

DISTRICT BULLETIN

To: Westport CSD Faculty Members, Staff Members & Volunteers

From: A. Paul Scott, Interim Superintendent, Westport CSD

RESOLUTION ON SAFETY & SECURITY

A formal resolution on **school safety & security** is on the docket for school board consideration this coming Thursday, March 8th at the 5:45 PM regular monthly meeting which also features budget development workshop #2. A **preview edition** of that resolution is **attached**.

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Voluntary budget forums are slated for Tuesday, March 2nd at 7:30 AM, 11 AM and 3:20 PM at our library media center. Those budget forums will feature updated budget facts and figures, plus an opportunity to share **comments and suggestions** regarding how to most thoughtfully proceed with budget development matters in the following weeks.

Please consider attending one of the budget forums.

MERGER STUDY PROCESS UPDATE



The twenty-member merger study advisory committee comprised of board-appointed representatives of Westport CSD and Elizabethtown-Lewis CSD engaged with the consultants February 28th on an **analysis** of pertinent **financial facts and figures** for the time period of school years 2019-20 through 2033-2034.

During the initial fifteen years of a merged district, the state provides several categories of incentive aid. **Some highlights** of the financial analysis presented by the consultants and

discussed with the merger study advisory committee are on the **next page**, along with **other** pertinent facts and figures:

- A. The State's [merger] incentive operating aid during that initial fifteen years of the merged district would provide an **additional \$6.24M of operating aid** to the merged district comprised of the former Westport CSD and Elizabethtown-Lewis CSD.
- B. Fifteen years of annual reduced expenditures due to the **increased staffing efficiencies** of operating a **single** merged school district rather than the **two** current school districts would result in **decreased** expenditures of **\$7.62M** across that fifteen year time period.
- C. **Other** annual budget efficiencies of operating one merged district rather than operating the two current school districts (*necessary management-related functions such as auditing services, financial services, legal services, BOCES services, school physician, insurance and tax collection*) would result in **decreased** expenditures of **\$800,685** across that fifteen year time period.
- D. **Tax rates** for the merged school district could be **stabilized** or **reduced**, when compared to what the tax rates would be if **no merger** of Westport CSD and Elizabethtown-Lewis CSD takes place.
- E. The merged district would be able to offer **all of the courses** that are currently offered in both districts and operate with enough added efficiency to offer **additional courses and/or reduce staffing**. The consultants have recommended that any such staffing reductions be via **attrition**.

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

On the **revenues** side, the state-mandated local property tax cap threshold allows Westport CSD an additional **\$84,810** in property tax levy for 2018-19. Our shared business manager will provide a revised forecast of all revenue categories at budget workshop #2, next Thursday at the school board's budget workshop.

On the **estimated expenditures** side, Westport CSD faces a **\$285,436** increase in estimated health insurance-related costs including plan premiums, buyouts and Medicare reimbursements; and an estimated **\$164,100** increase in salaries, among various other budget category increases for July 1st forward.

I expect to be presenting a set of **recommended budget & staffing adjustments** for next fiscal year, intended to address the roughly **\$251,000 gap** [as of mid-day today] between forecasted **revenues** and forecasted **expenditures** for 2018-19. Among the recommendations will be staffing adjustments that would be linked with **attrition** we'll experience, due to multiple retirements of valued full-time faculty members. Staffing reductions via attrition, at least from my vantage point, are almost always preferable to alternate staffing reduction strategies such as reducing multiple positions from full-time to part-time, for a variety of reasons. I will also be recommending use of some unassigned fund balance, as yet another component of closing the roughly quarter million dollar gap.

Thank you, best wishes for this weekend ahead, and **safe travels** between now and Monday!

WESTPORT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

RESOLUTION #1 OF MARCH 8, 2018

REGARDING SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY

Whereas, Westport Central School District and the Board of Education believes every person has a right to an education, and schools must provide a positive learning environment recognizing that people learn in different ways; and

Whereas, the school district's code of conduct calls for the Board of Education to lead by example, therefore:

Be it resolved, that this Board of Education firmly calls upon federal and state legislators to:

- A. **Provide** substantial additional funding exclusively earmarked for providing much more adequate levels of mental health interventions and supports for families via counties, social services interventions and supports via counties, guidance services and resources for students and parents via school districts.
- B. **Provide** fast-track funding and fast-track authorizations for school districts to upgrade their facilities in timely fashion, if internal safety and security audits determine there is a need for capital improvements to those facilities.
- C. **Sustain** our New York State focus on having local school boards and local school districts having the authority and responsibility to choose what is best for their local community's school district, in regard to the details and logistics of school safety and security.
- D. **Complete** a thorough, public review – and thoughtful updating - of federal and state laws associated with background checks of individuals who wish to purchase guns.
- E. **Restore** and **expand** funding for school resource officers in public schools, as part of federal and state financial support for public school safety and security.
- F. **Reject** the notion of arming New York State's public school teachers and support staff.

We certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the resolution acted upon by the Westport Central School District Board of Education in public session on March 8, 2018.

A. Paul Scott, Interim Superintendent of Schools

Alice LaRock, President of the Board