

ACROSS THE BOARD BUDGET CUTS

By now, most of us have heard about the 10% across the board cut that was ordered by Governor Culver last week. With all of the rhetoric out there, I wanted to share some information with you regarding this budget situation and how it will affect us at Maquoketa Valley.

The total dollars that Maquoketa Valley will not receive for the 2009 – 2010 school year, according to the Department of Education, will be \$361,766. Obviously we built this year school budget based on projected revenue, which included this \$361,766. Knowing that our district will have to somehow make up this revenue reduction, a question that you may have is, “why doesn’t the school just cut a few faculty or staff positions to offset this difference and/or possibly use stimulus money that is flowing from the federal government to the State of Iowa, and then to our schools. In regards to reducing personnel, collective bargaining is complete and contracts have been signed. As a district, we are obligated to these contracts. Approximately 85% of our budget is consists of salaries. A reduction in our supplies, heating and cooling will not produce significant savings. Our district has received stimulus dollars, but the money targeted for our district has been earmarked for certain programs, such as Title and Special Education, and the remainder of these funds is actually revenue sent from the state in order to meet their state aid obligation. This money does not help us “backfill” any of the \$361,766 shortfall that we will experience.

Although this news is not good, please let me reassure you that we currently have the resources necessary for this school year to weather this financial storm. In their infinite wisdom, our School Board Directors have been diligent with your tax dollars and have had the foresight to put some money into a reserve (savings account) for a rainy day such as this. Obviously with an approximate shortfall of over \$360,000 due to the cut, your Directors will have a number of difficult decisions this spring as we begin the process of building and balancing the school budget for 2010 – 2011. Over the course of the next 4 or 5 months, our Directors will continue to have conversations about how to best meet the academic and social needs of all of our children with the resources we have.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at dtuetken@maquoketa-v.k12.ia.us or call me at 563-922-9422.