

WINTHROP HARBOR'S TENBUSCH MUST BE REMOVED BY THE BOARD OR COURT

Winthrop Harbor School District Superintendent James Tenbusch must be replaced at once.

In fits of rage and anger to punish the citizens of the district for not giving him more money in the form of an 18% property tax increase with a 39¢ rate increase in the educational fund (aka enrichment fund for the teachers union and administration) Tenbusch appears committed to destroying the school district with this upcoming referendum and threats to the District if it fails. This is madness. Tenbusch has called for the State Board of Education to put the District on the States watch list as a school in financial difficulty and appoint a school oversight panel. He let the Board enter into another exorbitant teacher's contract without knowing if funds would be available.

The lunacy of Tenbusch's remedies, including merging the district with Beach Park or Zion, and dissolving the district indicates that the citizens should have him immediately removed even if it means going past the Board and have a judge declare Tenbusch incompetent to manage the district. The Board President must speak for the District, not this Superintendent.

WINTHROP HARBOR #1 HAS PLENTY OF REVENUE

The District has seen its total revenues from all sources to fund its educational programs, skyrocket from \$2.5 million in 1990/91, **the first year of the tax cap**, to over \$5.9 million for the school year 2003/04. This is an increase of 141% during a thirteen-year period of 41% inflation.

Property Taxes Up 138%

During the same period property taxpayers in the District saw their contributions increase a whopping 138%, from \$1.2 million to \$2.8 million.

6.4% More Students

Despite the Superintendent's claims of having been inundated with additional students, attendance increased over the same period by only 47 students (from 732 to 779). Revenue per student has gone from \$3,395 in 1990/91 to \$7,674 in 2003/04 for a 126% increase, a period of 41% inflation.

Where has your money gone? Has it improved the test scores that much with 20% of the District's children falling behind State Standards? Or has it been used to reward the "poor" teachers and administrators just for doing their job? Funding early retirement programs by borrowing against current revenues? Providing step pay increases just for longevity? For professional development by taking summer education courses? For hoarding sick days and unused personal days to be paid out in a lump sum?

Winthrop Harbor Elementary District #1 has plenty of money to operate the schools. It has lived beyond its means. Too much time and money has been spent to avoid accountability to

the taxpayers. Too much was spent on contracts which could not be funded from current revenues. The District's future has been mortgaged. There is no easy way out.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WINTHROP HARBOR SCHOOL BOARD TO SOLVE YOUR PROBLEM AND PUT THE SCHOOL BACK ON TRACK

NEW SUPERINTENDENT

Replace Superintendent James Tenbusch at once. His remedy of deficit spending, a state takeover, stealth referendum tactics and consolidation with another nearby school district are grounds for his termination. The Board must give him a failing evaluation. It must also minimize his termination benefits. If the Board will not act, remember the next election date, the Electorate must take charge.

RESTRUCTURE IF POSSIBLE THE DEBT

A Debt Repayment Plan must be considered to pay off those short-term loans, lowering their amount over time.

CLOSE THIRD SCHOOL BUILDING

Your third school building that is full of asbestos and full of kids should be closed and the students moved to the two other school buildings where you have space. Your school district promised that years ago. This would save you thousands of dollars in administrative and operating costs.

PARENTS TO PAY

The burden of providing extracurricular activities should be shifted to the parents. The school is not a charitable activity; the extras need to be funded on a current basis by the participants.

CONTINUING PARENTAL OVERSIGHT

The result of parents paying more is they will pay attention to their school board, attend finance meetings and become more involved because it is more of their money for their child.