

Win-Win for 113 taxpayers?

In an effort to provide accurate, reliable information, USD 113 has been maintaining a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page on its website. The FAQ information has received some excellent questions from constituents about the Wetmore closure, land trades, etc. Recently a constituent asked about the plans for the residual revenue that the district will receive through the State of Kansas' funding formula. This issue has been one of the most contentious following the decision to close the Wetmore school. I wanted to repeat this information in *The Sabetha Herald* to provide this information to a larger audience.

Q. How does the district plan to use the \$5,088 per Wetmore student that will be received over the next two years even though the students will not attend school in USD 113?

A. There is no certainty that USD 113 will receive this money

for two years. I would anticipate that the legislature will again work to change the formula for FY25. It is true that the district will receive this money for the upcoming year. Regardless, of whether the district receives these funds for one or two years, I see the district handling this money in the same way.

The #1 responsibility of USD 113 is to the students and constituents of USD 113. With this responsibility comes the obligation to be good stewards of the public's money. I propose that additional revenue from residual weighting be used as tax relief for USD 113 taxpayers. This will need to be supported by the Board of Education, but I see this money going in three directions:

Notes from USD No. 113

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SUPERINTENDENT



1. Support for transportation for neighboring districts. If this offer is not accepted by neighboring

districts, then USD 113 will be able to use all funds exclusively for tax relief. (NOTE: this would be for the 23-24 school year only. Starting with the 24-25

school year, other districts will receive funding from the state of Kansas).

2. A portion could be used to make an early payment on the district's lease purchase debt, thus reducing the burden of levying taxes for this purpose.

3. The final option is to use the funds (utilizing transfers) to reduce the capital outlay mill rate. Based upon the pattern of USD 113's state aid for specific funds, we would be wise to maximize

our Supplemental General Fund (aka Local Option Budget) while we transfer funds from General Fund to Capital Outlay. These funds would not replace all of the capital outlay levy, *but would make a noticeable difference on the tax bill for all property owners of USD 113!*

The idea that state aid be used to replace local taxes as much as possible is not a new idea for USD 113. We have been doing this for a number of years by maximizing our Supplemental General Fund to take advantage of the state aid offered. By reducing the tax burden on local USD 113 taxpayers, constituents from all parts of the district benefit. It seems like it has been a while since there is the possibility of a win-win for all USD 113 constituents, but reduced taxes should be a common bond that we can all agree upon. The FAQ webpage may be accessed at <https://www.usd113.org/vnews/display.v/ART/643572326561b>.