Each year at this time, we begin the process of putting together a projected budget for the upcoming school fiscal year. This is difficult as most of our revenues come from New York State Aid and a state budget is almost never available for this activity. This year, although there will be no final budget in place prior to our budget adoption, the governor has made it very clear that we will receive significantly less money from the State next year than we received this year. The governor’s budget proposal indicates that we can expect about $675,000 less than we got for the current school year. To put this in perspective, $675,000 equates to a tax levy increase of 12.91% without any increase in costs. With this reduction and our increased costs for salaries, employee benefits, and special education, it is easy to see that we are in for some serious budget cutting.

Many of you remember the 2005-06 school year when we faced a deficit of over $1,000,000 requiring a contingency budget, staff cuts, and program eliminations…including art, music and sports. I am sad to say that we are facing many of the same issues for the upcoming school year. The exact magnitude of these reductions will not be known for a few weeks, but it is clear that there will be cuts in nearly all areas.

Even if we could maintain the same budget as this year (ignoring the increased fixed costs), we would still need a tax levy increase just to break even. Simply put, with increasing costs, reduced revenues, and the legal prohibition against running a deficit, we are in for a very painful year. However, the Board of Education and the administration are looking for every way to limit the impact while balancing student needs and those of the taxpaying citizens.

As a reference, I believe it is valuable to show where we are now and how we have gotten to this point. In looking back at the tax levy over the past several years, we have seen a very positive trend as shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tax Levy</th>
<th>Tax Levy Increase</th>
<th>Fund Balance</th>
<th>Rate Per $1,000 on True Value</th>
<th>Rate Per $1,000 True Value % Change</th>
<th>$100,000 True Value Tax Bill</th>
<th>$50,000 True Value Tax Bill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>$4,260,419</td>
<td>$76,591</td>
<td>$19.37</td>
<td>$1,937.00</td>
<td>$968.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>$4,640,448</td>
<td>8.96%</td>
<td>$185,454</td>
<td>$18.86 8.47%</td>
<td>$1,886.00 8.47%</td>
<td>$943.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>$4,734,158</td>
<td>2.02%</td>
<td>$256,749</td>
<td>$15.58 -17.39%</td>
<td>$1,558.00 -17.39%</td>
<td>$779.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>$5,059,023</td>
<td>6.86%</td>
<td>$680,862</td>
<td>$15.58 0.00%</td>
<td>$1,558.00 0.00%</td>
<td>$779.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>$5,230,663</td>
<td>3.39%</td>
<td>$752,809</td>
<td>$15.58 0.00%</td>
<td>$1,558.00 0.00%</td>
<td>$779.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change from 2005-06 to 2009-10 ( $3.79 ) ( 9.57% ) ( $379.00 ) ( $189.50 )

Over the past five years our rate per $1,000 of true value has actually gone down by 9.57%. The tax bill for a property valued at $100,000 decreased by $379.00. Likewise, a property owner with a true value of $50,000 saw his tax bill go down $189.50. We are very glad that we were able to accomplish this during these years of better state financing. However, it may not be possible to continue this trend. Please know that we will do everything we can to limit the tax levy impact, but there simply is no way for a low wealth district like ours to absorb such a significant reduction in state aid. The good news is that even if the tax levy does increase, it is not expected to approach the levels of 2005-06. Hence, we would still be paying less per $1,000 of true value than we were five years ago!

The exact numbers are yet to be determined, but I thought you should know the situation we face. Please know that we appreciate your continued confidence and support as we work our way through these difficult financial times with our state and nation. By working together we will overcome this latest challenge.

Have a Great Week!

Steve Schoonmaker
SVE Universal Pre-kindergarten Registration for the school year 2010-2011 will take place on March 23rd from 8:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Spencer Van Etten Elementary School Conference Room
(8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m., 1:00p.m.-4:30 p.m., 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.)

ELIGIBLE families are defined as those who live in the Spencer Van Etten School District and have children who will be four years old by December 1, 2010. The program begins in September 2010, pending funding approval in the NYS budget. Students who are unable to attend UPK 5 days a week, for the entire school year may be ineligible. Students who do not live in the Spencer Van Etten School District are also ineligible.

You may pick up the SVE UPK application, at the Spencer Van Etten Elementary School Office or Call 589-7110 for more information.

When you return the completed application, please include the following copies that we may keep:
- a copy of your child’s original birth certificate,
- a completed signed or stamped record of up-to-date immunizations, with the physician’s name and address included,
- proof of district residency (Documentation showing your name & address. Ex.: Mailing address on a bank statement, utility bill, magazine, etc.)
- a telephone number where you can be reached between 8:00a.m. and 4:00p.m.

* If the application is not complete, it will not be accepted.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO RETURN THE COMPLETED UNIVERSAL PREKINDERGARTEN APPLICATION

No later than March 23rd, 2010 to:

SVE Elementary School
Attention: Christine J. Ewanyk
7 Langford Street
Van Etten, New York 14889

A limited number of slots are available. Children will be chosen by a lottery system. SVE will accept the applications until the designated deadline.

Important Dates

April 2nd - No School
April 7th - 11:30 dismissal - Parent/Teacher Conferences
April 7th - Elementary School PTO Meeting - 6:30 p.m.
April 19th - 23rd - No School - Spring Recess
PAVE Students Cheer on SV-E Alumni @ Cornell’s Big Red Basketball Senior Night!

On Saturday, February 27th participants of the PAVE After School Program were treated to a special Early College Awareness field trip to witness S-VE Alumni Jeff Foote play in his last home contest for the Cornell Big Red Men’s Basketball Team. There were smiles on every face as students took their seats amid the sold out crowd in Newman Arena. Students made signs to support Jeff Foote and his Cornell team mates, and truly became part of the “Newman Nation” for the evening. It was impressive to watch Jeff accomplish a game-high 11 rebounds and contribute to the Big Red’s 68-48 victory over the University of Pennsylvania, bringing the Cornell standings to 25-4. The night was capped off by Jeff Foote’s generous gift of time as he visited with our students, signed autographs, and posed for photographs. This was a wonderful experience for those present, as they meet face to face with a hometown hero who is an inspiration and a positive role model. All in all this was a night that many students will never forget!

Twenty New Members Inducted into Middle School Honor Society

Congratulations to the following students who were inducted into the Middle School Honor Society on March 3rd: Kayla Benjamin, Patricia Benjamin, Allexa Buckingham, Laura Cornish, Eliot Deppe, Genovee Dominguez, Caelan Haney, Samantha Klimekoski, Ty Kunzman, Ryan Lanning, Kennedy Manley, Lisa Nelson, Melanie O’Hara, Connor O’Hare, Kelsey Pierce, William Price, Ashley Rockwell, Gabrielle Sousa, Yvonne Tarantelli and Quinn Vallely. Included in the picture below are new inductees, Mrs. Bishop and Mrs. Joyce.

Current members lit the candles, the Torch of Knowledge (Jaclyn Sears), and the light of Scholarship (Mallory VanNess), Leadership (Samantha Grippo), Character (Hunter Bergmark), and Service (Maia Kunzman). Mrs. Joyce, 7-8 science teacher and Honor Society Advisor, gave the keynote address. Everyone enjoyed a musical interlude offered by the jazz band, which played “What a Wonderful World.” After the program, new inductees and their guests attended a reception in the cafeteria.
SPENCER VAN ET TEN HIGH SCHOOL

Spencer-Van Etten High School presents Disney’s Beauty and the Beast.

March 18, 19, & 20th at 7:00 pm in the Clyde Spear Auditorium of the Spencer-Van Etten High School. Tickets are on sale at the High School Office (589-7144); $6 advanced sale, $8 at the door.

A scene from Beauty and the Beast starring Lucas Eaton (the Beast), Leeanna Bond (Belle), Tommy Larison (Gaston). In this scene: Ashley Morey (Mrs. Potts), Lucas Eaton, and Kenneth John Reuter (Lumiere).

Upcoming Dates

High School Musical: Beauty and the Beast: March 18, 19, 20, 2010
All-County Band and Chorus, Owego: March 13, 2010
Board of Education Meeting: March 23, 7PM, MS Library