



## *Horseheads Central School District*

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### **Business Office**

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On Tuesday, March 16, a committee of four (Karen Donahue, high school principal; Mike Stuart, district business manager; Darby Thompson and Deb Kisloski, current yearbook advisors) met to discuss the yearbook RFPs received for the next contract. Currently the high school contract is with Jostens, and we have been highly satisfied not only with the quality of the book and service, but with our representative, Jack Murray. Because of projected cost differences, however, the committee recommends switching to Herff-Jones for the next contract. The Herff-Jones proposal is significantly lower than Jostens, and Deb Kisloski and Darby Thompson both met with the representative, Bob Wood, for an overview of the software and were impressed. Darby also contacted Mike Simons, current yearbook advisor at Corning West, about his long experience with Herff-Jones, and he recommended the company and Bob highly.

However, in our conversation with Mike Stuart on Tuesday, it became clear that perhaps some of the motivation for us to switch to a different company would be to lower the cost of yearbooks to the students, and we feel strongly that at least for the first year of the Herff-Jones contract, the cost to students must be maintained at \$55. (The sales representative stated that \$55 would be the suggested price for the book, although that does not appear in their RFP.) Our opinion is based on many combined years of advising yearbook both here and at other schools, and recognizing the need for the yearbook account to remain profitable so that we may replace lost or broken equipment, supplement our club with more computers (which are already desperately needed), and be sure we can budget for options such as a larger book dimension, more pages, and special features that would enhance the book's appearance.

In our experience advising yearbook, we have found these companies will often add charges that are not disclosed up front, and though we do everything we can to oppose this, we do not want to be short on funds and unable to pay bills. Therefore, we ask that we go through one yearbook cycle at \$55 per book until we are comfortable with Herff-Jones experience, and then at the end of that year evaluate if we can reduce the cost of the books to students. We would also like to add that our books sell for less than other area schools. For example, Corning West yearbooks sell for \$65 in the fall and \$75 in June. Corning East yearbooks sell for \$60 in the fall and \$65 in the spring, and they plan on increasing the price next year. Though our school is twice as large, our books sell for \$55 in fall and \$60 in June. Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations.

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### **Quality Education for All**

The Mission of the Horseheads Central School Community is to provide a quality education for all within a nurturing environment which promotes excellence, growth, and a sense of civic responsibility.