



February/March 2018 Tri-Center Newsletter



**High School 712-485-2257 Middle School 712-485-2211
Elementary 712-485-2271**

Superintendent's News and Comments ... Angela Huseman

Upcoming dates of interest:

February 7: 1:30 dismissal-Professional Development
February 21, 22: 1:30 dismissal-Parent/Teacher Conferences
February 23: No School
February 26: No School
March 9: 1:30 dismissal--end of quarter
March 14, 28: 1:30 dismissal-Professional Development
March 29, 30, April 2: No School--Spring Break

Budget Time 2018-19

The General Fund

The General Fund (GF) represents the largest portion of the budget for Tri-Center Community Schools. The GF budget revenues are driven by two variables: enrollment and Modified Supplemental Amount. The certified enrollment (state equation) is determined each year by mid-October. That number is then multiplied times the regular program district cost per pupil to yield the total regular program district cost for the next fiscal year.

The Modified Supplemental Amount (allowable growth) rate is determined by legislature, and it represents the percentage of growth that is added on to the previous year's program district cost per pupil to give schools more funding for the upcoming year. The State Supplementary Assistance has not yet been set for Fiscal Year 2019, but the current number being floated by the House of Representatives is 1.0%. I cannot think of anyone in public education that would say this percentage is "enough", but it may be what we have to work with

during the upcoming year. **I will share a few areas where the legislators could still help our school to realize additional funding at the end of this article.**

The budget capacity of the GF consists of local property tax dollars, state foundation aid, miscellaneous income from state and federal programs, special education funding, allowable growth dollars, and the previous year's unspent balance. The GF is responsible for the payment of all salaries and benefits, materials and supplies, transportation costs, equipment, repairs, and purchased services. Schools are financially responsible for maintaining the budget that is proposed and adopted each year by the month of April.

Enrollment of a school district has the largest impact on funding. A school with declining or even steady enrollment will realize very little if any allowable growth dollars. A school that increases enrollment will see the largest gain in dollars to build their budget. In many situations, schools are forced to operate the school on the same budget capacity as was used the previous year. This is extremely tough because the expenses of running a school rarely, if ever, go down, (i.e., transportation, technology, preschool, student information systems, textbooks, supplies). These were the primary reasons for implementing the Instructional Support Levy (ISL). The Board can make the decision as to how much of this tax will be income tax or property tax for each fiscal period. Each school in the Western Iowa Conference now has implemented the ISL, and all but a few schools in the state have adopted it. As we move forward, this revenue stream will be vital to the quality of our transportation, technology, and early childhood programs.

The Special Revenue Funds

The Special Revenue Funds are a part of the Tri-Center Community School's budget consists of: Capital Projects, Management and Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (PPEL).

Capital Projects can only be used for the purpose of infrastructure--or building/facility repair and updates. Our present source of income is the amount of revenue realized from Secure an Advanced Vision for Education (SAVE) Tax in Harrison, Pottawattamie and Shelby Counties. The Harrison County Sales Tax was voted upon in such a way that it can be used to purchase busses, also.

More on SAVE later.

The Management Fund levy provides the district with monies to pay for the annual property, auto, liability, and worker's compensation insurance costs. Much like other insurance premiums, the cost of this coverage continues to escalate. The Management Fund may also be used to pay for early retirement packages that are periodically offered by the Board.

The PPEL Fund is levied to enable the district to purchase buses or equipment vital to the operation of the physical plant. This money is presently earmarked for the purchase/lease of new buses in an effort to maintain a solid, up-to-date transportation system, but we will also use it to pay for such things as a new roof, cooling tower, technology or any other sizable plant and facility need that arises.

Earlier this year, you voted to up the amount of the he Voter PPEL Fund to its maximum. THANK YOU. This money will help us pay for technology costs incurred by the district each year as well as transportation expenses. It should be noted the State of Iowa does not contribute any funding towards technology expenditures.

It should be noted that the revenue flows directly into each of these special funds and cannot be redirected to the school's General Fund. Special Funds in school finance can be thought of as separate checking accounts. They are maintained and operated according to Iowa Code.

Spending Authority

As important as cash balance is in each fund, the concept of spending authority is equally if not more important. Spending Authority is the limit on General Fund expenditures calculated by the state. Exceeding the legal limit in spending authority is a violation of Iowa law and results in a negative unspent balance. If you have paid attention to our schools financial plights the past three years, you know that this is the area Tri-Center has worked to overcome. Tri-Center currently has a positive unspent balance, and we will plan to budget so this will not be an area of concern again.

Preliminary budget information for 2018-19 will be shared at the March board meeting, with the actual presentation/adoption of the budget taking place at the April board meeting.

Help from the Legislators

Our Iowa Legislators are still in session, and there are a number of bills (and I have outlined a few below) that would help our kids get a truly "equitable" amount of funding.

Transportation Equity: This refers to the amount of money districts spend on bussing their students to school. As you may have guessed, since everyone has to drive to our building, our costs are among the highest in the state. In fact, we pay \$416.96/student for transportation as opposed to a district that only pays \$9.56/student. Transportation money comes out of the General Fund, so you can see how this is inequitable. This equals \$416./96 more a year we are paying then the district paying the lowest amount. If we had to spend less on transportation, we could use that money to get resources in our student's hands.

Per Pupil Spending Equity: TC gets \$143 less per student per year than some districts in Iowa. That equates to over \$90,000 in money and spending authority---EVERY YEAR.

Secure and Advanced Vision for Education (SAVE): This is money that school districts get every year that we need to keep our buildings up-to-date. This particular tax is set to sunset in a couple

years. There is some current legislation out there to extend the sunset. We need this to happen so we can continue on our long-range planning for our facilities.

These are just some of the areas that would help our Tri-Center students to be treated as well as other students in the state in terms of dollars we could use. I would urge you strongly to contact your legislators and advocate for our kids in each of the areas I have listed. If you need help figuring out how and who to contact, you can go to: www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find Additionally, there is a great group called Parents for Great Iowa Schools doing great work advocating for public education. They will be at Thomas Jefferson High School in Council Bluffs on February 6th. If you can't make that meeting and are interested in getting involved in promoting the needs of our district, please contact me, Angie Huseman at 712-485-2257 or ahuseman@tctrojans.org.

Tri-Center is a great school. Just think of what we could offer our students if we got equitable funding.

If you have questions on any of the items I wrote about, please ask me.



Counseling Comments ...By Tami Harman

Seniors: You should be in your final stages of planning for your post-secondary options. College visits, college applications, scholarship searches, etc. should all be in process or almost completed. I have met with 29 seniors and their parents to go over college planning information. I would still like to meet with the remainder of seniors and their parents to finalize plans. I will begin meeting with those seniors that I have not touched base with individually here in the next week or so.

The Tri-Center Foundation Scholarships will be available to seniors beginning April 1st.

Senior Parents: The FAFSA applications can and should be completed and sent in as soon as possible. This must be submitted in order for any financial aid packages for the fall term of college. The

website is www.FAFSA.ed.gov. If you need assistance please do not hesitate to call the high school for assistance. Many colleges have priority deadlines, make sure you are aware of those deadlines for colleges your son/daughter may be applying to in the fall. Remember to make copies of your completed FAFSA and tax returns. You and your son/daughter will also need an ID username and password, which replaces the PIN number before completing the FAFSA.

There are 3 test dates available for ACT testing this school year. They are April 14th, June 9th and July 14th. Juniors should try to test at least once their junior year and then again starting right away their senior year.

There will be a John Baylor Test Prep offered here at Tri-Center before the April 14th ACT test. If your son or daughter is registered to take the April 14th test, they need to sign up for the Baylor Test Prep with Mrs. Harman.

Underwood and Tri-Center will be hosting a College Planning Night and Financial Aid Night on Wednesday, March 14th in Underwood. The College Planning presentation will start at 6:00 pm followed by the Financial Aid presentation at 7:00 pm. Sophomores and juniors should plan to attend if possible.

Juniors: The junior class will be taking the ASVAB (Armed Service Vocational Aptitude Battery) here at Tri-Center on February 15th. This assessment is given to assist the students in career exploration and to gain knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses in relation to different careers. It also helps students begin exploring future educational and career plans.

Juniors should be gathering information on the colleges they may want to attend, visiting with representatives from different schools and planning when to take the ACT test. Juniors should try to take the ACT test once their junior year and again in the beginning of their senior year. There will be an ACT John Baylor Test Prep course offered before the April 9th ACT test date this year for juniors and another in early fall of next year for those students wanting this extra resource to help with the format of the ACT test.

The sophomores will be attending a Career Fair on Thursday, March 22nd at Iowa Western Community College from 9:00 - 12:00 noon. All sophomores will be attending.

Sophomores and Freshmen:

They need to keep focusing on their academics and being active in school activities as well as community organizations. Class rank, cumulative grade point averages, attendance, and ACT scores will determine their success.

National Honor Society News:

The Tri-Center Blood Drive will be held Tuesday, February 20th from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm in the Middle School Gym. Mark your calendar!! Call 712-485-2257 and ask for Tami Harman to make an appointment.

Second semester sophomores, juniors and seniors that qualify for National Honor Society will be given an application in February to complete and return. Students that fill out the application are then ranked by staff and those rankings are brought before a panel for final evaluation and a selection process is used to determine those students that meet the qualifications for admission into National Honor Society. Please watch the Tri-Center website for more information on National Honor Society applications.



Elementary Principal ... Jami Helgenberger

February and March are upon us! We just celebrated the 100th day of school with some fun and creative ways to learn. As our schedules fill outside of the school day, they also continue to be busy inside the classrooms as we continue to focus in all academic areas. We still have a lot of learning to do before the end of the year.

We are currently finishing up our winter FAST (Formative Assessment System for Teachers) and will be getting ready for our NWEA assessments sometime in March. Remember it is important to

make sure everyone is getting enough sleep at night and getting breakfast to start their day.

We continue our focus on different character words that will help build not only good quality students but also good citizens. Our new word we will be focusing on is INTEGRITY. I encourage you to talk with your children about what integrity means and what it looks like. Being honest and having strong moral principles will get us a long way in life. We have so many students, families, and staff at Tri-Center that represent high integrity. Our children and students have great role models. Tri-Center is a GREAT place to be.

Parent teacher conferences will be Wednesday, February 21st and Thursday, February 22nd from 4:00 - 8:00, with a 1:30 dismissal. Teachers will be sending home your appointment time to meet with them. Please contact the school if your time does not work and we are happy to accommodate.

Dates to Remember

February 2nd - No Preschool
February 7th - 1:30 dismissal, Staff Professional Development
February 16th - No Preschool
February 21st - Parent Teacher Conferences, 1:30 dismissal
February 22nd - Parent Teacher Conferences, 1:30 dismissal
February 23rd - No School
February 26th - No School, Staff Professional Development
March 9th - End of 3rd Quarter, 1:30 dismissal
March 14th - 1:30 dismissal, Staff Professional Development
March 28th - 1:30 dismissal, Staff Professional Development
March 29th - No School, Spring Break
March 30 - No School, Spring Break
April 2nd - No School, Spring Break
April 11th - 1:30 dismissal, Staff Professional Development
April 20th - No School
April 25th - 1:30 dismissal, Staff Professional Development
May 9th - 1:30 dismissal, Staff Professional Development
May 24th - End of 4th quarter/Semester 1:30 dismissal



**Kelly Alferts
....TC Bowling**

Bowling is on its final roll of the season. We had a great season and are a week away from our district meet in Shenandoah. We have had a lot of students bowl over "200" scores and some very close. Among those very talented are: Olivia Maassen 228, Erika Kline 200, Caroline Sondag 194, Tillie Heim with a 186, and Alyssa McDermott with a 181 for the girls.

For our boys - our star bowler, Jordan Macias, has been consistently bowling an average of 170 or better, almost a perfect score January 23rd, having 10 strikes in a row, scoring 8 in his last 2 rolls and ending up with a score of 286! I have never seen a score like this in my lifetime. I hope I continue to see more of these scores. We face very tough competition. The other high male bowlers are Noah Dickerson with 225, Kaleb Smith 223, Sid Stowe with a 213, Spencer Heine 213, and Aiden Hess rolled 211. The students have a lot of fun and so do I. We have fabulous kids, thanks to great parents/guardians and a caring community.



**Kelly Alferts
.... MS/HS Art**

The YAM art show will be on display all February at the Heritage Museum in Des Moines. We are allowed only 10 pieces for submission. Justin Bolte, Nathan Holtorf, Makenzie Ritchison, and Hannah Wulff were selected as YAM winners and will have their work on display. The other entries will be part of a traveling art show this whole month of February.

Basic art students have their Vase Face projects displayed on the pillar in front of the High School office. There is a vast array of different projects on display in the cases near the art room. Most work is taken home over Christmas break but more are in the works and will be displayed at the Tri-Center Scholarship Foundation luncheon. We also will be participating in the WIC (Western Iowa Conference) in Audubon on April 27th. The school year is flying by, we'll try to make it as colorful as possible.



Preschool Programs

If you are interested in signing your child up for the 4 year old Tri-Center All Day Preschool Program, you should attend the Preschool Screening.

Kindergarten 2018-2019

If you have a 5 year old not attending our preschool program, please call and make an appointment to come to screening.

Who:

Children ages 2 1/2 to 5 who live in the Tri-Center Community School District and are **not** presently in Kindergarten.

What:

A developmental screening which gives you the opportunity to see if your child is playing, moving, thinking and talking at his/her age level. Screenings include: vision, hearing, speech-language, overall development, and a growth assessment.

Why:

The Preschool Screening can give your child a better educational start when they enter school and your child should attend the screening as a part of the preschool application process.

When:

Friday, March 9

8:00 a.m. To 1:00 p.m.

Must call for an appointment!

Where:

Tri-Center Preschool Room

Tri-Center Elementary

For Appointment:

Please contact the Tri-Center Elementary Office at 712-485-2271. Please bring your child's Immunization Records, Birth Certificate and Social Security card to your appointment.

Cost:

It's **FREE** for all children, fun for all children and reassuring to parents.