

# POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

## No time for school tax increase

Nearly 1.5 million Pennsylvanians have lost their jobs during the last five weeks, nearly a quarter of the state's workforce.

Economists are predicting the worst economic crash since the Great Depression.

This is no time for the Pottstown School District to increase taxes.

Our school employees are fortunate. Even as our physical schools are closed and we've moved to on-line learning, all employees will still be paid their full salary and benefits through June 30.

This job guarantee is a provision of emergency state legislation passed last month, which also ensures full state subsidies to school districts in the current school year.

Pottstown has already collected local school taxes for the 2019-2020 school year. Overall, our expenditures are less than anticipated because of the early closing of schools. We have unanticipated costs, such as purchasing about 1,800 chrome-books for home use, but business manager Maureen Jampo has found

ways to cover those costs without dipping into our reserves.

However, next year is a big question mark. As of now, the state has assured us we will not see a cut in our state subsidy.

Ms. Jampo is also optimistic our local tax collections will not decline next year.

The current teacher contract calls for a 2 percent pay hike next year, and administrators and support staff will also receive a 2 percent pay increase.



Commentary by  
Tom Hylton

Last week, the administration proposed a 2020-2021 budget with no layoffs next year and a 3.8 percent tax increase, the maximum allowed by state law.

I hope other board members will join me in voting against this budget. With so many people hurting, we should be cutting costs, not increasing them.

The chart below shows the district cut its budget in 2011 as a response to the Great Recession. We will need to reduce spending again.

*Tom Hylton is a member of the Pottstown School Board. However, the views expressed are his alone and not the board's.*

Pottstown School District budgets, state subsidies, tax increases					
Year	School budget	State subsidies	Tax increase	Additional tax dollars raised over previous year	End of year balance
2010-2011	\$54,553,223	\$19,274,881	4%	\$1,136,662	\$7,203,047
2011-2012	\$51,108,049	\$16,887,723	1.9%	\$537,710	\$6,001,148
2012-2013	\$52,034,797	\$17,621,862	1.2%	\$276,979	\$6,438,752
2013-2014	\$52,947,845	\$17,979,352	2.4%	\$678,251	\$6,028,305
2014-2015	\$55,929,737	\$19,505,000	2.9%	\$856,059	\$6,433,796
2015-2016	\$57,136,928	\$20,848,212	0%	\$(117,995)	\$6,222,584
2016-2017	\$59,553,150	\$23,128,334	0%	\$11,503	\$8,286,198
2017-2018	\$61,882,242	\$24,691,399	0%	\$395,969	\$9,158,214
2018-2019	\$62,677,927	\$25,991,873	3.5%	\$996,045	\$10,938,049
2019-2020	\$64,284,813	\$27,192,522	3.3%	\$728,628	\$9,040,361*
2020-2021	\$65,830,998*	\$27,192,522*	3.8%*	\$1,138,808*	?

**THE LAST TIME** the Pottstown School District cut spending was in 2011, above, in reaction to the Great Recession which started in 2008. The current financial crisis is expected to be much worse. \* projected