

VALLEY STREAM UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT THIRTY

Administrative Offices

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Dr. Elaine Kanas
Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Valley Stream 30 Community,

Founders Day Celebration - Thursday, February 3rd – 7:00 p.m., Clear Stream Avenue School

This event celebrates the founding of the National PTA Organization. Each year, one of the Valley Stream 30 PTAs takes responsibility for hosting this celebratory event of a wonderful organization. Thank you to Clear Stream Avenue PTA whose turn it is to host this evening's presentation.

Budget Update

Work on preparing the 2011-12 budget has begun in earnest. Below are some highlighted considerations discussed at the January 24th Board Work Session and January 31st Board Business Meeting:

- At the January 24th Board of Education Work Session, the Board reviewed all of the feedback from the Community Forum regarding programs that the community values, as well as possible program modifications suggested by the community. The consensus from the Community Forum was that all programs were valued and should be kept, but modifications should be considered to allow for cost-savings.
An example of a modification that keeps program but makes it more affordable is this year's change to a six-day cycle. By going to a six-day cycle, the District was able to more efficiently use the schedules of shared staff to absorb the teaching load of a newly-retired staff member without making a replacement hire. As a result, the District was able to continue to provide special area programming with minimal loss of student contact time with considerable cost savings to the District.
- Large mandatory increases in New York State employee pension system costs, increased health insurance costs and contractual obligations make it prohibitive for the District to continue to offer our same program without modifications in the 2011-12 school year. For example, factoring in the increased obligations, if the District were to provide the same program in the same way in 2011-12, it would cost \$2,084,362 more, (a 6.64% budget-to-budget increase and a 9.30% increase in tax levy.)
- At the January 31st meeting, a draft of a 3% budget-to-budget increase with a 4.56% tax levy increase was presented to the Board for consideration. A 3% budget-to-budget increase would require the District to cut \$1,140,353 from the projected continuation budget.
- A 2011-12 proposed budget summary (with a 3% budget-to-budget increase assumption) can be found online at our website, www.valleystream30.com, as shared at the January 31st meeting. Also available on our website is the proposed general support, transportation, debt service, employee benefits and inter-fund transfers component of the budget presented for discussion on January 31st. Ideas for suggested modifications gleaned from the Community Forum, such as reorganization of our evening security to maintain safety are still under review, but actively being pursued.
- On **February 14th (Work Session)** and **February 28th (Business Meeting)**, the Board will be discussing the Instructional and Special Education Budget. As highlighted above, a 3% budget-to-budget increase would require the District to cut \$1,140,353 from these programs next year. Following the recommendations of the Community Forum feedback, the administration is working to provide options for the Board's consideration that modify program but still maintain it, rather than the elimination of any single program area.
- Projections for a 2% budget-to-budget increase, as well as a potential contingent budget (projected 1.88% budget-to-budget increase based on current figures available) are also available on the District website. Budgets at this level would demand whole program cuts rather than modifications to existing programs.

The Board of Education and District Administration value your input in the budget decision-making process. The challenges in developing a budget this year are enormous given the increases in obligatory payments to the New York State employee pension funds and other contractual obligations, coupled with a significant decline in state aid revenue. Please attend the Board Work Sessions where you will have an opportunity to gain insight on the budget issues and the Board Business meetings where you will be able to provide your comments and suggestions during the public comment portion of these meetings. We will also continue to update you with ongoing budget information through this newsletter and on the District website.

Please do not hesitate to call me at ext. 222 or Assistant Superintendent for Business, Lisa Rutkoske, ext. 225, if you have any questions about the above or want clarification on budget items at ANY time. We are eager and happy to assist you with your questions, as an informed public only further supports a successful community/district partnership!

Have a good weekend! As always, please contact me at 516-285-9881, x222 or email ekanas@vs30.org with comments and suggestions on the topic of this newsletter or with suggestions or questions on other topics.

Sincerely,

Elaine Kanas

Elaine Kanas, Ed.D.

The mission of Valley Stream District Thirty, through collaboration with parents and community partners, is to educate all students to their highest levels of performance in nurturing learning environments that are safe, inclusive and student centered.