

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE FOR THE APRIL 12, 2018 MEETING

EARLY MORNING MEETING FOR APRIL 26TH BOCES VOTE & ELECTION?

The annual BOCES **vote** (on this region's BOCES administrative budget) and **election** (of open seats on this region's BOCES) was set for Thursday, April 26th by this region's BOCES. Would the school board be willing to gather for a few minutes at either 7:45 AM or 8 AM on Thursday, April 26th for that annual vote and election?

JUNE 19TH - SCHOOL BOARDS TO MEET WITH MERGER STUDY CONSULTANTS

The original timetable for the merger study process calls for the merger study consultants firm to present a merger study report at a joint meeting of the Westport CSD and Elizabethtown-Lewis CSD school board August 2018. The merger study consultants firm is prepared to advance that date from August to **Tuesday, June 19th** for that joint presentation to the two school boards, in public session.

THE THREE 2018-19 BUDGET SCENARIOS YOU REQUESTED

Tonight's budget development workshop agenda calls for you to examine and discuss the three 2018-19 budget scenarios you requested on March 22nd that the business manager and I construct for your consideration on April 12th:

Title	Description	Tax Levy Increase	Key Parameters
Budget Forecast #4	Tax Levy Threshold	2.42%	See section A below.
Budget Forecast #4-A	Teacher Staffing As Is	7.96%	See section B below.
Budget Forecast #4-B	Staffing and Top Priorities	9.98%	See section C below.

PARAMETERS ASSOCIATED WITH THOSE THREE BUDGET SCENARIOS

All three scenarios: [1] incorporate \$51,630 of administrative leadership cost reductions by consolidating the two required administrative positions (Superintendent and Principal) into a singular combined Superintendent-Principal position. [2] End the BOCES service that provides Westport CSD with a second cafeteria services manager. [3] Appropriate \$200,000 of fund balance toward your 2018-19 operating budget.

Section A: Calls for an additional \$194,398 of yet-to-be identified cost reductions, with nearly all such reductions almost certainly to be from instructional programs & instructional staffing, since Westport CSD already has a very lean set of operations budgets and operations staffing for main office, custodial, maintenance, cafeteria & transportation services.

Section B: Is based on your obtaining a May 15th supermajority voter approval of a 7.96% tax levy increase, thereby enabling you to sustain your current teacher staffing levels into next school year.

Section C: Is based on your obtaining a May 15th supermajority voter approval of a 9.98% tax levy increase, thereby enabling you to sustain teacher staffing levels and fund \$70,664 of top priority items.

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WHAT WE'VE LEARNED SINCE THE MARCH 22ND BUDGET WORKSHOP

Here's a short list of what Westport CSD has learned since the school board's most recent budget workshop, which took place Thursday, March 22nd. Westport CSD now has updated figures for:

1. 2018-19 school year special education placements/tuition seats.
2. 2018-19 career-technical education tuition seats.
3. The recently established New York State budget that offers a meager foundation aid increase to Westport CSD.

EXPENDITURE INCREASES ECLIPSE FORECASTED REVENUES

Westport CSD policy 5110 (Budget Planning and Development) states the Superintendent has overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction and adherence to a budget calendar. The Westport CSD school board has stayed the course with the budget development calendar approved fall 2017.

Now that the dust has settled on the statewide front, the school board faces an important point in time at tonight's budget workshop: Establishing an overall proposed expenditures plan that will be subjected to voter consideration May 15th. What's next? The shared business manager and I will scope out the details of the school board's proposed expenditures plan in greater detail, beginning tomorrow morning. The process of scoping out and detailing the school board's proposed expenditures plan must be completed by the final budget development workshop, April 19th at 5:45 PM, when the school board is slated to formally adopt a proposed expenditures plan for voter consideration May 15th.

From my vantage point as your interim superintendent, there are no easy choices remaining. Sustaining instructional programs and instructional staffing "as is" into next school year would require a supermajority voter approval of a 7.96% tax levy increase – more than three times the percent of tax levy increase at the tax levy cap threshold of 2.42%. I recommend the school board establish a proposed expenditures plan that sets the forecasted property tax levy at the calculated property tax levy cap threshold. A March 2018 report by the New York State Association of School Business Officials states that 99% of school districts within New York State expect their budget proposal to stay within the limit of the property tax levy cap threshold.

REMAINING WALKTHROUGH EVALUATIONS BY END OF NEXT MONTH

The collectively negotiated annual professional performance review for Westport CSD teachers calls for annual independent walkthrough evaluations (each being fifteen to twenty minutes of a lesson or class period) to be conducted prior to the end of May. I conduct those independent walkthrough evaluations this school year as a part of my interim superintendent responsibilities. I launched such walkthrough evaluations early January 2018. Fourteen have been completed. The remaining twelve walkthrough observations will be scheduled in the weeks ahead, once the school board establishes a proposed expenditures plan for voter consideration.