

## **Massena Central School Board of Education Update February 8, 2018**

The Board of Education Meeting scheduled for Monday, February 11, 2019 will begin at 6:30 pm in Room 314 of Massena High School. It is anticipated that the Board will go into executive session at 6:30 pm to discuss such topics as personnel on the agenda prior to the regular meeting.

There will be a Finance Committee meeting at 5:30 pm in HS Student Affairs to discuss the 2019-20 budget preparations.

### **Public Forum on the 2019-20 School Budget**

There will be the first of three public forums on the draft 2019-20 school budget at the beginning of the Board meeting on Monday. The budget figures remain preliminary as administration and the Finance Committee continue to gather information in preparation of a final budget in April. Our current projections are based on the Governor's proposal released on January 15<sup>th</sup>. A PowerPoint presentation is attached to the BOE agenda for your review.

### **Capital Project Update**

Our initial Focus Group meetings were held on Friday to obtain input on the capital project from various stakeholders in the District. The Thursday session was postponed until Friday, February 15<sup>th</sup> due to inclement weather. The groups consisted of administrators, teachers, food service, maintenance, nurses, and parents. Ed Bernhauer from the IBI Group led the discussion at each location which on Friday included Jefferson, Madison, and Junior High. Minutes of these meetings will be distributed to the Board upon completion. The schedule of our meetings are attached to the BOE agenda.

The selection process for the construction manager continues. A pre-bid meeting and building tour will be held on Tuesday. Several firms have indicated they will be bidding on the project and it is likely they will attend this meeting to learn more about the potential scope and timeline. Proposals are due in the District by 2/21 at 12:00 pm and interviews are scheduled for 3/7.

### **On-Line Summer School**

One of our District goals this year is to "Assess current summer school program and explore use of online option". Currently, our Grade 7-12 students attend summer school at a program directed by the St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES at Massena High school. This traditional model of teacher centered instruction has been in place for many years and was a District led program until 2010 when it was transferred to the BOCES. The data indicates, as seen in the report attached to the Board agenda, that many of our students are not successful in finishing the summer term or passing the Regents exams. That is why a different model, which involves a more individualized structure centered around an on-line program is being considered. At the BOE meeting on Monday, Director of Curriculum Stephanie Allen and JH Principal Alan Oliver

will present a report about the on-line summer school program. The presentation and report are attached to the Board agenda for your review.

### **School Resource Officer Update**

One of our District goals this year is to “Explore the creation of a school resource officer position”. To further this initiative, a subcommittee was formed from the District Safety Committee which includes administration, Massena PD, MFT representative, a student, and member of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council. A presentation was provided to the Board in December and there has been many follow up conversations and correspondence.

The next step in the process is to hold a **public forum** as an opportunity to obtain further community input. This forum will be held on February 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm in Room 314 of the High School. Representatives of the District and Village of Massena will provide a presentation and panel discussion. The public is welcomed and encouraged to attend.

### **School Trips**

The French Club trip to Montreal is on the agenda for BOE review and approval. The group will be traveling to Montreal on April 27<sup>th</sup> to tour the old part of the city and visit the Science Center, among other activities. The trip request is attached to the BOE agenda.

Regulation 8460R.1 Out of Country Trips requires Board approval for participation in the French Club trip. We will discuss further at the Board meeting.

### **Other News**

#### **Albany Update**

The following information from NYSCOSS Deputy Director Bob Lowry describes some of the latest news impacting public education in New York State.

#### **Governor and Comptroller Urge Caution on Revenue**

On Monday, Governor Andrew Cuomo, State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, and the State Budget Director, Robert Mujica, held a surprise press conference. During this event, the Governor indicated that the State has a [revenue shortfall of \\$2.3 billion](#).

The Governor placed a large part of the blame for this shortfall on the shoulders of the federal government and the state and local tax exemption cap of \$10,000 — a Washington action we vigorously advocated against. Wall Street's bleak December results were also cited.

Putting aside whether the shortfall estimate is accurate, what its cause may be, or whether some of the revenue might materialize later, the Governor clearly wants to tamp down the spending impulses of the new political leaders in Albany.

The Governor also foreshadowed cuts to his Executive Budget when he releases 30-day amendments to balance the budget. Any amendments must come by February 14. Any way you slice it, this announcement is bad news for schools.

### **Council's Finance Survey**

Earlier this week, we released our 8<sup>th</sup> annual finance survey in advance of the joint education budget hearing.

Here are links to the [survey report](#) and [news release](#).

Three key themes from the survey's findings:

- ◆ Student well-being is a widespread concern. For example, 56 percent of superintendents identified improving student mental health services as a top funding priority, should their district receive more revenue than what it would need to maintain current services and satisfy mandates, up from 35 percent just two years ago.
- ◆ Districts have been ramping up efforts to improve safety and security in schools. Fifty-nine percent of superintendents said they anticipated their school district budget for 2018-19 would improve school security, the first time in the survey's eight years that a majority of superintendents anticipated improvement in any area.
- ◆ Improvements in overall school district financial condition peaked in 2016. This year, 65 percent of superintendents said there has been no change in their districts' financial condition, 17 percent reported improvement (down from 24 percent a year ago) and 18 percent reported worse financial condition (up from 13 percent in 2017 and the first time in eight years that the share of superintendents reported worsening).

### **Legislative Budget Hearing**

On Wednesday, the Assembly and Senate fiscal committees conducted their annual hearing on the Governor's proposed budget for elementary and secondary education.

Bob testified, [here is the submitted testimony](#).

The hearing lasted until nearly 8 p.m., about two hours longer than recent predecessors. One reason for the greater length was more legislator engagement, especially from Senators from the new Democratic majority. More legislators participated, they stayed longer, they asked more questions, and the questions were good.

Notably, [many of the Senators](#) forthrightly referred to the state "owing" school districts several billion dollars in Foundation Aid as a result of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity. [The Governor](#) has vigorously disputed these arguments, saying, "These are ghosts of the past and distractions from the present."

There was little mention of the \$2.3 billion fall-off in income tax receipts announced by the Governor and Comptroller on Monday.

### **NYSSBA Testifies at Joint Budget Hearing on Education**

The following is information from NYSSBA Director of Government Relations Julie Marlette.

Today, NYSSBA Governmental Relations submitted testimony on the Executive budget proposal during the joint budget hearing on education. This testimony included both a response to the Executive proposal and advanced several NYSSBA proposals that were not addressed in his budget.

NYSSBA's testimony can be accessed below:

- [\*\*2019-20 State Budget Testimony\*\*](#)

Legislation Introduced to Allow School Districts to Decline Designation of District Buildings as Polling Places

NYSSBA supported legislation that was introduced earlier today by Assemblywoman Sandy Galef (D-Westchester) that would allow school districts to decline the request of boards of elections to use their buildings as polling places. In addition, the legislation would allow all school boards to hold board budget votes and board elections in non-district buildings. NYSSBA has had increasing concerns in recent years about voting taking place in school buildings while students are present. Those concerns have increased since the adoption of early voting and the merging of the primary day earlier this year. These changes will increase the number of voting days and the possible number of days a school building can be used, while also placing the June primary in the midst of Regents week. NYSSBA will be working closely with the sponsor to advance this legislation. Bill Language and Sponsor's Memo can be accessed below:

- [\*\*A.4743 \(Galef\) - Bill Language and Sponsor Memo\*\*](#)

### **Massena CSD In The News**

#### **Monday, February 4, 2019**

*Massena Central High School Class of 1957 creates endowment to assist financially strapped students* – Bob Beckstead, Watertown Daily Times

The efforts of the Massena Central High School Class of 1957 to fund SUNY Canton education for current Massena students are reported.

Link:

<https://www.watertowndailytimes.com/news05/massena-central-high-school-class-of-1957-creates-endowment-to-assist-financially-strapped-students-20190204>

## **District Upcoming Events**

2/11—Finance Committee Meeting—5:30 pm—Student Affairs; BOE Meeting—6:30 pm HS  
Room 314

2/18-22—Mid-Winter Break; No School