



# DISTRICT News

WEST SHORE SCHOOL DISTRICT

February/March 2013

## 2013-2014 Budget Process

The District continues to work toward adopting a balanced 2013-2014 general fund budget, scheduled for final approval in June 2013. For 2013-2014, the District's adjusted Base Index is 1.7%. The Taxpayer Relief Act (Act 1) defines the Base Index and limits Pennsylvania school districts' abilities to determine final mill rates.

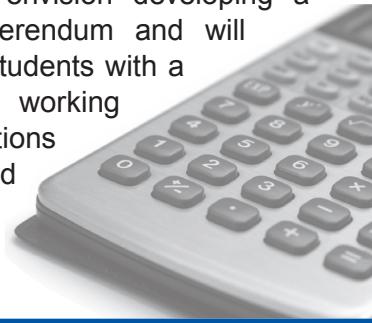
The Base Index is determined by the state and adjusted on an annual basis. This rate is determined by analyzing both the average wage in Pennsylvania and the Federal cost index before making adjustments based on the market value and personal incomes within individual school districts. More details about the Taxpayer Relief Act may be found on the Department of Education's website.

In compliance with Act 1, the District must adopt a resolution 110 days prior to the start of the July 1 fiscal year committing to keep real estate tax revenue increases within the Base Index, or it must adopt a preliminary budget at least 90 days before July 1. Based on budgetary projections for revenue and expenditures, the District adopted the 2013-2014 Preliminary Budget on January 17. Adopting the Preliminary Budget permits the District to seek public approval for a tax increase, and the District has the option of requesting exceptions from the Department of Education.

The 2013-2014 Preliminary Budget was developed over several months, with initial details first shared at the November 8 Study Session. The information presented to the Board, as well as information shared since, is found on the Board of School Directors portion of the District website.

This Preliminary Budget was balanced by including the sale of Cedar Run School and potential real estate tax increases based on two allowable exceptions (Retirement and Special Education) generating an additional \$1,113,384 in revenue. The Preliminary Budget also incorporated \$1,152,910 savings based on the potential closing of a middle school. Neither the decision to increase real estate tax revenue rates, nor the decision to close a middle school has been made. If the Board of School Directors decides against both of these actions, the District will be forced to cut an additional \$2,226,294 from the budget before final adoption.

The District does not envision developing a budget requiring a referendum and will continue to provide all students with a quality education while working within the state's regulations to develop a balanced budget for the 2013-2014 school year.



## Seeking Community Feedback

The District continues to share information with the community through the District website, *District News*, and Twitter in addition to information shared by individual schools. The District is not able to promise publication of all topics, but we would like to hear from you. What stories would you like to see in future publications and/or web postings? Please share your ideas with Dr. Ryan Argot at [rargot@wssd.k12.pa.us](mailto:rargot@wssd.k12.pa.us).

## Pursuing Grant Funds

The District pursues grant funding to provide basic and supplemental services to help offset the cost of required programs and to support opportunities that would not be cost effective without grant funding.

Currently, the District supports students through federal grant funding provided through Titles I, II, and III. Title I provides supplementary reading and math services for elementary students who qualify based on their academic needs or the individual school community's socioeconomic status. Support for reading instruction occurs during school and in after-school tutoring sessions. Title I math support is typically provided during after-school tutoring sessions. Title II funds support smaller class sizes by paying for at least a portion of the teacher's salary in three elementary classrooms. Title III provides funding for supplementary after-school and summer school tutoring for students in the English as Second Language (ESL) Program. Title III funds also provide additional classroom materials and enhanced technology for use by students in the ESL Program.

During the 2012-2013 school year, Pennsylvania's Accountability Block Grant to the District helps support students who need occupational therapy and counseling services. Additionally, this grant funds the Measures of Academic Progress testing which is being used to enhance the District's ability

to provide differentiated instruction for elementary and middle school students.

In addition to these state and federal grants, which are awarded on a formula basis tied to enrollment, measures of poverty, and/or program qualifiers, the District pursues competitive grants to support/enhance programs already in place. Grants which require the District to provide matching funds in order to receive money are pursued when the specific grant opportunities align with previously approved budgetary planning.

During 2012, the District received one of Pennsylvania's HIV/AIDS/Pregnancy Prevention Grants to update curricular materials used at the elementary and secondary levels. Since the start of the 2012-2013 school year, the District received two grants from Pennsylvania Department of Education's Office of Safe Schools to fund anti-bullying and safe crisis management training for staff. One of these grants will also support the purchase of additional safety materials for individual classrooms.

Due to the proximity of Three Mile Island, the District is eligible to apply for funding from York County's Office of Emergency Management to enhance the District's preparations for a nuclear crisis. The District's 2012 request for funds to help update the District's radio communication technology received approval. A similar request will be made in 2013.

## Sponsorship Opportunities

Please visit the District website at [www.wssd.k12.pa.us](http://www.wssd.k12.pa.us) and click the Sponsorships page under the Community tab for additional information about advertising your business in the *On Board*, *Shore Light*, *Staff Matters*, or at the West Shore Stadium.

Individuals interested in purchasing an ad may also contact Dr. Ryan Argot, Director of Federal Programs at 717-938-9577 or email [rargot@wssd.k12.pa.us](mailto:rargot@wssd.k12.pa.us).

Building principals are encouraged to work with their staff to pursue grants that may be available for individual schools. In the past year, individual buildings received grant funding/materials from multiple sponsors including, but not limited to: Bob Craig Foundation, BJ's Wholesale Club, Capital Area Intermediate Unit, Erie Insurance, H&R Block, Lowe's Home Improvement, Lower Allen VFW Post 7530, Office Max, Pepsi Refresh, Target, Wal-Mart Foundation, and the Whitaker Science Center. These grants provide fiscal support for field trips, enhanced technology, school supplies, and more.

## Expenses for Educational Services

The Pennsylvania School Code (24 PS 17-1725-A) requires school districts to pay the tuition of resident students attending charter schools. Districts are required to pay the tuition of students attending traditional "brick and mortar" charter schools, as well as online "cyber charter" schools. Tuition costs for charter schools continue to increase.

For 2010-2011 the District paid greater than 1.6 million dollars for District students attending charter schools. In 2011-2012 this figure increased to more than 2 million dollars. In 2012-2013, the general fund budget includes \$2,025,000 for charter school tuition. For the 2013-2014 school year, the Preliminary Budget includes \$2,359,000 for charter school tuition.

To appeal to students who may be interested in online learning and to limit the number of students who enroll in cyber charter schools, the District provides an online learning opportunity through the West Shore Cyber Classroom Connection. District students are able to continue their education online and earn a District diploma, rather than enrolling in a cyber charter school. More information is found on the Technology and Media section of the District's website.

As one of 22 districts sponsoring Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC), the District is obligated to contribute to a portion of HACC's annual budget. HACC has grown in size since the sponsoring agreement was first signed in 1964. With increased student enrollment and multiple campus locations, the amount the District pays has increased. In 2010-2011, the District paid \$1,239,286 to HACC. Collaborating with neighboring districts and leadership from HACC, the District's expenses for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 have been limited to \$867,501 each year.

On March 15, 2012, the Board of School Directors voted unanimously in favor of a resolution calling for changes to Section 1913-A of the Pennsylvania School Code. If passed, Senate Bill 1508 from the 2011-2012 Legislative Session would have

revised this portion of the Pennsylvania School Code. Unfortunately, this bill was not acted on after being referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee on June 29, 2012. If enacted into law, this bill, which was supported by HACC, would have created a more flexible environment for HACC and all of the sponsoring districts. The 2013-2014 Preliminary Budget includes \$867,501 in payments to HACC.

The District remains committed to meeting its legal funding obligations, but does not control the amount spent for charter schools and HACC. Please contact your locally elected state officials to share any concerns you may have about these expenses.

### Join West Shore's Driving Force

The District has several, immediate openings for permanent drivers with current CDL licensure with air brakes, P and S endorsements. Training is provided. Drivers complete daily morning and afternoon runs as assigned while adhering to the PA Motor Vehicle Code.

The starting rate is \$12.99 an hour with paid holidays/leave.

Interested candidates may apply in person, Monday through Friday, or contact:

Mr. Tony McNaughton  
Coordinator of Transportation  
West Shore School District  
532 Fishing Creek Road  
Lewisberry, PA 17339  
(717) 938-2296

Additional details and necessary application can be found on the District website.





## District Cost Saving Efforts

Multiple cost saving measures have been implemented throughout the District to limit expenditures.

### Operational Savings

In September 2011, the District restructured its long-term debt by issuing a new municipal bond. This is similar to when homeowners refinance their mortgage. Paying off two bonds and issuing a new bond lowered the yearly payments for 2012 through 2016 by approximately \$1.1 million each year, while saving the District \$657,234 in debt payments.

In May 2012, the Board approved a three-year agreement for electrical supply with APG&E Energy Solutions. This agreement is expected to save the District approximately \$400,000 over three years.

During the summer of 2012, the District successfully implemented two cost saving measures. Rather than mailing fourth marking period report cards, parents were able to pick up report cards at their children's schools. Those parents who chose not to pick up the report cards were able to get their children's report cards on the first day of school. Estimates indicate a savings of greater than \$3,000 for this initiative.

As part of continuing efforts to conserve resources, the District turns off the HVAC systems (including ventilation) for the areas within schools that are not used during the summer. Additionally, when not in use, other equipment is turned off for additional savings.

Between June 18 and July 27, 2012, the District closed 12 schools and relocated office staff into one of four open buildings to provide services for parents, students, and community members. By maintaining longer hours on Monday through Thursday during this six-week window, the District was able to save further on utility costs by closing all District indoor facilities on Fridays. This

initiative was only possible because of the adjustments by administrative, professional, and support staff. The District saved approximately \$40,000 with this initiative and plans to relocate staff during the summer of 2013. A decision to replicate the changes in summer hours for 2013 has not been finalized.

In August 2012, the District implemented an automated substitute placement and absence management service called Aesop. Aesop's technology is integrated with the District's human resources and payroll systems to manage attendance for professional and administrative employees.

The automated system replaces many of the functions previously performed by a live person, including making phone calls to secure substitutes on a daily basis. The new online method for requesting/reporting absences for teachers and administrators eliminates the use of paper forms associated with tracking attendance in most instances. Overall, Aesop has been well-received and is a more efficient way to manage this complex and time-consuming task.

The District continues to monitor custodial protocols to ensure cost effective cleanliness. A project from this school year saved approximately \$12-15,000 by replacing the paper towel, toilet paper, and soap dispensers throughout the District.

While specific cost savings have not been measured, the District initiated a "Power Down" campaign to remind staff and students to turn off lights and equipment when rooms are not in use. The District hopes these efforts will have fiscal as well as environmental benefits.

### Publication Savings

Prior to 2010-2011, *District News* and *Shore Light* were published as one document and mailed to all households in the District.

Beginning in 2010-2011, these publications were separated, so that building focused articles could be shared with parents in *Shore Light*, which is sent home with students, and district focused articles could be included in *District News*, which is mailed at least twice a year and posted on the District's website at least two additional times per year. Reorganizing the publications in this fashion saves more than \$10,000 per year, while maintaining communication with parents and the community.

Community members without internet access are welcome to obtain current issues of *District News* and *Shore Light* from any of the schools or the Administration Center. Archived copies of *District News* are also found online.

Beginning in 2012, the District started including paid advertisements in *On Board*, *Shore Light*, and *Staff Matters*. *On Board* provides a summary of the monthly Board meetings held during the school year, prior to approval of the formal minutes. *Staff Matters* is an informational staff newsletter. The funds raised through these advertisements returns to the District's general fund to support the costs of publication.

## School Closures

During the 2011-2012 school year, the Board of School Directors directed the formation of a demographics committee to study the most efficient way to use the District's elementary schools. Based on the work of this committee, at the May 10, 2012, Board meeting the proposal to close Mt. Zion Elementary School at the conclusion of the 2011-2012 school year was approved. The District's estimated savings from closing Mt. Zion are approximately \$400,000 in the first year.

As part of establishing a more efficient operation for the 2013-2014 school year, the District is exploring the potential of

closing either Lemoyne or New Cumberland Middle School. The potential for this closing was first discussed at the October 2012 study session, in which the Board of School Directors directed administration to form a demographics committee to examine building usage and the impact of closing one of the District's four middle schools.

Ultimately, the committee determined an estimated savings of \$1,152,910 if the District closes a middle school prior to the 2013-2014 school year. This savings includes decreased costs for salaries, utilities, and supplies, as well as increased costs in transportation based on estimates made from current and prior expenses. A formal hearing seeking community feedback on this issue was held on January 16. More information related to the potential school closing is posted on the demographics section of the website found under the community tab of the District home page.

## Staff Savings

When possible, the District reduces administrative, professional, and support positions through attrition. As administrative, professional, and support positions become vacant, the District evaluates its ability to meet needs by reassigning tasks, rather than replacing employees. Responsibilities previously held by these administrators, professionals, and support staff have been reassigned.

Beginning in the 2011-2012 school year, the District decided to stop offering day care. The cost for the District to offer day care for children of employees cost more than employees paid. The first year savings of approximately \$85,000 continues on an annual basis.

Additional savings of approximately \$240,000 were realized when all administrators and support staff took pay freezes for the 2011-2012 school year. Although asked for 2011-2012

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Staff Snapshot	
School Year	Number of District Staff
2010-2011	1,166
2011-2012	1,088
2012-2013	1,022
2013-2014	pending

*Totals reflect District staff employed at start of school year. Vacant positions are not included in figures.*

## District Revenue Generating Efforts

During the 2011-2012 school year, the District's Revenue Generating Committee met to consider and evaluate alternative revenue sources for the District. The focus of this committee's work was to identify potential sources of funding that would not conflict with the mission and efforts of the West Shore Foundation or PTO/booster organizations currently supporting a variety of student activities and programs. The intent was to raise funds which will help mitigate cost increases to maintain quality programs and reduce the District's economic challenges.

One of the Revenue Generating Committee's first tasks was to develop a policy on sponsorships for consideration by the Board of School Directors. After public review, the Sponsorships policy was adopted on July 19, 2012. This policy allows for new revenue to be realized through naming rights, advertising, and other sponsorships. At the July 19 Board meeting, an agreement with Market Street Sports was approved ([www.marketstreetsportsgroup.com](http://www.marketstreetsportsgroup.com)). Market Street Sports serves as the contact for those businesses who want to see their name on school facilities such as the West Shore Stadium, Lowther Field, West Shore Natatorium, high school parking lots, and more.

Advertisement space is still available in a variety of electronic and print publications produced by the District for distribution to community, families, and/or staff. Eighteen businesses have purchased more than 100 advertisements in the past year. In addition, advertising signs may be purchased for display along the fence surrounding the West Shore Stadium. Currently, the District has

advertising agreements from four businesses for advertising in the Stadium. To learn more about advertising in District publications, or purchasing a sign in the West Shore Stadium, please visit the sponsorship section of the District website found under the community tab.

The Revenue Generating Committee also worked closely with the West Shore Foundation to expand the eligible programs included under the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program. This incentive aids the District by funding innovative programs such as the Kindergarten Acceleration Program (KAP), which provides an extended-day experience for kindergarten students demonstrating a need for more intensive instruction in literacy and numeracy, while also benefiting the business whose contribution is eligible for tax credits.

In addition to these efforts, the District is currently selling two vacant buildings. The District has a contract to sell Cedar Run School in Lower Allen Township for \$1.5 million dollars. The District is also working to sell Mt. Zion School in Fairview Township. In addition to the proceeds from the sales, the District (and the respective townships) will benefit from increased real estate tax revenue as these properties are returned to the tax rolls.



## District Cost Saving Efforts (continued)

and again for 2012-2013, the Teacher's Association has been unwilling to support a salary freeze for teachers, without costly concessions.

In addition to these staffing changes designed to save money, the District continues to reevaluate its curricular offerings. Through alterations to the

curricular program and evaluation of vacancies as they occur, the District's number of employees has decreased.

The number of employees needed for the 2013-2014 school year will be determined as the District moves toward final adoption of the annual budget.

## Historical Changes in Pennsylvania School Finance

The Pennsylvania legislature controls many aspects of school business functions. The District complies with regulations as they are approved by the legislature.

Going back to 2001, Pennsylvania approved Act 24 in June, which gave the District the option of replacing revenue from the occupational assessment tax with revenue from an increase in earned income tax. In August of 2001, the Board of School Directors conducted a public hearing to discuss Act 24 and the financial impact on the District if the occupational assessment tax was eliminated and replaced by an increase in the earned income tax. After the hearing, the decision was made to put the occupation tax question on the November ballot as a referendum item. Ultimately, the referendum to eliminate the occupational assessment tax passed.

In June 2006, Governor Rendell signed the Taxpayer Relief Act into Law. Act 1, as it is called, provided for possible property tax relief by shifting a portion of school funding from property taxes to income-based taxes. Based on the requirements of the law, the District formed the West Shore Tax Commission whose members were publicly

appointed in September 2006. Based on the work of the committee, in December 2006, the Board accepted the commission's recommendation to move forward with an increase of 0.40 percent in the earned income tax to offset a reduction of approximately \$334 in property tax.

Following a February 15, 2007, Tax Relief Hearing, the Board of School Directors adopted a resolution to place a referendum question on the ballot for the May 2007 municipal election. This referendum did not pass and the District's earned income tax rate remains at 0.95 percent.

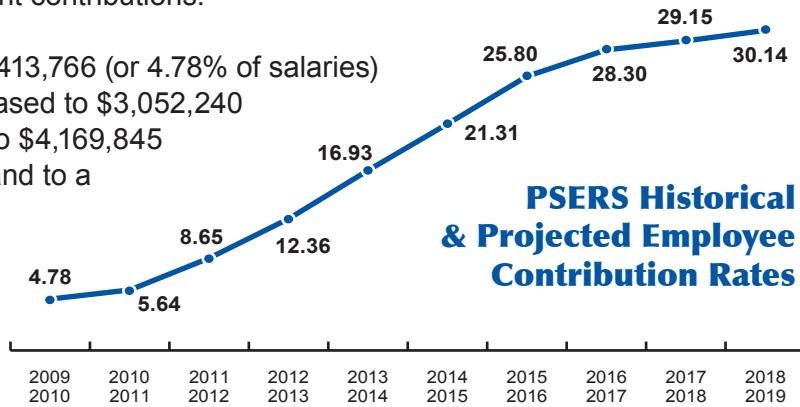
Pennsylvania updated Act 1 with the adoption of Act 25 of 2011. The revisions to Act 1, as it relates to school real estate taxes, provide real estate property tax relief through use of revenue generated from legalized gambling. This law placed limits on Pennsylvania school districts' abilities to determine the amount of money districts generate from real estate tax revenue by establishing a "Base Index." Districts are unable to exceed the Base Index without approval through either a voter referendum or an exception granted by Pennsylvania's Department of Education.

## Pennsylvania Pension Crisis

The District continues to adapt to the challenges of Pennsylvania's pension crisis. Due to changes that were made to the retirement calculation formula through Pennsylvania's Act 9 of 2001 and economic changes that have occurred since then, the District is required to provide a significantly larger percentage to fund retirement contributions.

In 2009-2010, the District paid \$2,413,766 (or 4.78% of salaries) toward pensions. This figure increased to \$3,052,240 (5.64% of salaries) in 2010-2011, to \$4,169,845 (8.65% of salaries) in 2011-2012, and to a budget amount of \$6,105,008 (12.36% of salaries) in 2012-2013.

The 2013-2014 Preliminary Budget includes \$8,266,822 for pensions (16.93% of salaries).





### Mission Statement

The West Shore School District is committed to providing this generation with a quality education serving as a foundation for responsible and successful citizenship.

### Board of School Directors

Anthony J. Tezik, Ed.D., President  
Ronald L. Candioto, Jr., Vice President  
M. Todd Ambrose  
Judith A. Crocenzi  
Denise N. Grover  
Brian K. Guistwhite  
Frank J. Kambic  
Gayle M. Russell  
Kelli C. Williamson

### Administration

Jemry L. Small, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Todd B. Stoltz, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent

## West Shore School District

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New Cumberland, PA 17070-0803  
[www.wssd.k12.pa.us](http://www.wssd.k12.pa.us)

NON-PROFIT  
CARRIER ROUTE  
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YORK, PA  
Permit No. 600

The West Shore School District will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, marital status, or disability in accordance with state and federal laws governing educational and vocational programs and in its recruitment and employment practices. Inquiries concerning the application of Title VII, Title IX, Section 504, the ADA, and the implementing regulations may be referred to the Director of Human Resources, 507 Fishing Creek Road, P.O. Box 803, New Cumberland, PA 17070-0803, telephone (717) 938-9577. Revised 12-2012

## Homeowner Tax Relief

With the passage of the Tax Payer Relief Act (Act 1 of 2006), all approved homestead/farmstead properties are eligible for property tax relief from gaming revenue provided by the state. For the 2012-2013 school year, the District's gaming revenue totaled \$1,279,994. The total number of approved homestead/farmstead properties for Cumberland and York County is 16,122. On the real estate tax bill, this results in a \$79.84 reduction in the assessed value of each approved property.

As details related to savings for 2013-2014 become available the District will provide updates for property owners. Participation in homestead/farmstead relief is not mandatory, nor is it automatic. Generally, most owner-occupied homes and farms are eligible for the property tax relief. Homeowners who are unsure if they qualify or if their home has been approved should contact their county's assessment office.



## Thank You...

This year, the West Shore Foundation received \$50,000 from the following EITC contributors:

Cleveland Brothers  
Crabtree Rohrbaugh  
Frontier Communications  
Fulton Bank  
Giant Foods  
Pennsylvania American Water  
Phillips Group  
PNC Bank  
Select Specialty Hospital  
Susquehanna Bancshares, Inc.