Message from the Superintendent...

Benefit vs. Cost of Education

There has been much talk over the past year about the increasing cost of education to local taxpayers. I'd like to take some time to look at the issue from the perspective of the benefit of education vs. the cost. Included in this discussion will also be a look forward to what is in store for the upcoming budget, which we are now in the process of developing.

Over the past few years, all of us have become acutely aware of the loss of manufacturing jobs in the greater Rochester area. It is a fact that there are approximately 5,000 less manufacturing positions than there were 5 years ago. Some jobs have moved to other states but many of these jobs have moved overseas. We can complain all we want, but the fact remains that our society is changing. Our society is moving from a place where you could graduate from high school and have a “good” job in manufacturing to a society where there are fewer jobs available without some post-high school training. In 2003, the average full-time, year around worker in the U.S. with a college degree earned $49,900, which was 62 percent more than was earned by the same worker with a high school diploma. This disparity has been growing over the past 30 years. In 1979, a college degree earned you 38 percent more than a high school graduate (College Board statistics). While not every student needs a college degree, the fact is that each student leaving high school needs some post-high school education to be competitive. Last fall, leaders from all sectors (business industry and education) conducted a symposium in New York State and came to the conclusion that economic growth is essential to New York and education is essential to economic growth. The value of providing education to our young people is a benefit that will help keep our economy strong.

In Williamson, we have tried to provide the benefit of education at a reasonable cost. Together, with the Board, our budget increases have attempted to be sensitive to the public we serve. This can be shown by the chart below, which shows that we provide a program that is high quality at a cost that is below that of other districts with comparable wealth.

Expenditure Per Pupil (Based on most recent NYS data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Williamson</th>
<th>Similar Schools *</th>
<th>All NYS Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$6,305</td>
<td>$7,111</td>
<td>$7,595</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Similar schools are schools of comparative wealth

My goal this year is to bring in a budget that will meet the governor’s expectation of being at or below the contingency level. By doing so, we will have met the criteria that he has set for increased tax rebates to you under the Star Plus Program. Whether or not his proposal becomes reality, we will have to wait and see.

In addition, I would like to remind you that we will have an additional expense this year because of the ongoing capital project. This increase is a one-time increase of $.54/thousand. The project will not have further impact on the tax rate in future years.

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Message from the BOE President . . .

Richard Jordan
Board of Education President

E ach February the Board of Education starts preparing a budget for the next school year. With input from the superintendent, gathered from the administration, faculty, and staff, we start making decisions about program and staff. These decisions shape our school district for the next school year and, indeed, for years into the future. These decisions are crucial to the school and the community we serve.

You, as a resident of the district, have the most important decision to make. You must decide whether to support that budget or not. You also have another decision to make each year. Who will you place your confidence in to make these decisions for you? Each year people step forward to run for the Board of Education. That selection is just as important as any budget or building plan you might vote for or against.

This year Gretchen Craft stands for re-election. Next year, Mike Collins and I are up for re-election. In 2008, Linda Moll and Laurie Verbridge stand for election. Why did I take the time to review all three years? It is important to see the Board as a whole. Not five individuals, but a whole unit working together for Williamson. None of us have any power or control individually. But as a group, we oversee some of the most important issues of our day, the education of your children and grandchildren and the impact that has on us as a community.

Are you interested in running for the Board of Education? The Board has prepared a booklet about being a Board member. There will be workshops available about serving on the Board. Information is available at the District Office. Drop in or call 589-9661. Call a present Board member and ask questions. We will gladly help you and direct you to other sources of information.

Williamson has been lucky in recent years to have a choice of candidates. Some school districts can barely supply enough people to fill the open seats on the Board. These are tough times financially for everyone, including your school district. The Board makes many tough decisions every month. No one group makes any more important decisions concerning Williamson than the Board of Education. This can be frustrating but also highly rewarding. Come visit our meetings, research our jobs, and decide to join our team. Petitions to run for the Board are available at the district office.

Thank you,
Bucky Jordan

Elementary School . . .

Artist in Residence

Nancy Bryan, Grammy Nominated singer and songwriter will be our guest artist in residence during the first two weeks in March. Mrs. Bryan will be sharing her talents with each student in the school and helping our students further express their creative and musical abilities. At the conclusion of the two-week residency, our students will have composed and written three original songs that reflect the spirit of the Williamson Elementary School. The songs will be recorded using professional equipment and be showcased on both The Festival of the Arts evening and Grandparent’s day. Mrs. Bryan will coordinate her efforts with both Mrs. Byron and Mrs. Hunn, our music teachers and Mr. Rozzi, our enrichment teacher.

T.V. Free Week

The Elementary School will be participating in National T.V. Turnoff Week April 24-30, 2006. The Bully-Free Committee will help to coordinate this effort for our students which will encourage alternative activities to watching television and culminate in a family game evening at the school the evening of Friday, April 28, 2006. The T.V. free week was inspired to foster reading and academic achievement, promote active lifestyles and encourage families to spend more time together in social activities. Last year, more than 19,000 organizers and an estimated 7.6 million people participated in T.V. Turnoff Week. Additional information will be sent home to parents and students who wish to participate in our local effort.

Annual Reading Incentive Program

Our annual reading incentive program began on Friday, February 3, 2006 with an exciting assembly entitled, Storytown Under Construction. Our students and faculty have been exposed to the many sights and sounds of construction as we continue to make improvements to our facility. Therefore, the construction theme seemed to be a natural one. The town of Storytown was under construction because its inhabitants were all mixed up. The various characters from favorite fairytales were distressed because they were placed in situations that were unfamiliar and completely opposite from their traditional roles. For instance: Little Bo Peep had found her sheep; the spider for all her efforts could not scare little Miss Muffet away.

The annual assembly showcases the many talents and creativity of our faculty members. Teachers are asked to sing, dance, act, narrate, design and sew costumes and write the annual script to excite and entertain our students. The assembly is just one of the many activities planned throughout the four week reading incentive period.

The goal of the program is to develop good reading habits and create an atmosphere where we promote the joys of reading. Students and their parents are asked to develop a reading partnership in which they commit to reading at least twenty minutes a day for five or more days a week. Other planned activities include making and sharing book marks, writing and reading thank you notes, decorating grocery bags, reading recipes and making the yummy treats, reading to a friend, reading and writing a story about your grandparents or other relatives, reading various genre’s like fairy tales, biographies etc., and reading the directions to a new game.

Guest readers from our High School, Middle School, Administrative team and community members also visit classrooms on a weekly basis and share a favorite book and the enjoyment that can come from reading. The program will conclude with an additional assembly planned for Friday, March 3, 2006. Keep reading!!!

LEARNING FAIR

The Williamson Central School District’s Annual Learning Fair for K-12 students will be held on Saturday, March 25 from 1-4 p.m. at the Middle School.

Registration materials for student projects are available in each building.

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Honor, Merit & Achievement Rolls

Middle School Merit Roll (85%-89.99% Average)

- Stephanie Kingsbury
- Katlyn Gregg
- Alexandra Cappon
- Roxanne Bowman
- Pierce Alquist

Middle School 5th Grade High Achievement (84.5%-99.9% Average)

- Catherine Bonke
- Joseph Ankrom
- Ariana Allman
- Brandi Albone

Middle School 5th Grade High Achievement (84.5%-99.9% Average)

Building Project Update

Work associated with the capital improvement project continues at the elementary, middle and high schools. We are happy to report thus far there have been no lost time accidents on the project. The Project team as a whole has shown an extremely high level of professionalism allowing work to be completed with little interruption to the day to day activities of the District.

The State Education Department has approved the drawings and specifications for phase two of the project. Bids for work at the bus garage and track will be accepted on March 2nd, 2006, at 2:00 PM. This work is scheduled to begin immediately and will be completed by the start of the fall session of school in September.

Sincerely,

Todd LaBarr
Construction Manager

High School Auditorium Control Desk

Class Ring

High School Auditorium Control Desk

Elementary Classroom Close To Completion

FOUND (Near TOPS – Ridge Road East) Older, Williamson Central School Class Ring

Please call the District Office at 589-9661 to identify.
High School . . .

The 2nd semester of the 2005-06 school year is underway. One of the academic highlights from the 1st semester was our students’ success on the Math A Regents Examination, as all 89 students that took the exam passed and 60% achieved mastery level with a score of 85% or better. Over the course of the 1st semester, over 40% of our students achieved one of our academic rolls (merit, honor, high honor, and improvement roll). Also, Stephanie Darling, Allison Carnwath, Ryan Dixon, and William Pellert’s artistic talents were recognized through the “Principal’s Choice” Art Award Program as the November, December, and January winners.

In addition to the wonderful things happening inside Williamson High School’s walls, the following students deserve recognition. Chad Burlee, a WHS junior, is going to the American Legion State Oratorical Contest Finals on March 11, 2006. She recently won the Western New York Zone to reach the finals. Josh Forget, who is in 9th grade, won a composition competition at Hochstein School of Music and will compete at the State level in the spring. Congratulations also go out to Jeanine Follette, a WHS senior, who placed in the top 3 in the Rotary Classical Arts Competition and will compete for a $1000.00 scholarship at the State level in the spring.

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The following students were inducted into the National Honor Society (NHS) on December 16, 2005:

- Chad Burlee**
- Kyle Odell
- Kelly Kolyer
- Caleb Animal Watercolor – S. Darling
- Watercolor Still Life – R. Dixon
- Shattered Palace Dragonfly – W. Pellert

**Chad Burlee was also recognized as the WHS sophomore of the year.

Middle School . . .

Over one half of the 2005-2006 school year is completed and the Williamson Middle School continues to have a number of activities that highlight the integration of instruction and citizenship.

Classroom Highlights:

Grade 5  One section of fifth graders have begun a research project involving the fifty states. Another group of students are writing about acts of kindness in home and school. In Science students are learning about body systems, including skeletons and muscles and the effects of the physical environment. Fifth graders will also be receiving computer skills training.

Grade 6  In Science the sixth graders are researching consumers and producers, constructing food webs and creating new three dimensional creatures. From stories they read, students spent class time researching and developing a creature that can adapt to their environment. In English Language Arts students are reading Miracles Maker and preparing projects for the Learning Fair. Sixth grade math students can now develop spreadsheets and are beginning their work with fractions. Students recently completed their foreign country research project and brochure and will begin studying the medieval culture.

Grade 7  The seventh graders are reading three different books: The Count of Monte Cristo, Freak the Mighty, and Seedfolks. These books focus on tolerance and cultural diversity. A poetry unit will also be introduced soon in the English Language Arts classes. In math students have been working with circle graphs and measuring angles and will soon to be learning about probability and statistics.

Grade 8  The eighth graders are working on a poetry unit in English Language Arts and their poems are displayed in the hallways. In celebration of Black History Month the students are reading Role of Thunder, Hear My Cry. In math the students are vigorously preparing for New York State testing by reviewing transformational geometry and polynomials. Eighth grade Science students are learning the periodic table. Each student will research one of the elements and students together will create a large table to be displayed in the building.

Other activities in the Middle School:

- 16 students participated in the oral round of the spelling bee after qualifying in the written round.
- 7th grade actors will portray Revolutionary War soldiers re-enacting life and hardships of the soldiers of that time.
- Over 200 students have submitted entries for Ripples, a magazine featuring student writing.
- The constellation dome, Star Lab, will return to the Middle School in March.
- The Learning Fair is scheduled for March 25th from 1-4 pm in the Middle School.
- The new after-school program for 5th and 6th graders, “Cool Stuff for Cool Kids”, is off to a successful beginning with nearly 40 participants.
- Middle School Student Association has begun setting up a new school store, organizing a dance and talent show, and implementing a “Do What’s Right” initiative.

Principal’s Choice Art Award Program

- Oceanic Horse Sculpture – A. Carnwath
- Cebes Animal Watercolor – S. Darling
- Watercolor Still Life – R. Dixon
- Shattered Palace Dragonfly – W. Pellert

- Don’t miss the High School Musical, “GUYS & DOLLS” on March 10 & 11, 2006, at 7:30p.m. at the High School -