

# Chippewa Valley approves funds, food programs for next school year

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By Nicole Tuttle, Voice Reporter



Dakota High School Police Liaison Vic Patrone was honored by Dakota Principal Paul Sibley and the Chippewa Valley Board of Education as he announced his retirement on June 16.

Photo by NICOLE TUTTLE

The Chippewa Valley Board of Education began its preparations for the 2014-2015 school year on June 16 with public hearings regarding the budget and the breakfast program, in addition to honoring the retirement of Dakota's police liaison.

The board held a public hearing regarding breakfast programs in the district, then approved a breakfast program for 2014-2015 for 10 schools. Included in the list were the Macomb Township schools of Fox Elementary and Ojibwa Elementary.

“Buildings with free/reduced applications totaling less than 20 percent of enrollment in October 2013 are to be exempt from offering a breakfast program that is in compliance with applicable regulations in 2014-15,” Chippewa Valley Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations Scott Sederlund said. “Buildings with applications totaling more than 20 percent of enrollment in October 2013 are mandated to offer a breakfast program in 2014-15.”

Although Iroquois Middle School in Macomb Township qualified for the program last year, this year it did not qualify with the 20 percent of enrollment as of October 2013, according to Sederlund.

“Chippewa Valley schools has not offered the mandated breakfast program in buildings with less than 20 percent criteria because of low projected participation, which makes the program not economically feasible,” Sederlund said.

Also in relation to food programs in the district, the board deemed, on June 16, that there would not be an increase in breakfast and lunch prices for the 2014-2015 school year but that prices would remain the same as last year. The listed prices were \$1.55 for breakfast at all schools and lunches at \$2.75 for elementary level, as

well as \$3 at the middle and high school levels. The board further approved Little Caesars for a one-year contract with an option to renew on an annual basis for four additional years in the approximate annual amount of \$68,733, as well as for Group One Schools pizza delivery through the National School Lunch Program. Funding will come from the district's food service fund, according to Sederlund.

The board held a public hearing on the budget on June 16, as state law requires that Michigan school districts adopt budgets for the next fiscal year prior to the start of the fiscal year.

"The purpose of this hearing is to receive comments on the proposed general fund, food service fund, building activities fund and Macomb International Academy fund budgets for the 2014-15 fiscal year," Aquino said.

The board heard no comments from the audience regarding the budget. The board adopted a resolution to approve the general fund, food service fund, building activities fund and Macomb International Academy budgets for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Projected revenues are \$147.4 million and projected expenditures are \$146.4 million, for an operating surplus of about \$1 million, according to Sederlund.

"Budgets for the general fund, food service fund, building activities fund and the Macomb International Academy fund have been prepared by the administration," Sederlund said. "The revenue budget for the general fund has been developed using major factors including a flat enrollment projection, an increase in the foundation allowance of \$50 per pupil and equity payment of \$125 per pupil, continuation of the MPSERS retirement costs offset funding of \$66 per pupil, the best practice funding of \$50 per pupil, a reduction of two dollars per pupil and there are different criteria to qualify."

Other major factors included continued funding of the \$40 per pupil for student performance benchmark, recording of retirement offset revenue funding and review and adjustment of other items, according to Sederlund.

"It removes several one-time funding amounts included in the prior year budget. The expenditure budget for the general fund has been developed using major factors including the impact of settled employee group contracts; 2014-15 is the second year of a three-year settlement. The impact of a change to the hard cap under PA 152 for health insurance benefits, the impact of the retirement contribution increasing from 24.79 percent to 25.78 percent, the recording of the retirement offset expenditure funding section 147c funding and review and adjustment of other items as appropriate," Sederlund said.

The board further adopted a resolution to approve compliance with GASB 54, designating commitment of fund balance in compliance with GASB 54 and authorizing Sederlund to make assignments of fund balance.

### **Police liaison recognized**

In addition, the board recognized the retirement of Dakota High School Police Liaison Vic Patrone on June 16.

"Vic Patrone now was been our only liaison officer at Dakota high school since we opened, so we have just recently hired our next liaison officer," Dakota High School Principal Paul Sibley said.

Sibley described Patrone as a mentor to administrators, staff and students.

"Vic has always been there for us. He's always been there to give sound advice and to be someone that we could always count on, really, as another administrator at our school," Sibley said.

Sibley said that Patrone has always been proactive in his approach to offering a law and order perspective to students.

“I’ve been an administrator now for eight years and he has done presentations at our ninth-grade center where he meets with every single student who enters as a ninth grader, in their classrooms, to present to them basically a lot of the decision-making that they’re going to face in high school and some of the legal ramifications and consequences of what some of those decisions could lead to. It has been a joy to watch him interact with the students because sincerely, the kids really do like him,” Sibley said.

Sibley said that students have freely approached Patrone with questions if they had upcoming court dates, if they had problems at home or if they were seeking a mentor for future careers as police.

“In addition to our staff, people seek out Vic for advice on what to do in student situations and again, his knowledge and his experience with kids both as a deputy and as our school liaison officer has been invaluable,” Sibley said.

Patrone said he has spent the majority of his career in Chippewa Valley Schools.

“As a sheriff’s deputy for 27 years, I spent more than half my sheriff’s career at Chippewa Valley schools, at Dakota High School as the police liaison officer. So more than half my career I’ve been working in schools with kids and it’s been a great, great career. I’m going to miss the people, the kids the administration,” Patrone said.

### **Library issue discussed**

During the public comments portion of the meeting, the board heard from Michael Nickerson, a member of the Say Yes to the Clinton-Macomb Public Library Committee regarding the upcoming library millage issue to be on the Aug. 5 ballot. Nickerson said that the library originally began as the Clinton-Chippewa Valley district library in 1992. By 1997, the Clinton-Macomb Public Library was created through partnerships between Clinton and Macomb townships, according to Nickerson. Nickerson said that in 1998, voters approved a one-mill tax in perpetuity to construct and operate the library’s three branches.

“The economy went south, the property values went south, and of course the amount of money coming in went south with it. The library has done some things to try to offset these reductions,” Nickerson said.

Nickerson said that the library has grown both in its collection and the number of cards issued.

“Directly related to Chippewa Valley, there are a number of programs where the library is involved with your students. Just recently there were some art exhibits down there and some judging in different things. There is tutoring, there are computers to be used, a number of things that will be directly impacted. If we don’t get our millage, some of these things are going to be reduced. ... It’s not good for your students, it’s not good for the rest of the community,” Nickerson said.

Other items that the board approved on June 16 included:

\* The purchase and installation of playground mulch for all district playgrounds in the total amount of \$55,613.25. Funding will come from the 2014-2015 general fund budget, according to Sederlund.

\* The purchase of 160 computer systems from Netech Corporation at a cost of \$127,568 for International Academy of Macomb.

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