



North Shore Schools

Discovering Your Dreams

BOE Meeting Summary February 3, 2011

Discussion/Presentations:

North Shore Trustees Discuss Best Budget Strategies for 2011-12

Current Situation:

At the February 3rd North Shore Schools Board of Education meeting, Superintendent Dr. Edward Melnick discussed the current economic situation. He communicated that pension contributions, health insurance costs, and contractual obligations continue to rise each year while state and federal aid decreases as the government continues to push costs onto local public school districts.

Governor Cuomo's Tax Cap Proposal:

Additionally, Governor Cuomo has proposed a 2% property tax increase cap from one levy to the next (not budget to budget) without currently capping costs for required mandated expenses (those that the state forces schools to pay). This proposal has been passed in the Senate and will likely go into effect in 2012-13. With instructional salary and benefits accounting for 70 percent of the average school budget, some analysts project that this will immediately create a major deficit in all New York School Districts resulting in increases in class sizes, staff layoffs, and the reductions in electives and extracurricular activities.

Budget Review:

At the meeting, Trustees discussed the best ways to fiscally and responsibly move forward this budget year in light of these uncertain times. Dr. Webb said, "We have to be very careful with what we cut this year from our budget since we will probably never be able to get it back in the future." The Board reviewed the portions of the budget pertaining to the Board of Education, Central Administration, Central Services, Plant Maintenance, Insurance/BOCES Administration, and Supervision of Instruction.

Trustees Place Items On "Comeback" List

Trustees agreed to place many items on a "comeback" list rather than eliminating them from the budget. These items included costs related to election workers, personnel ads, health, safety contracts (DW) and fuel oil. A total of \$1,000 was eliminated from the initial budget proposal presented by Superintendent Dr. Edward Melnick on January 20, 2011. Please visit <http://www.northshoreschools.org> to watch this initial budget presentation video. The "comeback items" will be discussed at the March 10th meeting when it will be decided whether or not to remove or reduce these amounts.

BOE President Igor Webb added, "The Board is doing everything they can and the realities are very serious." The Board continues to lead other Long Island School Districts to unify efforts to help control school spending. Since a tax cap will likely pass, Trustees are also

advocating for mandate relief that will allow taxpayers to save significantly without destroying the core of public education.

Initial Community Advisory Committee Discussion

To conclude the meeting, Trustees discussed initial measures for a “Community Advisory Committee” where residents can join together to lobby against current laws and escalating NYS mandates facing our schools. The Board welcomes any other suggestions to influence legislation to avert these damaging results to Long Island schools.” BOE Vice President Carolyn Mazzu Genovesi reiterated, “It is important that the Board hears from everyone in the community. We encourage you to get involved.”

BOE March Meetings:

During the month of March, the Board will continue to remain sensitive to the fiscal concerns of our residents as they seek to make further reductions prior to adopting the 2011-2012 budget on Thursday, March 24th. **Trustees strongly urge you to come to the upcoming meetings and voice your feelings and concerns so that they can make an informed decision based on the input of our community members.** Upcoming BOE/Budget meetings will take place in the High School Alumni Room at 8 p.m. (unless noted otherwise) on the following dates: **March 10** (Comeback Items/Budget Refinement), **March 24** (Budget Adoption, HS Library), **April 27** (BOCES Budget Vote/ Meet the Candidates Night), and **May 5** (Town Meeting/Budget Reading).

The budget vote will take place on Tuesday, May 17, 2011 in the HS Gym from 7 am to 10 pm. If you have any questions regarding the budget, please contact Superintendent Dr. Edward Melnick at 516-277-7801 or email him at melnicke@northshoreschools.org. If you would like to have a budget coffee, please email Shelly Newman at newmans@northshoreschools.org. Additionally, for the latest budget information, please visit the district website at www.northshoreschools.org. For further information regarding this meeting, please see the North Shore Board of Education Minutes from February 3, 2011 at www.northshoreschools.org. Complete BOE Minutes are available in the Central Office at 112 Franklin Avenue, Sea Cliff.

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