

3 PRIMROSE STREET
NEWTOWN, CT 06470
TEL. (203) 270-4221

BOARD OF FINANCE
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
Council Chambers
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

These minutes are subject to approval by the Board of Finance

Present: Sandy Roussas, Keith Alexander, Ned Simpson, Chris Gardner, John Madzula and Matthew Mihalcik

Absent: None

Also Present: First Selectman Dan Rosenthal, Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue, BOE Chair Michelle Ku, Ron Bienkowski, BOE Member Dan Delia and BOE Member Deb Zukowski

Chair Sandy Roussas called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Attendees saluted the American Flag.

Voter Comments

None

Communications

Chair Roussas shared the following was brought to her attention by Ned Simpson:

The Legislative Council Sub-Committee is looking at CIP Policy (which three town bodies in sequence have worked on). Mr. Simpson suggested working collaboratively due to the fact that LC Sub-Committee brought a concern bigger than just CIP Policy/Regulation. Chair Roussas will reach out to Chair of LC Chair to discuss.

Minutes

Chris Gardner moved to approve the minutes of February 10, 2020. Ned Simpson seconded. All in favor and motion passes.

First Selectman's Report

None

Finance Director's Report

None

Unfinished Business

Debt Policy

Tabled

Q&A from the BOF to the BOS regarding the BOS FY 2020-2021 Budget (see attached)

New Business

Newtown Board of Education FY 2020-2021 Budget Presentation (see attached)

Superintendent, Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue, BOE Chair, Michelle Ku, presented the proposed BOE budget, which is \$79,201,776 or an increase of 1.40% and an estimated enrollment decrease by 65 pupils.

One may find the official Newtown Board of Education FY 2020-21 Budget via the Newtown Public School District website: <https://www.newtown.k12.ct.us/BOEBudgets>

Mr. Gardner asked about parking permits being raised \$10k. Ms. Ku and Mr. Bienkowski responded by saying it's not raising fees nor an increase for the student population per se. Mr. Bienkowski noted that slowly they've been able to build a fund by collecting fees for various expenses for the parking lot at the High School. The High School asking for additional support from this fund. Mr. Mihalcik asked how much is collected in total for parking fees. The BOE will respond with an accurate answer at a later date. Once it goes to \$30k it will stay at \$30k.

Mr. Gardner asked the Special Education Contingency line and how the district used it. Ms. Ku answered that last year, 2018-19 \$63,000 rolled over to the Non-Lapsing Fund and this year is unknown. Mr. Alexander asked about receiving additional information on previous years spending on special education.

Mr. Gardner asked about the In School Suspension Proctor and whether this is state mandated. Dr. Rodrigue mentioned it is not state mandated; however, the conversation is changing around Out of School Suspensions in correlation to the required hours students need to graduate. Therefore, In School Suspensions are becoming more common (where appropriate) thus needing an official proctor.

Mr. Mihalcik inquired about Staffing by Function that shows an increase in past several years and asked what is driving that increase (see page 18). Ms. Ku said the increase, in part, is due to incorporating World Language in the K-6 grades. Mr. Bienkowski stated that another answer can be found by looking at page 143 of the Budget Book.

Mr. Alexander asked the capacity of World Language in the District this year. Dr. Rodrigue answered by saying Spanish and Science will have it's own scheduled time of about 30 minutes in K-4. World Language at Reed will be brought into both grades (previously there was no plan to implement language in 6th grade this year as the idea was to incorporate year by year). However, Dr. Rodrigue and the BOE felt it was important to include both Spanish and French in a cultural way at Reed because students will be choosing a language in the Middle School.

Mr. Alexander asked for review of the reductions in music. Dr. Rodrigue shared that the K-4 Music will model the K-4 Art model; therefore, 3 teachers sharing their time in 4 schools by traveling.

Mr. Alexander inquired about the workload of the Assistant Principal at the High School given the reduction of one assistant principal. Dr. Rodrigue stated there is another full time Administrator namely the Special Education Supervisor at the High School sharing Administrative duties. Given the decrease in enrollment, Dr. Rodrigue felt she couldn't continue to cut teaching staff without looking at the Administration.

Mr. Alexander asked about idea of bringing in Special Education children from other districts as it would be a revenue stream. Mr. Bienkowski responded by saying we currently don't have any special education children coming in from other districts.

Chair Roussas inquired about the general idea around the initial reductions in the amount of \$1,087,055, from the administrator's initial budget, which thereby decreased the budget an additional 1.39%. Dr. Rodrigue stated this was the result of several discussions and deep study into the importance of not raising the budget.

Chair Roussas asked if there were any requests for enhancements. Dr. Rodrigue responded by saying there weren't many requests like this. She sent the message that she didn't want to raise the budget anymore than was necessary.

Chair Roussas asked how does one evaluate the success of the K-4 World Language program? Dr. Rodrigue said that's the idea around giving Spanish it's own scheduled space (this lends itself to the idea

of a 6-day schedule to stress more fluidity in academia in the elementary level). Once Spanish becomes more regular and more structured, there will be more data so to speak to draw upon for the question. It's too soon to tell.

Chair Roussas asked if there are there any grants that have sunsetted that the Town now has to absorb? Please see page 19 of the BOE Budget Book.

Mr. Simpson (looking at slide 4 "Competing Budget Impacts") stated given enrollment, state aid and grant funding are out of the control of the BOE, was class size and external pressure that the BOE does not control. Dr. Rodrigue answered that class size is determined by the district.

Mr. Simpson (looking at slide 8 "Budget Revenue Sources") asked if there are charges for participating in sports and extracurricular. Dr. Rodrigue noted the correct the term "Pay to Participate" and responded that yes there are fees, totaling about \$153,000 per year (see page 127).

Mr. Gardner asked whether given the staff reductions and class size guidelines, are the reductions we are seeing here negatively affect those guidelines. Dr. Rodrigue stated they do not.

Department presentations regarding the BOS FY 2020-21 Budget

Chair Roussas noted inviting the following departments for further discussion: Public Works- Feb 18, Police Station- Feb 18, Edmond Town Hall- Feb 20, , Parks and Rec- Feb 24 and the Community Center- Feb 24

Voter Comments

None

Announcements

None

Adjournment

Keith Alexander made a motion to adjourn. Chris Gardner seconded. All members were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kiley Gottschalk, Clerk

Attachments

Legislative Council February 12th Meeting Minutes
Q&A from the BOF to the BOS regarding the BOS FY 2020-2021 Budget
Board of Education FY 2020-2021 Budget Presentation

Chris Eide, Chair
Alison Plante, Vice-Chair
Ryan Knapp
Paul Lundquist
Cathy Reiss
Chris Smith



TOWN OF NEWTOWN

The Legislative Council
Finance and Administration Committee
will be meeting on Wednesday, February 12th, 2020 at 7:30 PM
at Newtown Municipal Center, Meeting Room 1

Meeting Notes

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Eide, Chair at 7:37 PM.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

ROLL CALL

Members present:

- C. Eide
- A. Plante
- R. Knapp
- P. Lundquist
- C. Reiss

Absent:

- C. Smith

VOTER COMMENT

None

COMMUNICATIONS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion and possible action on the Board of Finance approved Capital Improvement Plan Policy

The Resolution of the Finance and Administration Committee Regarding Guiding Principles for CIP Policy Revisions was moved by Ms. Reiss and seconded by Ms. Plante.

The resolution was read and debated. The resolution put forth that the committee should use as its guiding principles in the policy revisions that the town should move from bonding to savings to finance capital expenditures, that all relevant town boards and commissions should be consulted through the CIP formulation process, and that disparate items should not be bundled together in order to qualify for inclusion on the CIP. Though the committee had general consensus that the ideals expressed in the resolution were worthwhile, there were concerns that the first ideal encompassed in the resolution, that the town should move from bonding to savings, would be better expressed somewhere other than the CIP policy document and that the committee didn't necessarily need a formal document to encompass the changes that would be made.

A motion to withdraw the resolution was made by Ms. Plante and seconded by Mr. Knapp. The motion to withdraw passed by unanimous consent.

The committee then began a discussion around the work to be done, identifying areas that could use some reworking. It was noted that the document is referred to as "policy", though it exists as regulation under the Charter and the language of "regulation" is used in some places in the document itself.

Mr. Knapp noted that the process laid out in the document left the roles of the different bodies to be unclear and, in some cases, repetitive. Through the CIP formulation process, the CIP is "prioritized" by four different bodies. Clearer roles for each body might help make the process clearer and provide some distinction between what each body should be doing when the CIP comes to them.

The committee then went through the document and made a list of things that might be changed in the CIP revision process including:

- Targeting Section 310-7 for adding consultation with boards and commissions
 - In Section 310-7 A.1, more clearly defining relevant boards to help ensure that consultation occurs during the CIP formulation process
- Looking at Section 310-3 D to address language calling the CIP an "official commitment" of the town, as the CIP extends beyond the terms of office of the officials who approve it; the suggestion was to consider striking commitment, and replacing with "plan"
- Adding a Sec 310-x that clarifies roles of various bodies in the CIP process
- Removing language calling the document policy as it exists in both the Charter and Code Book as a regulation
- Looking at Section 310-10, since it doesn't seem to fit the purpose of the document; consider making it its own stand alone document or making it live somewhere else

The committee members then agreed to take on different aspects of the revision using the points above as follows:

- Ms. Plante will revise the "purpose/goal/overview" section (310-1,2,3)
- Mr. Knapp will revise the "process" section (310-7)
- Mr. Eide will create a new "roles" section, consulting the Charter (310-x)
- Mr. Lundquist will revise on the "bundling" language to make it stronger

- Ms. Reiss will revise Section 310-10 to see if language is duplicated anywhere and/or whether it should be moved

OLD BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Lundquist and seconded by Mr. Knapp. The motion passed by unanimous consent and the meeting adjourned at 9:07 PM.

Resolution of the Finance and Administration Committee Regarding Guiding Principles for CIP Policy Revisions

Whereas the Town of Newtown currently relies mainly on bonding to finance capital projects, which entails interest payments that add to the cost of capital projects and, therefore, the tax burden on Newtown residents;

Whereas capital projects are intended to be large scale capital undertakings that are sizable enough to exclude them from a one-time payment; and

Whereas the Town of Newtown has many groups and bodies with diverse expertises that can and should provide feedback in the planning of capital projects; now therefore be it

Resolved, that the Legislative Council's Finance and Administration Committee adopts the following as guiding principles for the review and revision of the Town of Newtown's CIP Policy:

1. that the Town of Newtown should support a shift from bonding to savings when financing capital projects
2. that projects included on the Capital Improvement Plan should refrain from bundling smaller, disparate expenditures that could be included in yearly budgets as regular maintenance
3. that decisions of inclusion, exclusion, planning, and timing of capital projects should include feedback from all stakeholders with relevant expertise

Expenses

Registrars

Explain expenditure of \$33K for seasonal salaries vs removal of \$65K for professional services and increase of \$28K for "other expenditures." Confusing in the detailed budget book.

The election account was split to separate workers and other expenses such as ballots, programming etc. The account was split due to IRS regulations requiring w-2 for workers versus 1099's.

If the two accounts, seasonal and other, are combined our election expense is actually decreased.

Emergency Communications

Explain justification for increased cost for fiber net service (\$26K)

There will be circuits being moved to 191 South Main (new facility) that requires a build from the state that changes current pricing structure that is in place. This connectivity is for the 911 and the COLLECT Criminal Justice systems. It is the cost of the build and connectivity that drive the monthly recurring fees.

I don't know how to explain it more, our Inter/Intranet fees have stayed the same from last year (and that connection is NOT part of this connection), this is the new fee for the other fiber and is not part of the construction costs. If we had not moved at all (PD or us) there would be no increase to my line items, but once the physical location changes it impacts the entire system and we then have to absorb the costs.

Maureen

Fire

Why the 19 percent increase in hydrant costs? Maintenance? Water?

Bob, the hydrant account covers several things. First, we pay Aquarion Water for all of the municipal fire hydrants and the underground water distribution mains that supply them. This is about \$73,500. This is an increase of \$3,500 compared to two years ago. Also, we need to provide and maintain an adequate firefighting water supply for the remainder of the town. There are currently 75 underground water storage tanks throughout town. These tanks are vital, as they protect areas that do not have hydrants. We repair some of them each year, for a total of \$4,000 to \$8,000. However, we have more tanks to repair, and we are now finding that several of them are starting to fail and will need more extensive repairs. This extra money will allow us to keep up with minor repairs, and to start addressing the more expensive ones.

Winter Maintenance

Is the price for road salt down or are we budgeting less because we anticipate using less material next year?

The reduction in the road salt line item is due to a reduction in the unit price per ton and a reduction in the five (5) year rolling average of use.

Public Building Maintenance

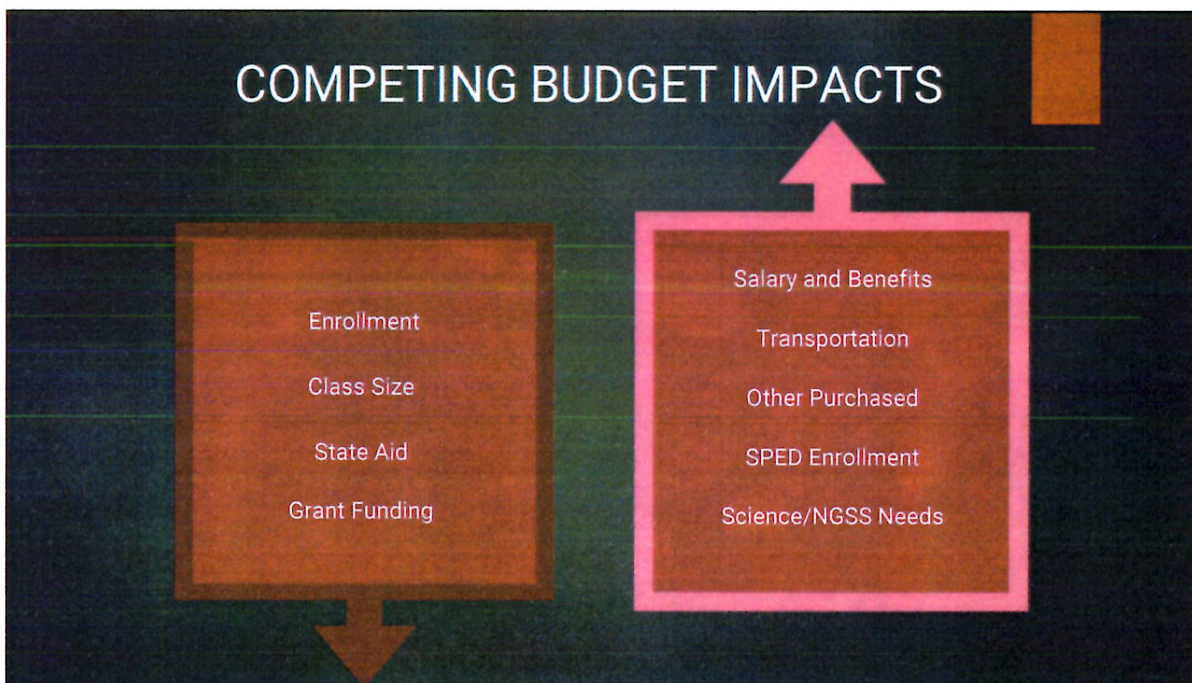
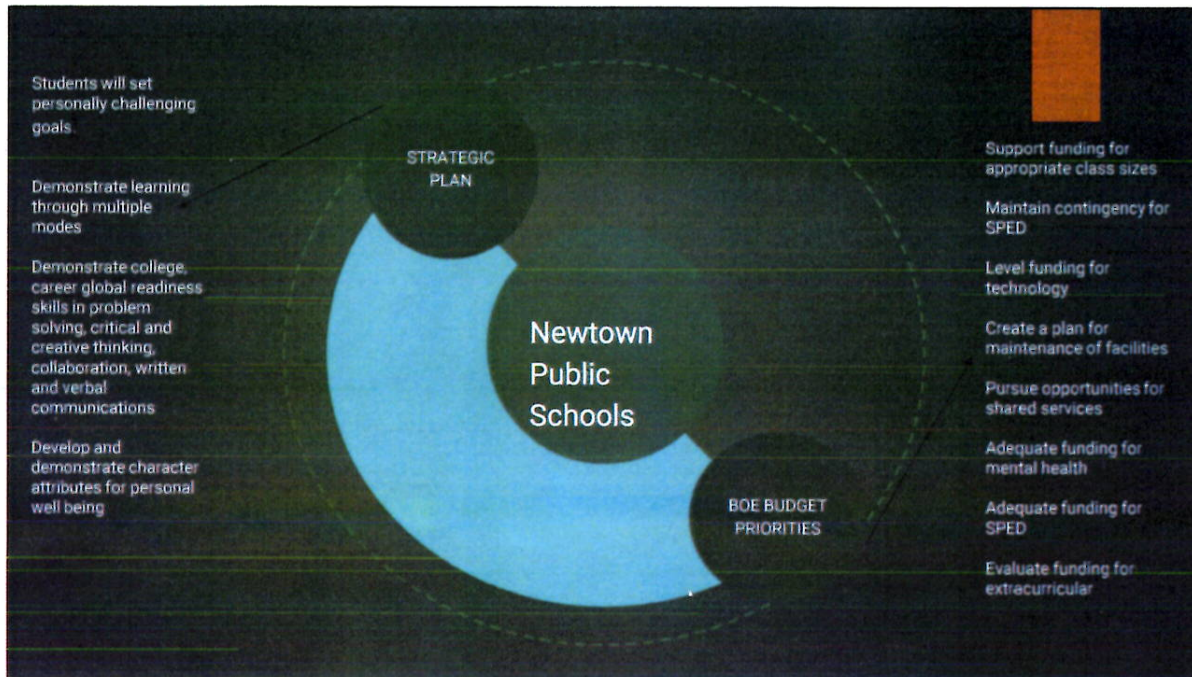
Explain justification for increases in energy, contractual services, water/sewer. Community Center? If so how does GE maintenance grant fold in to budget?

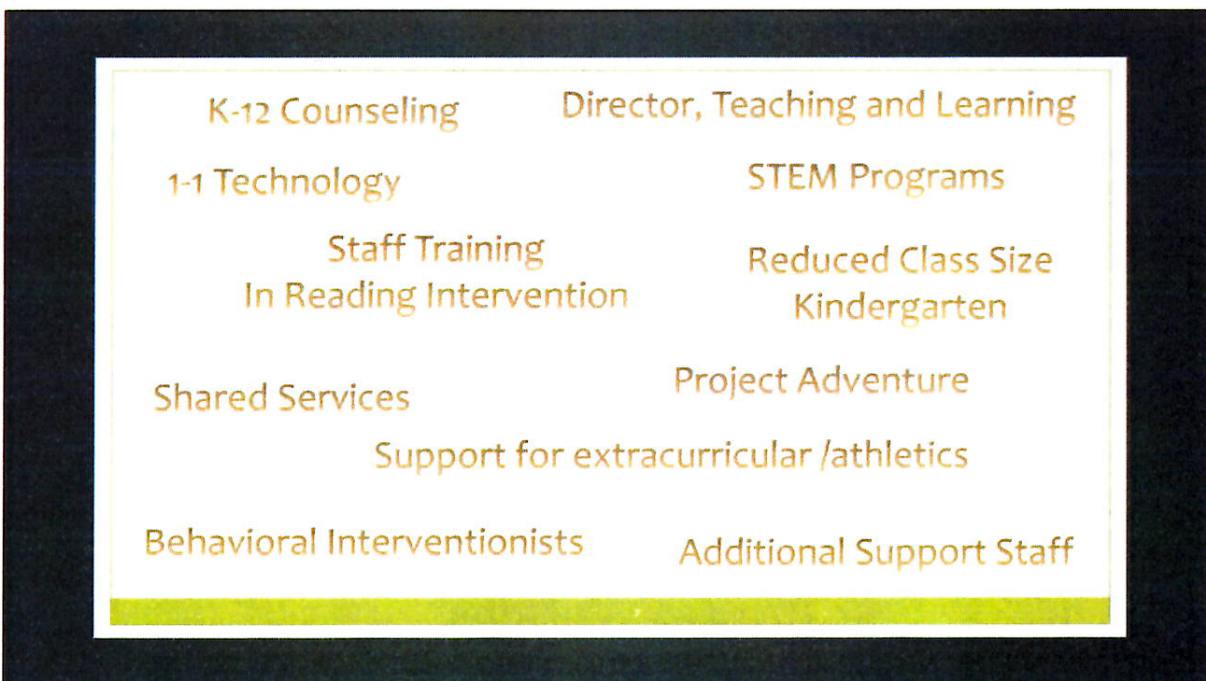
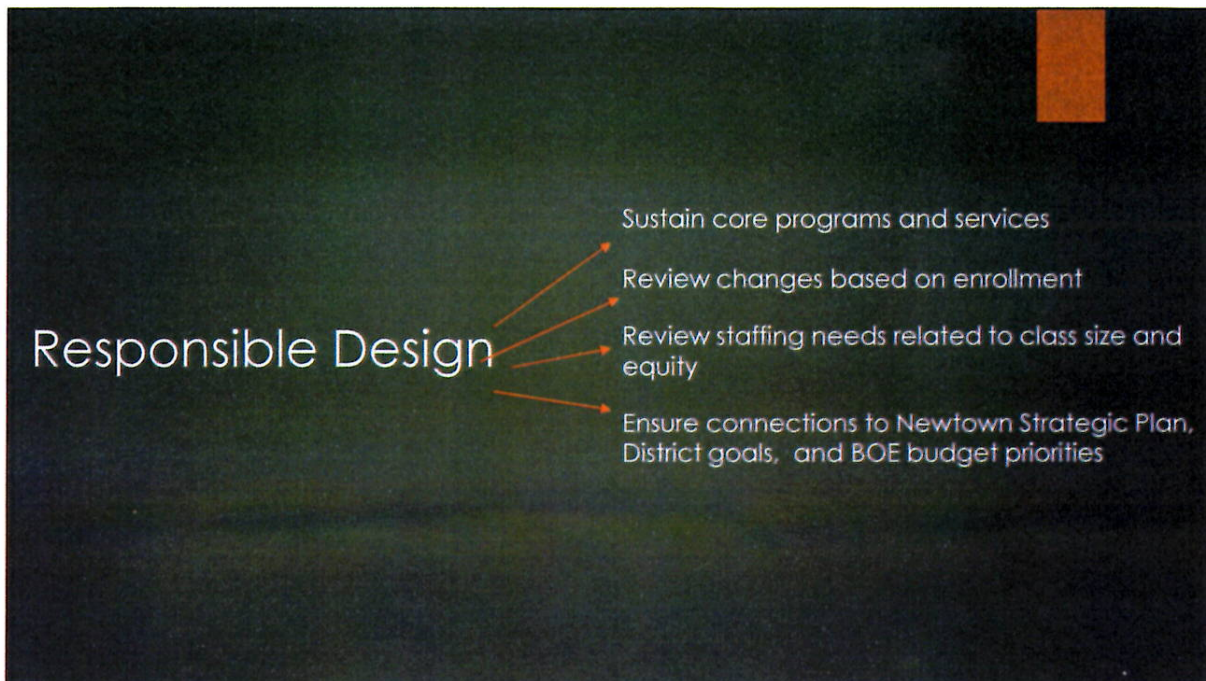
The increases in line items are primarily for the operation of the "new" senior center and not the community center. The senior center does not participate in the GE maintenance grant. In addition we still have operational but not custodial responsibilities for the "old" senior center now operated as part of the Children's Adventure Center. While the Town does receive revenue for the re-use of the building, we still have to carry the expenditures in our line items.

Revenues

I heard high confidence from Dan and Bob that the ECS grant will be approximately \$4.5M. What are the benefits/drawbacks of increasing the 2020-21 estimate in that revenue account to \$4.35M, up from \$4.25M? How would that increase impact the proposed mil rate?

Mil rate would go down to 34.98 (from 35.01). To date the governor's proposal for Newtown's ECS grant is \$4,495,691. Budgeting a revenue estimate of \$4,250,000 would give us a cushion of \$245,000 to offset any subsequent decrease in the state's contribution to Newtown's ECS grant. Budgeting \$4,350,000 would give us less of a cushion (\$145,000).

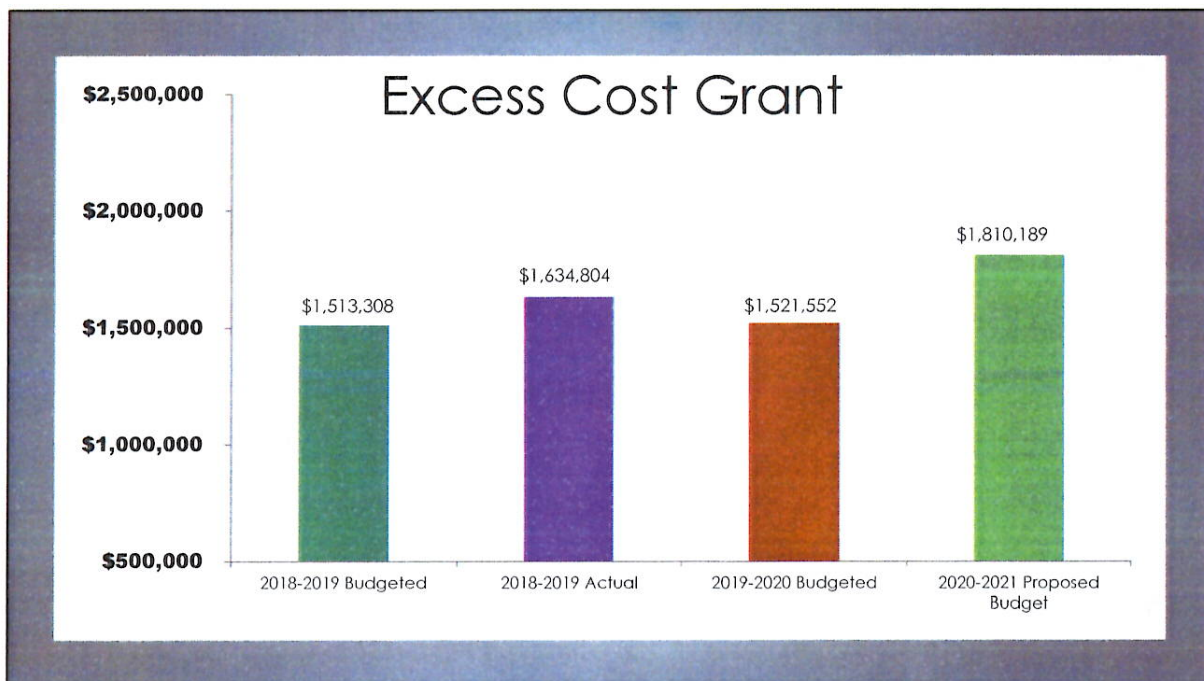
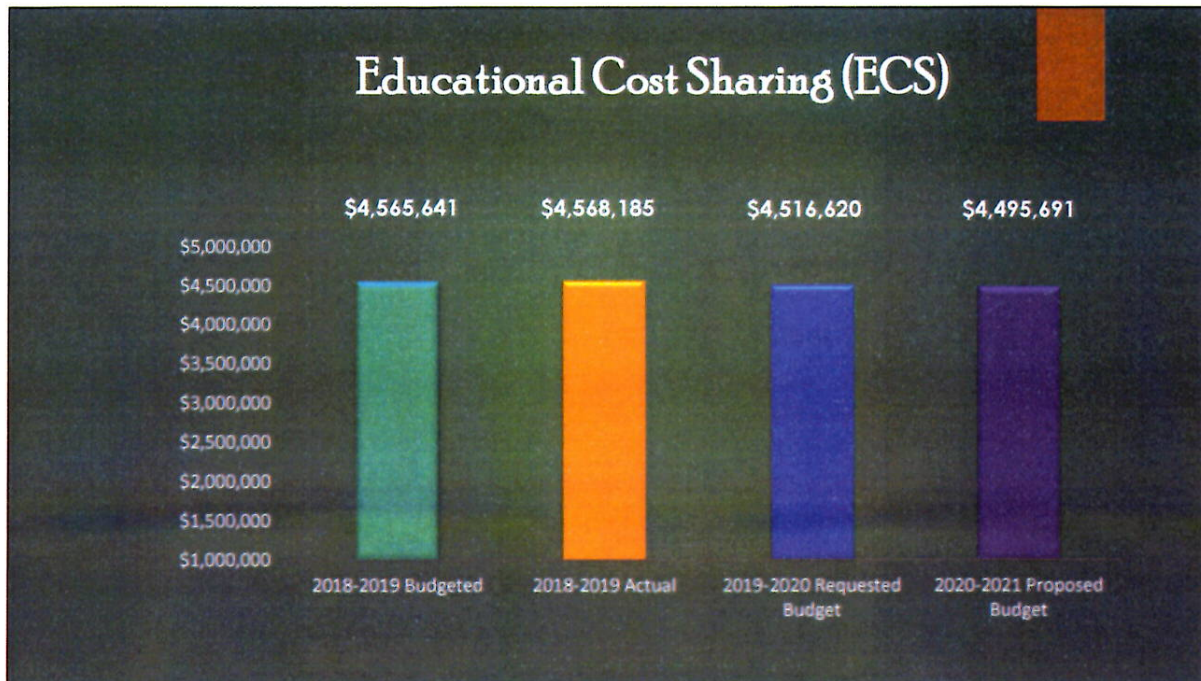


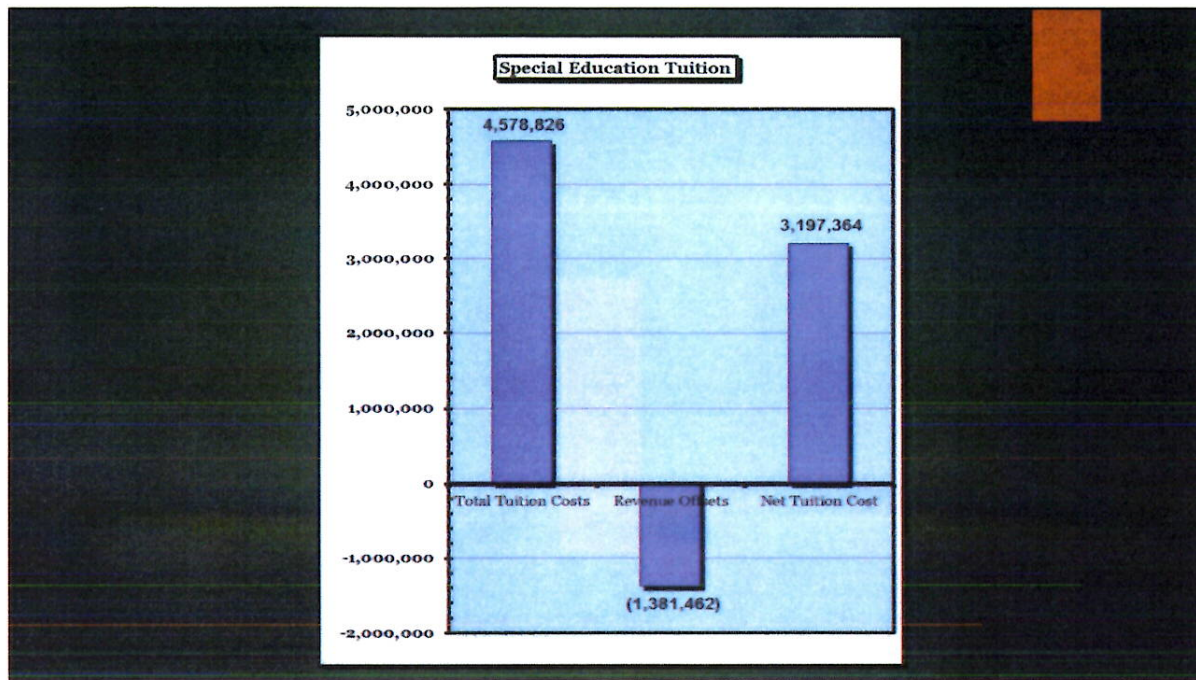


Revenue Sources

Budget Revenue Sources

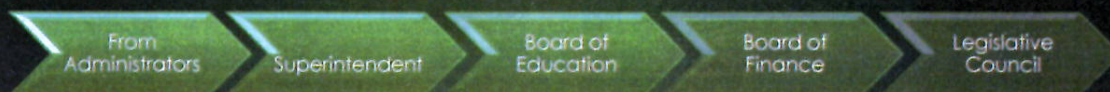
	2018		2019		2020	
	Revenue \$	% of Total Budget	Revenue \$	% of Total Budget	Revenue \$	% of Total Budget
Tax Revenue	71,399,524	93.88%	73,507,450	94.11%	74,614,745	94.21%
Educational Cost Sharing	4,568,185	6.00%	4,516,620	5.78%	4,495,691	5.68%
Other Grants	22,777	0.03%	23,000	0.03%	23,000	0.03%
Local Tuition	38,745	0.05%	32,340	0.05%	32,340	0.04%
Parking Permits	20,000	0.03%	20,000	0.03%	30,000	0.04%
Miscellaneous Fees	5,000	0.01%	5,000	0.01%	6,000	0.01%
Total Funding Sources	76,054,231		78,104,410		79,201,776	





What's Behind the BOE Budget?

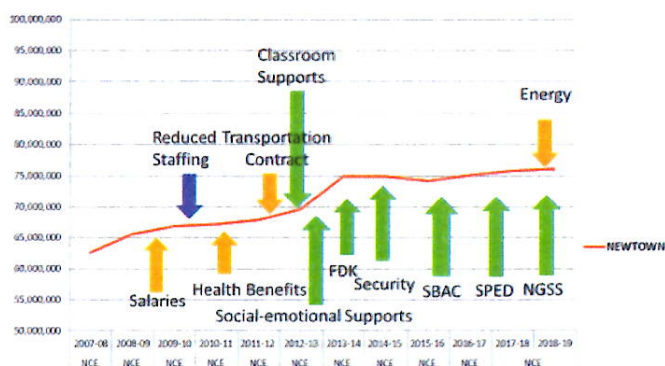
Budget Reductions

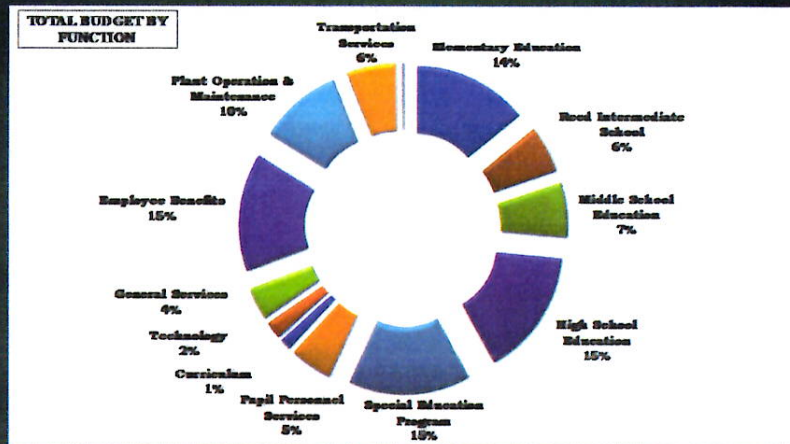


Administrator's Initial Budget Request	\$80,368,829	2.9%
Superintendent's Total Budget Reduction	(\$1,087,055)	(1.39%)
Board of Education Reduction	(\$79,998)	(0.11%)
Superintendent's Budget Proposed Spending Plan	\$79,201,776	1.40%

Budget Influences

- Changes in enrollment
- Contractual obligations and economic factors
- Changes in programs or services based on legislative mandates, changing student needs or the Strategic Plan



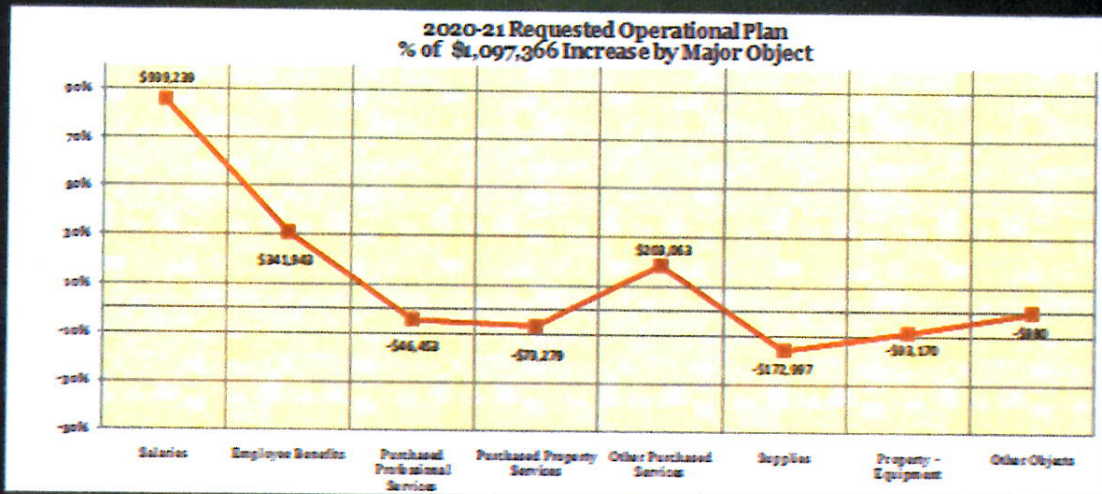


Major Budget Objects 2020-2021

Salaries	\$51,144,554
Employee Benefits	\$11,435,283
Purchased Professional Services	\$751,382
Purchased Property Services	\$2,219,463
Other Purchased Services	\$9,314,942
Supplies	\$3,498,335
Property & Equipment	\$664,402
Other Objects	\$73,415
Special Education Contingency	\$100,000
Total Operating Budget	\$79,201,776

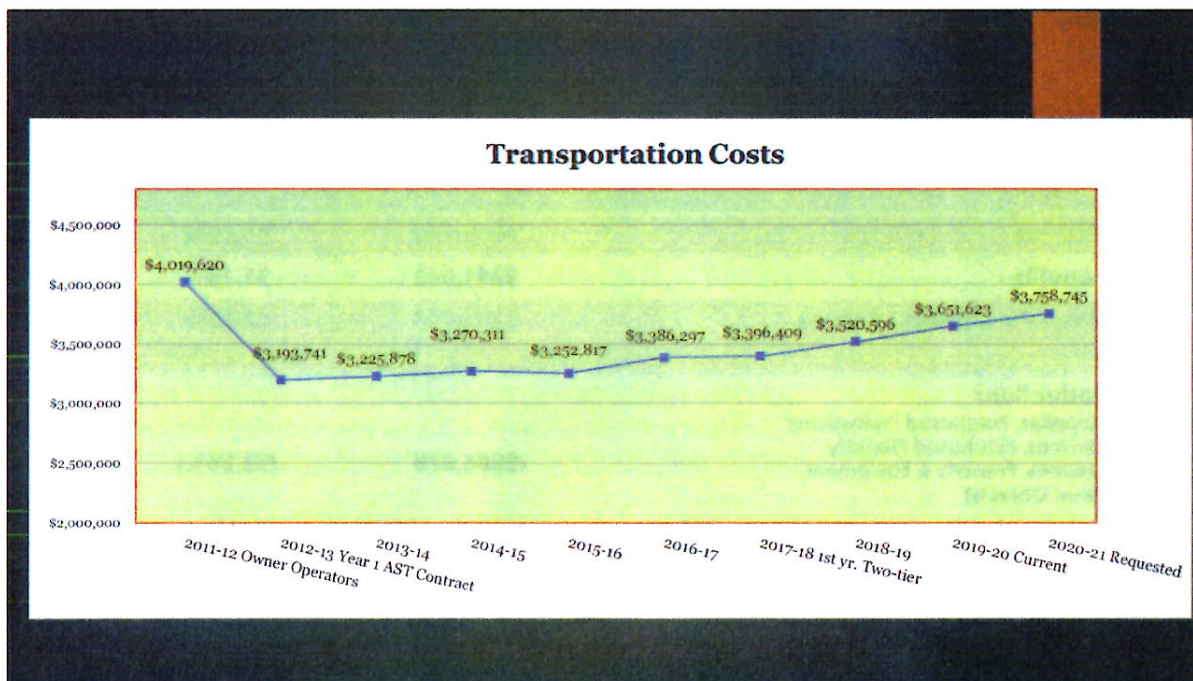
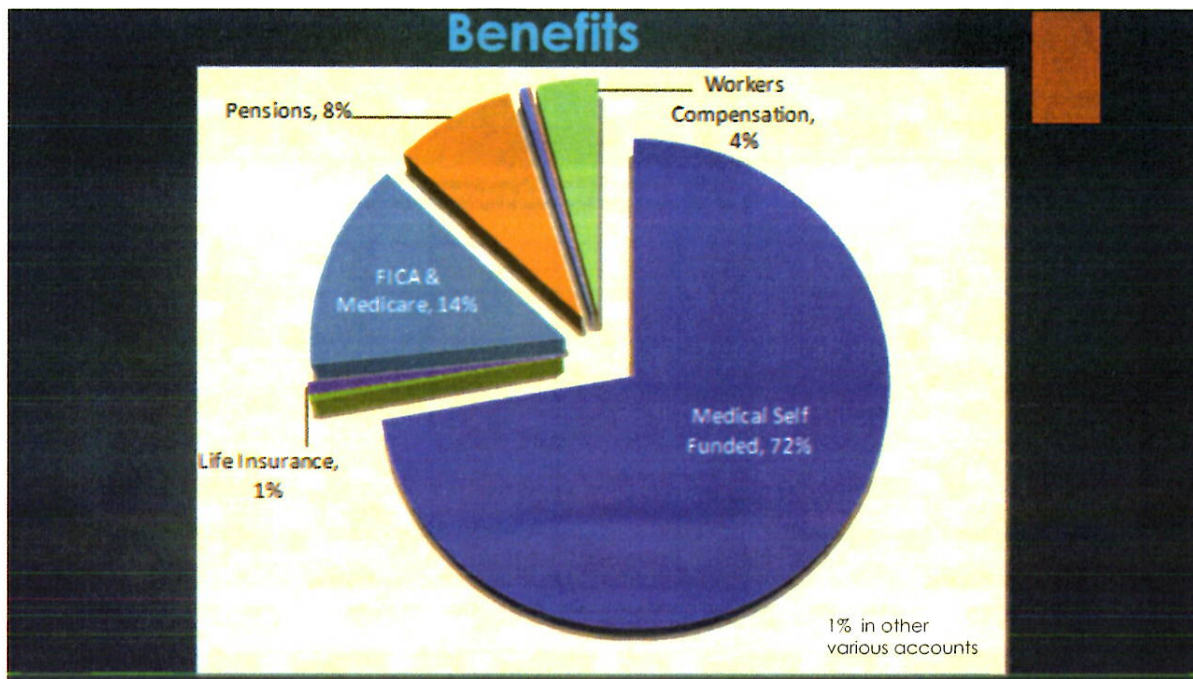
OPERATING BUDGET INCREASE ➡ 1.40%

Budget Drivers Increases by major object



Driving the 2020-2021 Budget

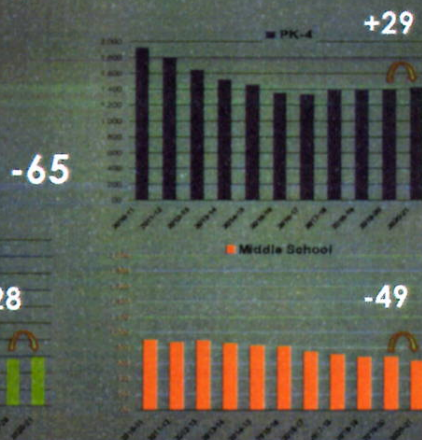
	Cost Increase	% of Budget Increase
Salaries	\$939,239	85.59%
Benefits	\$341,943	31.16%
Other Purchased Services	\$203,063	18.50%
Reductions (Supplies, Purchased Professional Services, Purchased Property Services, Property & Equipment, Other Objects)	-\$386,879	(35.25%)
Total	\$1,097,366	100%



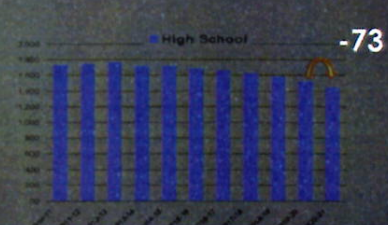
Enrollment and Staffing Adjustments

Enrollment Overview

District Enrollment
 2017-18 total: 4,427
 2018-19 projected: 4,317
 2018-19 actual: 4,324
 2019-20 projected: 4,235
 2019-20 actual: 4,207
 2020-21 projected: 4,142



Hawley	302
Sandy Hook	385
Middle Gate	372
Head O' Meadow	289
PreK	76

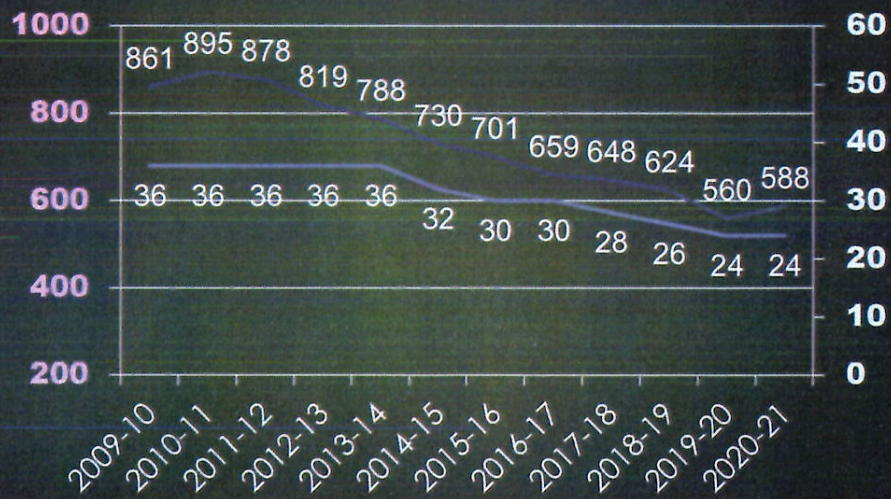


K-4 Enrollment & Classroom Teachers



24

5-6 Enrollment & cluster teachers

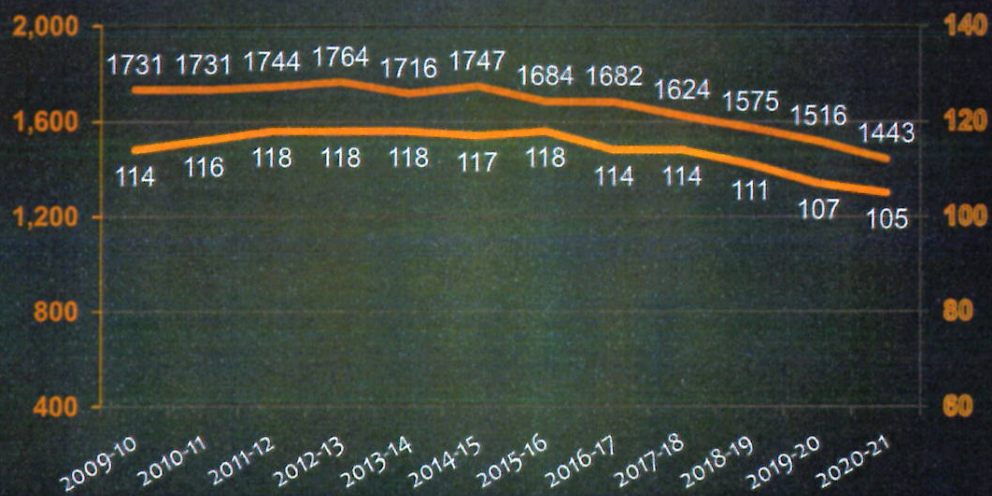


25

7-8 enrollment & cluster teachers



9-12 enrollment & certified staff



Certified Staffing Requests**FTE****AMOUNT**Certified Additions

Kindergarten Teacher – SHS	1.00	\$ 61,961
Classroom Teacher – HOM	1.00	\$ 61,961
Spanish Teacher – RIS (5 th /6 th W.L.)	1.00	\$ 61,961
Math Intervention – NMS	.60	\$ 37,177
Math Teacher – extra class – NMS	0.14	\$ 12,278
Health Teacher – NMS	.50	\$ 29,316
<u>SAIL Program Teacher – Special Ed.</u>	<u>1.00</u>	<u>\$ 61,961</u>
Total Additions	5.24	\$ 326,615

Certified Reductions

Music – Shared Elementary	-1.00	-\$ 53,670
Physical Education – Shared Elementary	-0.60	-\$ 29,512
Spanish Teacher– Elementary	-0.50	-\$ 30,981
Classroom Teachers– MS	-4.00	-\$ 247,844
Assistant Principal – HS	-1.00	-\$ 157,940
English Teacher – HS (existing .6)	-0.60	-\$ 37,177
World Language – HS (.8 Spanish/2 French)	-1.00	-\$ 61,961
<u>School Psych – RIS (Pupil Personnel)</u>	<u>-0.40</u>	<u>-\$ 26,024</u>
Total Reductions	-9.10	-\$ 645,109

Net Total**-3.86****-\$318,494****REQUESTED STAFFING****REQUESTED STAFFING****Non-Certified Staffing Requests****FTE****AMOUNT**Non-Certified Additions

Behavior Interventionist – SHS	0.33	\$ 20,020
Increase Math Para Hours – HOM	0.17	\$ 3,357
Increase Math Para Hours – Hawley (grant funded)		\$ -0-
Site Coordinator for Athletics – HS (stipend)		\$ 6,235
<u>In School Suspension Proctor</u>		<u>\$ 22,100</u>
Total Additions	1.10	\$52,712

Non-Certified Reductions

Clerical – RIS	-0.86	-\$27,564
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Net Total**0.24****\$25,148**

Return on Investments...



Net current expenditure per pupil DRG-B

GREENWICH	\$22,221
MADISON	\$20,403
NEW FAIRFIELD	\$18,628
BETHANY	\$18,588
FAIRFIELD	\$18,524
MIDDLEBURY	\$18,372
SOUTHBURY	\$18,372
ORANGE	\$17,984
GUILFORD	\$17,960
WOODBIDGE	\$17,793
NEWTOWN	\$17,788
AVON	\$17,678
MONROE	\$17,635
SIMSBURY	\$17,451
GLASTONBURY	\$17,244
FARMINGTON	\$17,185
WEST HARTFORD	\$17,001
TRUMBULL	\$16,660
CHESHIRE	\$16,514
SOUTH WINDSOR	\$16,499
GRANBY	\$16,172
BROOKFIELD	\$15,635

Budgets – DRG -B

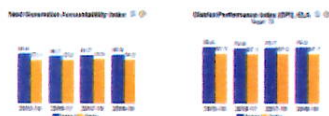
DRG-B	2014-2020 5 year average	proposed 2020/2021	Stage of Development
West Hartford	3.25%		Superintendent presentation in March
Farmington	3.15%	3.96%	BOE approved - 2/3/2020
Fairfield	3.14%	3.90%	BOE approved - 1/28/2020
South Windsor	2.94%	2.69%	BOE to review 2/25/2020
Brookfield	2.71%	6.65%	BOE approved - 1/22/2020
New Fairfield	2.38%	1.76%	BOE approved - Feb. minutes not posted
Glastonbury	2.28%	3.32%	BOE approved
Granby	2.26%	3.69%	Preliminary Superintendent estimate (March presentation)
Trumbull	2.22%	3.51%	Superintendent's proposed budget
Madison	2.18%	1.09%	BOE approved - 1/7/2020
Greenwich	2.17%	2.00%	BOE approved
Pomperaug	2.15%		Superintendent to present February 24
Cheshire	2.13%	2.93%	BOE approved - 1/28/2020
Newtown	1.83%	1.40%	BOE approved 2/4/2020
Monroe	1.58%	4.88%	BOE approved 1/28/2020
Avon	1.57%	4.76%	Superintendent's proposed budget
Simsbury	1.55%	2.50%	Superintendent budget - BOE approval on 2/25
Guilford	1.53%	2.14%	BOE approved? Feb. 3 minutes not posted
Amity	1.48%	3.95%	Superintendent proposed budget



CT Top 20 High Schools 2019

- #1 Darien HS
- #2 Weston
- #3 Achievement First Hartford HS Academy
- #4 Ridgefield HS
- #5 CT IB Academy
- #6 New Canaan HS
- #7 Staples HS
- #8 Simsbury HS
- #9 Wilton HS
- #10 Academy of Aerospace and Engineering
- #11 Hall HS
- #12 Amistad Academy
- #13 Conard HS
- #14 Greenwich HS
- #15 Canton HS
- #16 Avon HS
- #17 Marine Science Magnet High School of Southeastern
- #18 Joel Barlow HS
- #19 Newtown HS
- #20 Farmington HS

Connecticut Report Cards

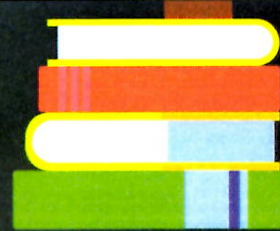


Newtown HS NICHE Rankings

- Best College Prep Public High Schools in Connecticut
26 of 197
- Best Public High Schools in Connecticut
27 of 206
- Best High Schools for Athletes in Connecticut
41 of 296
- Best Public High School Teachers in Connecticut
48 of 204
- Best High Schools for STEM in Connecticut
49 of 118

What Do We Get?

1.40% increase over the current budget



- Commitment to world language at next level (5th and 6th grades)
- Core academic programs and continued STEM opportunities
- Appropriate staffing additions, shared services, and reductions in response to enrollment, class size, and equity
- Adequate staff to address infrastructure, district-wide improvements, and student supports
- Extension of alternative programming and supports to support SPED students at NMS and NHS
- Appropriate resources to reflect Social Emotional Learning and Practice
- Level funding for technology