

Garwood BOE Adopts \$10.1-Mil. School Budget

By **MICHAEL BONACCORSO**
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

GARWOOD — Board of Education Business Administrator Eric Larson presented the 2018 school budget at a special budget meeting on Tuesday night. The school-year tax increase will be half of 1 percent, the lowest in 11 years, Mr. Larson said. The total budget is \$10,106,562 with \$8,209,455 to be raised in school taxes, an increase of \$40,843 from the previous year.

The total tax levy will be .08 of 1 percent higher when considering a calendar year time frame versus a nine-month school-year time frame, stated Mr. Larson. Assuming a \$100,000 assessed value on a property, the total school tax levy will be an \$82 increase per household from the prior year.

Mr. Larson said a metric he uses to compare the board's budget practices is the budgetary per-pupil cost. He said the cost is the year-to-year change in cost per student in the district.

Garwood's 2016-2017 per-pupil budgeted cost was the ninth lowest of 75 kindergarten through eighth grade districts (K-8) with 0 to 400 students, stated Mr. Larson. The 2017-2018 year per-pupil cost is not available until mid-summer, stated Mr. Larson, as per state calculations and data collection.

Mr. Larson said for 2016-2017 the state median per-pupil cost for K-8 districts was \$16,331. The 2016-2017 Garwood student per-pupil cost was \$14,021, or \$2,359 below the state average.

Two major expenditures are \$623,000 being used to replace a boiler system and \$118,000 to

pay existing debt, stated Mr. Larson.

The district received an increase in state aid from \$516,933 the previous year to \$556,490 for the 2018-2019 budget, stated Mr. Larson. The district received grants summing \$121,767 for the 2018-2019 budget, less than the \$153,255 received in 2017-2018 budget.

The district will pay 2 percent less in tuition fees to the Clark Board of Education for student enrollment at Arthur L. Johnson (ALJ) High School in Clark. The cost per student is \$13,466 in tuition, stated Mr. Larson. Garwood sends its high-school students to ALJ.

The cost for instruction or teacher salaries went up 2.5 percent or \$58,293, stated Mr. Larson.

Mr. Larson said the increase was as expected given negotiated salaries were expected to increase 2.75 percent. Administrative costs decreased 7.5 percent or \$48,399, stated Mr. Larson. Facility management costs decreased \$49,022 or 6.6 percent from the 2017-2018 budget year, stated Mr. Larson.

Resident Bruce Paterson said he was concerned with capital reserve depletions and one-time revenue sources offsetting costly trends.

"We are taxpayers as well," said board member Amanda Langston.

Board President Christine Guerriero said Mr. Larson and the board worked on the best budget they could without breaking the bank.

"Mr. Paterson, it is not right or necessary to say the board does not show concern. They are aware of the trends," School Superintendent Teresa Quigley, Ed.D.

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EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR...The Education Foundation of Garwood (EFG) held its 14th annual appreciation dinner at The Westwood on Thursday at which time the organization honored Educator of the Year, Denise Cafiero, center. She is congratulated by Superintendent of Schools Teresa Quigley, Ed.D., left, and EFG President Sara Todisco.

EFG Honors Top Educator, People Making A Difference

By **MICHAEL BONACCORSO**
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

GARWOOD — The Education Foundation of Garwood (EFG) held its 14th annual appreciation dinner at The Westwood on Thursday. The evening honored Educator of the Year Denise Cafiero. Barbara Tweedle and Mary Ann Severage were honored with the People Making a Difference Award.

"I'm really excited to announce that to date the EFG has given out over \$54,000 in student scholarships and grants for educators," said EFG President and

Councilwoman Sara Todisco.

The appreciation dinner recognizes educators and community leaders who contribute to the Garwood education system. The night's proceeds from ticket sales, raffle drawings and a tricky tray will raise scholarship funds, including other programming funds benefiting Garwood students.

Ms. Cafiero, who teaches mathematics and science for both fifth and sixth grades, will be completing her fifth year in the Garwood school district. She has been nominated every year for

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work that makes them think," Mrs. Murphy told the board.

Additionally, the Teachers Cadets Collaboration in Education was spotlighted, as Cranford High School teacher Barbara Narus discussed achievements.

The program allows cadets to observe elementary, middle-school and special-education classrooms, have diverse teaching experiences and prepares them for placement for their student teaching practicum.

Students are placed in the student teaching practicum based on their interests. They are expected to teach lessons and earn college credits.

Some of the things cadets learn are proper lesson-plan format, classroom management skills and the importance of student relations.

Student Cadet Brenna Dolan told the board, "you make mistakes and you learn from them. It's very reflective."

The board of education honored a request on behalf of the New Jersey School Boards Association and Agencies for the Handicapped to proclaim Sunday, May 13, through Saturday, May 19, 2018, as Special Education Week.

The next board of education meeting will take place on Monday, May 14.

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