



Amherst Central School District

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Amherst Central School District 2023-24 Foundation Aid Plan

The 2021-22 enacted state budget included language stating that, for the 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years, each school district receiving a foundation aid increase of more than ten percent or \$10,000,000 must post to the district website prior to July 1 of each school year a plan by school year of how the funds will be used to address student performance and need, including but not limited to:

- (i) increasing graduation rates and eliminating the achievement gap;
- (ii) reducing class sizes;
- (iii) providing supports for students who are not meeting, or at risk of not meeting, state learning standards in core academic subject areas;
- (iv) addressing student social-emotional health; and
- (v) providing adequate resources to English language learners (ELL), students with disabilities; and students experiencing homelessness.

Foundation Aid, first enacted in 2007-08, is the largest unrestricted aid category supporting public school district expenditures in New York State. Amherst CSD's 2021-22 Foundation Aid was \$9.4M, approximately 63% of the full amount owed to our district by the state. In 2022-23, our Foundation Aid increased \$2.8M, to a total of \$12.2M, or 81% of our full amount. For 2023-24, our projected Foundation Aid will increase \$4.4M to a total of \$16.6M, or 100% of our full amount as per New York State's adopted formula.

Amherst CSD's 2021-22 adopted budget incorporated several initiatives to support student learning in all areas, maintain small class sizes to support individualized instruction, provide social emotional and mental health support, and address the unique and diverse needs of our ELL students, students with disabilities, and any students struggling with homelessness. Some examples are provided below:

- Addition of a 1.0 FTE ELL teacher to be shared between the Middle and High Schools
- Addition of a 0.2 FTE teaching assignment in the High School in the area of English/Language Arts
- Addition of a 0.2 FTE teaching assignment in the Middle School in the area of Technology
- Addition of a 1.0 FTE Physical Education/Health teacher to be shared between the Middle and High Schools
- Addition of a 1.0 FTE Physical Education/Health teacher in Smallwood Drive Elementary School
- Transfer of a 1.0 FTE PE/Health teacher in Windermere Boulevard Elementary School

- Addition of 2.0 FTE Occupational Therapists at Smallwood Drive and Windermere Boulevard Elementary Schools
- Increase professional development budget
- Increase special education budget for tuitions and programs needed to help students find success
- Second Instructional Purchase Agreement with BOCES to increase and update technology available to all staff and students.

Furthermore, without an increase in state aid, we were grappling with identifying reductions in an effort to balance our budget. These reductions would disrupt our programs and have the opposite effect on our goals and the foundation aid goals identified above. Some examples of these reductions included:

- Reductions would result in increased class sizes and would affect instructional and individual student support for general education students, special education students, ELL students, and students experiencing homelessness:
 - Reduce elementary library support in Smallwood Drive and Windermere Boulevard Elementary Schools
 - Eliminate afterschool instructional support at Middle School
 - Reduce Academic Intervention Services Teaching Assistant position in the Middle School
 - Reduce Teaching Assistant positions in Smallwood Drive and Windermere Boulevard Elementary Schools
 - Reduce Science and Art teaching positions in the Middle School
 - Reduce all enrichment activities in Smallwood Drive and Windermere Boulevard Elementary Schools
- Reductions affecting the physical, social emotional, and mental health of students:
 - Reduce athletic opportunities for students
 - Reduce intramural opportunities for students

Our 2022-23 budget not only maintained all of these initiatives to support student learning and social-emotional wellbeing, but also continued to enhance those efforts through more additions:

- 1.0 FTE Art teacher - .6 FTE HS / .4 FTE WBS
- 1.0 FTE ICT teacher - SDS or WBS, based on projected student enrollment/programming needs
- 0.2 FTE Science position - current position is vacant MS 0.8 FTE
- Add two HS coach stipends - Girls Flag Football and Strength & Conditioning
- BOCES increases CTE program enrollment
- Increased professional development budget
- Additional increase in special education budget for tuitions and programs needed to help students find success
- Third Instructional Purchase Agreement with BOCES to increase and update technology available to all staff and students.

Finally, our 2023-24 budget projects full foundation aid, which allows us to accomplish several goals to best support our students and families:

1. We are able to maintain the additions and increases we implemented over the past two years of partial foundation aid increases,
2. We will reinstate key positions cut over the years to enhance programs and maintain ideal class sizes, and
3. We propose to add new positions based on the ever changing needs of our students, supporting all aspects of student life.

These staff additions and departmental budget increases include the following:

- Six 0.2 FTE teacher 6th assignments - 1.0 FTE HS and 0.2 FTE MS
- 6.0 FTE building aides - 2.0 FTE HS, 2.0 FTE MS, 1.0 FTE SDS, 1.0 FTE WBS
- 10.0 FTE teachers - 2.0 FTE HS in ELA/ENL and Social Studies, 3.0 FTE MS in ELA AIS, Math AIS, and ICT gr 6, 1.0 FTE SDS Gen Ed, 2.0 FTE WBS in Math AIS and Reading AIS, 2.0 FTE ICT if needed based on enrollment changes
- Two Engage home instruction slots - 1 HS and 1 MS
- Extracurricular budgets - in HS and MS
- Field trip budgets - in all four buildings
- 1.0 FTE Assistant Principal - MS
- Materials and supplies for science - in MS, SDS, and WBS
- Materials and supplies for classrooms - in SDS and WBS
- 2.0 FTE Teaching Assistants - 1.0 FTE MS and 1.0 FTE WBS to provide pool coverage
- Six coaching positions - two Football, two Soccer, Strength & Conditioning, and Unified Basketball
- Athletic budget increases - HS and MS
- 0.5 FTE speech teacher - WBS
- Special education contract services
- Special education private tuition
- 1.0 FTE Director of Curriculum
- Three teacher coordinator/leader stipends
- Curriculum/technology budget increases
- PD budget increase for strategic plan and DEI
- Furniture replacement budget - all four buildings
- 1.0 FTE laborer - HS
- Facilities budget increases
- 1.0 FTE nurse - provide coverage in all buildings
- 1.0 FTE records management clerical
- Staff and student services budget increases
- Set aside increases - if required
- Contingency, if needed
- General increases in salaries and benefits

Amherst CSD has received significant increases in foundation aid over the past two years with another projected increase for the upcoming 2023-24 school year. We are grateful to the Governor for her commitment to fully funding the Foundation Aid formula. We look forward to the continued support from the state to fully fund foundation aid so we can continue to enhance the services provided to our students and families.

If you have any questions, comments, or feedback about the District's plan for Foundation Aid usage, please contact Laura Bosinski, School Business Administrator, via email at lbosinski@amherstschoools.org or by telephone at (716) 362-3040. Additional details about the budget development process can be found in the budget presentations posted on the District's website at <https://www.amherstschoools.org/Page/8936>.