

Weston Board of Education Workshop

Monday, October 7, 2019 9:00 AM

Central Office Conference Room, 24 School Road, Weston, CT 06883-1623

I. Debrief on FY 20 Budget and Adoption Processes

II. Review of "Preliminary/Estimated/Discussion Only" Pro Forma FY 21

III. Discussion of Communication Processes for BOE and Administration regarding possible budget modifications during review of FY 21 Operating and Capital Budgets

WESTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

Weston, CT

Meeting Date: October 7, 2019

Information Only

Action Requested

Agenda Item Subject: Budget Workshop

Submitted by: William McKersie

Document Summary/Purpose and/or Recommended Action:

Please find the link below to the current FY 20 budget.

<https://www.westonps.org/page.cfm?p=6002>

For more Board of Education Meeting and Committee Meeting Information, visit:
<https://meeting.cabe.org/public/Agency.aspx?PublicAgencyID=47&AgencyTypeID=1>

Weston Public Schools
Budget Assumptions
FY 2020

The following factors will be considered in developing the Superintendent's Recommended FY 2020 Operating Budget:

1. The Administration will recommend a FY 2020 Operating Budget framed by the action steps to Develop Global Citizens:
 1. Academic Excellence
 2. Digital Learning
 3. Healthy Learning Environment
 4. Gauging District Progress
 5. Resources for Learning

2. Dual attention to high-leverage investments and opportunities to be more cost-effective will shape the budget development process and Recommended FY 2020 Operating Budget.

A. Areas for consideration as investments will include:

I. Teaching and Learning, with attention to:

- i. Academic Excellence
- ii. Healthy Learning Environment
- iii. Digital Learning
- iv. Gauging Student Progress.

II. Facilities, with attention to:

- i. Investment in maintaining our facilities and preventative maintenance for all facilities.
- ii. Identifying and outlining an approach to implementing the recommendations of the Facility Master Plan.

B. Areas for possible cost containment include:

I. Staffing:

- i. Review current staffing models for cost efficiencies where possible.

II. Programs:

- i. Review program offerings to find efficiencies where possible. When a new program is added, we will strive to find a comparable financial saving.

III. Operations:

- i. Review all areas of operations for efficiency and improvements that could yield financial savings.

3. Review current and projected Enrollment Data for impact on staffing levels. Listed below are the FY 2019 actual enrollment numbers as of October 1, 2018, and FY 2020 projected student enrollment figures. The district relies on demographers to forecast enrollment for kindergarten through grade 12. Our Special Education Department forecasts enrollment for all students in our pre-school program and those that are placed in educational facilities outside the Weston Public Schools.

Neither the pre-school nor the out-of-district placement students are included in the kindergarten through grade 12 enrollment numbers below.

Grade	Actual Enrollment October 1, 2018	Milone & MacBroom Projected Enrollment 2019-2020	Change
K	109	128	+19
1	128	123	-5
2	154	135	-19
Hurlbutt Elementary School Total	391	386	-5
3	163	166	3
4	164	175	11
5	180	169	-11
Intermediate School Total	507	510	3
6	188	187	-1
7	200	192	-8
8	194	202	8
Middle School Total	582	581	-1
9	203	198	-5
10	207	199	-8
11	185	205	20
12	207	184	-23
High School Total	802	786	-16
In-District Total (K-12)	2282	2263	-19
Pre-School	27	27	0
Total Enrollment	2323	2290	-19

Budget class sizes based on the following Board of Education guidelines: kindergarten and grade 1 class sizes range from 18-20, while grades 2 through 12 typically range from 20-24 per class. However, at the high school level, especially where a class may be a singleton, class sizes may exceed 24 on occasion.

Note: There are 27 students that attend our schools through the Open Choice program. These students are reflected in the enrollment numbers presented above. The decision to accept additional Open Choice students is enrollment driven and will be made in late August or earlier if possible. As space permits additional students might be added which can increase the revenue received

through the Open Choice grant. Students will not be accepted if additional classroom teachers are required.

4. Include costs associated with employee contracts.
 - I. WAA: 2.75% GWI plus step
 - II. WTA: 2.35% inclusive of step
 - III. AFSCME: 2.25% GWI plus step
 - IV. The salaries for employees that are not affiliated with a union are typically determined in June 2018. The budget will include an allocation of \$82,020 to fund these salary increases as determined.
5. The cost of consumable goods and services will be based on existing contracts or increase by a projected CPI of 2.2%. (CPI taken from the Bureau of Labor & Statistics and is based on CPI for the Northeast less food and energy, Year over Year for the data published through August of 2018).
6. Meet all Federal and State mandates that pertain to Connecticut School Districts.
7. Carefully monitor and examine the immediate and long-term impact to the Weston Public Schools of any State of Connecticut adopted budget.
8. Maintain a high-quality professional development program in order to successfully implement the district's instructional goals.
9. Continue to maintain and monitor current Pupil Personnel Services and Special Education programs and services for their efficacy, as well as explore possible new quality programs and services that can address the social-emotional needs of students in a manner that also supports their academic progression in district.
10. Examine areas of the budget that have historically caused financial pressures during the year and identify potential solutions.
11. Consider near and long-term cost efficient opportunities as they emerge.



Historic Budget Considerations for FY21 Budget Development

October 1, 2019

DRAFT

Background

The BOE, administrators and staff have worked closely on a series of multi-year budget challenges, which have substantially affected the development, adoption and implementation of operating and capital budgets over the past several fiscal years. We all need to be cognizant of these realities as we begin to develop the FY 21 Operating and Capital Budgets.

Historical Budget Appropriations

The residents of Weston are uncommonly generous through their property taxes to the Weston Public Schools. Rightly so, they also are conservative about annual increases in the WPS operating and capital budgets. Over the past 10 years, the average increase in the operating budget has been 1.91%. Over the past five years, the average increase has been 2.31%.

Historical Budget Appropriation			
Fiscal Year	Approved Budget	Increase (\$)	Increase (%)
2010	\$ 43,975,602		
2011	\$ 44,697,024	\$ 721,422	1.64%
2012	\$ 45,166,337	\$ 469,313	1.05%
2013	\$ 45,587,192	\$ 420,855	0.93%
2014	\$ 45,575,418	\$ (11,774)	-0.03%
2015	\$ 47,364,855	\$ 1,789,437	3.93%
2016	\$ 48,503,782	\$ 1,138,927	2.40%
2017	\$ 48,905,141	\$ 401,359	0.83%

2018	\$ 49,907,522	\$ 1,002,381	2.05%
2019	\$ 51,444,906	\$ 1,537,384	3.08%
2020	\$ 53,073,710	\$ 1,628,804	3.17%
Average		\$ 909,811	1.91%
5 YR Average		\$ 1,141,771	2.31%

History of Cutbacks

The WPS has been in a budget cutback mode for at least the past four years. Declining state revenue, declining property values, CT inability to rebound from the recession in 2008 and budgetary pressures in health insurance and special education have resulted in the following reductions over the past four years, totaling approximately \$2.8 million¹:

Personnel Reductions

- Elimination of Para Educator (Science) in HS and MS
- Elimination of Technology Integrators
- Reduction in staffing at copy center, then closing the copy center
- Reduction in 1 Special Education clerical staff
- Reduction in Transition Coordinator
- Reduction in MS Clerical Staff
- Reduction in HS Clerical Staff
- Elimination of Central Office Clerical Support in Technology
- Elimination of 2 Groundskeepers
- Elimination of 2.5 custodians
- Elimination of 3 Security Specialists
- Elimination of Transportation Coordinator

Technology Reductions

- Reduction in laptop replacement cycle
- Reduction in Chromebook replacement cycle
- Reduction in Smart Board replacement cycle
- Reduction in Server upgrades to support the network

¹ These reductions do not include budget savings—such as those accrued from issuing RFPs for lower cost services—or cutbacks tied to enrollment declines. We are listing reductions required after accounting for budget savings and enrollment driven cuts.

Program Reductions

- Elimination of MS After School Programs (with athletics transferred to Weston Department of Parks & Recreation)
- Elimination of HS After School Clubs (cuts limited to clubs with low participation or topics able to be covered by other clubs or school opportunities)

Facility & Maintenance Reductions

- Energy Management upgrades at the MS
- Ceiling repairs at the MS
- Boiler Repairs district wide
- Air conditioning maintenance
- Field maintenance
- Ground maintenance
- Elimination of classroom furniture upgrades

Budget Cutbacks on Facilities

It is essential to give extra attention to the budget impact on facilities and grounds. Weston's operating expenses for facilities are the lowest per sq. foot in DRG A. If we met the DRG A average, we would have approximately \$300,000 more in facilities maintenance and repair to help address critical items. The implications of this relative underfunding include longer response time for work orders, deferring general maintenance, not moving forward with air conditioning projects, electrical upgrades, roof maintenance, and field maintenance. Future budgets ideally need to provide for increased funding to facilities—not less.

Capital Budget Deferrals

Due to Town of Weston budget constraints, the average Capital budget over the past four years has been less than what is required. The average annual funding level has been \$665,000, which has meant deferring the following facility upgrades:

- North House Classroom Air Conditioning
- HES Cafeteria Air Conditioning
- Middle School Air Conditioning
- Ventilation upgrades
- Locker upgrades in the Middle School
- Track Replacement
- Hallway repairs in the Middle School
- High School Courtyard upgrades
- Hurlbutt and Intermediate School Flooring upgrades

Special Education FY 18 and FY 19 Cost Over-Runs

In FY 18, the district had outplacements that exceeded the budget by \$1.6 million. The BOE had to request an additional \$1 million from the Town and reduce within its own operating budget \$600,000 to cover these costs. This meant reductions to facilities and grounds in excess of \$200,000 that year, reductions to technology, reductions to supplies and materials in the classroom as examples. These reductions have an impact on the operations and environment for all students and employees.

The BOE was able to institute new administration and student support services for PPS/SPED in FY 19. One new administrator was added (an Assistant Director for PPS) and several direct service positions (BCBA, social worker and career/college counselor). With the retirement of the Director of PPS, we hired a new Assistant Superintendent for PPS (a change in title now standard as districts have transitions in the top PPS administrator). All told, the new plan mitigated the problem of “too much work for too few professionals,” and has played a role in boosting the quality of services for students and better managing the budgetary challenges. Indeed, the cost overrun for PPS/SPED in FY 19 dropped to approximately \$145,000 from the cost overrun in FY 18 of \$1.6 million.

Insurance Savings Clarification

The district did achieve approximately \$2.9 million in savings for moving to the State Partnership Plan. However, that does not equate to budgetary savings as the majority of the amount is considered cost avoidance. The budgetary savings in FY 19 was \$757,000. The district had to apply those savings in the FY 19 budget to cover the cost of outplacements, which had increased the FY 19 budget by over \$1.1 million. If not for the \$757, 000 in budgetary savings, the BOE would have had to reduce roughly 12 positions to ensure a balanced budget.

As anticipated, the State Partnership Plan has announced a likely regional surcharge for districts and towns in Fairfield County, effective FY 21. The specific surcharge and the pace of the increase (over a single or multiple years) are not yet known. We would have to factor this surcharge into FY 21 budgets.

Weston Public Schools
Budget Calendar -- FY 2021
DRAFT – October 1, 2019

KEY:

- **HIGHLIGHTS = BOE Deliberations schedule to finalize.**
- **Board of Education Meetings are underlined.**
- **Items in Red to be determined by Town of Weston.**

9/17/19 (Tues.)	<u>Board of Education Finance Committee Meeting</u> Review of Budget Calendar.
10/02/19 (Wed.)	Leadership Team receives DRAFT copy of Budget Calendar.
10/04/19 (Fri.)	Director of Finance and Operations opens MUNIS budget module to schools and departments.
10/07/19 (Mon.)	<u>Board of Education Budget Workshop (9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon)</u> Review of Budget Assumptions and Calendar. Discussion of processes for Board communications and deliberations regarding Budget decisions.
10/08/19 (Tues.)	Director of Finance and Operations meets with Principals and Dir. of Facilities & Security to discuss framework of budget.
10/4-10/25/19 (Fri.) – (Fri.)	Schools and Departments to schedule meetings with the Director of Finance and Operations.
10/11/19 (Fri.)	<u>Board of Education Finance Committee Meeting</u> Final Review of Budget Assumptions and Calendar.
10/21/19 (Mon.)	<u>Board of Education Meeting</u> Board takes action on DRAFT Budget Assumptions and Budget Calendar.
10/30/19 (Wed.)	Budget request due to Director of Finance and Operations from administrative staff (to be submitted earlier, if available).
11/6/19 (Wed.)	Director of Finance and Operations disseminates a “Working Copy” for the district’s budget request by Program/Cost Center.
11/6-11/13 (Wed-Wed.)	Superintendent and Director of Finance meet with Principals and Central Office Administrators individually and collectively to discuss Budget Requests.
11/14-26/19	Cabinet Members, Principals, and the Director of Facilities meet regularly to discuss working copy of the budget.
11/15/19 (Fri.)	<u>Board of Education Finance Committee Meeting</u>

11/26/19 (Tues.)	Administrative team submission date for Budget Narrative(s) & Pictures.
12/2-12/5/19 (Mon-Thurs.)	Superintendent and Director of Finance and Operations review status of budget development
12/04/19 (Wed.)	Leadership Team Meeting to discuss DRAFT budget.
12/5-20/19	Cabinet Members, Principals, and the Director of Facilities meet regularly to discuss working copy of the budget.
12/13/19 (Fri.)	<u>Board of Education Finance Committee Meeting</u>
1/03/20 (Fri.)	FY 2020 Administrative Budget Request delivered to Board of Education.
1/06/20* (Mon.)	<u>Board of Education Meeting – Weston Middle School Library (7:00 p.m.)</u> Formal Presentation of FY 2021 Requested Operating & Capital Budgets.
1/06-24/20	Superintendent and Director of Finance & Operations meet with school staff. (Meetings to be scheduled.)
1/08/20*	<u>BOE Workshop to discuss FY 2021 Budget Request (9am to 1pm)</u>
1/09/20 (Thur.)	BOE questions submitted to Superintendent by end-of-day.
1/10/20 (Fri.)	<u>Board of Education Finance Committee Meeting</u>
1/17/20 (Fri.)	Written responses to Board of Education questions distributed.
1/21/20* (Tues.)	<u>First Budget Q & A – Weston Middle School Library (7:00 p.m.)</u> FY 2021 Requested Operating and Capital Budgets.
1/27/20* (Mon.)	<u>Second Budget Q & A Session – if necessary – Weston Middle School Library (6:00 p.m.)</u> FY 2021 Requested Operating and Capital Budgets. (Followed by January 27, 2020 BOE Meeting, 7:30 p.m.)
1/30/20 (Thurs.)	<u>Board of Education Meeting – Weston Middle School Library (6:00-9:00 p.m.)</u> Approval and Adoption of FY 2021 Recommended Operating and Capital Budgets.
1/31/20	Board of Education transmits FY 2021 Operating and Capital Budgets request to the Board of Selectmen (Charter requires by February 3 rd).

- 2/5/19
(Tues.) Board of Selectmen reviews Board of Education budget recommendation
7:30 P.M.
- 2/19/19
(Tues.) Board of Selectmen votes on and transmits First Selectman's and Board of
Education budgets to Board of Finance. Board also nominates moderator for Annual Town
Budget Meeting. Regular Board of Selectman's meeting.
7:30 P.M.
- 2/24/20
(Mon.) Deliver Budget Books to Board of Finance
- 3/6/19
(Wed.) Board of Finance reviews Board of Education budget request
7:30 P.M.
- 3/7/19
(Thurs.) Board of Finance reviews Board of Education budget request (if necessary)
7:30 P.M.
- 3/14/19
(Thurs.) Publish Notice of Public Hearing on budget
(Charter requires 10 days prior to Public Hearing)
- 3/26/19
(Tues.) Board of Finance holds Public Hearing on budget request.
(Charter requires at least two weeks prior to Annual Budget Meeting)
8:00 P.M. - Weston Middle School Library
- 3/27/19
(Wed.) Additional Public Hearing on budget request (if necessary)
8:00 P.M. - Weston Middle School Library
- 4/2/19
(Tues.) Board of Finance Budget Deliberation Meeting
7:30 P.M.
- 4/11/19
(Thurs.) Publish and Post Notice of Annual Town Budget Meeting
(Charter requires at least five days prior to meeting)
- 4/24/19
(Wed.) Annual Town Budget Meeting
8:00 P.M. - Weston High School Auditorium
- 5/4/19
(Sat.) Proposed Referendum
- 5/9/19
(Thurs.) Board of Finance meets after Town Meeting

*Public meetings still to be posted.