

East Troy Schools Prepares 09-10 Budget

The East Troy Community School District is preparing for its Annual Meeting on Monday, September 28th at 7:00 p.m. located at the East Troy High School, with its tentative budget for the 09-10 school year. As in previous years, the projected budget is still in flux because of revenue limits and state aid.

Superintendent Chris Hibner explains, “The revenue limit, or the amount of revenues able to be collected in the budget, will not be finalized until after September 18th. The third Friday in September is always designated by the State to be the official count date of students enrolled toward membership, which directly impacts the calculation in the revenue limit formula. In addition, state aid will not be final until mid-October, when figures are released by the Department of Public Instruction.”

In the meantime, the annual meeting presents a “State of the District” address which is an estimate of what the budget might look like before the end of October, a presentation on current student achievement, and a reporting of opportunities and challenges for the East Troy District. Some of the key points regarding the estimated budget include student count projections of 1,756, services transferred from Walworth County in special education resulting in approximately half of the 5.12% increase in budgeted costs, and revenue as well as state aid decreases.

A State decrease in the per pupil amount in the revenue limit formula as well as state aid hit the district and all other Wisconsin public schools in late June, following the approved legislative budget of Act 28. Hibner added, “We are always preparing for worst case scenarios in budget preparations while balancing our District’s needs academically and fiscally. We originally were told by the State that a ‘flat’ increase, or no increase, was going to be the calculation for this year. When the per pupil number was finalized at \$200 instead of \$274 which was the 08-09 amount, it brought the total amount of cuts this year to over \$450,000 compared to the \$334,000 that was reduced last year. Even though we are attempting and will continue to focus on efficiency for the betterment of all stakeholders, revenues continue to not keep pace with necessary expenditures. To further the challenges, Act 28 also called for a significant state aid decrease. Our July 1st state aid estimate from DPI decreased from last year’s amount by 8.1%. We are still hoping October’s numbers will be more positive.”

Finally, of the 9.85% projected tax impact, approximately one-third can be attributed to the transition of services, one-third to the decrease in aid compared to last year’s aid, and the remainder to regular school services.