

Superintendent's Thoughts

January, 2017

Each year we want to take a look at issues that could adversely affect the operations of Greensburg Schools. These issues below are and will continue to be very important as we plan for the future. We can only do what we can afford to do financially so some of these issues will require us prioritizing by need and addressing with an understanding of today's budget constraints. Revenues to the Corporation are very important and will impact many aspects of the daily operations of the school. Listed below are some of the issues we need to be aware of going into a new year.

What issues do we anticipate affecting our future plans?

- 1. Budgetary constraints that are being caused by Tax Caps and the Circuit Breaker. These continue to greatly impact our Capital Projects Fund. We must continue to work with the City of Greensburg to minimize the impact as much as possible. 2017 could see a projected \$500,000 negative impact due to the Circuit Breaker on Greensburg Schools revenues. We have been negotiating a pass through of \$150,000 a year over the next three years with the Greensburg TIF Board.**
- 2. GCS is at the Foundation Level in the School Funding Formula (about \$4,967 per ADM). Unless our ADM increases there will not be any new monies. The impact of poverty (Free/Reduced lunches) has been greatly reduced as a factor in funding under the Foundation funding formula. The only way currently to increase revenue is for the district ADM to increase. This isn't likely over the next few years.**
- 3. Future impact of TIF districts on our assessed valuation (AV). Most anticipated growth in our district will occur within these TIF areas. This loss of AV will increase the negative impact of the Circuit Breaker.**

- 4. Impact of vouchers from the non-public schools. Both non-public schools are currently accepting vouchers. This can take away potential ADM from GCS. Between Saint Mary's and Good Shepherd we lost 80 students that we would normally have in GCS attendance.**
- 5. Potential impact of pre-school programs at non-public schools. Once non-public schools get students in their pre-schools many of the students will stay at the non-public school. If state funding becomes available we will need to look at establishing our own pre-school program.**
- 6. Effect of transfer students on our district budget. New Indiana Codes have caused the district to change our policy and this could affect us financially. We currently have about 100 transfer students. If we accept transfer students then we have to take all students. Some of these students may require services that cost more than the revenue they produce. This can be a problem over time.**
- 7. Changing demographics (lower socio-economic base) will affect programs and expenditures to sustain them. This could manifest in rental fees for 1:1 implementation. We used debt service to retrieve some of the monies lost due to non-payment of fees for 16-17.**
- 8. Changing demographics will require new approaches and strategies to meet all student needs. GCS Special Ed population has increased over the past two years. This additional cost to the program is about \$150,000 with no additional revenue to cover this cost. This additional cost went to provide two new teachers for programs not offered in the past.**
- 9. Sustaining and enhancing school programs during a time of diminishing revenues will be a financial challenge but to remain competitive we must promote these programs:**
 - a. 1 to 1 computer program (Book rental alone will not sustain the Program)**
 - b. Vocational Ed Program**
 - c. Ag Program**
 - d. World Language at GJHS**
 - e. PLTW and computer applications**
 - f. Achievement School for GJHS and GHS**

- 10. Multiple levels of accountability will be of greater public concern:**
 - a. Teacher/Administrator Evaluation**
 - b. School Letter Grades**
 - c. Graduation Rates**
 - d. Post GHS success of students**
 - e. Sustaining high quality instruction with decreased revenue**
 - f. Maintaining STEM emphasis**
 - g. Recruiting and keeping outstanding teachers**
- 11. Instructional technologies (hardware and software) will need to be sustained and enhanced.**
- 12. Our early childhood education program (possible pre-school for all students) will need to be examined. This might be an area that over time could actually generate some revenue for GCS.**
- 13. Focus on increased rigor, more relevance of curriculum, and building solid relationships must be balanced with standardized test score importance. CTE will be of greater emphasis from the IDOE.**
- 14. District growth that we saw for 10 years has flattened. With ADM declining revenue for the General Fund is a major concern.**
- 15. Increased Student/Teacher ratios across GCS is inevitable. We will try and keep all class sizes under 30 students.**
- 16. Examining the relevance of all academic programs across GCS will be of great importance. Eliminating existing programs is important when we add new programs.**
- 17. Managing the digital divide – some students have all the tools and support for technology they need from home and others do not have that support. We must make up for this deficit at school so that all of our students are on the same level.**
- 18. Developing our administrative team in the district. We will continue to stress the need for our administrators to be competent in technology, curriculum, and instruction. PD will be provided as needed.**
- 19. Maintaining positive relationships in the community, especially when we have to make difficult decisions.**

- 20. Balancing our overall focus between curriculum, instruction, and assessment.**
- 21. Meeting our student needs for more support in regards to psychological, emotional, and social issues that are impacting our schools negatively. We will continue our relationship with Center Stone so that we can provide more intense therapy and counseling to those in need.**
- 22. The growing disparity in income levels affecting our students must be anticipated and addressed in all of our buildings.**
- 23. Communication between home and schools must continue to be emphasized. We must continue to examine the effectiveness of social media and how we can use it to benefit our schools.**
- 24. Evaluating and improving current assessment/testing programs in GCS. We need to eliminate any standardized testing that is not essential to providing meaningful and useful data.**
- 25. Keep a positive attitude towards our daily work in an environment that is constantly attacking public education.**

Have a great 2017