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The weather Thursday: high 90, low 56, hum. 60 percent.

Those who truly care about education in Polk County are just sick over what three of our elected leaders are about to do — perhaps as early as when they meet at 3 p.m. today at the County Courthouse annex building.

They plan to give Polk County Schools less money by 20 percent than the schools received four years ago!

Let's all stop and think. What evidence have we been given that would call for such disruption in our schools?

Are we willing to see eight teachers and their aides laid off, without work? Do we want to see Polk County children in combination classes up and down every hall? Do we really want to turn back the clock and say mediocre education is "good enough for Polk County."

Do we really want to send that message to industrial site locaters and young people with families considering moving here — that Polk County is a place that wants their jobs and their services, but cannot muster the political courage to provide their children a top-notch education?

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Polk Schools Get No Increase

The Polk County Schools will have to live with \$450,000 less than they requested, the county's Board of Commissioners said Friday morning.

By a consensus vote of 3-2, the commissioners agreed to leave the school budget at \$1.68 million, as originally proposed by County Manager Steven D. Wyatt.

A final vote on the budget has yet to be taken. That vote could come as early as today at 3 p.m., at the board's regularly scheduled meeting. The budget must be passed before July 1.

At Friday's work session, Rachel Ramsey, Ken Faulkner and Henry Huntsinger said they felt the county must hold the line.

Board chairman Jeannie Martin and commissioner John Edwards argued for increasing the appropriation by at least \$85,000 — the additional tax revenues estimated since Wyatt's original budget.

But Ramsey, Faulkner and Huntsinger said they preferred that that money be put into the county's savings account — called a "fund balance" — for a rainy day.

"As unsteady as things are, we have to leave something in contingency," said Faulkner.

Wyatt told the board its required fund balance should be 8 percent of its total budget, or nearly \$500,000. Right now, the fund balance is nearly \$250,000 short, he said.

Martin said she had believed
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Newest Habitat Family



The Wayne Holt family will be the occupants of the newest Habitat House — the 14th new house built by Thermal Belt Habitat for Humanity. At the top in the photo are Ann and Wayne Holt; in the middle are Mike 17 and Steve 14; at the bottom are Joey 8 and Tara 5.

The Holt home is located on Spivey Creek Rd. in Landrum. Dedication ceremonies will be held at the home on Monday, June 25 starting at 6:30 p.m. it was announced by Jim Jackson who is in charge of the dedication. There will be a pot luck dinner and those attending are requested to bring a covered dish, salad or dessert for eight people. In the event of rain, the dedication will be held at the Habitat Resale Store on N. Trade Ave. in Landrum. — Reporter

Landfill Budget And Fees Reduced

The landfill fees opposed so vigorously a week ago during the budget public hearing were substantially reduced by the Polk County Board of Commissioners Friday, but the method of charging remained the same.

Under the county's new fee schedule, homeowners would pay \$25 instead of \$20, businesses would pay \$100 and industries \$200. Motels and bed-and-breakfasts would pay \$5 per year per room, and hospitals and clinics \$10 per bed per year.

With those fees, Polk Solid Waste Manager David Draughn said the county could raise \$203,740, a reduction of \$139,460 from the original proposal.

"Those are some cuts!" exclaimed commissioner Rachel Ramsey. "We ought to get David together with (school superintendent) Dr. Causby."

Draughn said the cuts he made were: \$65,000 from the required escrow account, reducing it to \$5,000; \$65,000 out of equipment depreciation; and \$30,000 which would have been used to buy truck scales.

But board Chairman Jeannie Martin said she still questions the fairness of charging flat fees. She said a small hairdresser's shop will pay the same \$100 under the plan as McDonald's.

"This is not based on volume at all," she said. "As much time as we've spent on this method, we

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