Children who want to learn and who partake of these activities should not be denied.

At the end of this month, the Cleveland Municipal School District must submit its five-year proposal to the State Board of Education. Included in this report will be recommendations for further cost saving cuts in the already financially beleaguered school system.

Among speculation of what programs will get the axe is the area of extra curricular activities, to include interscholastic sports.

We recognize that CMSD Superintendent Eric Gordon and the board have difficult choices to make when it comes to the district's budget.

We also recognize that a key component to academic life is socialization and life skills that come with activities such as bands, choirs, student councils and high school sports.

Studies have shown that students involved in these activities are more like to come to school on a daily basis and have higher graduation rates.

Such statistics overwhelming make our case that these activities should be spared in this next round of budget cuts.

We know that money is tight within the district.

We also know that graduation rates are better when extra curricular activities are provided to students who revel in these wholesome outlets.

Children who want to learn and who partake of these activities should not be denied.

Yes, hard choices must be made by the District. Doing away with extra curricular activities is not a viable choice.