

## **Honeywell Update- March 22, 2017**

Good evening Highland Park, this is Dr. Taylor. School budget preparation has passed a milestone- I presented the preliminary proposal to the full board of education and community on March 13. Tonight I would like to highlight the impact this budget will have on our children next year.

This was a very tough planning year. Our school district has to confront greatly increased, necessary expenditures. Irving School is registering a large number of young children who require mental and physical health support and whose challenges severely impact learning growth. The number of homeless students for whom the district is responsible has increased from three to 20. Charter schools have exacted a heavy toll as our district now pays almost \$400,000 in tuition. And Highland Park has not received much help from the state; our community is due to receive state aid with only an additional \$563 from last year.

The leadership team and Board Finance and Facilities Committee worked hard to develop a budget that will maintain all of our school programs. This means we will continue to offer the high-quality curricula, after school activities and new initiatives we have in place district-wide.

The unfortunate result is that most existing programs will not be expanded. For instance, the George Street Residency Program that has been in place in Grades 4 and 5 at Bartle School and in some aspects of the middle school curriculum will not be expanded. The district's community based instruction program for special needs students at the high school will also remain in a holding pattern for at least one more year. To further accommodate the necessary increased expenditures, the district has scaled back instructional supplies, technology purchases, professional development, capital projects, and has eliminated four non-teaching positions that will not directly effect instruction.

Fortunately, local tax revenue has risen thanks to additional "ratables" (new homes and businesses that now contribute to the community tax pool), and the overall school district levy on local taxes has dropped by approximately two-tenths of a point. You can read about the monetary impact the 2017-2018 budget will have on Highland Park residents by going to the district website, clicking "District" and then the "2017-2018 Budget" link.

I will check in with another Honeywell on April 19.