



# HARTLAND CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

*Chuck Hughes, Superintendent*

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April 5, 2023

Dear HCS Education Community:

**Non-Homestead Millage Renewal, Fact vs Fiction:** Unfortunately, there is a lot of misinformation being passed around regard the non-homestead millage renewal to be placed before HCS voters on May 2, 2023. At the end of this Weekly Update, I have provided facts regarding some of this information. Please take the time to review this information and reach out to me with any questions you may have. Honestly, I cannot understand how something as routine as this has become such an issue. Being fiscally responsible to collect the full per-student allocation for Hartland seems like it should not be an issue. The failure to collect what our students deserve has the potential to change what HCS can offer for years to come. Please vote either in person on May 2, 2023 or through the absentee ballot process.

**Non-Homestead Community Question and Answer Session:** I will be hosting a Non-Homestead Q & A session on Thursday, April 13, 2023 at 6:30 PM in the Board of Education Room at the Educational Support Service Center. All community members interested in learning more about this millage are invited to attend. Come with your questions ready. Here is a video that you can view which might help along with the information in the March and April Community Life, the Non-homestead link on our website at [www.hartlandschools.us](http://www.hartlandschools.us), and the final pages of this Weekly Update: <https://youtu.be/-46bLVq19dI>.

**Hartland High School Women in Technology (WIT) Support Learning:** High school students Adriana Lippolis, Malia Klumpp, Audrey Dunham, Kaitlyn Shinabarger and Ashlynn Mulka from Women in Technology spent a day in all 6th grade science classes. They created the initiative to provide a STEM lesson to students since this group has yet to have a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) program implemented. The HS students created the activity, the PowerPoint, and ran the entire lesson. They talked about what WIT is all about and what they work on in the club. **Note:** Next year Farms will be rolling out a STEM program.



**Informational Workshop Being Offered:** In partnership with Michigan Alliance for Families, The Arc Livingston is hosting an online event titled "Navigating the Manifestation Determination Review and Beyond" with Special Education Mediation Services on May 3, 2023.

*Students with disabilities are provided additional protection when faced with discipline that will change their educational placement. The Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) meeting is an important part of that protection. This session will explain the MDR process and provide information to help you prepare for an MDR meeting.*

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/4734341368527146844>

**Art Walk Scholarship Opportunity:**



**Parent Education Opportunity to Learn:**

**Navigating the Manifestation Determination Review and Beyond**  
with Special Education Mediation Services


Wednesday, May 3, 2023  
7:00pm-8:30pm

Register at <https://tinyurl.com/yc7tskf3>

Students with disabilities are provided additional protection when faced with discipline that will change their educational placement. The Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) meeting is an important part of that protection. This session will explain the MDR process and provide information to help you prepare for an MDR meeting.

**Who should attend?** Families with a child with a disability or learning challenge, school staff, other community members.

**Questions? Please contact** Kelsey Biswanger  
[kelsey@michiganallianceforfamilies.org](mailto:kelsey@michiganallianceforfamilies.org)  
248-560-7435



**Seniors Don't Forget to Check Out Scholarships:** The high school counselors asked me to remind you to make time to look at the [Scholarship Gazette](#). HHS has **23 local scholarships** with deadlines between April 1st and April 26th. Seniors and parents, don't miss out on these amazing opportunities to gain help in paying for your post-high school education.

**Geography Excellence:** On Saturday, March 25, 2023, 8th graders Chace Borg, Jaxon Perry, and Frederick Nikitin competed in the International Geography Bee Regional Finals held in Pontiac, Michigan. Congratulations to Jaxon Perry who qualified for the National Geography Bee finals with a 4th place finish, and for the first time in HMS history, a special congratulations goes out to Frederick Nikitin who qualified for both the National Geography Bee and the International Geography Bee with a silver medal finish. Outstanding job boys and good luck at Nationals.

Respectfully,



Chuck Hughes

“When you talk, you are only repeating what you already know. But if you listen, you may learn something new.”

Dalai Lama

### **Hartland Consolidated Schools Non-Homestead Millage Clarifying Information Vote on Tuesday, May 2, 2023**

Below you will find some concerns being presented to the community about the non-homestead millage proposal that need to be clarified as they do not represent the facts:

#### **The non-homestead millage is a new tax.**

**Fact:** This is not a new tax, it is simply a renewal and a slight increase to make the non-homestead tax whole at 18 mills since there has been two rollbacks over the past five years. All non-homestead properties currently pay this non-homestead tax and have done so since the passage of Proposal A in 1993. This is not unique to Hartland.

#### **The district has more money than they need currently, so they do not need the \$5.5 million dollars provided with the passage of the non-homestead millage.**

**Fact:** The district currently has a healthy fund balance due to one-time grant dollars earmarked for supporting students who fell behind during the pandemic. These dollars will be spent over the next several years to supplement the programs put in place to support students. The important thing to note is that these are one-time dollars and will run out within the next two years. This is much like a homeowner spending their savings account dollars to replace their furnace. Once the dollars are used, they are gone and not replenished.

**By not supporting the renewal and increase of the non-homestead proposal to make it whole at 18 mills, consumers will experience savings from businesses, on rental properties, etc.**

**Fact:** I have been an administrator in the district since 2000. In this time period, I have never seen or heard of a campaign put together by those obligated to pay the non-homestead millage indicating that consumers will see prices fall if the proposal fails. Never! Since 2000, the district has put this proposal to the voters 13 times, and it has passed easily. This is just not a realistic thought process.

**The district just gave administrators generous salary increases and bonuses, so they must have enough money and the non-homestead millage renewal is not needed.**

**Fact:** The administrators were granted a 2% increase on the salary schedule found in Board Policy 1410 (clear transparency for all stakeholders to see). At the February Board of Education meeting when this was discussed, some Board of Education members wanted to be sure that this raise was in line with the teacher's contract. The 2% salary schedule adjustment is not consistent with the teacher's contract, which provides a 5% salary schedule increase in 2023-24, a 2% increase in 2024-25 and up to a 3% increase in 2025-26 if the district retains a healthy fund balance in its general fund. The administrative contracts call for a potential adjustment in the fall of each year if the district realizes an increase in per student funding and/or an increase in students. This increase is not guaranteed, and if an increase is to be realized, it is kept consistent with other employee groups. The longevity schedule found in Board Policy 1410 has been in place for many years and is not intended to be a bonus. The intent of the longevity schedule (which all employee groups have in their contracts) is to retain employees. This is part of the employee's salary package and not a bonus as some individuals have suggested. Once the highest level of longevity is obtained, the increase in cost to the district is zero.

**The district is wasting taxpayer money by holding a special election for the non-homestead millage renewal.**

**Fact:** State law requires all school proposals to be last on the ballot. In a general election, where the district would not be spending as much to present the proposal, the proposal gets lost with all the political campaign ads and state proposals. Too often, school districts see proposals fail because individuals see the word tax at the end of the ballot and vote it down simply because they do not know anything about the proposal. The cost to run the election in May is nominal compared to the revenue this proposal will ensure over the next 5 years. By spending dollars to run this proposal in a special election, the district can educate the public on its obligation to collect the 18 mills locally, which the State of Michigan subtracts and will not make-up as part of the per student amount sent to the district from the School Aid Fund. Keep in mind, in 1993-94 Proposal A lowered property taxes in Hartland from 37 mills for school operational costs to 6 mills that every property owner pays to the School Aid Fund (see graph below, State Education Tax). Proposal A also created the local contribution of 18 mills for non-homestead property that districts must collect as part of their per pupil funding. The graph below shows the School Aid Fund revenue sources. The School Aid Fund allocation plus the non-homestead funds added together make up our per student operating revenue of \$9,150 per student annually.

**Note:** The School Aid Fund provides approximately \$8,150 per student, the non-homestead millage provides approximately \$1,000 per student for a total of \$9,150. The non-homestead millage (18 mills) is expected to be collected locally. The state will not make up the difference if this is not collected. Passage of the non-homestead millage renewal and, slight increase to make up for past roll backs, allows the district to collect the entire local contribution from non-homestead properties.

If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact Mr. Hughes at 810-626-2100.

# SAF Revenue Sources

Sales tax is the largest revenue source, contributing nearly half of the **\$16.1 billion** in total estimated SAF revenue for FY 2021-22.

