

VALLEY STREAM UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT THIRTY

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Dr. Elaine Kanas
Superintendent of Schools

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March 18, 2010

Dear Valley Stream 30 School Community,

Budget Update

During the past three months the Board of Education has been holding budget discussions at their public meetings. Acutely aware of the current, difficult economic times, the Board of Education has been working with the administration to bring in the most cost-saving budget possible, with the lowest possible tax increase that maintains programs for our children. It is the Board's present intention to adopt a budget for voter approval at the March 22nd Board Meeting. During April and May, we will be using this newsletter, our Friendly Schools Publication and various community/PTA meetings to provide details regarding the Budget prior to the May 18th Budget Vote.

Strategic Plan Update

Approval of the Five-Year Strategic Plan for Valley Stream 30 is scheduled for the March 22nd Board Meeting as well. Below is the forward to the plan document, encapsulating the impetus and journey of this collaborative effort. Thank you to all the many constituents and community members who have participated in one way or another in this event.

As you know, these are economically-challenging times for our community and its schools. On the other hand, this is the best time to re-think our priorities and bring focus and efficiency to our work and use of available resources. With this in mind, the Board of Education convened a Strategic Planning Committee this year to survey parents, the community at large, and our staff about areas of school programs which merit a closer examination and a priority for our energies.

Attached is the Strategic Plan for Valley Stream 30 School District for the Years 2011-16. (Available on web site). You will see ten major goals that have been identified as areas for growth for the next five years. Though these ten areas have been specifically identified by the Board of Education based on the community and staff input, Valley Stream 30 will continue to address and grow in those curricular areas where significant effort and planning have already started taking place, as in our ELA and Math curriculums.

The Board is grateful to the following persons who gave so generously of their time to guide this strategic planning effort as members of the Committee:

Parents: Dr. Jamilah Grant-Guimaraes, Sherri Holmes Knight, Kim Lapera, Caroline Nonan; Community Members At Large: Steve Epstein, Kymberley C. Jones, Jeffrey Olson, Marc Tenzer; Staff: Jackie Capewell, Ed Cullen, Ellen Fitzgerald, Maureen Hotzak, Angela Hudson, Helene Levine, Erin Malone, Ryan Meloni, Jessica Mitchell, Sue Perrone, Gerard Poole, Caroline Reser

We also want to thank the members of the community and staff who took their time to respond to the written and online surveys, and/or to participate in one of the several focus groups which took place.

A strategic plan is an excellent tool to help identify school district priorities and to serve as a guide when decisions are being made in terms of resource allocation and program priorities. It forms a framework that can be helpful in such decision-making. A strategic plan is, however, a plan...it is not a document that is written in stone. To be truly useful, such a plan needs to remain flexible and responsive to changing times and needs, particularly in this uncertain budget era. Thus, each year, the Board of Education will review the goals, priorities and timetable of the Strategic Plan to measure and report to you on our progress. In this way, we will be able to evaluate any changes in priorities or action steps that may be appropriate.

This is an exciting time for Valley Stream 30 school district as the Board partners with the community and staff on our journey into the future. We value and appreciate your continued collaboration.

*Kenneth Cummings, President
Elise Antonelli, Vice President
Maria A. Fletcher, Ph.D., Trustee
Carolyn Pean, Trustee
Cristobal Stewart, Trustee
Dr. Elaine Kanas, Superintendent of Schools*

Upcoming Activity:

March 22nd, 8:00 p.m. - Board of Education Business Meeting, Shaw Avenue Library

I wish everyone a good weekend! Please email (ekanas@vs30.org) or call me (285-9881, ext. 222) with any suggestions, comments, questions, etc.

Sincerely,

Elaine Kanas

Elaine Kanas, Ed.D.