THANK YOU teachers, parents, support professionals, school leaders, and Board of Education members for working together each and every day to make the at-home learning experience a positive one for the children. Your care, concern, and reassurance are helping our young people navigate this somewhat upside down and inside out World with a stronger sense of safety and security. Please know that your Washington Township Schools is deeply committed to supporting every child through these unprecedented times and that we (teachers and school leaders alike) want you reach out should your child need additional support.

As we await Governor Murphy’s next announcement regarding school building closures (expected on or before May 15th) I know that many parents and educators across our state are wondering if schools will actually reopen this school year. The Governor noted on Monday of this week that a reopening is still possible. Not necessarily likely, but possible. As a result, I will be issuing a survey to parents and staff early next week regarding the reopening of school. The survey will address such topics as concerns, challenges, and anticipated supplies (ie. parents accessibility to multi-layered, cloth, washable face masks for their children). Even if schools do not reopen this school year, the District will use the information gleaned from the survey in planning for a reopening in the new school year. I have shared my thoughts with professionals from both the Department of Education and the NJ Office of Emergency Management as to the needs, challenges, and concerns that come with the reopening of schools. I certainly cannot speak for the Governor, but I trust he will air on the side of caution when it comes to the health and welfare of New Jersey’s schoolchildren.

With week 7 of at-home learning set to begin next week I understand that some parents may be wondering about grades at our Long Valley Middle School. It is important to note that the Long Valley Middle School Grade Portal remains “open” for students and parents. As we await determinations from Trenton about possible return dates and/or the fate for the close of the present school year, all LVMS Students will show a “DL” (distance learning) indicator as their “grade.” By clicking on this “DL” grade, students can review performance on individual activities and learning assignments, keep track of work owed and submitted, and receive feedback on their work submissions. If it is later determined that returning to “traditional grades” is warranted, the “distance learning override” code can be removed and gradebooks will look as they have previously. We are employing the “DL” placeholder to allow us to make a more thoughtful decision about performance reporting once we have information about the remainder of this current school year. Additionally, the DL placeholder allows us to more flexibly attend to student and family needs during this unprecedented time, without worrying students unnecessarily about their “Marking Period Grade.” Instead, the LVMS Professional Staff is hopeful our students will simply give their best possible effort (under these circumstances) to assignments and learning experiences.

Even though school life has been altered as we know it, planning for the coming school year continues. This past Tuesday evening the Board of Education adopted the 2020-2021 School Budget. The budget preserves the multi-faceted array of programs and services for our 2,000+ students with a slight increase to the local tax levy of less than 1% (.85%). I have included a “Snapshot” of the 2020-2021 School Budget at the close of this school-home communication.
Take good care, please stay safe, and **THANK YOU** for all that you are doing for the children of our fine community ... Enjoy the beautiful weekend!

❤️ **We WILL Get Through This TOGETHER!** ❤️

Jeff Mohre
Superintendent of Schools

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**Washington Township Schools**

**2020-2021 SCHOOL BUDGET SNAPSHOT**

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### Sources of Revenue

**OPERATING BUDGET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tax Levy</td>
<td>$35,626,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Fund Revenue</td>
<td>$1,072,536</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Aid</td>
<td>$6,307,006</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal Aid</td>
<td>$20,776</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td>$217,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL FUND Revenue TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$43,244,018</td>
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</table>

### RESTRICTED REVENUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Projects</td>
<td>$3,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Projects</td>
<td>$446,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt Service</td>
<td>$1,391,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESTRICTED REVENUES TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$1,841,550</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ANTICIPATED REVENUES

**TOTAL** $45,085,568

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### How does the 2020 – 2021 School Budget Compare to Current Year’s?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>$45,672,773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-21</td>
<td>$45,085,568</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The **2020-2021** school budget is 
$587,205 less (-1.3%) 
than the current year’s.

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### Key Highlights 2020-2021 School Budget

- Preserve Current Array of Educational Programs and Services for Students
- Instructional Resources to Support Curriculum Delivery (NJ Student Learning Standards)
- Average Elementary (K - 5) Class Size = 19.4
- 1:1 Laptop Initiative - LVMS and Elementary Grades (3-5)
- Professional Development Opportunities for Faculty and Staff
- Access to Varied Instructional Resources (students & faculty)
- Continued Facilities Maintenance and Security at All Schools

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### School Budget Q & A

**Will the new school budget preserve the array of program & services for students?**
Yes, all educational programming and services for our district’s students will continue.

**Is WTS’ school budget below cap?**
Yes! The 2020-2021 school budget is below the State’s 2% tax levy cap. The spending plan reflects an overall tax levy increase of less than 1% (.85%).

**Will my school taxes decrease or increase as a result of the new school budget?**
Taxpayers will see an increase of $106 per year on the average assessed home.

**What does the school budget pay for?**
The school budget encompasses all costs related to curriculum and instruction, plant operation and maintenance, transportation, personnel, fiscal operations, & board governance.

**Where does the money come from to fund the school budget?**
In the Washington Township Schools 82% of the budget is funded through local property taxes, 14% from State aid, 2% from local fund balance, and approximately 2% from other sources including Federal.

**The 2020-2021 school budget is less than the current year budget but the tax levy has increased. How can that be?**
What you are witnessing is the financial impact of New Jersey’s reductions in State aid to school districts. The tax levy increase of .85% helps to offset, somewhat, the $912,384 reduction in aid WTS will experience in the new school year.

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Questions?

Contact **Jeff Mohre, Superintendent** @ jmohre@wtschools.org
or **Liz George, School Business Administrator** @ lgeorge@wtschools.org
~ Or call us @ 908.876.4172 ~