



**Duanesburg** CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## ***News Release/Media Advisory***

For release: Dec. 3, 2013

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### ***Community participation is essential for Jan. 9 Education Summit; all are also encouraged to complete survey***

Duanesburg Central School District (DCS) will hold an Education Summit on Jan. 9, 2014 (snow date Jan. 15) from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the high school to gather community input for development of a strategic plan to guide the district through the next three to five years.

The district wants to determine how to best preserve opportunities for all students – and particularly for those who will soon make the transition from high school to the workplace, college or military service - while also making decisions that align with the community's priorities.

All members of the community are encouraged to participate in the summit and may pre-register by contacting Jeanne Beach at [jbeach@duanesburg.org](mailto:jbeach@duanesburg.org) or (518) 895-2279. The summit will feature a brief opening presentation, followed by small-group discussions of ideas, opinions and concepts.

All community members are also urged to participate in a survey included in the district's *Winter 2013-14 Soaring Eagle* newsletter, which is being mailed this week, with a return date to the district of Dec. 13. The survey may also be taken online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Duanesburg>.

Responses to the survey, in conjunction with information from the district's January 2012 community forum, will be used to drive discussion at the 2014 Education Summit and allow every community member to have a voice in the process.

"Duanesburg is looking to the future, and as it does, it continues to face significant challenges," said Superintendent Christine Crowley. "Schools across the state are confronted with rising costs that are outpacing state and federal school aid and stressing their taxpayer base. As a result, many districts have made serious cuts in staffing and programs, including high school course offerings.

"This comes at a time when much more is demanded of graduates not only to succeed, but to survive in a highly competitive, economically turbulent, global society. We cannot raise the bar for students and continue cutting."

Crowley noted that the district has already made significant reductions in recent years, including cutting 10 full-time positions; reducing several staff to part-time; eliminating non-aidable equipment, software and books; eliminating afterschool late buses; and reducing the cost of supplies, out-of-district tuition, field trips, clubs and summer services. DCS has saved money by sharing transportation services, restructuring healthcare benefits, offering retirement incentives and participating in consortiums for healthcare, energy, purchasing and workers' compensation.

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“It is the district’s mission and the responsibility of the Board of Education to provide an educational program that meets student needs while also being responsive and accountable to all residents, said Board of Education President Robert Fiorini. “The board has been working to develop a district-wide strategic plan to ensure the long-term viability of the district and the success of our students.

“A strategic plan is a critical tool used by all organizations to make sure that day-to-day progress leads directly and efficiently to where we want to be in the future,” he added. “In essence, we are developing a road map to guide us through times that continue to present financial, regulatory and educational challenges for Duanesburg.

“One of the first and most important steps in this process is to gather feedback from all stakeholders within the district – community residents, parents, faculty, staff and students. Listening to our community is the first step in helping us understand the needs and desires of those we serve,” Fiorini said.

“Our district has been fiscally responsible, our students are performing at a high level when compared to districts around the region, and we continue to keep our local share of taxes at one of the lowest levels in the region. That is a testament to the past work of our district leaders, the hard work of our students and parents and the dedication of our community members.”

“Our children are growing up in a global, complex and highly competitive society that demands much more than a basic education,” said Duanesburg Superintendent Christine Crowley. “It is our duty and mission to provide students with the depth and breadth of educational programs and services so they have the skills and knowledge to be college and career-ready, whether their plans include higher education, the workplace, a trade or craft, family business or the military.

“The DCS Board, administration, faculty and staff all encourage and welcome the community’s participation in our survey and Education Summit.”