

January 2010

Dear Citizens of Yarmouth,

Much effort this fall has focused on our fiscal response to Gov. John Baldacci's curtailment of nearly \$520,000 of general purpose aid to Yarmouth's schools. At the same time, we have begun the development of the 2010-2011 school budget in consideration of significant constrictions, most notably the reductions in general purpose aid expected for the next fiscal year and the resolution of the Town Council to limit budgets for 2010-2011 to amounts approved for 2009-2010.

We are thankful for the past fiscal management of the School Committee that provided reserve funds that will mitigate approximately one-third of next year's estimated \$1.2 million loss of subsidy. It is obviously not a strategy that can be sustained beyond this next fiscal year.

The development of the 2010-2011 budget follows a budget process that is well-established. The time line for this process is as follows:

1. During the fall months, from September to December, the budget process begins with what is commonly known as the School Committee's program review work. Programs that need significant modification and any programs that may have a sizable impact on the following year's budget are discussed in detail. These discussions allow the School Committee and school community to better understand the rationale behind the proposals to improve various school programs or learning areas as well as the requested funding. The program review work also enables the School Committee to prioritize the needs of the school system from a K-12, long-range perspective.

2. As the program review work unfolds, the normal budget process is also initiated. Teachers submit budget requests to the building principals by mid-November. The principals and superintendent also work together to review staffing needs for the upcoming school year.

3. Building principals review recommendations and make necessary adjustments before submitting budget recommendations to the superintendent by mid-December.

4. Superintendent reviews building requests and staffing needs and submits recommended budget to the School Committee by February 1st.

5. February and March -School Committee reviews superintendent's recommended budget and develops modifications and eventually proposes budget to the Town Council.

6. Town Council considers School Committee requests and makes budget recommendations to the community.

7. Community votes on the school and municipal budgets at Town Meeting.

8. As part of a new state law, the community votes again in a ballot referendum on the school budget.

9. During July and August the School Committee develops a list of programs to be reviewed in the next school year. The cycle begins again.

Through this year's program review, the School Committee:

1. Reviewed staffing, retirement, student enrollment, and budget

projections for 2010-2011.

2. Considered the added athletic expenses related to two athletic programs that are moving from one level to another level of sanctioning.
3. Postponed consideration of improvements to HMS playground space.
4. Considered the needs for additional supervision of the middle school athletic program and the high school weight room.
5. Considered the sanctioning of a sail team for Yarmouth High School. This sanctioning will not require financial support.
6. Postponed consideration of curricular changes that do not require financial support. The study of these curriculum areas will continue through the spring.

The School Committee has reserved the following meeting times for the development of the 2010-2011 school budget:

Thursday, January 28, 2010

Budget Overview

Log Cabin

7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

Budget Workshop

Rowe School

7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 9, 2010

Budget Workshop

Log Cabin
7:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 25, 2010
Regular Meeting/Adopt Budget
Log Cabin
7:00 p.m.

These are all public meetings and I invite you to attend. If you have any suggestions or questions, do not hesitate to contact me or any School Committee member.

Sincerely,

Judith J. Paolucci, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools