



BRIGHTER TOGETHER

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Micron's Promise and What It Means for Our Schools

By Dr. Terry L. Ward, Superintendent of Schools, North Syracuse Central School District

Support for Micron and Regional Growth

The North Syracuse Central School District proudly supports Micron's arrival and investment in our community. We share in the excitement surrounding the thousands of new jobs and the economic growth this project will bring to Central New York. This is a transformative opportunity for our region, and we appreciate the dedicated efforts of local and state leaders who are working to make it happen.

Partnership and Engagement with Micron

From the beginning, our district has embraced Micron as a valued partner. We have hosted chip camps for students, collaborated on STEM learning opportunities, and helped connect Micron with educators across the region. Recognizing the potential for broad educational benefits, we introduced Micron to BOCES so that all Central New York school districts could share in the experience and gain access to new resources and opportunities. We are proud to be part of the effort to ensure that this historic investment benefits all students in our region.

Clarifying the Impact of PILOT Revenue

Although the North Syracuse Central School District was not involved in negotiating the Payment in Lieu of Taxes, or PILOT, agreement with Micron, we understand the importance of economic development and the role incentives play in attracting major employers. However, it is important for our community and local taxpayers to understand that PILOT revenue does not directly benefit the school district.

Despite reports suggesting the district will receive 63 million dollars over the next 49 years, every dollar of that revenue will be returned to taxpayers as a reduction in the school tax levy. This is required under New York's property tax cap law, which has been in effect since 2012. As a result, the district will not retain any of those funds to support instruction, programs, or facilities. While taxpayers may see some financial relief, the school district itself receives no additional funding to educate the students who will one day work at Micron or in related industries. Furthermore, the PILOT agreement represents only approximately 0.7% of our annual school budget which does not allow for much tax relief to our community.

Commitment to Student Preparation and Investment

The North Syracuse Central School District remains deeply committed to preparing students for success in college, careers, and life beyond graduation. To do this effectively, we must continue to invest in innovative programs, up-to-date technology, and learning spaces that reflect the needs of today's economy. Our goal is to equip students with the technical, analytical, and creative skills necessary to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

However, the Micron PILOT provides no funding for these essential investments. Under the state's property tax cap formula, all PILOT revenue is allocated to taxpayers, not to school districts. As we look ahead to Micron's construction and operations, it is vital that educational funding keep pace with the region's economic growth. Our students deserve access to the tools and experiences that will prepare them for the opportunities like Micron.

Local Impacts on the North Syracuse Community

The North Syracuse community will experience the effects of Micron's development more directly than most other areas of Central New York. Our community is already feeling the impacts of infrastructure and road expansion projects, leading to heavier traffic and longer travel times for residents and school transportation. The use of eminent domain has removed and will continue to remove additional properties from the tax rolls, leaving fewer taxpayers to share the cost of essential public services, including education.

In addition, many of the new housing developments being constructed in response to Micron's arrival are apartments whose developers have also received PILOT agreements. These properties, like Micron, will not contribute their full share of school taxes, which further limits the revenue available to support our students.

A Call for Collaboration

Micron's presence is a remarkable opportunity for Central New York, and we are eager to continue working with them to inspire and prepare the next generation of innovators. The success of this partnership depends not only on economic development but on an investment in education. Micron's arrival can and should lift the entire community, including the schools that will educate the very students who one day will help build its success. However, our schools must have the tools and resources to match the scale of this opportunity.

Dr. Terry L. Ward is the Superintendent of Schools for the North Syracuse Central School District.