



2016-2017

**Preliminary Budget Details:
Putting the Puzzle Pieces
Together**

Problem/Challenge:

Continue to provide a rich academic and instructional program that supports the mission statement and District Goals of Gardner-Dickinson, but while maintaining sustainable good-standing financial status.

The mission of our community based school is to create a safe, compassionate, progressive learning environment that recognizes individual needs and encourages all students to strive for personal and educational excellence.

As a small, suburban school district, rich with pride, we believe that by working together we can: create a dynamic program based on character, tolerance and diversity; provide opportunities for all to reach their fullest potential; empower all to achieve personal excellence and encourage a life-long love of learning.

The District's Goals for the 2015-2016 School Year

Increase academic achievement for all students.

Value continuous school improvement.

**Foster a safe, respectful, responsible and positive school
community.**

Promote open and effective communication.

**Provide a quality educational program while remaining fiscally
responsible.**

As of February 11, 2016, what do we know?

1. At present moment, we can expect a total state aid increase of \$96,940 (continuously evaluated by State Aid Planning Specialists)

2. With the zero percent tax levy law and the District's lack of taxable growth (construction), total tax levy for 2016-17 can be increased only by approximately \$6,000*

*please note individual tax/equalization rates are determined by the NYSORPTS (Office of Real Property Tax Services)

3. Carry over of \$67,705 from last year (use some, all, or none)- Short-term vs. Long-term

4. Total "Guaranteed" increase from last year's budget year is approximately **\$102,940** (not including any use of previously mentioned carry-over)

More Money is Great, But...

- * Contractual salary increases are mandatory. Combined mandatory pay increases for both unions (WTA and WTAA) is **\$105,000** (approx.).

This does not include non-unionized 10/12 month employee increase

(bus drivers, custodians, secretaries, administration)

- * Mandatory retirement contributions (TRS, ERS), are estimated to be an approximate increase of **\$17,000** (rates are based on percentages of total member payrolls)
- * Health insurance/prescription coverage rate increases estimated at **\$63,054**

- * Special Education Placements (two unexpected student placements with a total cost of approximately \$120,000, not including transportation); important to budget for these students and also **unexpected/unanticipated** student arrivals
- * Charter School Tuition / High School Tuition
- * The above are non-negotiables (“open your doors” expenses)
- * Purchase of 2 new vehicles (one 28 passenger and one 66 passenger) aid able/ no extra cost to the District but will be part of our overall budget considerations (short-term vs. long-term expenses)

Program Priority Needs to Address:

- * In addition to maintaining current level of programming, the District would like to consider the following needs:
 - Addition of supports or resources to address larger class sizes (exploring numerous options)
 - Reallocation/maintenance of support for K-8 staff professional development
 - Restoration of an appropriate textbook allocation to meet needs of Math/ELA Series plus classroom/book rooms
 - Maintenance of Technology Support and Resources for instructional program, devices, and aging infrastructure
 - Minimal disruption to the Fund Balance

BOTTOM LINE:

Balance revenues with mandatory and desired program expenses to present a viable school budget

BUT, THERE'S HOPE (THE MISSING PUZZLE PIECES):

1. Gap Elimination Act (GEA) restoration could be partially or fully restored (possible addition of approximately \$150,000)
2. Legislative lobbying is successful in advocating for an increase in overall Foundational Aid
3. Tuition Revenue (gain greater than loss)

NEXT STEPS:

1. Use available data to ensure needs of fixed costs will be met
2. Re-examination of last year's line item allocations to determine if appropriate (too high, too low, etc.)
3. Use enrollment data and examine financials after the "open the door" needs are met to ensure class sizes are adequately but responsibly addressed (short-term versus long-term)
4. Be patient, ask/answer questions, advocate, and think "outside of the box!"

Questions?