

Budget Statement

The West Morris Regional High School District has crafted a budget that works to preserve the educational core of our programs, while remaining mindful of our economic realities. Recent cuts in state aid have made this an even more challenging process, and yet the budget that we present for the 2010-2011 school year is both respectful of our taxpayers and protective of our students.

The proposed cuts represent an almost 3 - million dollar reduction to our operating budget and incorporates substantial losses in state aid, coupled with historic increases in health benefit premiums.

Given these stark realities, we began planning for a series of cuts more than three months ago. When building our budgets we sought input from faculty, administrators, and board of education members. In deciding upon reductions, we were careful to spread the cuts across every possible area of the school budget, and not ask any one group or program to shoulder the burden.

As a result, the proposed cuts include:

- Reductions in capital projects and in building operating budgets.
- The elimination of courtesy busing and the remaining late bus run.
- Sixteen clubs will be eliminated.
- Athletic budgets have been reduced, including a significant number of coaching positions.
- After-school coverage in the library and weight room will be curtailed.
- Enrichment music lessons offered by adjunct instructors will be eliminated.
- Special Education offerings will be consolidated, and other special services for students will be limited.
- Some of our retiring teachers will not be replaced, and we will commit ourselves to hiring replacements with fewer years experience, thus reducing costs.
- We have suspended the search for the West Morris Central principal and will rely instead on existing administration to fill that gap.

In all, 32 positions among support staff, faculty, and administration, including approximately 17 teaching positions will be eliminated next year because of these cuts. This represents an unprecedented reduction in staff, and an even greater pressure on the district to do more with less—yet this is a challenge that we can meet. We have proposed a budget that is sensitive to our students' greatest needs and our taxpayers' abilities to fund their schools. It is a thoughtful, educationally defensible, and realistic budget that we hope that you can support.

3/25/10 p.m.