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NOTE: BTU First Vice President was also interviewed on camera for this article at the school board workshop early in the morning.

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Broward Schools May Lose Arts & Phys. Ed. Classes

FORT LAUDERDALE (CBS4) — Facing a \$100 million deficit, the Broward School Board debated their options for cuts during a Tuesday workshop session. The cuts suggested by district staff included cuts to art, music, and physical education at the grade school level.

"As a mother I'm nervous, they're an important part of our curriculum," said Board member Robin Bartleman. "For some kids, the arts are the only reason they like school. When you take art and music away, you take them away."

One option suggested by the committee would be to group nearby schools into zones and all the school would share teachers for music, art, media or other non-core classes. Another option would have one teacher instructing two classes simultaneously with the help of a teacher's aide. Yet another option has instruction in art, music and PE incorporated in a classroom teacher's daily lesson plan.

At the same time the budget cuts are being formulated, the board is getting heat from the teacher's union over an upcoming recruiting drive in New York.

Broward Teachers Union President Pat Santeramo says despite claims that the school district is in a 'fiscal crisis,' Superintendent James Notter and the School Board approved taking out an ad in the New York Times and agreed to send "recruiters" to the Big Apple next week to search for new employees.

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Union officials say the money being used for the ad and the trip could have been put to better use, such as recruiting in their own backyard. In addition to the approximately 800 teachers statewide which were laid off last year there are hundreds of new education graduates who will need a job when they complete their university studies in the next couple months.