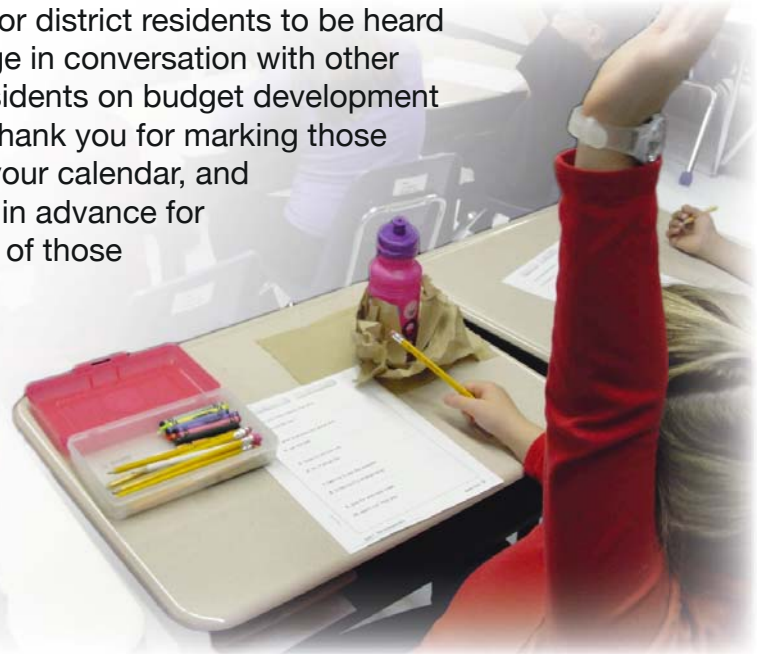


Community Conversations Slated for Winter 2012

Our school district has reached a point where it's especially important for larger numbers of district residents to participate in budget development conversations. Greater participation is an important part of community engagement and helping the school district and school board make the most informed choices possible.

As a result, all adult residents of the school district are encouraged to take part in two larger-scale 'community conversations' slated for 6 p.m. on the evenings of January 23rd and February 13th in the high school cafeteria. Each 'community conversation' will offer op-

portunity for district residents to be heard and engage in conversation with other district residents on budget development matters. Thank you for marking those dates on your calendar, and thank you in advance for being part of those conversations!



Data & Decisions: Class Sizes and School Bus Runs

Peru Central will be tracking and periodically reporting to the Board and public on the size of class sections this school year. During recent school years, the school district has made reductions in the number of class sections and the number of bus runs, as part of cost reduction and responding to a modest drop in student enrollment.

New for this school year will be tracking and reporting the actual

student ridership numbers on each bus run, this fall, winter and early spring. Doing so will help the school board and transportation services department continue to reduce costs and bus runs to the extent feasible. Tracking and reporting on actual student ridership will be part of having a more fact-based winter 2012 set of community conversations regarding the number of bus runs required to safely transport students to and from school.

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'Race to the Top' Focus on Achievement and Data

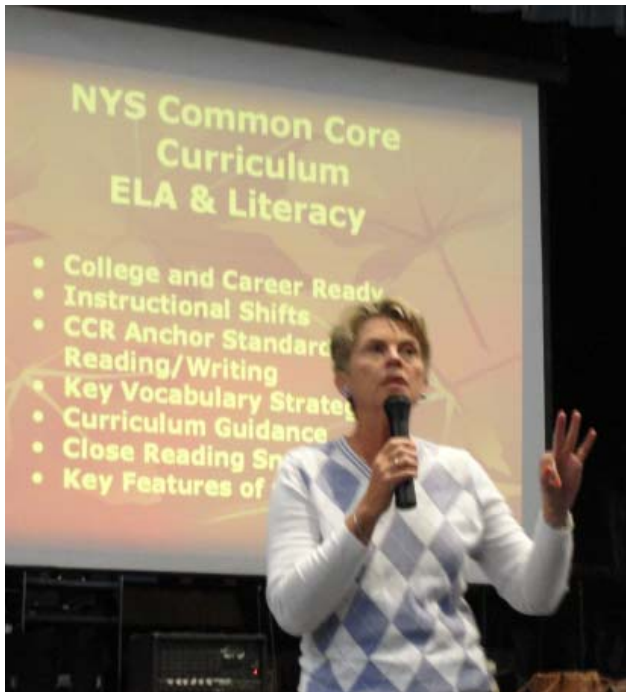
The federal government's 'Race to the Top' public education initiative includes a grant of \$700M to New York State. With that state grant are obligations for the State Education Department to engage our State's public school districts with:

- 🍏 Updating grades K-12 English language arts and mathematics learning standards and day-to-day professional practice.
- 🍏 Creating a new statewide system of accountability tests intended to measure student growth and school progress toward meeting new, higher achievement goals.
- 🍏 Revamping the statewide system of evaluation for public school teachers and Principals.



- 🍏 Increasing student achievement and staff evaluation data reporting to the State Education Department, to help with statewide progress reporting, annually.

Already, Peru Central administrators and teachers are collaboratively examining and making action plans to implement these new State mandates. The state grant provides Peru Central roughly \$22,000 per year for the next several years. Any costs beyond that to implement these new State mandates will be the responsibility of Peru Central. That is what school districts and school boards refer to as an 'underfunded State mandate.'



Preparing for Next Years' Budget

District Looking for Public Participation

During the past six years, the Peru CSD Budget Advisory Committee [BAC] has helped expand school community discussion of the budget development process. The BAC formulates specific recommendations for Board and administrative consideration and assists the Board and administration through respectful, collaborative discussion of key budget matters.

The BAC features two seats for each of these four towns: AuSable, Peru, Plattsburgh and

Schuyler Falls. A brief application form is featured as part of this Community Report, for residents of those towns who have interest in being appointed to one of the non-employee 'seats' on the BAC. Applications are due November 30th.

The BAC will meet three Mondays: January 23rd, February 13th and March 12th. In addition, the BAC will engage with the school board on Tuesday, March 13th at the school board's public session budget development workshop.

Peru CSD Application Form for the Budget Advisory Committee

Directions: Complete this application form, then submit the completed form, stapled to your brief letter that answers the three questions below, and mail the form and letter to:

A. Paul Scott, Interim Superintendent of Schools, Peru Central School District, PO Box 68, 17 School Street, Peru, New York 12972, in time for the letter to arrive at the district office by noon on November 30th. Thank you!

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Daytime Telephone Number: _____

Age (check one) I am 21 years of age or older I am under age 21

Town of Residence (check one): AuSable Peru Plattsburgh Schuyler Falls

I have interest in being appointed as a representative on this school year's budget advisory committee. I am not currently employed at Peru CSD. Attached to this application form I have provided a brief letter providing the following information:

1. Why I believe I'd be a helpful addition to the budget advisory committee.
2. Any experience I've had with examining budgets, programs or public services.
3. One example of a good idea I think would be worth consideration at Peru CSD.

As with all other appointments, the Interim Superintendent of Schools will formulate recommendations for Board of Education consideration. It's anticipated the Interim Superintendent will recommend eight district residents for appointment as town representatives at the December 13, 2011 regular monthly Board meeting.

 **Clip and return**

Navigating Choppy Fiscal Waters

The school district is aware that many families have needed to make difficult financial choices these past few years. Like many of our community's families, the school district also focused on cost reductions and the use of fund balance as part of navigating the 'choppy fiscal waters.'

Since July 2009, Peru Central has reduced its general operating budget by nearly three million (\$3M) dollars and is on track to have expended nearly three million (\$3M) dollars of fund balance by June 30, 2012. The school board reduced administrative, instructional and support operations budgets and staffing, as part of cost reduction.

The school district anticipates more budget reductions will be necessary and additional fund balance will be used to support future annual operating budgets.

As a school community, we'll face that challenge, with the interests of our children in mind. The two winter 2012 'community conversations' will help!



COMMUNITY REPORT

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