

HALT: Help Arlington Lower Taxes Fixing School Taxes: One Signature at a Time

The Arlington School District's HALT: Help Arlington Lower Taxes committee has collected nearly 1,200 signatures on petitions to implore our state and national representatives to address the problem of escalating school property taxes. On December 13, the petitions were mailed to elected officials who represent the interests of Arlington taxpayers. Newly elected congressional representatives will receive copies of the petitions when they begin their terms.



Copies of the petitions, compiled by high school students to form the word 'HALT', were presented to the community at the December 12 Board of Education meeting. HALT co-chair Jan Andrews pledged that her committee would continue their efforts "to educate the public about tax reform and to communicate the community's concerns in an effort to bring about real change." The HALT committee is actively working with other like-minded groups in our region and across the state.

The public is encouraged to send letters to their representatives and to sign the HALT petition, which is available on this website, in all District schools, and in Arlington's Central Administrative Office.

The HALT committee was established in spring 2005 to press for legislative reform and local resource development. The committee includes representatives of the school board, faculty, staff, and community members. HALT's mission is to achieve a school tax system that supports student learning and is fair to every taxpayer. HALT has three basic goals:

1. Develop an equitable and predictable school funding formula.
2. Ease the tax burden for those on fixed incomes.
3. Obtain adequate funding for all federal and state mandates.



HALT seeks to promote legislative school tax reform that keeps the rate of tax increases as low as possible while adequately supporting student achievement; and ensures that District residents will benefit from school spending efficiency.

During the past 18-months, HALT has held a series of educational forums in order to gain a fuller understanding of how school taxes are raised and how school aid is distributed. On October 18, 2006, HALT hosted a presentation entitled "Fixing School Taxes." Ten Dutchess County school districts co-sponsored this event.

HALT committee members have met with state legislators to discuss the problems associated with how school aid is distributed and to express concern about increasing property taxes.