

Are Our Kids Getting Their 'FAIR' Share?

Questions and Answers

Q: What's changed about the way Monroe County shares sales tax revenue?

A: Since 1985 sales tax revenue has been divided among the County, Towns, Villages and School Districts. While sales tax will still be shared among all these municipalities, school districts are the only entity that will see a reduction in its shared sales tax revenue. In fact, the County plans to keep \$29 million that was promised to school districts for the 2007-2008 school year.

Q: Can't school districts just tighten their belts?

A: Yes, school districts are constantly looking for ways to save money without compromising educational programs. In recent years schools have saved millions by participating in a health care consortium, initiating energy conservation projects, and collectively bidding on and purchasing materials and services common among school districts. These and other cost saving measures are highlighted in the Monroe County School Boards Association publication "The Best for Less." To view this document in full, visit www.mcsba.org.

Q: What are school districts doing to recoup this lost revenue?

A: School districts are looking at their current budgets to find ways to fill the financial void left this school year. In addition, most Monroe County school districts have united to file a joint lawsuit aimed at proving that the action undertaken by the County is illegal.

Q: Will increased State Aid offset the money schools will lose as part of the F.A.I.R. Plan?

A: No. Last May district voters approved budgets under which districts established its programs and services for the 2007-2008 school year. The additional state aid was committed to specific educational programs designed to increase student achievement and bolster school safety and security measures.

Q: What does this mean to students and programs?

A: At this time, school districts are working out the specific budget cuts and adjustments each has to make. More specifics about the impact to your district can be found on the back of this publication.

Q: Can the County and School Districts work together in order to preserve our quality school systems in Monroe County?

A: Yes. Local superintendents invite our legislators to collaborate with them to find solutions that safeguard our fine schools, the lifeblood of our community.

Q: How will this impact the 2008-2009 school year budget?

A: Under the F.A.I.R. Plan, schools stand to lose more sales tax revenue next year. The impact of the lost revenue will be discussed as part of the 2008-09 budget development process. You are invited to attend the series of public hearings held annually by your District's Board of Education to learn more.