

BGCT reduces budget for schools but income could rise_81103

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BGCT reduces budget for schools but income could rise

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DALLAS—Texas Baptist schools may see fewer dollars in the 2004 Baptist General Convention of Texas Cooperative Program budget than in the 2003 budget, but they actually could receive more money next year.

One hundred percent of nearly \$12.8 million next year is more than 85 percent of \$14.9 million this year, and that's what the BGCT Christian Education Coordinating Board hopes Texas Baptist schools will receive.

A budget recommendation affirmed by the coordinating board at its Aug. 5 meeting in Dallas would reduce the Cooperative Program budget for Texas Baptist universities, academies and Hispanic Baptist Theological School by \$2.1 million in 2004 from the amount budgeted in 2003.

However, under the suggested budget plan, Texas Baptist schools potentially could realize an increase of up to \$1.85 million in Cooperative Program funds next year if the scaled-down budget is met and if giving in

2003 continues at the current pace.

Through the first half of 2003, Texas Baptist churches gave \$29.28 million in total Cooperative Program gifts and \$20.34 million toward the BGCT Cooperative Program budget, falling 14 percent short of budget requirements, according to David Nabors, BGCT treasurer and chief financial officer. For planning purposes, BGCT program areas have projected 2003 receipts at 85 percent of budget.

The 2004 budget recommendation from the Christian Education Coordinating Board would allocate \$12.78 million for Texas Baptists' eight universities, San Marcos Academy, Valley Baptist Missions/Education Center and Hispanic Baptist Theological School. That represents a 14 percent drop from the \$14.94 budgeted for 2003.

However, if Cooperative Program receipts in the current year continue at a projected pace of 85 percent of budget, Texas Baptist schools will receive only \$10.8 million, according to Keith Bruce, coordinator of BGCT institutional ministries. Institutions receive funds at the percentage level that the BGCT budget is met.

As recommended by the coordinating board, the eight Texas Baptist universities together could receive \$11.86 million through the Cooperative Program budget in 2004, compared to their projected actual receipts of \$10 million in 2003.

Under the suggested plan, Hispanic Baptist Theological School could receive \$459,162; San Marcos Academy could receive \$310,000; and Valley Baptist Missions/Education Center could receive \$150,000. That is a \$919,162 cumulative total in the 2004 budget, compared to projected total receipts of \$758,330 this year.

Recommended Texas Baptist funding for Truett Seminary in Waco and Logsdon School of Theology in Abilene would drop from \$1.05 million in the

2003 budget to \$891,677—roughly equal to projected Cooperative Program receipts for this year.

The Theological Education Committee does have some allocated funding that will be used to maintain the current level of support for these ministries at least through 2004, according to Royce Rose, BGCT director of theological education.

The BGCT Administrative Committee will consider the coordinating board's budget recommendations at its Sept. 4-5 meeting. The Administrative Committee's budget proposal will be presented to the BGCT Executive Board on Sept. 30, and the board-approved budget proposal will be considered by messengers to the BGCT annual session in Lubbock Nov. 10-11.

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