

Pension costs drive increase in MBIT budget

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Middle Bucks Institute of Technology's executive council has approved an \$8.6 million budget for the 2014-15 school year.

That's less than a 2 percent increase over the current year's spending plan.

MBIT business manager Rob Vining said that increase is due mainly to an additional \$205,825 that the tech school must pay into the state pension system.

"The biggest piece of the increase is coming from retirement," Vining said. "After that would be from instructional salaries and wages."

Salaries and wages will go up by about \$63,000, less than three-quarters of a percent. Salaries for administrators and support staff actually will fall by \$16,656.

Vining said this isn't because of job cuts, but because staff members who left over the past year had been replaced with staff who are earning less.

About 52 percent of the budget goes to paying salaries. Twenty-seven percent pays for health care and other benefits.

Teacher salaries are calculated using an average of the wages paid by the sending school districts, which are Centennial, Central Bucks, Council Rock and New Hope-Solebury. The budget will now go to those districts for their approval.

Overall contributions from the districts will increase less than 1 percent, Vining said. MBIT will receive a 14 percent increase in funding from the state - although most of that will go toward the pension, Vining said. It'll see a decline of 3 percent in funding from the federal government.

The budget does not call for the addition or deletion of any programs, Vining said, although MBIT is planning to introduce a sports therapy and exercise management program in the 2015-16 school year.

"We try to be fiscally responsible," Vining said.