

West Bend Joint School District #1

Education Service Center
735 S. Main Street, West Bend, WI 53095
www.west-bend.k12.wi.us

February 26, 2010

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(262) 335-5425

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Services
(262) 335-5630

Transportation
(262) 335-5438

Facilities and
Operations
(262) 335-6188

Public Information
(262) 335-5459

Dear West Bend School District Staff Member:

We want to take this opportunity to directly communicate with you to explain the impact of the upcoming budget reductions and negotiations. As you know, reductions in state aid, in conjunction with revenue controls, have resulted in the West Bend School District being forced to cut its budget by \$2,000,000 for next school year. These reductions are necessary even though we unanimously voted to levy to the maximum amount allowed by state statute this past fall.

We are steadfast in our commitment to excellence. Yet, we find ourselves challenged to maintain programming and staffing in the education system in which you play a critical role. The economic forces and state funding formula that are beyond the Board's control will necessitate layoffs and program reductions in the upcoming years. Unfortunately, these uncontrollable forces, as well as the reductions of the past decade, put us at a critical juncture. The budget and financial situation we face will force us to reduce staff by nearly 27 full-time teachers for next year.

The current collective bargaining process is going to directly impact the amount that has to be reduced for next year's budget. Between 83% and 84% of our overall budget is staffing. The current proposal from the Association would add additional costs to the budget beyond what has been projected. These additional costs would force us to further cut spending for next year. To capture those costs we must reduce additional FTE's for next school year. This could be up to five more FTE's for a total reduction of nearly 32 FTE's for the 2010-2011 school year.

The Association proposal is also asking for an additional \$600,000-\$700,000 which would reduce eight to ten FTE's for the 2011-2012 contract year. Again, this means that we would have to reduce spending by an additional \$600,000-\$700,000 in 2011-2012. That does not include the expected reductions resulting from the economic climate and lack of funding available for the WBSD.

The District and the West Bend Education Association teams will be meeting with Dan Nielsen, Mediator from the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission, on March 17, 2010 in an attempt to reach a voluntary settlement. We have had honest, open and difficult discussions about how to bargain a wage and benefit package that:

1. *Minimizes its negative impact on the budget in order to save jobs and programs*
2. *Provides a competitive salary schedule to attract and retain top-quality staff*
3. *Revises health insurance and post-retirement plan benefits to ensure the long-term financial viability of the District*
4. *Produces an overall contract that does not exacerbate the impact to the taxpayer who is already suffering from the dismal economy*

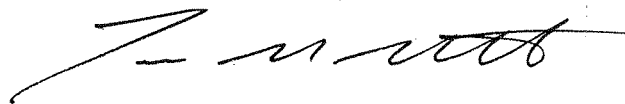
We are committed to reaching a voluntary settlement and will work tirelessly to do so. However, the fiscal challenges facing our District are very real and will likely compound in the future. The state is facing an increased deficit and the West Bend area is one of the leaders in unemployment in the state. As the parents of our students and the citizens of West Bend face greater financial difficulty we will once again have the dilemma of balancing the competing interests of many groups as well as the will of the community.

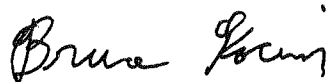
As we move forward with our commitment to prepare all students for college readiness and career success, we feel it is important that all parties understand the difficult situations facing the West Bend School District and our commitment to moving forward. On the district website there is a teacher negotiations frequently asked questions (FAQ) document posted for your information.

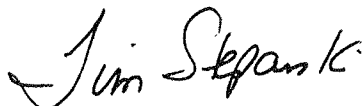
Finally, we want to thank you for all that you do. Each of us have children in the schools and we have the utmost respect and admiration for the work you do educating and caring for our children and all students. We see the hard work that you do each day and we are truly grateful for your commitment to learning and education.

If you have any questions, additional ideas, or feedback regarding the budget process, please feel free to contact any member of the District's leadership team.

Sincerely yours,

 Kathy Van Eerden

 Bruce Koenig

 Tim Stepanski

 Lynn Corazzi




Joe Carlson, President
Kathy Van Eerden, Vice President
Kris Beaver, Clerk
Bruce Koenig, Treasurer

Todd Miller, Board Member
Tim Stepanski, Board Member
Lynn Corazzi, Board Member