



2010-2011 PROPOSED BUDGET REDUCTIONS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

June 1, 2010

- 1. *What is the School Committee's and the Leadership Team's commitment to the budget reduction process?***
 - The School Committee, Superintendent Rosemarie Kraeger, and the Leadership Team are committed to maintaining excellence in our schools and accountability to our community. Our goal for the 2010-2011 fiscal year is to maintain level service for our students. As a result of the decreased revenue projections from State and local funds, we must all consider ways to reduce expenses, restructure, reorganize, and generate new revenue sources to maximize the educational programming for the entire Middletown school community.

- 2. *Why is the Middletown Public School budget being reduced?***
 - Due to the poor economic conditions that are plaguing the entire country, the Governor's Recommended Fiscal Year 2011 Budget proposes significant reductions to Local Aid to Cities and Towns. The current economic climate has also negatively impacted local non-tax revenue such as permit fees, hotel receipts, and investment income. The Town Council's final budget figures could contain a minimal tax increase and a loss of educational funding.

- 3. *What impact will the State budget reductions have on the Middletown Public Schools?***
 - The Governor's Recommended Fiscal Year 2011 Budget reduces educational aid and proposes a variety of changes to municipal pension programs. The Statewide budget crisis has provided an impetus for us to review our educational programs, services, and organizational structure for efficacy and cost effectiveness.

4. What impact will the Town’s budget reductions have on the Middletown Public Schools?

- The State and local revenue shortfalls could result in a loss of educational aid from the Town’s Tax Appropriation. With the Town Council’s commitment to keep tax increases to a minimum, we could face an additional \$790,000 reduction to our 2010-2011 Proposed Level Service Budget.

5. How much will need to be cut from the Middletown Public School budget?

- The 2010-2011 Proposed Level Service Budget assumes a 3% projected reduction in State Unrestricted Educational Aid. The Governor’s Recommended Fiscal Year 2011 Budget proposes an additional .8% reduction in State Restricted Educational Aid resulting in a \$89,719 cut to the proposed budget. The Town’s 2011 Proposed Budget could result in a \$790,000 reduction in local education aid.

6. Has the Middletown Public Schools faced budget reductions before?

- Yes. We have faced budget reductions in prior fiscal years. In 2008-2009, due to increased expenses, level funded State Educational Aid, and decreases in Federal Revenue, the following budget reductions were made:

2008-2009 Budget Reductions
Reduction of 1.3 Elementary School Teachers
Reduction of 3 Reading Teachers
Reduction of .4 English as a Second Language Teacher
Reduction of 1 Local Special Education Teacher
Reduction of 2.2 High School Teachers
Reduction of 3.4 Middle School Teachers
Reduction of 1 Teacher Assistant
Reduction of 1.5 Three Hour Teacher Assistants
Reduction of 1 Technology Systems Administrator

In 2009-2010, the challenge of reducing the budget continued as we faced a difficult year with a 12% increase in health insurance premiums, a 10.3% reduction in State Educational Aid, and a 2.4% reduction in other revenue sources. In an effort to balance the budget and maintain quality education, the following reductions were made:

2009-2010 Budget Reductions
0% Salary Increase for Teachers, Administrators, Custodians, Teachers Assistants
1% Salary Increase for Clerical Staff
Reduction of Professional Development Activities
Elimination of a Late Bus
Closure of John F. Kennedy School
Reduction of 8.4 Teachers
Reduction of 1 Principal
Reduction of 1 Central Administrator
Reduction of 1 Custodian
Reduction of 1.3 Teacher Assistants
Savings of Building Overhead due to closure of JF Kennedy School

7. *Were there budget reductions prior to the submission of the 2010-2011 Budget?*

- Yes. The 2010-2011 Level Service Budget was developed with a 3% projected reduction in State Educational Aid. In order to present a balanced budget, the following reductions were made prior to the submission of the 2010-2011 Level Service Budget.

2010-2011 Budget Reductions to Reach Level Service
3% Increase in Employee Portion Co-Payment for Health Insurance Premium
2% Reduction in Employee Health Insurance Benefits
Reduced Employee Health Insurance Buyback Program
Froze Teacher and Administrative Longevity Stipends at 2009-2010 Rate
Froze Teacher Stipends and After School Curriculum at 2009-2010 Rate
Froze Athletic Coaching Salaries at 2009-2010 Rate

8. *Is the Middletown Public Schools receiving Federal Stimulus or Race to the Top funds that can supplement the budget?*

- No. The Middletown Public Schools has received Federal Stimulus Funds to support children with disabilities (IDEA Part B), early childhood (IDEA Preschool), improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged (Title I Part A), and for recovery and reinvestment in education (ARRA-SFSF). All Federal funds must supplement, not supplant, funds from any other federal, local, or state funding.

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) has submitted the application for the second round of Race to the Top funding. Race to the Top funds are stimulus funds dedicated to specific educational purposes as defined within the State's Race to the top strategic plan.

9. What are the proposed cuts being considered at this time?

- Our top priorities are our students and continuing to follow our strategic plan for improved educational achievement. We are committed to minimizing the budget reduction impact on direct educational services as much as possible. However, depending on future revenue reductions, there may be eliminations to extracurricular activities, reductions in support services, and reductions in the amount of classroom support and materials available to teachers and students.

We have scrutinized the 2010-2011 Level Service Budget line by line to comply with additional projected reduction in State Educational Aid and the Town Council’s request to reduce our budget by \$790,000. Below are the proposed budget reductions.

2010-2011 Budget Reduction Plan
Reduction of Intramurals, Afterschool Clubs, Extracurricular Activities
Reduction of Transportation of Fieldtrips
Reduction of Young Parents Program
Reduction of .5 Nurse Teacher
Reduction of Budgeted Textbooks
Reduction of Athletic Programs (Retaining One Sport per Season for Males, One Sport per Season for Females)
40% Reduction in Budgeted Unemployment Compensation
20% Reduction in All Supply Lines
20% Reduction in School wide Capital Outlay Equipment
20% Reduction in Custodial and Non Certified Staff Overtime
20% Reduction in Health Service Line Items
10% Reduction In Substitute Line Items
10% Reduction in Instructional Line Items
10% Reduction in Maintenance for School Buildings
10% Reduction in Central Services Line Items
5% Reduction in Budgeted Utility Line Items

10. How will these reductions affect services provided to students and families?

- Many of our services provide vital learning and social opportunities for our students. Any reduction in athletics, intramurals, and extracurricular activities directly impacts students and their families. The range of extracurricular activities reaches children with a broad diversity of interests and provides opportunities for student recognition and potential college scholarships.

11. Will any staff positions be reduced?

- No. Reducing staff is not an option. During the 2009-2010 school year, Forty four (44) classes were over the desirable class size. The desired class size for Kindergarten through Grade 2 is 20 students per class, for Grades 3 through 12 it is 25 students per class. Our enrollment has grown steady over the past three years increasing 20-30 students each year.

12. What are the next steps for staff, parent and community input in the budget reduction process?

- Please attend our School Committee Meetings, Parent Budget Meetings, and the Town Council's Public Hearings on June 9th and June 14th. If you have any additional questions on the budget reductions or any ideas that you would like to share, please feel free to contact the Superintendent, School Committee, or Town Council.

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