



Amherst Central School District

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Amherst Central School District 2021-22 Foundation Aid Plan

The 2021-22 enacted state budget included language stating that, for the 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years, each school district receiving a foundation aid increase of more than ten percent or \$10,000,000 must post to the district website prior to July 1 of each school year a plan by school year of how the funds will be used to address student performance and need, including but not limited to:

- (i) increasing graduation rates and eliminating the achievement gap;
- (ii) reducing class sizes;
- (iii) providing supports for students who are not meeting, or at risk of not meeting, state learning standards in core academic subject areas;
- (iv) addressing student social-emotional health; and
- (v) providing adequate resources to English language learners (ELL), students with disabilities; and students experiencing homelessness.

Foundation Aid, first enacted in 2007-08, is the largest unrestricted aid category supporting public school district expenditures in New York State. Amherst CSD's 2020-21 Foundation Aid is \$7.7M, approximately 59% of the full amount owed to our district by the state. In 2021-22, our projected aid is increasing \$1.7M, to a total of \$9.4M, or 68% of our full amount.

Amherst CSD's 2021-22 adopted budget incorporates several initiatives to support student learning in all areas, maintain small class sizes to support individualized instruction, provide social emotional and mental health support, and address the unique and diverse needs of our ELL students, students with disabilities, and any students struggling with homelessness. Some examples are provided below:

- Addition of a 1.0 FTE ELL teacher to be shared between the Middle and High Schools
- Addition of a 0.2 FTE teaching assignment in the High School in the area of English/Language Arts
- Addition of a 0.2 FTE teaching assignment in the Middle School in the area of Technology
- Addition of a 1.0 FTE Physical Education/Health teacher to be shared between the Middle and High Schools
- Addition of a 1.0 FTE Physical Education/Health teacher in Smallwood Drive Elementary School
- Transfer of a 1.0 FTE PE/Health teacher in Windermere Boulevard Elementary School
- Addition of 2.0 FTE Occupational Therapists at Smallwood Drive and Windermere Boulevard Elementary Schools

- Increase professional development budget
- Increase special education budget for tuitions and programs needed to help students find success
- Increase technology budget for Instructional Purchase Agreement with BOCES to increase and update technology available to all staff and students.

Furthermore, without an increase in state aid, we were grappling with identifying reductions in an effort to balance our budget. These reductions would disrupt our programs and have the opposite effect on our goals and the foundation aid goals identified above. Some examples of these reductions included:

- Reductions would result in increased class sizes and would affect instructional and individual student support for general education students, special education students, ELL students, and students experiencing homelessness:
 - Reduce elementary library support in Smallwood Drive and Windermere Boulevard Elementary Schools
 - Eliminate afterschool instructional support at Middle School
 - Reduce Academic Intervention Services Teaching Assistant position in the Middle School
 - Reduce Teaching Assistant positions in Smallwood Drive and Windermere Boulevard Elementary Schools
 - Reduce Science and Art teaching positions in the Middle School
 - Reduce all enrichment activities in Smallwood Drive and Windermere Boulevard Elementary Schools
- Reductions affecting the physical, social emotional, and mental health of students:
 - Reduce athletic opportunities for students
 - Reduce intramural opportunities for students

If you have any questions, comments, or feedback about the District's plan for Foundation Aid usage, please contact Laura Bosinski, School Business Administrator, via email at lbosinski@amherstschools.org or by telephone at (716) 362-3040. Additional details about the budget development process can be found in the budget presentations posted on the District's website at <https://www.amherstschools.org/Page/8854>.