

Island schools have some extra \$\$ for once

Faced with bonus of 250Gs to buy supplies, restore programs

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Staten Island schools have a nearly \$250,000 budget bonanza to purchase supplies and restore school programming after a year spent pinching pennies, according to District 31 Superintendent Christy Cugini.

The money lay unspent since the start of school because the Staten Island Community School Board anticipated more severe mid-year budget cuts than eventually hit the district, Cugini said during a discussion meeting last night in Laurie Intermediate School, New Springville.

"We held back allocations for supplies and materials, and asked the principals not to spend them," because the district didn't know whether it would need the money later if its budget was cut severely, Cugini said.

Cugini said he thought the board should spend the money — about \$245,000 — for pupil furniture, putting on more school programs like concerts and plays, and for equipment like photocopiers, typewriters, musical instruments and art and shop supplies. The purchases made should last the schools through the next year, he said.

"It's an 11th-hour reprieve," he said. "It's due to the good management in this district that we haven't gotten caught in a bind."

Document dispute

Curriculum chairman Jerry F. Cammarata was chastised by fellow board members last night after he passed out copies of a position paper he sent to the central Board of Education without discussing it with the board.

The paper, titled "Strike Three? Children of the Rainbow Revisited" delved into the touchy subject of multicultural curriculums and proposed that decentraliza-

tion would be the only way to prevent the city from forcing districts to follow a plan with topics some residents deemed "age inappropriate."

Although Cammarata noted in the paper that its contents did not reflect the opinion of the school board, board Chairwoman Eleanor Conforti said she was disturbed to see an attached letter was sent to the central Board of Ed on school board stationery. Cammarata countered that he typed "personal" across the top of the paper.

Olivia Brennan said that even though she might agree with everything Cammarata said in the paper, the idea that he was not consulting them or "working as a team" bothered her most.

"What gave you the right to send this off to the central board without talking to us?" she asked. "You're doing exactly what you're saying the central board is doing to us."

Mrs. Conforti added that the fact that Cammarata would be bringing up the document in his curriculum committee meeting gives people the perception that it was board material.

Cammarata said he felt it wasn't wrong to mail an opinion document to the Board of Education like any other citizen might, and he said he never pretended the paper represented board opinion.

"I only prepared the information. You can do with it what you want," he said.