



North Shore Schools

Discovering Your Dreams

BOE Meeting Summary

January 20, 2011

Initial 2011-12 Budget Presentation/Town Meeting

Discussion/Presentations:

On January 20, 2011, the North Shore Board of Education held a Town meeting where Superintendent Dr. Edward Melnick presented the Initial 2011-12 Budget Proposal. In his overview, Dr. Melnick began his presentation by stating, "\$2 million was eliminated in this proposal after initial internal budget meetings with the administration, principals and department heads." He reiterated, **"This budget proposal maintains the quality and scope of North Shore's array of programs (including academics, class size, and athletics/extracurricular activities) and adds no new programs."**

Initial 2011-12 Budget Presentation:

Dr. Melnick proceeded by discussing how NY State and Federal mandates continue to escalate while aid to public school districts declines. He communicated that the governor may implement, "Mid-year cuts in NY State Aid to school districts which would impact our schools and students."

Contribution to the NY State Retirement System Dramatically Up

This year alone, **North Shore's contribution to the NY State Retirement System is dramatically increasing 28.5% or an additional \$1,029,922 for the 2011-12 school year alone.** Dr. Melnick said, "The Board can not determine the amount of our contributions, New York State requires or mandates that we pay it and have our employees take part in the retirement system." Additionally, there will be an increase in the cost of providing health insurance, up approximately \$400,000 from last year. **Dr. Melnick emphasized that this two items alone reflect a 2% budget-to-budget increase from last year in our bottom line due to increases in both Health Insurance and Pension/Retirement System Contributions alone.**

Considerations Not Included in this Initial Budget Proposal

- **Governor's 2% Property Tax Cap:**
Governor Cuomo proposed a cap on property taxes for all school districts and local governments that would be set at the rate of inflation or 2 percent, whichever is less. While we think this proposal is imminent, it has not been approved at this time. Dr. Melnick said, "We are not opposed to the tax cap as long as the state imposes the same tax cap on themselves for the costs that are passed down to our schools and our residents."
- **Nassau County Property Assessment Challenges and Refunds (the Common Sense Act):** In late October, the Nassau County Legislature voted "yes" to shift the financial burden of paying property assessment errors and refunds from the County to local school districts effective in 2013-14 (an increase of approximately \$1 million)

Over the next few months, Trustees will have the difficult job of looking at each line item in the budget and cutting costs wherever possible. **Dr. Melnick clarified that the goals for planning the budget this year include addressing all these factors while attempting to *maintain* the scope of the programs now in effect while providing the best education at a reasonable cost.** In the area

of technology, a pilot study has been proposed for next year enabling hand-held computers to be given to one grade in the district to provide our students with the same technological advantages provided by a number of our neighboring districts.

Please visit the North Shore Schools homepage at www.northshoreschools.org to see a copy of this presentation, a video of Dr. Melnick presenting the initial budget proposal, and a list of the dates for the upcoming BOE budget meetings.

Trustees and the administration strongly encourage everyone to please get involved early in the budget process. This is your opportunity to have a meaningful role in determining the future of the North Shore Schools. For further information regarding this meeting, please see the North Shore Board of Education Minutes for January 20, 2011 at www.northshoreschools.org or if you have any questions, please contact Dr. Melnick at melnicke@northshoreschools.org. Like in previous years, a “Q&A” will be posted on the district homepage to help answer any questions anonymously posed by any of our residents.

(For further information regarding this meeting, please see the North Shore Board of Education Minutes for January 20, 2011 at www.northshoreschools.org. Complete BOE Minutes are available in the Central Office.)