



Board Briefings

ITEMS FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD'S MARCH 12 MEETING

- **BUDGET WORK SESSION** — Superintendent Mr. Michael Cornell gave a presentation about the 2024-25 budget.
 - Unfortunately, due to the current status of the 2024-2025 budget, 20 of our colleagues will be laid off as of July 1, 2024. Laying off members of our staff is the last thing we want to do. Each person being laid off is a valued colleague and trusted friend. All of them have served this community extremely well.
 - We met with each staff member who is being laid off in advance of Tuesday’s meeting so that each had knowledge of what would be presented in public, and each had the opportunity to leave work for the day after hearing the news. We ensured each of our colleagues that the district stands ready to assist them personally and professionally during what is a difficult time for them and their families.
 - All of our programs at the Middle School and the High School will be maintained for 24-25. By scheduling 7th and 8th grade students by grade level instead of teams, and by scheduling high school classes according to school enrollment and individual student requests, our students will have access to the same art and music programs, college credit classes, core classes, academies, clubs and sports next year as this year. Maintaining our programs will also be made possible because we will welcome five (5) full-time teachers, who are currently doing amazing work outside of the classroom, back to the classroom in 24-25.
 - The district has been labeled “Susceptible to Fiscal Risk” by the NYS Comptroller due to budgeting errors (over-budgeting revenues and under-budgeting expenses) in 21-22 and 22-23. This caused \$4 million the district’s cash reserves to be spent on recurring expenses. This was reported at a board meeting this past fall.
 - The district cut every possible non-staffing expense in both the 23-24 and 24-25 budget, and laying off staff members is truly a last resort.
 - Capital Project funds can’t be used to fund staffing expenses, or anything that wasn’t included in the referendum voted on by residents in fall of 2021.
 - Mrs. Colleen Kaney presented a 10-year history of enrollment at each level, as well as staffing projections for the 24-25 budget.
 - Mrs. Christine Ljungberg provided an overview of the Property Tax Cap, as well as Expenditure and Revenue projections to date for 24-25. She noted that there is still a budget deficit. The budget will be balanced after the final State Aid revenues are given and some estimated expenditures are finalized.
- **BOARD REPORTS** — Student representative Abby Nikiel said Bald for Bucks raised \$21,000+ and HHS is in the Top 10 of schools who raised the most money in the region. She also made a statement on behalf of the student body about staffing for the 24-25 school year.
- **CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE** — The construction team shared we are approved to move forward with Phase 2 as of Tuesday. The team is looking into options to still be aligned with municipal guidelines for bidding. They recommend using Gordian for bidding instead of the traditional bidding process which allows for better control over the project budget and has the potential to reduce change orders.
- **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AND FINANCIAL ITEMS** —All items were approved.
- **APPROVAL OF ACTION ITEMS** —All items were approved including an agreement with the Town of Hamburg to use space in Union Pleasant for their summer camps.
- **PUBLIC EXPRESSION** — 21 students, parents, and community members spoke about the staffing changes and budget for the 24-25 school year.
- **NEXT MEETING** — Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Michael Cornell, Superintendent
March 14, 2024