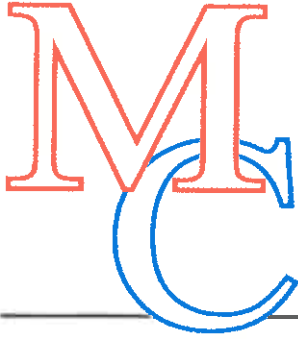


MIDDLE COUNTRY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
AT CENTEREACH

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Roberta A. Gerold, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
Francine McMahon, Deputy Superintendent for Instruction
Beth A. Rella, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Business
James G. Donovan, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

February 1, 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Last week, we were notified by the New York State Comptroller that Middle Country Central School District has received the designation of “Susceptible Fiscal Stress”. We received this designation because, over the past several years, we have relied heavily on reserves to balance our budgets. The ability to do so is no longer sustainable for us.

In Middle Country, our program costs, including instructional, operations, and healthcare, have exceeded the revenue we received from both state aid and local taxes over the past several years. For 2024/25, we are anticipating a 2.6% tax levy cap and, at this point in time based on the Governor’s proposed state aid package, a 2.9% state aid increase. Healthcare costs, just one example of a cost driver, increased 10% for current employees and 25% for retirees. Our budget gap, right now, looks to be about \$7.5 million.

Working with our administrative colleagues, we are developing a plan that will lead us to financial recovery. We are trying to minimize the impact on our students’ programs and on staff, but spending has to be significantly reduced. The budget gap must be closed, and it cannot be done through use of reserves because they are close to being exhausted.

Middle Country will continue to lobby the Governor to receive a more equitable and appropriate share of state aid. Our local Elected Officials are supportive of our efforts and we are looking to them to work with us to bring more funding to Middle Country. Even with additional state aid this year we will need to reduce spending as there is no guarantee that state aid funding will remain constant or increase in succeeding years. However, our hope is additional state aid this year will help ease the negative impact.

The next couple of months are going to be difficult as decisions are finalized and implemented. We are Middle Country Strong but our strength will be challenged...we have to stand together on the road to financial recovery. It will be hard, we know, but, ultimately, we will prevail.

Sincerely,

Roberta A. Gerold, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Sincerely,

Dawn Sharrock
President, Board of Education