

Charleroi School District balances Proposed Budget, tax increase remains uncertain

Charleroi School District balances proposed budget with a .55 mil tax increase; additional budget cuts may be made to mitigate the tax increase.

May 22, 2018

CHARLEROI – Restructuring our budget model and implementation of the “Zero-Based Budget” process has been a major contributing factor in the continued increase of the community’s overall confidence in the school district, and subsequent acceptance of the district’s budget recommendations.

“This budget reflects our plan to succeed, it is a blueprint for building on past accomplishments and funding future achievement. We crafted the 2018-19 budget with our most precious resource—Charleroi Area students—at the forefront, placing significant emphasis on supports that will also provide our staff with the tools to grow our success.” Zelic said.

The 2018-2019 budget is balanced at \$24,123,000 in proposed revenues and expenditures. The proposed revenues are funded 57% by State sources, 40% by Local sources & 3% by Federal sources. Crystal Zahand, Business Manager, credits the leadership of Dr. Zelic, and support of the School Board, with making the difficult, unpopular decisions over the past few years enabling the District to sustain our learning environment, with a vision of working toward the future. We have a strong administrative team, dedicated teachers and staff, and a very supportive Education Foundation that has come together to understand our fiscal constraints and work toward a common goal: providing a quality education and leaving every dollar we can in the classroom.

Among the cost saving measures for the 2018-19 budget are:

- Joining a new Health Care Consortium
- Eliminating Positions through Attrition
- Restructured Administrative Positions
- Outsourcing Technology Services
- Creating our own in-house Cyber School K-12
- Combining Transportation Routes for efficiency
- Freezing additional compensation for Extra Curricular Activities/Athletics
- Partnering with the Charleroi Regional Police Department to provide security on campus

The full budget proposal can be found at <http://www.charleroisd.org/DistrictBudget.aspx> The public may comment on the proposed 2018-19 budget during public meetings scheduled by the Charleroi Board of School Directors on May 22 and June 26 at 7:00 p.m. The meetings will be held at Charleroi High School Community Room. The Board is scheduled to vote on the 2018-19 Final Budget on June 26, 2018.

“Again, we have successfully implemented cost reduction initiatives over the last 3 years that have allowed us to continue to keep jobs by utilizing attrition, creating in-house support classrooms, optimizing outside utilization of services, combining transportation for routing efficiency; however, driving costs, like retirement, cyber school tuition and special education services continue to increase,” Zahand said

The District’s current millage rate is 15.8306 mills, raising the millage rate to the index will increase taxes to 16.38 mills or \$16.38 for each \$1,000 of assessed valuation of taxable property. This increase would generate an additional \$291,850 for the District. The tax bill for a \$100,000 assessed property value will increase approximately \$55.

The proposed 2018-19 budget reflects an increase of \$573,000 (or 2.38%) over the current spending plan.

Board President, Ken Wiltz said “The District is analyzing expenditures to make possible recommendations for additional cuts to expenditures before next month’s meeting to avoid a tax increase, including the possibility of eliminating positions and programs”

The proposed budget includes a donation of \$3,000 to the JK Tener Library in Charleroi.