



Sweet Home Central School District of Amherst and Tonawanda

Office of the Superintendent
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Geoffrey M. Hicks
Superintendent of Schools

March 1, 2010

Dear Staff Member,

The purpose of this correspondence is to update you on the 2010-2011 budget construction process. On Saturday, February 27th the Board of Education conducted its second major budget study session. The study session concluded with the recommendation of a third draft of the 2010-2011 budget, which reduced spending by an additional \$1.2 million and allocated another \$1 million in fund balance to the proposed budget.

The full budget presentation document is posted on the Sweet Home Central Schools website. It provides a history of the budget process to date, as well as a listing of all the proposed staffing reductions in the three draft budget proposals. The most recent draft of the 2010-2011 budget includes a total of \$2.8 million in spending reductions as well as \$2 million in allocated reserve and fund balance revenue.

The Board of Education has not yet reached consensus on a final budget to adopt. The Board will continue deliberations at the two regularly scheduled meetings this month (March 9th & March 16th) and hold another budget study session on March 27th. The Board will formally adopt the budget at the April 6th meeting. In addition, an open community meeting on the budget will be held prior to the Board meeting on March 9th.

The political landscape in Albany has changed with Governor Paterson officially dropping out of the election, an event which further complicates the possibility that the State Legislature will restore any of the extraordinarily large state aid cuts to schools. It also appears that New York will fail to qualify for Race to the Top competitive grant funding this year, thereby diminishing the chance for a further federal stimulus in time for the 2010-2011 budget.

The staff reductions in Draft 3 of the budget have not yet been finalized, and I will wait until the Board formally adopts the final budget before visiting those staff members who are in jeopardy of having their position eliminated. I have informed the Board that in my opinion, the spending reductions proposed in the draft budget on February 27th represent the lowest possible level the District should consider in the 2010-2011 budget.

You can find all future budget information updates on the district website. I will visit faculty meetings when the 2010-2011 budget is finalized to review the details with staff members. If you have questions about the process please call or e-mail me.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey M. Hicks
Superintendent of Schools