



A Message from Superintendent Tim Collins

Has it really been eight years since the Hastings Community passed an operating levy to support the educational programs of the community? There were a variety of thoughts that went through my head eight years ago, the evening the vote was approved, and one of those thoughts included the fact that 2011 seemed a long way into the future before we would need to ask our residents to renew the levy for another eight years. Those eight years have passed and it is now time to ask our residents to continue with the same financial support that they have given to us over the past eight years. We are not asking residents to increase their taxes. We are asking residents to give the same level of financial support that they have given over the past eight years, and we will continue to operate our schools and academic programs within those financial parameters.

An operating levy is a local tax that helps to support educational programs, keep class sizes low, and pay for the daily operations of the school district. The state government can make a decision to shutdown.....we can't. We must continue with our educational programs even in times when the government shifts money away from us and hands the school district an IOU

slip that they will pay back a year from now. The government shutdown made it very evident that communities are going to need to rely on their residents, and not the state government, to meet the core needs of the families living within the community.

In my eight years, as Superintendent of the Hastings School District, I know firsthand that this community has pride, vision and wants to make sure that the quality of learning, and living, is a top priority for all of the residents. The community also wants accountability and a demonstration of financial responsibility by the leaders within the community. In future articles I will outline how the financial responsibility, and conservative approach, has brought a level of financial stability to the school district during some very difficult financial times.

If the upcoming operating levy would not be renewed by the community it would mean an annual loss of \$3,800,000 to the school district. The financial impact on class sizes, elimination of programs, and basic reduction of educational opportunities for all residents would be catastrophic. Our past history indicates that this community will listen to all of the facts and vote yes to continue with the same level of financial support that they have given over the past eight years. As I state earlier, "The government can make a decision to shut down.....we can't."