

What is BOCES Surplus?

Lately, BOCES across New York State have been responding to questions about BOCES Surplus. We thought the following points may be helpful for our community members to know.

- BOCES Surplus is money that was not spent during the school year. All of this funding is returned to school districts that purchased BOCES services that year.
- Unlike businesses and school districts, BOCES begin each year with a \$0 fund balance. Meaning, by law, they are very limited on how they can reserve funds. In layman's terms, BOCES are not allowed to maintain a fund balance like school districts.
- BOCES plan budgets based on past experience, anticipated costs and feedback from school superintendents.
- BOCES Surplus is a mandated accounting process that protects school districts and taxpayers because excess funds are always returned. Part of the reason why Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES ends up with a surplus is that the agency aggressively manages its budgets to save money for its school districts.
- BOCES annual expenses anticipate some fluctuations in costs such as energy increases and changes in student enrollment. This ensures that BOCES are not requesting critical, operational funds from school districts at the end of the school year. School districts are responsible to pay for any budgetary deficiencies. If a BOCES generated a deficit, this would wreak havoc on school district budgets.
- The amount of money refunded is low when compared to BOCES budget or to the aggregate school district budgets. For example at Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES, the Surplus in 2010-2011 represented 3.7% of the \$78 million annual budget.
- Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES' total budget is actually a collection of several independent budgets ranging from special education to district support services. The organization offers more than 120 programs and services, including several statewide services that bring in additional revenue for the BOCES and its component districts. These services are approved by the State Education Department.
- BOCES are complex yet highly effective entities that help schools and municipalities share resources and contain costs. Due to their cooperative nature, BOCES have been cited as a model for cost savings in New York State.

For questions or comments, contact District Superintendent Jo Anne Antonacci at (585) 352-2400.