

**WHS Site Council
Combined Meeting with WMS Site Council
Wednesday, January 6, 2009
6:0 pm at Watertown Middle School**

Topics Discussed

1) Budget Update for FY '11

- new approach to presenting budget to the school comm.; more context in narrative form, really for public consumption so that impact of cuts are very explicit.
- 6-12 coordinators involved in combined WMS WHS budget parts, even though there are separate budgets.
- coordinators will draft programmatic proposals
- e.g., 4-year math requirement proposal in HS -- about 90% already do 4 years, but to make a requirement that needs 6-12 structural changes that costs

Public will have access to document when decisions are being made.

- options: level services, level budget, reduced budget (best to worst)

Difficulties in Budget Process for this year:

- (a) -- contract year with teachers, so unknown piece in budget (75-80% budget is salaries) (but also need to count on step increases)
 - grants (e.g., Title I) unpredictable
 - transportation, tuition for special ed.
 - already lean ... so not much left to cut
 - enrollment is increasing (from 580 at WMS to 735 at WHS) (i.e., 195 per class for years; MS 600 predicted; less students leaving district)
- (b) Increased enrollment--- MS 600 --> 25 per class average, which is higher than ever ... big difference from 24 ... 2 years ago max was 25 now max is 28.

Two expensive programs:

English Language Learners (some no elementary schooling),
High needs special needs students (e.g. autism); and mental health (anxiety, emotional)
--- one of 36 schools with gains in ELL --> new Title I funds available; but in AYP jail!!
--- in house costs are still less than sending special needs out of district-- but need to provide the services which will require increased staffing

- best case -- any new money has to be a cut somewhere else
- expect state to move sooner than last year... including "circuit breaker" funds
- percentage of out of district services ... e.g., Perkins -- used to be above 70% but this year was 43%.
- Watertown sends disproportional numbers out of district because of small size
- 6-12 coordinators left teaching without replacement with other teachers

Important for Parents to Go to Budget Meetings

Preliminary meetings -- public questions are taken

- 1/25 secondary budget 7:00 central office or lecture hall ...
- 2/8 programming, technology
- 3/1 school comm. meeting with public input

2) Middle to High School Transitions

- higher work load -
- physics is a special case
- socially transition is ok

- math -- need to bring 8th grade richer....
- equations aren't introduced until 7th
- Grading – need uniformity of approach

Next meeting

To be determined