

## Solving One Budget Problem Created Another...

Dear Pittsford Resident,

As you know, Monroe County plans to redirect sales tax revenue from Monroe County schools in order to "solve" the county's budget deficit. The following points are offered so residents in the Pittsford Central School District understand the impact of this decision on Pittsford Schools.

- The current law mandating the distribution of sales tax revenue was developed, negotiated and signed by County Executive Morin and Mayor Ryan in 1985. This law, which has not been repealed or altered, has served the county, towns, villages and school districts well for over 22 years. *As a result of this sales tax sharing agreement, Pittsford receives approximately 4 million dollars annually.*
- The F.A.I.R. Intercept Plan is designed to intercept the money lawfully earmarked for Pittsford Schools by 50%. *This plan if enacted will result in an aggregate loss for Pittsford of 2 million dollars in the next calendar year and a net loss of \$20 million dollars by January 1, 2018.*
- Pittsford received an increase in state aid from the Governor and the NYS Legislature for the current school year totaling approximately \$1 million. That amount was built into the 2007-2008 budget and is not available to cover the expected loss of one million dollars this year nor 2 million dollars lost next year. *As you can see, contrary to statements that schools will not be harmed, the amount Pittsford stands to lose is greater than the extra aid we may (or may not) receive in the future.*
- Speaking of state aid, the back page of this brochure provides more information about how Pittsford's state aid has declined over the years. *The new aid we received this year, for which we are appreciative, was just a start in moving us back to an aid level we enjoyed in the past.*
- *Currently, we are in the process of identifying \$1 million in reductions for this year. We need to do so in order to return to a balanced budget.*

In summary, it is contrary to current law to unilaterally alter the sales tax sharing agreement. Furthermore, the Pittsford school community voted in support of the District's 2007-2008 budget – a budget developed in the public and for our students. No matter how many commercials claim it, it is not "fair" to take away legally legislated revenue from our district and our students this year or in the future.

It is time to return to collaborative problem solving – a process used successfully for over two decades.

Mary Alice Price  
Superintendent of Schools

Special Pre-Budget Newsletter



# Are Monroe County School Chil

## Questions and Answers

**Q:** What's changed about the way Monroe County shares sales tax revenue?

**A:** Since 1985 sales tax revenue has been divided among the County, Towns, Villages and School Districts. While sales tax will still be shared among all these municipalities, school districts are the only entity that will see a reduction in its shared sales tax revenue. In fact, the County plans to keep \$29 million that was promised to school districts for the 2007-2008 school year.

**Q:** Can't school districts just tighten their belts?

**A:** Yes, school districts are constantly looking for ways to save money without compromising educational programs. In recent years schools have saved millions by participating in a health care consortium, initiating energy conservation projects, and collectively bidding on and purchasing materials and services common among school districts. These and other cost saving measures are highlighted in the Monroe County School Boards Association publication "The Best for Less." To view this document in full, visit [www.mcsba.org](http://www.mcsba.org).

**Q:** What are school districts doing to recoup this lost revenue?

**A:** School districts are looking at their current budgets to find ways to fill the financial void left this school year. In addition, most Monroe County school districts have united to file a joint lawsuit aimed at proving that the action undertaken by the County is illegal.

**Q:** Will increased State Aid offset the money schools will lose as part of the F.A.I.R. Plan?

**A:** No. Last May district voters approved budgets under which districts established its programs and services for the 2007-2008 school year. The additional state aid was committed to specific educational programs.

**Q:** What does this mean to students and programs?

**A:** At this time, school districts are working out the specific budget cuts and adjustments each has to make. More specifics about the impact on Pittsford can be found on the back of this publication.

**Q:** Can the County and School Districts work together in order to preserve our quality school systems in Monroe County?

**A:** Yes. Local superintendents invite our legislators to collaborate with them to find solutions that safeguard our fine schools, the lifeblood of our community.

**Q:** How will this impact the 2008-2009 school year budget?

**A:** Under the F.A.I.R. Plan, schools stand to lose more sales tax revenue next year. The impact of the lost revenue will be discussed as part of the 2008-09 budget development process. You are invited to attend the series of public meetings held annually in Pittsford to learn more.



# Children Getting Their 'FAIR' Share?



## Schools Stand United Against F.A.I.R. Plan

Boards of Education representing all Monroe County suburban school districts have filed a joint lawsuit against the County's action.

The distribution of sales tax revenue is a matter of state law. The County government does not have the legal authority to unilaterally change the law for distributing sales tax money or to pick and choose who will receive those dollars.

Since the county legislature has already voted to take money away from our schools, the courts will ultimately have to decide what's fair and legal.

## Join Our Petition Drive

Monroe County legislators didn't ask for community input on their F.A.I.R. Plan until after it was approved by the legislative majority. Share your opinion on the F.A.I.R. Plan and these unplanned cuts in school funding by writing or calling your county legislator or signing a petition.

Sign An Electronic Petition at [www.gopetition.com](http://www.gopetition.com) and type "Stop Monroe County" into the quick search field.

— OR —

Send in the Petition Form below

We, the undersigned, feel that Monroe County broke the law and its promise to local school districts by reducing the amount of sales tax revenue going to local school districts by 50%.

Monroe County residents approved school budgets in May to best serve students. Now, money will be taken away from school districts' budgets mid-year.

We agree that the Medicaid problem needs to be addressed; shifting the burden to schools is not the answer.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please send completed petition forms to:*

**Monroe County School Boards Association, 1250 Scottsville Road, Rochester, NY 14624**



# Pittsford Schools Will Lose Almost \$2,000,000 Next Year

## Sales Tax Take Back Greater Than Increased State Aid

### Current Status

This school year, as in every year, the Pittsford Central School District operates with a balanced budget beginning on July 1st. Losing \$1 million in revenue mid-budget year means we must now reduce \$1 million in expenditures to return to a balanced budget.

Since the budget year is well under way, a significant portion of the budget has already been expended. The Pittsford Central School District is currently under a "spending freeze" as all cost center managers review their remaining allocations to identify where cuts can be made.

Based on these cost center reductions, the district plans to move to a "limited spending" budget by the end of the first week of November.

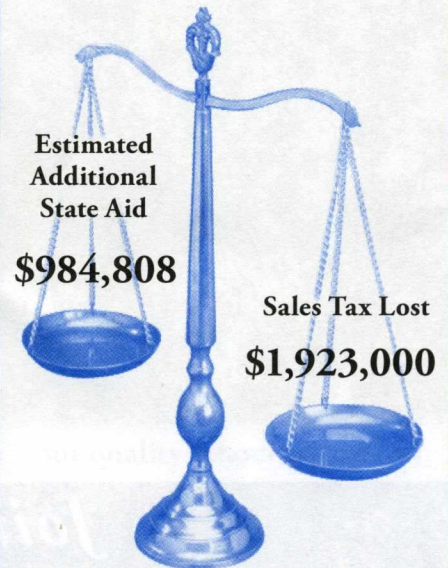
### The 2008-2009 Budget

Next school year, the problem will be compounded. PCSD will lose almost \$2 million in sales tax revenues. The District's Planning Team (DPT), composed of representatives from various constituencies, will address the loss of \$2 million during the development process which starts mid-school-year.

### Additional State Aid: Not a Windfall

This year's new state aid increase, while beneficial, was not a windfall. Since the 2001-2002 school year, New York State's support of the Pittsford Central School District has declined from 15.3% of total budget (less building aid) to 12.2% in the 2006-2007 school year budget.

### 2008-2009 BUDGET YEAR



### Pittsford Schools

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