

March 17, 2015

Dear Greendale School District Parents and Guardians and Community Members:

We are grateful for the strong support Greendale Schools receives from our community. Today, we are writing to provide you with important information about your school district and to ask for your help.

Over the past four years, the State has made significant changes in terms of how Wisconsin public schools operate. We have worked diligently to incorporate the state-mandated changes that have been part of the last two state budgets. Thankfully, the Greendale School District has a tradition of success and has been well supported by the greater Greendale community.

However, we are at a crossroads with Governor Walker's K-12 Education budget proposal that is part of the 2015-17 state budget. The budget proposal contains provisions that negatively affect our district in terms of school funding.

These are the budget challenges the Greendale School District currently faces:

- Governor Walker's proposal to cut \$150 in aid per student will reduce our current budget by \$341,400. (All Wisconsin Public Schools are funded on a per student basis by the state.)
- Funding the teacher salary structure and paying for supplies, services, utility and other inflationary increases will cost approximately an additional \$576,239 for the 2015-2016 school year. With no increase allowed on the revenue cap in the Governor's budget, there are no additional funds available. (Almost 80% of our budget is invested in "people". To have a great school – we need to attract and return great teachers and staff. Competitive salaries and benefits are major components to accomplish this.)

We are facing a nearly \$1,000,000 deficit for the 2015-16 school year. We cannot balance the school budget without making significant changes that may include: cutting student programs, reducing staff, freezing staff compensation, reducing benefits, utilizing funds in reserve that fund our cash flow needs, or receiving additional funding from the state.

We are reaching out to you as parents, community members, and leaders who want the best for the youth in the Greendale School District. It is well documented that local schools have a profound impact on local economic development, home values, and the quality of life in their community.

There is another way you can help us. Please consider reaching out to Governor Walker, local state lawmakers, and the Wisconsin Joint Finance Committee to express your thoughts about the impact of the state budget on the Greendale School District.

Our representative's contact information:

State Representative Ken Skowronski: rep.skowronski@legis.wisconsin.gov
State Senator Mary Lazich: sen.lazich@legis.wisconsin.gov

Co-chairs of Joint Finance Committee:

State Representative John Nygren: rep.nygren@legis.wisconsin.gov
State Senator Alberta Darling: sen.darling@legis.wisconsin.gov

Vice Chairs:

State Senator Luther Olsen: sen.olsen@legis.wisconsin.gov
State Representative Dale Kooyenga: rep.kooyenga@legis.wisconsin.gov

Note: The Joint Finance Committee has scheduled a public hearing on March 20, 2015 at Alverno College to take public input on the proposed budget beginning from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The public is invited. In order to speak, it is advised to be present by 7:30 a.m.

What will help the Greendale Schools and other Wisconsin Schools?

In order to get community feedback on potential reductions, a meeting has been scheduled for **March 25, 2015, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Greendale High School Library.** Please attend to learn more about possible budget cuts and how you can help us by contacting our legislators.

We intend to ask Governor Walker and the Wisconsin Legislature to eliminate the \$150 per student funding cut and provide for a reasonable increase to public school funding over the next two years. In the recent past, it was common for the State to provide us with yearly increases of over \$250 per student.

The students in the Greendale School District have benefited greatly from the support of parents and community members. We want this positive tradition to continue and you can be assured that our goal is to provide the highest quality education to the children of Greendale.

Thank you for your assistance and continued support in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Joe Crapitto, School Board President
Erin Green, Chief Financial Officer
John Tharp, School Superintendent