



To: Superintendent Chamberlin and School Board Members

From: Chris Sousa

Re: HSD School Board report

Date: October 29, 2010

For the past several weeks, school personnel have been busy balancing fiscal responsibility with the needs to ensure our students' academic growth. This is no easy task, but one that we take very seriously. At the onset of this year's budget season, I asked our Administrative Council to consider strongly the challenging economic times we face and to balance the need to maintain their quality programs while growing them. While we examined initiatives and best practices, our conversations centered on building and district goals, thus beginning the process of deciding, a year in advance, how best to utilize resources.

This year our budget will focus primarily on maintaining excellence in education, while balancing modest growth and innovation. We will look to utilize technology to increase communication and expand instruction and assessment strategies, while creating instructional goals that meet state expectations, challenge students, and ensure learning. Developing tiered supports and programs that reflect a differentiated approach to address the varied cognitive, social, and physical needs of our students, is also a consideration. We will also look closely at our school, department, and teacher protocols around grading and assessment.

Our budget goes through many permutations. It starts with the individual teachers identifying the needs of their students and what materials are required to meet those needs. As they research products, programs, and materials they coordinate with colleagues to determine if any collaboration, particularly within departments, could lead to more cost effective purchasing. From there, the department heads take over and go through the budgets looking for ways to tie in initiatives and dovetail the needs of the students with the overall goals of their department. Administrative meetings to discuss potential costs are also part of this process whether it is during a formal Administrative Council meeting, or one on one over lunch, the message of balancing fiscal responsibility with student learning is discussed. The department heads then submit their budgets and I go over each line, regularly checking in with each teacher, asking for more information, justifications, and explanations around spending. The office manager is a large part of this process, as is the support of Mr. Kelley, as items and ideas that we have thought about budgeting for get worked into the Principal's budget.

This year we continue to see an emphasis on technology acquisition. The more projectors, interactive white boards, and document cameras used, the more other teachers (and students) want them. This is a good thing as we continue to build the capacity for growth in this area. Teachers are actively asking for and utilizing current technology to assist them with instruction and assessment. In addition to this, other more traditional requirements still have to be met. The need for books, pencils, pens, etc. is part of this budget as we look to hone our music and art programs, as well as our math and science curricula. Reaching all students is also one of our major focal points as we build in materials and programs that help us create tiered supports and assistance for our students. In the end our hope is to provide a fiscally responsible budget that provides the materials and substance that serves to inspire students and assist us in ensuring student learning.

Some upcoming events (for more information please check out our calendar on our website):

- Nov. 1 Middle School Parent Teacher Conference
No School for Middle School Students
- Nov. 2 District Parent Teacher Conference
No School For Students District Wide
General Election - Voting
- Nov. 5 Grades Close Qtr. 1
VIP Breakfast
- Nov. 6 SAT's
- Nov. 9 Grades due Qtr. 1
Sports Awards
- Nov. 10 Special Olympics Faculty/Students Basketball
Math Meet Nashua
- Nov. 11 Veterans Day – No School
- Nov. 17 Picture Retakes
- Nov. 19-20 One Act Plays