

THE TEEN APPEAL

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Where has all the money gone?

\$66 million cut leaves students with fewer books, teachers

By Mareeka Taylor, Hillcrest
By Wilbert Moore, Westwood

Hillcrest principal Carolyn Shaw interrupted classes during second period at the year's outset with an announcement that silenced students and teachers.

"Excuse me students, since cuts have been made within (the) MCS budget I've been informed that I have to let go seven of my teachers," Shaw said. "In a time like this we need to come together and be a family."

Hillcrest High students are among thousands experiencing the cuts.

Citing declining enrollment and the need to cope with a \$66 million dollar budget cut by the city council this summer, Memphis City Schools officials are laying off teachers and administrators. In early September, officials said that 71 teachers and 100 administrators would be laid off, but more recently indicated that only 19 "surplus" teachers would be let go with some of those being reassigned as substitutes, according to The Commercial Appeal.

Even before students heard about the faculty cuts, several schools, including Hillcrest and Westwood, had been without permanent teachers

in the 12th grade English classes for weeks.

"See you in summer school," said Erica Peete, a Westwood High senior, when she learned Westwood did not have a 12th grade English teacher at the beginning of the school year.

Some students said they worried that that less-fewer teachers could mean larger classroom sizes, turning the focus to discipline.

Teacher cuts mean larger classroom sizes, and the focus turns to discipline.

"It's sad because you have over-crowded classrooms which mean the teachers can't give that one-on-one attention they would if the classes were smaller," Nicholas Luckey, a junior at Hillcrest, said.

Some students adopted the attitude that they don't have to come to class, because as long as their name is on the roll, they'll get a credit.

Miriam Wilson, a concerned Hillcrest parent, said she is unhappy

about the teacher cuts.

"Just two years back they had a teacher fair at the Board of Education, now two years later teachers are losing their jobs," Wilson said. "You used to think being a teacher was always a secure job — apparently not."

Without a proper faculty, many students are concerned about the end-of-course test scores

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