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**All Kids. All of the Time.**

## ***Superintendent's FY13 Budget Message*** ***"Prioritizing Excellence"***

*A budget is a roadmap. It is an organization's statement of priorities. I hope that you will agree that the Superintendent's recommended budget for fiscal year 2013 continues to focus our work on excellence. We must continue to commit ourselves to the improvement of our educational program.*

*Our District has much about which to be proud. In 2010, students at Richmond Elementary School were the top scorers on mathematics state assessments and students at Ashaway Elementary School were the top scorers on science state assessments. In October of 2011, the Hope Valley Elementary School was named a national Blue Ribbon School. Over the last five years, Chariho students experienced the largest increase (students scoring at or above proficient) in mathematics state assessment scores and the seventh largest increase in reading state assessment scores in Rhode Island. These successes are directly attributable to our outstanding faculty and to support provided to the District by the citizens of the member towns.*

*The Superintendent's recommended budget includes initiatives to further improve our program. Advanced Placement Physics and a course in film studies will be added to the High School's program of studies. In January, the School Committee will be asked to approve a Career and Technical Center program in criminal justice, which will include a forensics component. We are also proposing that GEMSNET science kits be introduced in grades six through eight. (The success of our elementary schools in science is directly related to the GEMSNET initiative.) To further raise academic standards, this budget includes a full-time (with ½ of salary grant-funded) Academic Fellow devoted to the district-wide implementation of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics. To promote both healthy and productive activities and student responsibility, new athletic programs are proposed for high school boys in lacrosse and for high school girls in competition cheerleading; a home game cheerleading squad is also proposed for middle school girls.*

*Many factors influence this budget. The priority of our capital improvement work will be on the heating system at Hope Valley Elementary School. While other smaller projects are planned in other buildings for fiscal year 2013, this costly project is absolutely necessary. Even with the moratorium on school construction aid, we will seek 56% reimbursement for this project. The Superintendent's recommended budget includes nearly \$1.4M in capital improvement work, with \$700,238 funded by housing aid. Also, with a projected decline in enrollment in fiscal year 2013 of 29 students, this budget calls for a reduction of 1 support staff and a reduction of .5 certified staff. Finally, the new funding formula continues to negatively impact Chariho. We anticipate a loss of state aid to the District and member towns of over \$130,000 from one year ago.*

*With assistance from the School Committee's Management Study Subcommittee, I continue to look for fiscal efficiencies. Fiscal year 2013 operating expenses are up 1.6% from fiscal year 2012. When capital improvement projects, revenue, application of fund balance (which is significantly lower than one year ago), and debt service are considered, member town contributions are up 3.8% from fiscal year 2012. As always, shifts in student enrollment will create differing impacts on each of the member towns.*

*With the acknowledgement that we must be accountable to those who fund us, I hope that the School Committee sees this recommended budget as one that supports continued improvement. I look forward to supporting your efforts as you closely examine this fiscal roadmap.*

The Chariho Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, marital status, race, religion, national origin, color, creed, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or handicap in accordance with applicable law.

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