

2011 – 2012 SCHOOL BUDGET

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the budget goal?

Our budget goal is to support student achievement through the development of a budget that provides for a Thorough and Efficient Education in accordance with New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.

2. What is the budget cap?

Recent state legislation has limited the property tax levy growth to 2 percent per year. In these tough economic times, the district was committed to presenting a budget below this cap. The 2011-2012 budget results in a **ZERO tax increase** to the local tax levy.

3. What is the tax impact?

There is **NO** impact; there is a **0% tax levy increase**.

4. Since there is no tax levy increase, do I still need to vote?

YES. Please remember to vote on **Wednesday**, April 27, 2011 from 2:00PM-9:00PM.

5. Will there be positions cut from the budget?

Yes. Due to the outsourcing of the remaining 40% of the in-house transportation routes, the proposed budget includes a 17-count reduction in transportation personnel (impacting thirteen (13) bus drivers and four (4) bus aides) for a savings of approximately \$455K.

6. What did you do to avoid a tax increase?

The State restored \$509K of the \$2.5 million in aid which was reduced in 2010-2011. The Board decided that these additional funds would be put towards local property tax relief.

A comprehensive Energy Conservation Program that has resulted in significant savings of \$1.8 million in natural gas and electric consumption in the twenty-three (23) months since the district implemented the program.

Teacher and other HTEA employee salaries are aligned with the state mandated 2% tax levy cap. In fact, the HTEA employees have agreed to a **zero** salary increase for the 2011-2012 budget year.

Outsourcing of the remaining 40% of the in-house transportation routes

To promote economies and efficiencies, the district participates in numerous federal, state, county, and local shared services and consortiums.

Finally, the district generates additional revenue from facility usage fees, pre-school tuition, non-resident special education student tuition, corporate sponsorship income and one time revenue from the sale of buses resulting from transportation outsourcing.

7. “I have no children in school, what does the budget mean to me, besides the tax impact”?

All voters have a stake in the outcome of the budget vote, whether or not they have children in the school system. Not only does the school budget affect property taxes, but strong local schools enhance the quality of life in a community and can make a town more attractive to prospective homebuyers and business investors. In addition, strong schools help homeowners retain the market value of their properties. More importantly, quality public schools provide children with the opportunities they need to succeed and take their place in the world as productive citizens.

8. Will I still receive a budget newsletter, as in prior years?

Yes. The budget newsletter will again be sent to residents and posted on the district’s website.

9. What happens if the budget is defeated?

If the budget is defeated by the voters, the proposed budget is sent to the municipal governing body for review. The Township Committee may leave the budget intact or make cuts. If they decide to cut the budget, they can identify specific areas to cut or provide the district with a dollar amount to cut from the budget. It would then be the Board of Education’s decision as to which item(s) will be cut.

10. Where do we stand in terms of cost per pupil?

Unfortunately, the state has not published the 2010 Comparative Spending Guide that provides per pupil costs. Upon state release, it will be available on the district’s website