



November 24, 2004

Dear Friend of Education,

The Board of Education and district staff at the Beaver Dam Unified School District want to know what you think makes our public schools great and what can be done to continuously improve. A committee has developed an on-line survey that we are asking staff, parents, and community members to take. The survey takes just 15 minutes to complete.

Many of the survey questions relate to the budget challenges that the district has faced and continues to struggle with. Enclosed is some information that may be helpful prior to taking the survey.

To participate in the survey, please go to this website: www.iqewi.com sometime before December 6. If you don't have a computer or internet access, a couple school district sites will be open additional hours for you to take the survey. Volunteers will be available to answer any questions you may have about taking the on-line survey.

High School Career Center Monday, Nov. 29 and Thursday, Dec. 2 from 4:00 - 8:00 pm.
500 Gould Street, Beaver Dam

Educational Service Center lab Monday, Nov. 29 - Friday, Dec. 3 from 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
705 McKinley Street, Beaver Dam

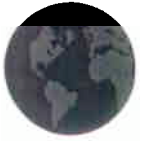
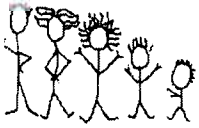
Paper copies of the survey are also available for pick up at Reчек's Food Pride, Gilmore's Piggly Wiggly, Beaver Dam Senior Center, Beaver Dam Community Library, Beaver Dam Chamber of Commerce, and Educational Services Center at 705 McKinley Street. To have a paper copy sent to you by mail, please call 885-7300.

Thank you for supporting students in Beaver Dam!

Great Schools Budget Survey Committee

Rosalie Alexander
Bev Beal-Loeck
Brian Busler
Bob Einwalter
Scot Ecker
Lynn Gruenewald

Mary Klawitter
Jen Klug
Donna Pivonka
Kris Schumacher
Gary Spielman



Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

I've heard the district has a budget shortfall, what does that mean?

The projected expenses for all current programs and staff members exceeds the projected revenue to be received under the state mandated budget formula.

What steps has the district taken to address the budget shortfall?

- ◆ Organized a Budget Task Force in August 2002 to look at ways to save money within the district.
- ◆ Developed a Staffing Task Force in August 2003 to study district-wide staffing.
- ◆ Developed an Administrative Staffing and Budget Committee in 2004 to study the budget.
- ◆ Reduced the budget by \$600,000 for the 2003-04 school year.
- ◆ Reduced the budget by \$750,000 for the 2004-05 school year.
- ◆ We value the ideas and thoughts of our staff and community. As a result, the two task forces consisted of teachers, support personnel, administrators, board members, parents, and community members.
- ◆ The committees shared ideas and suggestions on how to best utilize the available budget resources.

What cuts has the district already made?

\$1.2 million in cuts over the past 2 years

- ◆ Staffing
 - Library Administrator eliminated
 - Special Projects Administrator eliminated
 - Part-time Gifted and Talented Coordinator eliminated
 - Character Counts/Project AWARE Coordinator eliminated
 - Reduction in Custodial/Maintenance
 - Staff Reduction in Teaching Assistants
 - Reduction in Secretarial Staff
 - Less staff overtime approved
 - Reduction in chaperones at sporting events
 - Administrative Staff pay portion of health insurance
 - Many Middle and High School teachers teach 6 rather than 5 classes per day
 - Elimination of some paid coach and advisor positions

◆ Non-staffing

- School and classroom supply budgets reduced
- Fewer new library books are ordered
- Field trips are reduced or alternate funding secured
- Delay in updating computer and technology equipment
- Delays in completing maintenance projects at school facilities
- Higher and additional student fees

What impact have the budget cuts had?

For Students and Parents:

- ◆ Some course offerings at the Middle and High School have been eliminated
- ◆ The support from teaching assistants has been reduced in classrooms, libraries, and computer labs
- ◆ Student fees have increased
- ◆ Less teaching staff to serve students
- ◆ Less co-curricular coaches and advisors to serve students
- ◆ Instrumental/vocal music sections are larger

For Staff:

- ◆ Support Staff work 2 hours less per week
- ◆ Elementary teachers have less help from teaching assistants
- ◆ Many Middle and High School teachers are teaching 6 (rather than 5) classes. This increases their student load from 120 to 150. Teachers are paid additional money for this extra teaching assignment.

How much do personnel costs increase each year?

- ◆ The State of Wisconsin licensed employees (teachers and administrators) fall under Wisconsin State Statute 118 and their total compensation is set at a minimum of approximately 4.1%.
- ◆ Beaver Dam Support Staff Association compensation is established through the bargaining process.

What do personnel costs cover each year?

- ◆ The majority of a 4.1% total compensation increase is used to pay for increased health insurance costs.
- ◆ The balance of the increase is used to pay salary or wage increases, dental insurance, LTD, Social Security, and for the Wisconsin Retirement Plan.