



School Crossings

A Bridge Between School & Community

Westport Central School District
May 2010

Dear Westport Central School District Residents,

Westport Central School District parents expect and receive a solid education for their children. They expect us to teach higher order skills, including the ability to solve problems, continue learning and socialize appropriately. They also expect us to prepare their children for the next phase of their life, post-secondary education or work. Those expectations are articulated in school district policies, practices and procedures, and in the mission, vision and values that guide our work here.

In a time of an economic downturn and a New York State Budget crisis, constructing a budget which balances the needs of the children with the concerns of the taxpayers is, to say the least, a very difficult process. The Board of Education and Superintendent have been working together to develop a spending plan which recognized those needs and those concerns. The initial budget runs projected increased expenditures of about \$270,000. The 2010-2011 spending plan being presented represents a 2.47%, (approximately \$125,000) increase over last year's approved budget. The final tax levy and property tax rates will be determined at a later time, although some projections are included in this letter.

The members of the Board and the Superintendent have listened to the concerns raised by those in attendance at budget workshops. Long range planning is essential to the District. Just to reinforce some of the steps taken thus far;

1. The Board has entered into a contractual agreement with the Superintendent to work on a per diem basis

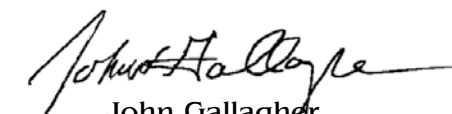
without benefits at approximately one-half time, a savings of almost \$75,000 per year, when benefits such as insurance, retirement costs, and vacation time are considered.

2. The District is utilizing a shared school business office with Elizabethtown-Lewis Central School. This shared service will result in a net savings in the range of \$30,000 next year.
3. The District is involved in the planning of a shared municipal complex. The sharing of services for diesel fuel and gasoline is already helping cost containment. A new facility will result in a consolidation of positions.
4. We have entered into cooperative bidding with St. Lawrence BOCES which will decrease costs for school supplies by over 10%. Those savings are reflected in the proposed spending plan. Similarly we have "locked in" heating oil for the coming year, and are entering a bid process for electrical energy.
5. We have utilized federal monies in a manner that reduces local taxpayer effort to the greatest extent possible.

In addition to these initial steps, the District will develop a plan that will carry on the tradition of excellence that exists here. For the remainder of this school year the Board will identify the topics for discussion in the long range. When this process starts, the Board, school community, and those towns served by the school should be involved.

Please consider supporting our budget.


Alice LaRock
Board President


John Gallagher
Superintendent

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A Word from Our Students

To the Community Members of Westport,

Our names are Martha McKinley and Valentina Rodriguez and as soon to be Westport School graduates we are writing this letter to express our gratitude to the community and school for the resources and loyal support through our years at Westport. Though we are starting to feel the walls creep in around us and are excited to go on to Clarkson and Harvard University we will not forget the gifts Westport Central has given us. Being involved in so many extra-curricular activities and clubs as well as taking rigorous academic courses, has been a crucial part of shaping our ambitious characters.



While we were going through the college application process and building our resumes, we realized how special Westport is. Unlike many students around the country we were able to put multiple sports, and clubs on our resumes rather than just a few. In larger schools students don't get the opportunities to participate in such a variety of activities. This year we both managed to be on a championship basketball team, published a yearbook, participated in the production of two shows, and maintained an average to give us the honor of being at the top of our class. We believe that it is because of

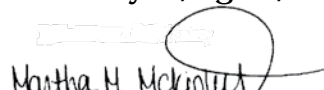


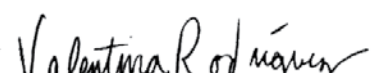
our school's unique ability to include and expand the interest of its students that it turns out such well rounded and successful citizens. At Westport Central School, there is an expectation to succeed and each one of us is thinking about how we can use our skills to better our community.

We understand that these privileges come with cost; however, we also think that these costs are completely worth the investment. We are the generation that will be the next leaders, lawyers, teachers, mechanics, doctors, and more... Our education is, at least we think, important. And not just what we have learned in textbooks; what we have learned while being team members, mentors, and tight-knit school community members has taught us to build relationships, teach values, and solve problems that we encounter. Our school creates individuals that are unpretentious, intelligent, and creative who represent Westport in the best light.

Someday, we hope that our children will be able to get educated in a school and community that is as supportive as Westport. As we prepare to leave Westport Central School, which has been our home for the last thirteen years, we would like to thank every single community member, teacher, administrator, and fellow student for all of the lessons they have taught us. We believe that because of the unique experience we received at Westport, we will go out into the world with the knowledge that we have acquired and be able to see life with open hearts and minds.

Thank you, again, for all of your support,


Martha M. McKinley


Valentina S. Rodriguez

Budget Vote, Board of Education Election & Passenger Van Purchase

In addition to the Annual Budget Vote, voters will also be asked to vote on the following items: 1. To elect one member of the Board for a five (5) year term commencing July 1, 2010. 2. To authorize the purchase of one Express Passenger Van 1500 and the expenditure of a gross sum not to exceed thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000) and the use of the sum of thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000) from the Bus Reserve Fund to pay for the van in full.

The Annual Budget Challenge

Each year the Westport Central School District is faced with a budget that includes increasing costs:

- Health insurance
- Retirement system
- Special Education
- Contractual salaries
- Debt service

As well as limited operating aid:

- Reduction of State Aid of \$133,794

How is WCSD controlling our costs?

- Superintendent position reduced to half time
- Shared Business Office services
- Purchasing cost-effective shared services through CVES and FEH BOCES which is also eligible for State Aid
- Acquisition and utilization of grant funding
- Partnering with the Town of Westport to purchase fuel
- Sharing costs through a Health Care Consortium
- Local staff development

How Can You Help?

Attend WCSD Board of Education meetings in order to remain informed. We always welcome your comments and suggestions. All Board of Education meetings are open to the public and you are invited to attend.

Attend a Board of Education Meeting

- May 11, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.
- June 10, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.
- July 8, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.

Upcoming Events

May

6-8	Drama Club Production
7 & 8	NYSSMA Solo Festival
11	Early Dismissal
13	Parent Involvement Night
17 & 18	Art Show
	Science & Technology Fair
18	John F. Geyer Concert
	Blood Drive
19	Kindergarten Screening
22	Junior Prom
24-27	PTO Book Fair
28	No School, unused emergency day
31	Memorial Day

June

1	Superintendent's Coffee Hour
2	Essex County Senior Awards Evening
3	Academic Awards Evening
15-23	Regents Examinations
19	Galley Gig
24	Last Day of Classes
25	Superintendent's Conference Day
26	Graduation 10:00 a.m.

Westport Central School District Mission Statement

The mission of the Westport Central School District is to nurture our children's natural curiosity and wonder so that the love of learning continues throughout their lives. We will stress academic achievement while encouraging the development of the total person through social, physical and creative experiences. Our goal is to inspire our students to be caring and contributing members of society.

ADMINISTRATION

This category of the budget includes administrative, financial, legal and instructional support services for the operation of the school system. It also includes insurance, administrative costs and School Board expenditures.

Board of Education - The members of the Board are elected representatives of the public who serve, without pay, as trustees of the school district. Included are supplies, meeting expenses and advertising.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. Board of Education	\$4,807	\$6,826
2. District Clerk	3,000	3,000
3. District Meeting	300	300
TOTAL	\$8,107	\$10,126

Central Administration - This category includes the compensation for the Superintendent's Office as well as the Business Office. Other expenses include supplies, postage, auditing services and collection of school taxes.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
Chief School Administrator	\$157,211	\$114,137
TOTAL	\$157,211	\$114,137

Finance - This category includes compensation for Business Administration, as well as auditing services and collection of school taxes.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. Business Administration	\$109,340	\$119,538
2. Auditing	4,700	7,950
3. Tax Collector	4,225	4,325
TOTAL	\$118,265	\$131,813

Staff - Included in this category are the expenses of the school attorney, personnel services and costs associated with newsletters.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. Legal	\$5,000	\$5,000
2. Personnel	10,709	10,879
TOTAL	\$17,388	\$15,709

Central Services - This category includes cost for printing and mailing services

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
Central Printing and Mailing	\$5,686	\$8,665
TOTAL	\$5,686	\$8,665

Special Items - This category includes fire, liability, student accident insurance and the District's share of operating the BOCES Administrative Office.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. Unallocated Insurance	\$24,000	\$23,300
2. BOCES Administrative Costs	33,240	36,235
TOTAL	\$57,240	\$59,535

Administration & Improvement - This category includes the salary for a Principal along with expenses related to the supervision of the instructional program.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
Supervision - Regular School	\$60,902	\$61,781
TOTAL	\$60,902	\$61,781

Employee Benefits for Administrative Employees.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. State Retirement	\$14,000	\$6,521
2. Teacher Retirement	15,733	10,593
3. Social Security	22,737	13,945
4. Worker's Comp	1,154	651
5. Unemployment Insurance	0	72
6. Health Insurance	49,672	82,652
TOTAL	\$103,296	\$114,434

TOTAL ADMINISTRATION **\$526,416** **\$516,370**

DEFINITIONS

1. Administrative costs include the salaries and benefits of all certified staff who spend 50% or more of their time in administration, plus the salaries and benefits of clerical staff. Also, school board costs, curriculum development, staff development, tax collection, legal and auditing costs, central printing, central data processing, BOCES administrative costs, research, planning, and evaluation.

2. Program costs include the salaries and benefits of all teachers and staff delivering pupil services (health, guidance, library and athletics). Also, textbooks, instructional materials, equipment, extracurricular student activities, BOCES program costs, and all costs of the transportation program except bus purchases.

3. Capital costs include the salaries and benefits of maintenance and custodial staff, plus debt service, bus purchases, utilities, general insurance, tax certiorari, and other court-ordered expenses.

PROGRAM

Instruction is the heart of a school district's budget. This is where direct educational services are provided to children. Programs budgeted in this category include elementary and secondary education, career and technical education, remedial and special educational programs, library and media services, interscholastic athletics, extracurricular and other direct services to students. The proposed budget has 69% targeted to these programs.

Inservice Training - Charged in this area are expenses for training our instructional personnel.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. Instructional Training	\$5,339	\$6,434
TOTAL	\$5,339	\$6,434

Teaching - This category is concerned with instruction of pupils and includes salaries of instructional personnel, charges for BOCES Career and Technical Education programs and classroom supplies and textbooks.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. Salaries K-3	\$468,919	\$292,813
2. Salaries 4-6	126,653	259,248
2. Salaries 7-12	720,007	803,945
3. Salaries - Substitutes	16,000	16,000
4. Equipment	3,000	0
5. Contractual	28,800	21,600
6. Materials & Supplies	32,330	27,715
7. Textbooks	18,000	14,000
8. BOCES Services	30,517	24,169
TOTAL	\$1,444,226	\$1,459,490

Programs for Students with Disabilities -

This category includes services for students with disabilities. These programs are mandated by State & Federal Law and are partially supported by special education categorical state aid.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. Instructional Salaries	\$140,416	\$152,835
2. Non-Instruc. Salaries	44,312	29,055
3. Contractual	6,500	6,500
4. BOCES Services	272,914	357,011
TOTAL	\$464,142	\$545,401

Career & Technical Education - This category includes costs for operating career and technical education classes within the school building and at BOCES.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. Salaries	\$56,565	\$57,377
2. Contractual	1,200	1,200
3. Materials & Supplies	1,800	1,800
4. BOCES Services	111,768	96,850
TOTAL	\$171,333	\$157,227

School Library - Funds for the library including salary, library books, reference materials and supplies are found in this area of the budget.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. Salary	\$24,293	\$24,293
2. Contractual	200	200
3. Materials & Supplies	3,600	3,600
4. BOCES Services	3,912	5,069
TOTAL	\$32,005	\$33,162

Computer Assisted Instruction - Funds for the purchase of computer equipment and software, as well as computer-related BOCES services

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. Computer Hardware - Aided	0	\$1,000
2. Computer Software - Aided	3,670	3,670
3. BOCES Services	80,796	81,562
TOTAL	\$84,466	\$86,232

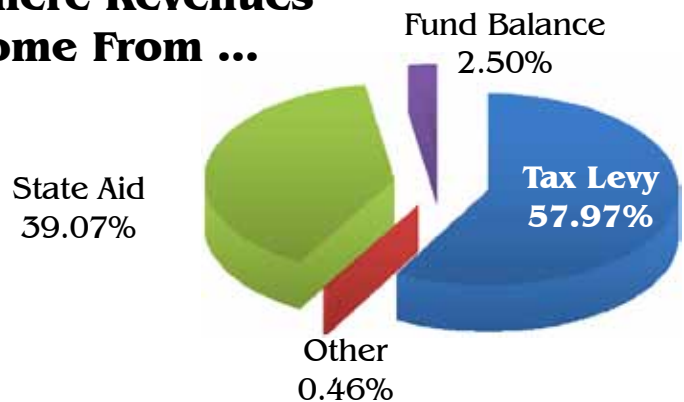
Pupil Services - The Pupil Services category deals with a variety of programs for students.

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. Guidance	\$112,421	\$63,886
2. Health	33,677	34,444
3. Psychological	19,733	20,807
4. Co-Curr. Activities	29,456	31,510
5. Interscholastic	68,478	68,904
TOTAL	\$263,765	\$219,551

Pupil Transportation - This category includes the cost of bus fleet operation which transports children to and from school and other educational activities

	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
1. Transportation	\$192,748	\$178,076
2. Garage	22,074	21,312
TOTAL	\$214,822	\$199,388

Where Revenues Come From ...



REVENUES

Other	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
Interest / Penalties on Taxes	\$7,500	\$7,500
Admissions	\$2,500	\$2,500
Interest on Earnings	\$5,000	\$5,000
<u>Gifts & Donations</u>	<u>\$9,000</u>	<u>\$9,000</u>
Total	\$24,000	\$24,000
State Aid	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
Foundation Aid	\$1,481,689	\$1,481,689
Excess Cost Aid	\$21,366	\$12,998
Transportation Aid	\$173,755	\$173,009
Building Aid	\$243,276	\$244,325
High Tax Aid	\$70,000	\$70,000
Hardware Technology	\$2,236	\$2,197
BOCES Aid	\$156,574	\$155,587
Software/Library/Textbook	\$16,033	\$14,577
Supplemental Pub Sp Ed	\$0	\$3,796
<u>GAP Elimination Adjustment</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>-\$126,406</u>
TOTAL State Aid	\$2,164,929	\$2,031,772
TOTAL Revenues	\$2,188,929	\$2,055,772

Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings Based on a Hypothetical Home Within the School District with an Assessed Full Value of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) Using 2009 Assessed Valuations to Determine an Estimated Tax Rate.

Net Basic STAR Tax Savings: \$413.48

Property Tax Report Card

Total Spending:	\$5,200,000
Estimated School Tax Levy:	\$3,014,228
Public School Enrollment:	274
Consumer Price Index:	-0.40%

<u>TOTAL</u> <u>APPROPRIATIONS</u>

\$5,200,000

<u>LESS TOTAL</u> <u>REVENUES</u>

\$2,055,772

<u>LESS UNRESERVED</u> <u>FUND BALANCE</u>

\$130,000

<u>ANTICIPATED</u> <u>TAX LEVY</u>

\$3,014,228

This represents a 4.45% increase in the Tax Levy
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WCS Highlights

- We have 275 students K-12, near to a 100% graduation rate for the past ten years and have recently been recognized by US News and World Report as a Bronze Medal School, one of 1189 out of over 18,000 schools examined in the U.S.
- Our Quiz Bowl students have competed and won the honor of competing at the National level in this event.
- We have been recognized by New York State as a model school for Response to Intervention (RTI).
- WCS serves grades K-12 in the Westport Central School District. It is among the few public schools in New York to receive a distinguished Great Schools Rating of 8 out of 10.
- Parents have reviewed this school and given it an average rating of 4 out of 5 stars.
- We have 8 of 9 students who have recently competed in Greenwich, NY for the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Spring District Conference and have won the honor of competing at the State level.
- Last year, we were Varsity Basketball Section Seven Class D Champions, boys' and girls'.

The girls were undefeated in the regular season this year and repeated as Section Seven Champions.

- Our art program typically has 45% of our entire student body's art work on display during the year from the State House in Albany to Seventh Avenue in New York City.
- We have a Bridge Program with North Country Community College that allows our students to take up to fourteen college credits.
- We teach Advanced Placement English and American History.
- We have two student-athletes eligible to compete in the Junior Olympics for fencing.
- During the 2008-2009 school year all students with a disability testing within the building scored 3 or 4 (maximum score 4) on the New York State ELA and Math tests.
- High School Biology and 7th Grade Life Science students have been raising Atlantic Landlocked Salmon from salmon



- eggs delivered in January from Trout Unlimited. The classes have observed the hatching and development process. They will be releasing them in May.
- 85% of students grades 5-12 participate in music/band.
 - 35% of 7th and 8th grade students are All County Music performers.
 - Three high school students are performers at the All State Music level.
 - Westport Chamber Ensemble is a completely student run strings group of performers.
- Many students participate in the Lake Champlain History course.

John W. Gallagher, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Michele M. Friedman
Principal
www.westportcs.org

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