

QUESTIONS ASKED REGARDING THE 2018-2019 BUDGET

Student Programs

1. Do we currently have modified or JV track? Who takes the NYS mandated fitness test?
 - o Eden currently has students in grades 7-12 on the Varsity Track Team. Students in grades 7 and 8 are required to take and pass the NYS mandated fitness test to be selectively classified. Students in grades 7 and 8 who are not selectively classified can run in exhibition, with discretion of their coach, against students of the same ages from other districts.
2. Why are we moving the 6th grade?
 - o In the spring of 2015, teachers from Eden CSD brought a proposal to the Board of Education to form a middle school, grades 6-8. The data was compelling regarding improved social/emotional health and academics. The BOE approved the move. This move then became part of the capital project referendum in December 2015.
3. Under the new .46% tax levy budget to be voted on June 19, what student programs are in danger of being cut or downsized?
 - o All newly proposed after-school activities (programs) that were in the 2% tax levy budget have been taken out, for example: Mock Trial, Intramurals, MS Musical, MS Tech Club, MS Art Club, AFS and any new after-school activities for GLP and EES.
4. In a contingent budget, what student programs are in danger of being cut or downsized?
 - o It is the Board of Education's discretion to decrease non-contingent items in compliance with Education Law 1716.
5. The community is concerned that Unified Bowling and Unified Basketball are in danger of being cut under the contingent budget.
 - o Unified Bowling and Unified Basketball coaching stipends are currently funded by All-Sports Boosters, as are Modified Wrestling and Cheerleading. All-Sports Boosters also funds uniforms and transportation for away non-league games for all teams. The District does not know what All-Sports Boosters would do in a contingency budget.

Students Transportation and Building Security

6. Why put a GPS/Bus Locator on school buses?
 - o We received calls from parents requesting this feature because they have seen it work in other districts. Some of our student driveways are over 300 feet long and parents cannot see their children at the road. GPS/Bus Locator

would allow parents to have an app on their phones and be able to see where the bus is so that their children can get out to the bus just before it comes. The GPS/Bus Locator would also locate a bus in an emergency- for example: when the driver cannot speak due to a medical emergency, or in a situation when an intruder has gotten onto the bus. Our elementary bus runs have young children, and it is possible toward the end of a run to only have students riding that are very young. It also allows mechanics to remotely diagnose a mechanical issue so that we do not have to send out another bus and driver in every situation.

7. What about leasing buses? Wouldn't that be cheaper?
 - In 2015-2016, the district analyzed the cost implications of leasing vs. purchasing buses. A typical lease period is five (5) years and our current bus rotation will take approximately seven to nine (7-9) years to replace all buses, thus we have a savings utilizing the purchase methodology.
8. Why do we need hall monitors at the Middle & High School?
 - Monitors are an extra set of eyes for added safety and security. Monitors duties throughout the day include checking bathrooms, securing exit doors, assisting students in getting to class, delivering items to classrooms, monitoring the P.E. locker rooms, and escorting students to the main office or nurse.
 - Monitors will also be visible when buses arrive in the morning, when school dismisses at the end of the day, and afterschool when students stay for athletics, detention, AEP and activities.
9. Why do we need to put a secretary at the front entrance to the Middle & High School? What will this person be responsible for? Why not relocate a secretary already employed?
 - The new secure entry "front door" to the Middle & High School is across the hallway from the main office; therefore, a main office secretary cannot relocate to this front door position.
 - The Jr./Sr. High School currently has a "greeter" at the Athletic Doors to check in visitors. This position was put into place temporarily after the Parkland shooting. Since the position was not in the budget this year, in order to maintain this position, it has been placed into the budget for next year.
 - This secretary would be responsible for student attendance, checking in/out visitors and for monitoring the security cameras within the building and at the outside doors.
 - Other than the two secretaries in the main office, all other secretarial positions are already split between two departments. Splitting secretaries between two departments was a cost savings to the district prior to 2012.

Facilities

10. Why do we have increased electrical demands on the co-gen? How long have we known this? Was going back on the Grid planned for in the capital project?
 - Co-gen was built with an additional 10% reserve capacity. The district's load exceeds this 10%.
 - The District has been experiencing brown-outs and high repair costs for many years. Modification to co-gen was in Proposition 1 of the Capital Project Referendum. A financial and construction analysis was completed once the referendum was passed. The recommendation was to reduce the load on the current plant. We did this by putting EES, GLP and the Bus Garage on the Grid. We will be eligible for grants and consortiums.
11. What about consolidating with North Collins? How is this different than shared services?
 - In a consolidation, two districts merge and savings come from cost reductions, such as: reduced staff and closed buildings. Both districts are required to put out a referendum to their taxpayers, and it must pass in both districts.
 - In sharing services, no buildings are closed. We currently share services approximating 1% or \$300,000 with multiple districts.
12. In a contingent budget, what would the cost impact be to outside organizations that use the facilities and grounds? Do Town Recreation and Boys & Girls Club currently pay to use the school? How much would the district charge Boosters and the Corn Festival Committee for the use of the fields, lawn and parking lot? I thought the fees for town recreation were because they are using the school.
 - NYS requires that outside organizations pre-pay at full cost for usage of district facilities. The Board of Education annually reviews and adopts a fee schedule for facility usage. We are currently creating a cost sheet for this scenario since we have not charged full price in the past.
 - Town Recreation and Boys & Girls Club do not pay to use the school facilities under our current Facility Use Policy.
13. Why hasn't the district closed GLP?
 - Before any construction, we began with a study by our current engineering and architectural firms. In this study we included trends in enrollment to determine future usage. It was determined by these studies that closing GLP and renovating EES for primary students would be more expensive than renovating the GLP building.

14. Why was the sports complex completed before the secure/safe entrances at all three school buildings?

- The District has five prime contractors by NYS Law. The contractors completing site work (outside) are not the same contractors doing the work inside the buildings, so both areas could be worked on at the same time. The decision was to start with the front entrance of Eden Elementary School because it included the most unknown expenses due to age of the building.
- Reducing the load on Co-Gen by putting EES, GLP and the bus garage on the Grid had to be completed before any new load or construction was completed inside the Jr./Sr. High School.
- We did not want to complete the front entrance and new bus loop at the Jr./Sr. High School and then spend the next summer driving over the new pavement with dump trucks.
- Our phased delivery plan for the entire project includes two summers. Scheduled completion is June 2019. This delivery plan focuses on: sequence of work so as to not damage completed work, not interrupting student instruction, safety, cost efficiencies, availability of contractors and local noise ordinances after 9pm, among other considerations. We worked with a construction management group, Campus Management Group, to create this phased delivery plan.

Finance and Property Tax

15. It was noted that the Unemployment Reserve was overfunded by \$418,000. What is the plan for these funds?

- The plan for the excess funds in the Unemployment Reserve is to reallocate these funds to the Worker's Compensation Reserve, which is currently unfunded.
- Additionally, the budget proposition calls for unfunding \$75,000 from this reserve to support the budget.

16. What are STAR rebates?

- Homeowners who have an adjusted gross income less than \$500,000 per year are eligible for a credit on their school taxes. Eligible homeowners would receive a STAR rebate in an override school budget.

17. What is a property tax eligibility check?

- Homeowners with an adjusted gross income of less than \$500,000 per year are eligible to receive this check from the NYS Department of Taxation if their school district stays within the tax cap calculation. (ie: no override)

18. The budget mailer listed Chief School Administrator costs. What are they and why did they increase \$5,122.00 to \$257,534?
- The Chief School Administrator lines include costs for the District Office and staff: Superintendent's salary, secretarial salaries, conference and travel, supplies, periodicals, and professional memberships.
 - The increase of \$5,122.00 is due to contractual salaries and increased cost of professional memberships.
19. Why does the district put money in a reserve?
- The purpose of a District Reserve Plan is to save money in designated reserves to offset any future shortfalls in state aid, to counteract other unplanned fiscal challenges, and preserve the long-term financial strength of the District's educational programs. Additionally, some of the money within the reserves are set aside for future capital projects and bus purchases.
20. Is there a cost associated with going out for another vote?
- Yes, typically the cost is associated with rental on voting machines (scanners), ballots, printing and mailing the required budget notice, attorney fees, legal notices and election inspectors.
 - We were notified by Erie County Board of Elections that we will not need to pay for the scanners or ballots. We will be using the newest technology without paper ballots. Scanners will have a touch screen behind a curtain.
21. How much has the budget increased over the years?
- The total budget has increased 1.46% on average per year since the 2009-2010 school year.
22. In the flyer about the original budget it stated that \$11,000 would be cut from civic activities. What are these activities?
- Overtime for building and grounds crews, technology crews and food service personnel when outside organizations that are currently exempt from payment utilize our facilities.
23. With declining enrollment, shouldn't the same amount of money go further?
- Although enrollment has declined overall, costs have continued to increase. For example, the current year Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase for the budget was 2.13%.
 - While enrollment in the elementary grades was declining in the past five years, it also started to rise enough at the primary level that we added a fifth teacher back into Kindergarten, then 1st grade and now 2nd grade is anticipated for the 2018-2019SY. Class cohorts range between 85 and 95 in a cohort at the elementary level.
 - In grades 6-12, cohorts range from 100-118. The staff at this level has been right-sized in the past several years to account for that decline.