

Why can't schools cut 2%?

Districts can cut 2%, but not without angering residents. Districts are always seeking ways to save money without hurting programs.

FACT: Sales tax dollars are distributed according to population while state education aid is allocated based on community wealth. The 50% reduction in sales tax, therefore, hurts most those districts least able to afford the loss.

FACT: The sales tax reduction takes more than 2% of the budget from almost every district.

FACT: Budget increases are caused by state and federal mandates and by community needs.

FACT: Communities differ in what they expect of their schools. They elect school board candidates who share their priorities.

FACT: Communities vote for or against the spending plans proposed by their districts. Residents can limit spending increases.

FACT: Every line in a school budget is supported by a law or constituency.

The County has no authority to make school districts cut 2% to pay for the County's Medicaid obligation.



Why doesn't MC cut 2%?

The County reduced its costs by shifting them onto the schools (Medicaid) and towns (MCC) and drivers (vehicle registration costs).

Compare the county's cost containment to the cost containment by schools found in "The Best for Less" (found at www.mcsba.org).

Why aren't schools accountable?

Public schools accountability is unmatched by any other level of government.

Suburban school districts are governed by elected non-partisan volunteers who are the only governmental leaders required to be trained in their fiscal oversight responsibilities.

Suburban school budgets are the only governmental budgets voted on annually. Construction projects and use of reserve funds must also be approved by public vote.

Most school districts involve their community in the budget development process.

Most local school budgets pass with high pluralities, validating our processes and programs.

No other level of government works with such stringent oversight or expensive obligations based on 16 volumes of NYS Education laws, State Education Department regulations, and demanding and expensive Federal requirements.

Didn't districts get extra state aid?

Last May, voters approved budgets for 2007-2008 programs and services.

The increased State Aid DID NOT offset the money taken by the County.

The additional state aid was committed to specific programs to increase achievement and accountability.

What happens now to students?

Districts are identifying specific budget cuts. Contact individual districts for specifics about the impact on their students and programs.

Where is our sense of community?

Monroe County started the Community Chest, community health care, and an innovative sales tax distribution plan that shared revenues among all taxing jurisdictions (at its inception) BEFORE Morin-Ryan established the current formula.

We need a return to that collaborative system of problem solving to deal with today's issues.

Q & A:



Monroe County's Public Schools



MONROE COUNTY School Boards Association

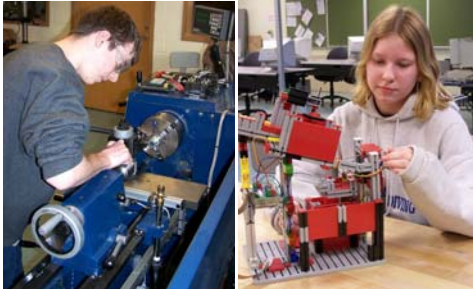
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Why don't schools save more \$?

School districts in Monroe County have a long history of collaboration to provide the best programs possible for the least cost.



Their collaborations contain costs through a health care consortium, energy conservation projects, transportation routing, academic programs, collective bidding, and purchasing, and more.

MCSBA's publication "The Best for Less: Cost-Saving Strategies and Shared Services in Monroe County School Districts" can be downloaded from www.MCSBA.org.

State and federal laws require our county's public school districts to provide transportation, special education services, health services, textbooks, library books, student computers and software to more than 9,480 students attending private and parochial schools and 780 charter school students.

Because our districts are responsibly governed, they all have A bond ratings from Moody's that save \$100,000s in interest costs when districts borrow money for needed capital projects.

Why should I care what happens?

FACT: Monroe County's school districts are a major economic force. Losses to districts will result in community-wide economic loss.

Collectively our school districts are the county's largest employer with over 21,000 employees and a total budget of \$1.7 billion a year. They also generate \$800 million in State Aid annually.

FACT: Cuts in school district spending will negatively affect the entire community.

School tax dollars stay in the local economy. The greatest part of a district's budget supports personnel who live and spend locally. Reductions in revenue lead to cuts in personnel and purchasing, thus affecting the local economy. The loss of \$29,000,000 equals at least 500 jobs.

Educational professionals are consumers of cultural offerings and college graduate programs.

Our districts are major employers of people who grew up here, and are returning the community's investment in their educations.

Our economy is built upon a highly skilled workforce. The national reputations of our public schools provide a major draw to potential employees and employers.

Area schools #6 in nation

Public schools in our area are ranked 6th in the nation by *Expansion Management* magazine, a resource for executives.

SOURCE: Gary McLendon. "Magazine ranks local schools No. 6 in U.S." *Democrat & Chronicle*. January 15, 2008

Why don't schools run like business?

Businesses can respond to the market by changing their purpose and activities. Public schools have one unchanging purpose – they must educate every child who comes to them, regardless of the child's neediness.

School districts are public employers; their unionized employees are protected by state law.

- * Any changes in working conditions or benefits must be negotiated
- * Contract provisions continue until the approval of the next contract.

School districts maintain lower ratios of administrators to staff than do private businesses.

Why are superintendents paid so much?

Market forces affect superintendent salaries.

There is a small pool of people both willing and qualified to take these jobs.

Superintendents are highly educated and certified leaders who function as a CEO and who must deal with ever-changing laws. In addition, they must be available 24/7 to deal with district issues.

Their salaries are lower than CEO salaries in any company with comparable budgets, or in major non-profit organizations. While most local non-profits have budgets much lower than the average school district and employ far fewer people, in many cases their leader's salaries are much higher than those of superintendents. **

** *Rochester Business Journal* review of local non-profits: December 21, 2007, page 7; and December 28, 2007, page 7.

Why not cut #s of administrators?

In recent years a flood of new laws has mandated new public school programs. Each new requirement brings complex regulations and time-consuming reports which increase the workload of administrators.

2007-08 – Limitations on use of new state aid with complex planning and reporting (Contracts for Excellence)

2007-08 – Identifying and delivering needed services for all special education children attending private schools within a district's boundaries (IDEA)

2006-07 - Health and Wellness Committees (School Lunch Act); annual tests for all students g. 3- 8 (NCLB)

2005-06 - Highly Qualified Teachers required in core subject areas (NCLB)

2004-05 - Mandatory fiscal oversight training for school board members, creation of audit committees, new auditing procedures, and periodic Comptroller audits (NYS)

2002-03 – Added accountability measures and sanctions, new hiring rules; sanctions for not making adequate yearly progress (NCLB)

2002-03 – Purchase of defibrillators and staff training in their use (NYS)

2001-02 - Redesign of school safety and security plans; mandated response activities in districts; mandated increase in pension fund contribution from 0% to 12% (NYS)

2000-01 - Development, annual review, and dissemination of Codes of Conduct; collaboration with emergency responders on crisis response plans including lock-downs and evacuations; and employee fingerprinting (NYS)

