



To: Ross Parents and Community
From: Ross Board of Education and District Administration
Date: May 5, 2023
Re: RLSD Statement

The Board of Education and Administration would like to thank the community members who continue to support our school district. As we are all aware, we are in a challenging time financially. Our district administration has tried to be very transparent with our financial situation and will continue those efforts in the future.

We are aware that the recent news regarding the potential property valuation increase through the triennial revaluation process combined with potential additional property taxes from a successful levy caused many residents concern. We understand and share that concern. While we expected property values to increase based on the previous triennial revaluation, there was *no indication or communication from the county auditor's office that the state tax commissioner would be recommending a 20-40% increase in valuation.* Given that the proceedings for the May 9.44 mill levy was finalized with the passage of resolutions in January, 2023, there was simply no way to predict such a potential steep increase in property valuation.

Since these large **potential** increases have been announced, we've determined that it's in the school and community's best interest to "press pause" in planning for any future levy. Until we are certain what the final property valuation increase will be and what potential revenue it will provide the district, we will not be asking for additional dollars from our community through a levy. It's important to note that the potential valuation increase is still a fluid process and, from our conversations with the county auditor's office, we may not know the final numbers until this fall.

With that said, after three unsuccessful levy attempts and uncertainty surrounding potential valuation increases, we will not be placing a levy on the November ballot. This will allow us to reassess the district's financial reality with a clearer picture of the property valuation and other variables such as the new biennium state budget which will be approved in June.

We will be moving forward, in principle, with Year 1 of the budget reduction plan presented at the April Board of Education meeting. As attrition occurs—meaning staff members retire or resign—specific details of that plan may change, but RLSD remains committed to reducing expenditures by approximately \$1.8 million.

Athletic Fees will remain at \$825 per athlete per sport with no family cap for next school year and RLSD will only provide school transportation to away athletic events more than 25 miles away. However, if the student-athlete participates in a third sport during the school year, the third sport will be free. We will reassess this fee structure for the 24-25 school year as we know more about our financial situation.

The School Board will approve the new student fee schedule at the May 18, 2023 School Board Meeting.

We will continue to communicate updates as this complex financial situation evolves.