



Mars Area School District

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June 21, 2018

Dear Mars Area Community,

On June 20, Mars Area School Board adopted the 2018-2019 Mars Area School District General Fund Budget of \$49,879,749. The budget includes a 2.4-percent increase in the current tax rate from 99 to 101.376 mills, bringing in an additional \$610,000 in revenue.

With the approval of the budget, the Board is pleased to announce that no changes will be made to the District's current music curriculum. The Board was able to find funding to maintain the music program through savings in negotiated contracted services. Funding to maintain the current music program will not affect other programs in the budget.

The adopted budget includes the expansion of the District's Guidance Department, adding a counselor who will provide services for students in Grades K-12. The budget also provides for a full-time Literacy Intervention Specialist (K-6); the introduction of a new elementary Life Skills program; and the implementation of a multi-tiered system of support.

In addition, the budget allocates funding to introduce the "Rachel's Challenge" Positive School Culture/Anti-Bullying Program at all grade levels as well as to initiate a comprehensive construction and renovation project at Mars Area Middle School.

As per the budget, the District will maintain appropriate class sizes through the reallocation of teachers/staff members to needed areas at the elementary level. The District will also remove the Ninth Grade Football Team from the District's athletic schedule. (Ninth-graders will be eligible to play on the JV Football Team.)

The 2018-2019 Mars Area School District General Fund Budget is 4.3 percent (\$2.1 million) higher than the 2017-2018 budget of \$47.8 million. District revenue from local, state and federal sources is anticipated to net a \$2.1 million increase and will be used to offset expense increases. Incoming revenues include an additional \$1.9 million from local sources and an increase of \$193,819 in state support.

Overall, the 2018-2019 General Fund Budget meets the demands of the growing Mars Area School District, including increases in fixed costs, an expanding curriculum, and needed improvements to the District's special education program and positive school climate initiatives.

The adopted 2018-2019 General Fund Budget will be made available for public review at www.marsk12.org as well as at the District's Administration Office and school buildings.

Questions or comments regarding the budget may be submitted to Mars Area School Board via e-mail at masdboard@marsk12.org or at any public Board meetings.

Sincerely,

Dr. Wesley Shipley,
Superintendent