

September 2015

Dear Lockland School District Resident,

Several months ago, our 11.2 mill school levy narrowly failed by 10 votes. We've made great strides in closing the deficit from 36.9% saying YES in August of 2014 to 49.1% saying YES in May. I believe one of the reasons we are seeing more YES votes is that we are earning your trust back and that is extremely important to us.

We were set to run the 11.2 mill levy in November, however, our elected officials in Columbus settled on a two year budget that gave more money to school districts. We are projected to receive a large increase in state aid. Now, there are many factors that contribute to how much state aid we will receive. The likelihood of us getting the exact percentage they announced is questionable. As a result, this has forced us to rethink the school levy we are requesting of the community. Equally important is that along with the possible large increase in state aid, the state is taking away the Tangible Personal Property (TPP) reimbursement from Lockland and other districts. **This is a loss of \$1,100,000 per year...gone off the books forever.**

This is the issue we face. We know we're going to get a substantial increase from the state. We also know we're going to get a substantial decrease from the state beginning with the 2017-18 school year. There is no doubt in my mind we will need additional money from the community in the form of a school levy to fill the gap between the increase in state aid and the decrease in TPP. However, without seeing for myself what the state aid amount will actually be, I cannot ask for a specific millage for the school levy. I have to be absolutely confident in the numbers before I ask for your hard earned money.

Here is what we are going to do. Each month, our Treasurer receives payments from the state. We need to look at the first half of the 2015-16 school year and see those amounts. Based on the actual money received from the state, I will be able to see what we will need to fill the gap. This will determine the millage we will request from voters.

**Bottom line, we will not be running a levy in November.** The next time we can run a levy would be March, August, and/or November of 2016. Whatever amount we request, it is important to pass in the 2016 calendar year, otherwise, we would lose an entire year of collection.

In the April letter, I asked the community whether they want a local school in their community. I believe the community answered that question in May and we are going to continue to work to earn your trust. There is no bigger investment that a community makes than in their public school. We are a direct reflection of the homes from which our students leave in the morning and return to in the afternoon. Making Arlington Heights and Lockland a great place to live and work starts with the Lockland School District.

I am going to hold an open forum at the beginning of the Regular Board of Education meeting on Thursday, September 24th at 6:30 p.m. in Room 152 to answer any questions about the information provided in this letter. As I wrote in the April letter, I am here to serve you as your school leader. I appreciate you taking time to read this.

In Service to the Community,

Matt M. Bishop, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools