Southeast Delco School District

Board & Community Update

2018 / 2019 General Fund Budget

The administration is currently beginning preparation of the 2018 / 2019 proposed general fund budget. The Act 1 Index, as set by the Department of Education, determines the maximum tax increase that can be levied by the school district. Southeast Delco’s Act 1 Index for the 2017 / 2018 budget year is 3.6%. Administration is recommending to the board to adopt the resolution to not exceed the index. Adopting the resolution to not exceed the index does not mean that the district will increase taxes by 3.6%. By adopting the resolution, the district is setting the limit of a tax increase at 3.6%.

The resolution to not exceed the index would need to be approved at the December 21, 2017 meeting, in order to meet the state deadline. As in previous years, committee of the whole meetings during the months of January through April will focus on budget preparation.

2018 / 2019 Budget Timeframe

- December 21, 2017: Adopt Resolution to Not Exceed Index
- January 18, 2018: Committee of the Whole – Budget Work Session
- February 15, 2018: Committee of the Whole – Budget Work Session
- March 15, 2018: Committee of the Whole – Budget Work Session
- April 19, 2018: Committee of the Whole – Budget Work Session
- April 26, 2018: Board Meeting – Adopt Proposed Final Budget
- May 17, 2018: Committee of the Whole – Budget Work Session
- May 24, 2018: Board Meeting – Adopt Final Budget

2018 / 2019 PSERS Rate

The PA Public School Employees’ Retirement System (PSERS) Board of Trustees met on December 8, 2017 and certified an annual employer contribution rate of 33.437 % for fiscal year 2018 / 2019, which begins on July 1, 2018. This is an increase from the 2017 / 2018 rate of 32.57%.

Building Emergency Response Teams

Each month, all Southeast Delco School District schools meet in what is labeled a B.E.R.T. meeting. B.E.R.T., which stands for Building Emergency Response Team, is responsible for overseeing that the school is promoting and practicing habits that ensure the safety and security of all students, staff and visitors. B.E.R.T. meetings are attended by a variety of school and district personnel.
Personnel may include teachers, paraprofessionals, building administration, the coordinator of public safety, and/or the security personnel assigned to the school. The meetings are designed to discuss solutions to problems that may be potentially dangerous, including where to install security cameras, sign in and sign out procedures, examining interior and exterior doors, scheduling fire and other emergency drills, as well as updating the building’s Emergency Response Plan. We appreciate the community’s understanding while we continue to work to keep everyone safe.

**Special Education Overview**

The mission of the special education department at the Southeast Delco School District is to provide students with a free appropriate public education (FAPE). The district offers many different types and levels of support for students, including learning, autistic, emotional, life skills, speech and language, gifted, blind / visually impaired, deaf / hearing impaired, as well as support for students with multiple disabilities.

Each student requiring specially designed instruction receives an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that identifies the supports the students will require to be successful. At times, students require services and levels of support that are unable to be addressed in their neighborhood school. The district works in collaboration with approved private schools, as well as the Delaware County Intermediate Unit, to meet these student’s needs.

The Delaware County Intermediate Unit provides a variety of services to Southeast Delco students. They work in collaboration with district personnel to provide students with necessary support services within district schools. When necessary, they also provide services in out-of-district placements. The cost for a student requiring educational services by the DCIU or an approved private school varies based on student needs and services; however, this cost continually increases. The cost may range from approximately forty-five thousand dollars per school year to upwards of ninety thousand dollars.

Access to some of the approved private schools and DCIU programs require a lengthy bus ride, as these programs are specialized and are located not in the community. To help address this issue, Southeast Delco School District contracted with Camelot. Delco Academy (Camelot) provides students with an increased level of support within the community. Students have successfully transitioned to Delco Academy (Camelot) this school year.

The special education department has several staffing needs at this time, including a speech / language pathologist, a learning support teacher and a life skills support teacher. These staffing needs continue to be addressed throughout the school year.

**District Students Enrolled in Charter Schools**

The district continues to monitor charter and cyber charter school enrollments as they are a large expenditure of district funds. The latest public release of academic achievement data again shows that Southeast Delco schools outperform nearly every charter school that district residents may attend. The charter school with the highest enrollment of district children, Chester Community Charter, recently scored nearly 11 points lower than any other district school and were 30 points lower than the district’s
highest achieving school. They were also noted recently in the print media for having more discipline incidents than the entire Southeast Delco School District. We continue to believe that we offer a higher quality of programming than charter schools and will continue to work to keep local funding within our community.

**Office of Curriculum and Instruction**

Alex Fizz, an associate of Thom Stecher, provided professional development to a group of 16 teachers from across the school district on December 6th. Mr. Fizz resumed the initiative that started at the November 7th teacher in-service day that focused on building community within our schools and classrooms, with emphasis on social emotional learning. The expectation is for these 16 teachers to continue this endeavor by modeling and demonstrating the team building activities and skills they learned in their own buildings.

The 16 teachers will participate in another similar half-day professional development session on February 7th to further develop their understanding and skills. An all-day professional development plan along the same lines is in place for February 16th for all Southeast Delco staff members. Thom Stecher will open the day at Academy Park High School by addressing all staff and there will be building-specific sessions for the rest of the day.

In addition to the session on social emotional learning there were two professional development initiatives that were set up for targeted groups of teachers: Google Classroom and Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT). These two sessions were led by presenters from the DCIU and those who attended the Google Classroom training are expected to do turn-around training in their buildings. Google Classroom is a tool that is gaining momentum within the world of education, making classrooms interactive and collaborative. We are currently witnessing a growth in the use of Google Classroom in our school district.

The district will have an early dismissal day for students on March 7th and during the remainder of the day teachers and administrators will focus on planning for the PSSAs. A team of approximately 30 elementary grade level teachers will participate in LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) training on January 4th and 5th offered by Jaimie Pittcavage from the DCIU. LETRS training, which will be hosted by Harris School, is essentially about literacy instruction, identifying why students are struggling readers and providing targeted and intentional interventions to address skill deficits.

**Future Board Meetings**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board Business Meeting</td>
<td>Thursday, December 21, 2017</td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Committee of the Whole</td>
<td>Thursday, January 18, 2018</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Business Meeting</td>
<td>Thursday, January 25, 2018</td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
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**Winter Concerts**
- Sharon Hill School Winter Concert – Tuesday, December 19th – 6:15 – APHS
- APHS Knight of the Arts – Wednesday, December 20th – 7 PM – APHS

**School Events**

- Knight of the Arts – Wednesday, December 20 – 7 PM – APHS
- APHS Winter Day Dance – Friday, December 22nd – APHS
- **Winter Break – December 25th – January 1st – No School for Students or Staff**
- Keystone Exams – January 8th
- **Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday – January 15th – No School for Students or Staff**
- End of 2nd Marking Period – January 19th
- Report Cards Issued – January 26th
- **Early Dismissal – February 7th – APHS – 11 AM / Grades K – 8 – 12:45 PM**
- **Teacher In-service – February 16th – No School for Students**
- Presidents’ Day Holiday – February 19th – No School for Students or Staff
- Progress Notices – February 23rd
- **Early Dismissal – March 7th – APHS – 11 AM / Grades K – 8 – 12:45 PM**
- End of 3rd Marking Period – March 23rd
- **Teacher In-service / Flex Day – March 26th – No School for Students**
- **Spring Break – March 27th – March 30th – No School for Students or Staff**