

CONEMAUGH VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT



Mr. David L. Lehman, Superintendent

William Kanich, Jr./Sr. High School Asst. Principal

Lawra J. Stuart, Elementary Principal

Eric Miller, Business Manager

August 1, 2011

Dear Community Stakeholders,

The Conemaugh Valley School District leadership TEAM has been actively engaged in assessing the operation of the current facilities. The Conemaugh Valley leadership TEAM is committed to providing the community with the best educational opportunities for children while protecting the interests of the local taxpayers. As you are well aware, the current economic trends have greatly stressed the importance of being stewards of operational funds and making decisions that will enable the district to operate in the most cost effective manner. Over the past year, the leadership TEAM has engaged in the following discussions:

- Consulted with three (3) architectural firms to complete feasibility studies highlighting district strengths, weaknesses, and possible solutions. Two architectural firms, Foreman, and Burt, Hill completed feasibility studies and presented their findings at public school board meetings.
- Burt, Hill was hired as principal architect of record. Naming Burt, Hill as principal architect of record allows the school district to continue studying possible construction/renovation options.
- Burt, Hill presented the district with possible options including: renovations and possible additions to the CVES campus, renovation and addition to the CVHS campus that would make the current High School a Pre-K to Grade 12 facility, constructing a new elementary school, and constructing a new elementary school that would connect to the high school.
- Interviewed three Act 77 energy savings providers. The energy efficient upgrades would provide certified energy savings which would be used to potentially self fund recommended energy saving renovations at the high school. Reynolds Energy Services was selected as the Act 77 provider during a school board meeting.
- Begun the process of possibly closing the East Taylor Campus to address population decline.
- Begun the process of realigning professional and support staff to address a declining enrollment.
- Consulted other local districts regarding a possible consolidation.
- Made reductions to multiple budget line items including labor costs, operational costs, and supplemental contracts.
- Consulted with financial advisors regarding financial assessments and millage impact of proposed projects.

The leadership TEAM is currently participating in a study and discussing the feasibility of a project. The district's current physical plant has been identified as needing significant renovations and upgrades. Outside of routine maintenance, the district has completed the following major capital improvements:

- ETES Campus- Dedicated in 1959. Upgrades renovations to date- new roof 1987.
- CVES Campus – Dedicated in 1970. Renovations to date- roof (skin) replacements 1989 and 2004. Boiler replacement 2004.
- CVHS Campus – Dedicated in 1969. Partial renovations 1992. Locker replacement in 2008.

During the June 27, 2011 Special Board meeting, the Board of School Directors increased millage by twelve (12) mills. The total tax increase has been placed in a capital reserve fund specifically designed to address an anticipated capital improvement project. As discussions continue, the Board of School Directors will continue to hold public meetings to discuss the issues facing the physical plant. All three buildings are in need of repair. Any construction project would require the district to complete the PlanCon process through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Additionally, if the leadership TEAM would consider a construction project of any magnitude, several public comment sessions and public hearings would need to occur prior to any formal approval and action.

Thank you for your continued support for the students of Conemaugh Valley. TOGETHER, we will make CV something special.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why 12 mills at once? Why wasn't the tax increase spread over several years?

During previous budgets, school districts were allowed to raise millage above the Act 1 Index through exceptions. A school district could apply for tax exceptions, and if approved, raise millage accordingly. Upon approval of the 2011-2012 Pennsylvania state budget, the ability to raise taxes through exceptions was significantly curtailed.

2. Was the school district's 2011-2012 general budget balanced without a tax increase?

The administrative TEAM was able to balance the 2011-2012 budget without a tax increase.

3. How much state funding was lost as compared to the 2010-2011 budget?

\$491,300

4. Why not consolidate?

To date several preliminary discussions have occurred. At this time, it appears that there is little to no interest/response to a consolidation/merger option/study with another district.

5. Why improve the district infrastructure?

The district's vision is to provide an appropriate, competitive, and safe education for all students. The Leadership TEAM's vision is to function as a solvent school district. Because of a lack in consolidation/merger interests and or study, the district will proceed with a continued vision to serve the community into the future. Preserving the integrity of the physical plant is a primary concern. Developing sound educational facilities will afford the district a strong position well into the future.

6. What is the 12 mill tax increase earmarked for?

The 12 mill tax increase has been placed in a capital reserve fund. The monies have been set aside to repair and/or replace significant physical plant issues.

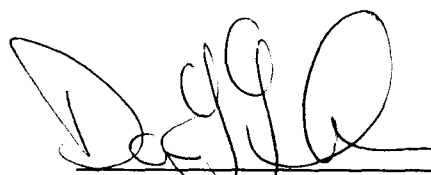
7. At the close of the 2010-2011 budget, what was the general fund and capital reserve fund balances?

\$950,000 in general fund balance reserve and none in capital reserve.

Sincerely,



Mark Vibostok, CVSD School Board President



David L. Lehman, CVSD Superintendent