



Gill-Montague Regional School District

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Superintendent's Report July 15, 2009

FY 10 Budget: As you know, we received a 1/12th Commissioner's Budget, which was set lower than the School Committee voted at its last meeting on July 7th. The 1/12th budget we received was \$1,338,149 for a total budget of \$16,657,788. As was relayed in the email sent out earlier, this amount results in a budget that is \$30,000 less than previously approved. So, instead of looking at an additional \$40,000 in cuts we will now be looking at a \$70,000 adjustment. The administrative team will be meeting on Monday to discuss our options.

I have requested clarification from the Commissioner's office regarding how the dollar amount was set, but have not heard anything back from him as of today.

Montague Town Meeting: The date for this meeting has been set for August 5th. We need to discuss whether you wish to present a revised budget to the town that reflects the Commissioner's proposed budget, which would allow for reduced assessments as well. We will include a new summary sheet for you with those updated/proposed numbers for your consideration. It would seem to make sense to me to have the School Committee vote the Commissioner's budget because if we do not have an approved budget by December this will likely be the number that we will have to work with anyway. While it's not the optimal budget that you have already voted for and supported, it would seem to me to be a compromise that perhaps everyone could live with – not necessarily be enamored with but perhaps live with.

I know that this may be difficult, but I would really hope that we could accept the Commissioner's budget and encourage the towns to support it as well. This would have the benefit of taking us out of the state's spotlight and allow us to hopefully begin to heal the rift that has been growing between the School Committee and the town officials. I truly want to have a different budget building process for the upcoming year that will encourage greater communication and dialogue between the school and town, and I don't see how that is going to be positively initiated if we are still arguing the FY10 budget all the way to December when we will have to accept the Commissioner's budget anyway. That process will likely leave everyone feeling that once again a budget was imposed upon them unilaterally by the state. Perhaps that is an idealistic viewpoint but I always prefer the positive over the negative if at all possible.

Community meetings: So far I have met with the Frank Abbondozio and the Montague selectboard as well as the Montague police chief. Ray was nice enough to take me on a tour of the community as I had not been to Montague Center or Lake Pleasant while driving around. I also have a meeting set up with Tracy Rogers and the Gill selectboard on Monday, July 20th. I am going to try to attend upcoming Finance Committee meetings in both communities to introduce myself to them and determine how we can work together. I would also like to meet with the local ministers and some of the social service agencies to connect with them and to see how the school district can work together with them to meet the needs of our students and their families. I know a great deal of work has already been done in this area and is

ongoing and I want to make sure that I understand the relationships already begun and help to continue to build them further.

SC Orientation: This meeting is set for Saturday, August 8th. Pat Correira, MASC Field Representative, will be conducting the orientation. We will be able to provide this orientation for the new members and have it all count toward their legal requirement. The strategic planning session will be held on August 15th with Glen Koocher, Executive Director of MASC. I believe Mike is going to review the revised structure for these meetings at the committee meeting on the 21st.

I encourage you to contact me or Lynn if you have specific questions or concerns so that we may adequately prepare for them prior to the meeting.

I look forward to meeting with you next week.