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At the third budget work session held on Monday, March 9th, the focus was once again on enrollment and the tax levy gap. Assuming \$1,070,022 of fund balance is applied to reduce the 2015-2016 tax levy, the gap, which was approximately \$1.087 million at the beginning of budget season, is now \$298,000. It is important to note that the total gap is \$1,368,169, which is the total of \$1,070,022 and \$298,000.

In most recent enrollment projection news, District Treasurer Thomas Primiano stated that the school received its demographic study back from BOCES, which projects enrollment for the next ten years. BOCES projects that high school enrollment will continue to increase; the current enrollment of 279 students in high school will increase to 298 next year. By 2021, projected high school enrollment is projected to increase by 134 students. Although these increases will raise the budget, Mr. Primiano noted that there is an offsetting cost reduction projected for next year in the amount of \$454,372, which reflects a net projected decrease in employee benefits.

The unassigned fund balance is estimated to be \$2.18 million. Board members suggested that available funds be considered for allocation to reserves. "We need to continue to keep 4% (in the unassigned fund balance)," said Mrs. Mendelman. "If we ever need to bond in the near future, we are in good fiscal standing." Mr. Primiano noted that Spirings School has received a Moody's rating of aa2, up from aa3, which could reduce the cost of possible future capital project borrowings.

Although board members agreed that it's difficult to stay under the tax cap while maintaining the school's academic program, they agreed that they are committed to closing the remaining \$298,000 gap.

Principal Casale reported on current staffing positions. He, once again, noted the new ESL

requirements, which were first mentioned at the first budget work session, will require staffing support for an additional two years for those students who have tested out of ESL. Mr. Casale commented that "We will keep staffing relatively the same to what we have this year, although this can change depending on student enrollment." Mr. Casale reported on current enrollment numbers. The latest numbers stand at 742 students in pre-k through eighth grade. According to Mr. Casale, we have reached a "plateau." This staffing information can be found in the Budget Work Session #3 presentation listed on the Springs School homepage under "Budget Info." and also under "Board of Education" -- "Presentations at BOE Meetings."

In other news, PTA President Lisa Matz reported that the swim program at the YMCA continues this year for grades kindergarten through fifth. Four hundred students have participated in the swim program so far this year. Proceeds from the 'Turkey Trot' helped pay for the program. Mrs. Matz also announced that the Pasta Lunch fundraiser is rescheduled for March 19th (to be confirmed shortly). The next Family Ice-Skating Night at Buckskill will be tentatively scheduled for March 20th. Another exciting event is P.A.R.P. Bingo Night, which is scheduled for March 27th. Mrs. Matz also announced that the Sports Booster Club has purchased portable pitching mounds for boys' baseball and girls' softball, in the amount of \$1,600.

The meeting also included a presentation by Junior Girl Scout Troop 825 (and fourth graders!), who presented their idea for a new playground. The girl scouts would like to install a new playground on school property equipped for handicapped children. They need to raise \$7,000 in order to obtain the playground. The project is for their bronze badge. Their ideas for fundraising include a Dance-a-thon, softball tournament and a car wash.

Lastly, the Board would also like to remind community members of the parking regulations on School St. and around the school campus. Parking regulations can be found on the Springs School homepage under "Announcements," and also under "Parents/Students" -- "Transportation."

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Mission Statement

“Springs School is dedicated to providing a foundation for personal and social growth in order to develop students of exemplary character who become responsible, productive and caring citizens.”