

1. Misconception: The reason we are experiencing financial difficulty at Galway is because the Board of Education and Administration mismanaged District funds.

Fact: The reason we are in such a financial conundrum is due to the reduction in state aid made by adopted state budget. Galway relies heavily on state aid and the loss of 9.3 % in state aid is severe for the District. The only immediate solution was to cut or reduce expenses. The District is making every attempt to balance expenses and seek additional revenue sources.

2. Misconception: The Board of Education and the GTA should have come to an agreement by now.

Fact: Negotiations between the two parties are ongoing. Successful negotiations could save positions and therefore programs.

3. Misconception: Voting "no" on the budget vote will send a strong message to the school district that we do not support all the cuts being made to teachers and programs.

Fact: Again, the Board and Administration have done their best to present an educationally sound and fiscally responsible budget under extremely difficult times. The frustration many of faculty, staff, parents, students and the Galway community should be channeled towards the elected officials who approved the inequitable distribution of funding to school districts. The state budget was extremely unfair to upstate rural districts. Voting "no" will only force us to make more painful cuts to programs and teachers.
For more info see links

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/02/opinion/02sat1.html>

<http://www.fondafultonvilleschools.org/DistrictNews/1011News/1011FondaInequity.htm>

4. Misconception: That the Board of Education and Administration is tone deaf to public.

Fact: Since November the District provided budget updates at all work sessions and regular Board of Education Meetings. The district formed a Budget Advisory Committee that met monthly to discuss budget progress. The Board of Education held three community chats, and met every Thursday during the month of March to inform the community of the budget progress and development. The public Budget Hearing was held on May 9th, every effort was made to make the process as transparent as possible, as well as frequent updates on the District website.

5. Misconception: Teacher salaries and pensions that are driving up costs exponentially.

Fact: All employee salaries, benefits and other fixed costs for employees are continually an area that District administration analyzes carefully. The fixed costs such as health, ERS, TRS, FICA are just some of the escalating costs which have an impact on the budget.

6. Misconception: That a contingency budget will be exponentially lower than the present budget.

Fact: The contingency budget would reduce the estimate tax levy to 4%. The contingency budget is more restrictive than the proposed budget, with specified reductions in equipment, student supplies, building usage, and certain salaries. The Board of Education does have discretion to reduce or reinstate various aspects of the budget.