

GENESEO CUSD #228 CAFETERIA
PRODUCTION REPORT

2009-10	# OF DAYS BREAKFAST SERVED	TOTAL # OF BREAKFASTS SERVED FOR MONTH	# OF DAYS LUNCH SERVED	TOTAL # OF LUNCHESES SERVED FOR MONTH	TOTAL LOCAL REVENUE FOR MONTH	TOTAL # OF ABSENT EMPLOYEE DAYS PER MONTH	# OF SUBSTITUTE WORKER DAYS PER MONTH
MONTH							
August	5	1235	5	9885	\$88,565.00	1	1
September	21	8059	21	41763	\$80,841.00	21	15+5*
October	19	7481	19	36077	\$90,264.30	46	33+5*
November	18	7130	18	33955	\$84,785.40	35	28+3*
December	13	4716	13	25394	\$60,437.30	27	28+9^
January							
February							
March							
April							
May							
June							

* added number is for employee training
^ added number is for open positions

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Eddy bill: No funding, no mandate

How long have I said this?

By Jim Broadway, Publisher
 State School News Service

Heading into a new spring legislative session, state Rep. Roger Eddy (R-Hutsonville) usually files a bill or two that will save school districts some money. His ideas often become law, but this year's initiative is unusually ambitious. HB 4711 would:

(1) Permit school districts to ignore state mandates for which the state does not appropriate funds to costs of compliance, and (2) allow districts to curtail or modify existing insufficiently funded mandates.

Board action would be required for discontinuing or modifying a "mandated activity due to insufficient funding from the state," and a list of such actions would have to be maintained – and provided to the State Board of Education upon request. Special education, transportation, coursework required for graduation and school lunch mandates would not be affected if HB 4711 were to pass.

Otherwise the law as Eddy proposes would be clear; an unfunded mandate would not be mandatory.

In recent years, some of Eddy's bills have reflected an expectation of a tight state budget. He passed a bill prohibiting the ISBE from putting a district on a financial status list for fiscal struggles resulting from a delay in the receipt of state funding, for example.

If HB 4711 is intended as more than just statement against unfunded mandates – if it is a genuine effort to ease the stress of fiscal pressures Eddy sees on the horizon – that would suggest he views the 2010 spring session as an impending budget disaster.

Clarification on budget-cutting targets

If he sees the state falling into its own fiscal black hole next spring, Eddy is not alone. As we reported in the last issue, the Commission on Government Forecasting and accountability last calculated a gap between FY 2010 obligations and available revenue at \$11.4 billion – and the gap is growing rapidly.

Legislators are advising school leaders to expect the ISBE budget lines to "take a hit" next year, to be cut in ways not seen since 1992. Our observation was that education programs that have grown rapidly in recent years – or whose effects are not generally apparent to the public – are likely prime targets.

A subscriber responded: What does that mean? It's an excellent question. First, to get at the money you have to go where it is. Early childhood funding has soared in recent years; it was cut 10% this year and an even larger cut is likely for FY 2011. GSA may be cut to the point at which the Foundation Level is unchanged, or even reduced. Mandated categorical funding could be steeply pro-rated.

Second, public perception – always a concern – rises as an issue in an election year. Not wanting to inflict harm in ways voters will notice, legislators will okay cuts to programs that are unseen by the public, no matter how valuable those programs may be.

We learned this week that Illinois ranked 4th this year in the number of teachers receiving National Board Certification. The program's effectiveness is powerfully apparent, but not to the general public. It got whacked in half this year, and because it lacks voter awareness it would be vulnerable again next year. Grow Your Own Teachers is another example.

Election year politics paralyzes policy

Climbing out of a \$11.4 billion-hole would be a feat any year, but it is virtually impossible with elections on the horizon – especially when tax-pandering has risen to become the top tactic of one of the parties.

While Gov. Pat Quinn and Comptroller Dan Hynes, both Democrats, have proposed tax increase plans, all seven of the Republicans gubernatorial hopefuls have positioned themselves as anti-tax candidates. Among GOP aspirants, only Sen. Kirk Dillard has left the door open to a “last resort” tax increase.

The Senate has passed a tax increase, but it remains pending in the House. Speaker Michael Madigan is unlikely to allow a vote on HB 174 in his chamber if the Republican caucus firmly refuses, as it has, to put even a single vote on the bill. So the only way to avoid “draconian” cuts in state programs, including education, is off the table until next November.

Look for another lump sum budget, appropriations without line items. That’s how the legislative branch slashed funding across the board for human service and education programs this year without having to take responsibility for any specific reductions.

Some programs zeroed out this year by the State Board of Education for lack of funds were rescued by Gov. Pat Quinn’s use of discretionary spending authority of about \$1.2 billion. This year, Quinn may not receive such authority – and he surely will not want it if he survives the primary against Hynes.

[Quinn and Hynes are now the only Democrats on the February 2 primary ballot. Perennial candidate William “Dock” Walls has withdrawn from the race, and enigmatic candidate Ed Scanlan was removed from the ballot by the State Board of Elections. The ballot clutter remains only on the GOP side.]

In an environment of legislative timidity, no budget line – no matter how vulnerable may be the citizens who rely on it – is safe. Non-profits serving elderly, disabled and other challenged citizens are currently in a “crisis management” mode. It will get worse.

Controversial RT3 application advances

“Many of the reforms called for in ‘Race to the Top’ are consistent with existing state priorities. Securing these ... dollars can spur immediate action on the reforms and help pay for their implementation.”

So says Advance Illinois, the new and politically well connected education reform group that has posted a report subtitled “Yes We Can” on the federal RT3 initiative through which the ISBE seeks \$400 million.

But others assert, in effect, “No, We Can’t.”

Parents United for Responsible Education, a Chicago organization, notes that \$400 million comes to just \$200 per Illinois public school student. PURE sees RT3 as a slapped-together experiment with the lives of kids. RT3 fans should visit casinos, not encourage gambling with the lives of children, PURE believes.

An urban education leader and SSNS subscriber calls RT3 “A Program Everybody has been Encouraged to Apply for without Knowing Anything About.” Details are as short as the RT3 application deadline.

[Here is what the USDE told state agencies about it last month. It was apparently drafted by a company that helped write NCLB. This is change?]

SSNS to go into Updates-only mode

As is our habit, State School News Service will enter a period of reduced communication until the end of 2009. We will continue to post information on our web site and alert you to breaking news by emailed SSNS School Policy Updates.

Otherwise, unless news breaks with a significance that merits copyright protection, this will be the last issue of the SSNS Newsletter until early January.

We hope every subscriber has an enjoyable holiday season and a wonderful new year. Thank you all so much for your encouragement and support in 2009, and for the thoughtful input that has helped guide our coverage and deepen our analyses.

To comment to SSNS click here.