

## **CENTER GROVE BUDGET PLAN**

As we deal with the reality of our current economic situation in both our community and school system, we must take some temporary steps to stabilize our Center Grove School Corporation. On November 2, 2010, our community voted on a referendum proposal presented by the School Corporation and Board. The voters rejected the proposal and we must now deal with that reality. We have heard proposals from the school leadership of letting teachers, teaching assistants; administrative staff along with support personnel in our school system go. While this is understandable within the budget constraints, I propose some alternatives for everyone to consider.

### **A Center Grove School Corporation Temporary Pay Decrease For All Employees.**

- 1) This includes everyone from the Superintendent, teachers to the facilities employees. The fact is that if we can save fellow employees' jobs by having everyone take a same percentage pay decrease then this is a reasonable solution. The community as a whole has had to endure pay decreases during this economy and so will the school system employees. This will help the employees of our school system focus on our children's education and not their job uncertainty. This pay decrease will stay in affect until the tax revenues increase with the economy or the state changes funding formulations. If during this time, we see a positive increase in funding then the temporary decrease will be phased out as funding allows.
- 2) A 4% pay decrease will generate approximately \$1.2 million in savings a year. The 4% will be the percentage for the first year and not increased even if funding levels drop.

### **A Pay To Play Format For Extracurricular Activities**

- 1) A \$100 fee at the high school and \$50 fee at the middle school level. This format will save the school system roughly \$125,000 a year.
- 2) We propose that the school system starts an "Extracurricular Advertising Program". The revenue generated will help reduce or even eliminate the above fees. I researched several programs around the country and schools systems our size have generated revenues of \$25,000 to \$200,000 a year.
- 3) Any revenue generated must first be used to pay fees for any free and reduced lunch students who participate in extracurricular activities, since these students represent a disadvantaged socio economic part of our society. The balance of funds then will be used by the remaining number of students participating in all extracurricular activities to reduce or eliminate the fees.

### **Utilizing \$1.3 Million in Federal Stimulus Funds**

- 1) This money must be spent by September 2012 and should be spread out over the next 2 years to fill in any financial shortfalls that the above proposed pay decrease does not solve. We understand that this is a one-time source of funding but believe it should be utilized in a funding safety net manner until 2012. The fact is we may have a better financial position by the time September 2012 rolls around.

### **Continue Proposed Cost Efficiency Cuts**

- 1) The Center Grove School Board and Administration have proposed daily operating cost cutting programs that should continue. Some examples are the proposed increasing of parking fees.
- 2) These cuts however should not directly affect the classroom experience of our students.

### **Transfer of Funds From The Capital Projects Fund to the General Fund**

- 1) We are allowed by a new state law to do a one time inter transfer of funds. This will allow us to transfer money to our General Fund that pays wages for teachers and staff. I understand that we will have a better idea of how much we can transfer within the 10% limit by the end of the year. However, it is safe to say that this amount will be better served for educating our students versus building projects.

I hope that this proposal shows our community that there is another way to solve our schools economic crisis without resorting to firings or force reductions. I have taken a lot of time to have figures confirmed by the school system and utilized public information by the school board itself. The numbers work, so feel some comfort in that. I call on teachers and its union to look at the reality of the economic situation our country is in. In order to save fellow teachers and school employees who help in your daily job you will need to compromise on your next contract. Some will say this proposal is not going far enough with cuts while others say too far. I think that is a sign in the end of a fair proposal. All parties will have to share in the pain for the common good of our students and school system.

Sincerely,

Rich Mickel