



Waterford School District Board of Education Approves Budget Recommendations

May 19, 2005 Waterford, Mich. - The Waterford School District Board of Education has approved the budget recommendations to balance the 2005-2006 budget. These recommendations will allow the Waterford School District to continue providing resources that will ensure quality classroom instruction for all students during a time when public schools throughout the State are faced with many fiscal challenges due to funding shortfalls from the State. The District's short and long-term fiscal planning allows the Board of Education to keep in place literacy coaches, historically low class sizes, athletics, fine arts, physical education, transportation, and other programs and services for all students while increasing advance opportunities at the middle and high schools.

Over the past three years, the Waterford School District has experienced a decrease in school funding from the State of Michigan, which makes up 75% of the funds available to operate the school district. The 2005-2006 budget is based on a \$125 per student increase from the State of Michigan. Even with this increase, the District still faces an additional \$175 per student shortfall due to increases in health care, retirement, and utility costs. This shortfall existed prior to initiating various short and long-term plans for 2005-2006 recommended by our Task Forces, consisting of parents, staff, and community members, administration, and Board of Education.

Seventy-nine percent of all expenditures of the Waterford School District provide direct instruction to all students. The remaining 21% of expenditures are used to cover such costs as utilities, operations, maintenance, transportation, computer services, and general administration.

The first step in meeting this projected shortfall, and adopt a balanced budget, was to negotiate contracts that consisted of negotiated insurance savings in excess of \$1 million. The second step was to plan utilization of budgeted reserves from prior years of \$1.5 million. The final piece of the strategic plan to balance the budget was to avoid reductions in programming, services, and existing staff. The District opted to realign and consolidate programming and reallocate staff to accomplish this goal. Below are realignment and reallocation highlights:

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Facilities:

- Implement a transition process that may close one elementary for the 2006-07 school year based on enrollment. Standards to determine the process were adopted by the Board of Education on April 21.
- Close the Transportation/Student Services Building in 2005-2006. Reallocate staff in existing facilities in 2005-2006.
- Close the Kurzman Administration Center and reallocate staff to existing buildings in 2005-2006.

Personnel:

- Eliminate five administrative positions: Management Information Systems, Central Staff, Community Relations, Custodial/Maintenance, and Adult Education.
- Reduce administrative costs by contracting services.
- Reduce teaching staff based upon 2005-2006 enrollments.
- Reduce additional support positions based upon 2005-2006 enrollment and facilities.
- Restructure the delivery of Staff Development to reduce substitute and training costs.

Programming:

- Continue to seek grant opportunities to enhance programming.
- Provide and expand athletic opportunities by seeking cost control and alternative revenue sources without instituting pay for play.
- Provide and expand community education.
- Eliminate the driver's education program.
- Continue to study school calendar by aligning half days, conferences, and instructional days.

Operations:

- Continue to implement electronic purchasing reducing reliance on warehousing of District supplies.
- Continue to implement changes in printing and copying of instructional and operational materials.
- Increase child care and food service contributions to the general fund in 2005-2006.
- Ensure non-traditional programming during non-school hours covers the operational costs of school facilities.
- Reduce memberships and professional fees to organizations.

Property:

- Sell surplus property found within the District: Four Towns Campus; Donelson (M59), Lockhaven; Hermana Street; and existing Kurzman Administration Center.

Superintendent Thomas Tattan states "In addition to many significant changes, the District continues to realize additional cost savings by examining a variety of current operating practices. This examination is assisting in meeting our fiscal plan and our Board of Education goals of providing quality educational services and opportunities for our students and community. We accept the challenge of resolving these current fiscal issues while continuing to make our District stronger and more competitive in the future."

Further information may be found on the Waterford School District website at www.waterford.k12.mi.us.

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