

## WILL PARKLAND ALLOW SCHOOL BUS ADVERTISING?



Who would have thought about advertising on a school bus? The Parkland School Board has thought about advertising on the school buses. This is not something they would normally consider but budget cuts have them thinking otherwise. School officials are trying to figure out how to raise money and not cut their budgets to nearly zero. This is a tough position to be in and school officials are trying to find an easy solution. "We are trying to be creative and look at alternative sources of revenue," said district spokeswoman Nicole McGalla. McGalla thinks that Parkland would wind up being the first district within the state to use this type of advertising if the board approves the proposal. Everything keeps expanding but the actual budget. The bus routes keep getting larger and the school is trying to think outside of the box. Just doing this advertising program can bring in about \$150,000 just during the first year. The advertisements would just be on the first 46 buses, but the plan is to go onto all of the 96 buses. "There are other districts in the country who have done this, but we think we would be the first in the state of Pennsylvania," she said. There is always a catch when it comes to trying to figure out exactly how to do something like this. The district has to sit down and put strict policies into place. These ads will have to be tobacco and alcoholic free. Of course, it would not make sense to have advertisements like this on the buses. "We want to focus on ads geared toward health, safety, nutrition, higher education and recreational opportunities," McGalla said. No one is really talking until details are released during a meeting on Tuesday. There are only nine states who actually allow these kinds of advertising on buses. There are some campaigns that try and keep schools from advertising with buses. This is so students are kept safe, and their best interest is kept in mind. These states who do not allow advertising on buses do find other ways to raise money. McGalla said that any money made from the ad revenue would be deposited into the district's general fund. This move would come just in time for the school district to set a new budget for the 2012-2013 year. There are also rumors to reduce staff members and raise the current taxes. Either way you look at it; it's a hard predicament to be in. This is because the school has to make cuts somewhere or else it will cease to function correctly. "We are still grappling with real estate assessment appeals, particularly from the commercial-industrial sector, and the losses associated with these assessment appeals have totaled in excess of \$4 million in the past few years," Superintendent Richard Sniscak wrote in the district's January newsletter.

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