

Weston Board of Education Workshop

Thursday, January 12, 2023 9:00 AM

Remote Session

I. CALL TO ORDER, VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

II. FY24 BUDGET

II.A. Board workshop on the FY24 budget.

III. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

III.A. Weston Board of Education regular meeting on January 17, 2023 at 6:00 PM. This meeting will be remote and live streamed.

III.B. Weston Board of Education Forum #2 with Administration on FY 2024 Budget Request on January 19, 2023 at 6:00 PM.

III.C. Weston Board of Education workshop on January 23, 2023 at 9:00 AM. This meeting will be remote and live streamed.

III.D. Weston Board of Education special meeting regarding the Approval and Adoption of Recommended Operating & Capital Budgets on January 24, 2023 at 6:00 PM. This meeting will be remote and live streamed.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Curriculum and Instructional Leader (CIL)



Overview of Proposed CIL Position
SY 2023-24



District Goal Highlights

- **Ensure all students demonstrate growth and deepen their conceptual understanding of mathematical concepts so that they develop the requisite problem solving skills.**
- **Ensure all students read at grade level or higher by grade 3 and continue to develop their reading abilities in grades 4-12 using reading as a tool to understand content across instructional areas.**



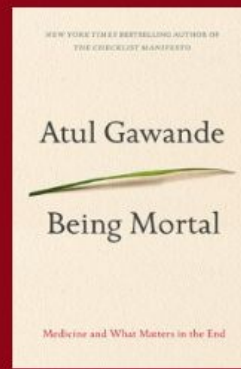
Evolution of the Curriculum & Instruction Leadership Coaching (CIL) Position

The CIL Model was seen as a strategy for:

- Increasing instructional coaching for classroom teachers
- Monitoring and supporting curriculum implementation
- Facilitating greater collegiality among school staff
- Promoting analysis and use of student performance data to inform instruction and curriculum development
- Advancing district initiatives to improve teaching and learning



Do we need CIL's?



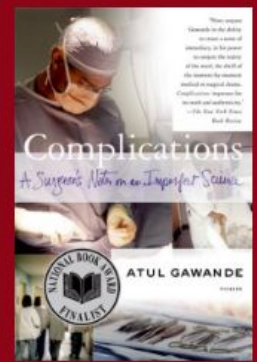
BEING MORTAL
(2014)



THE CHECKLIST
MANIFESTO
(2009)



BETTER (2007)



COMPLICATIONS
(2002)

The Coach In the Operating Room

“Personal Best: Top Athletes and singers have coaches. Should You?”

By Dr. Atul Gawande

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2011/10/03/personal-best>



What do Elite Athletes, Singers, Writers, Musicians have in common?

Rafael Nadal

F. Scott Fitzgerald

Ernest Hemmingway

Thomas Wolfe

Itzhak Perlman

Nigel Kennedy

Midori

Sarah Chang

Renee Fleming

“No matter how well trained people are, few can sustain their best performance on their own. That’s where coaching comes in.”



Methods of Support Provided by a CIL

1. Teacher-Driven Request

- A teacher advocates for feedback and input.

2. Principal-Driven Request

- An administrator has observed an area that needs development and recommends to the teacher/coach that a coaching cycle begin in that area of need.
 - The teacher reaches out to the coach

3. Targeted Group Cycle

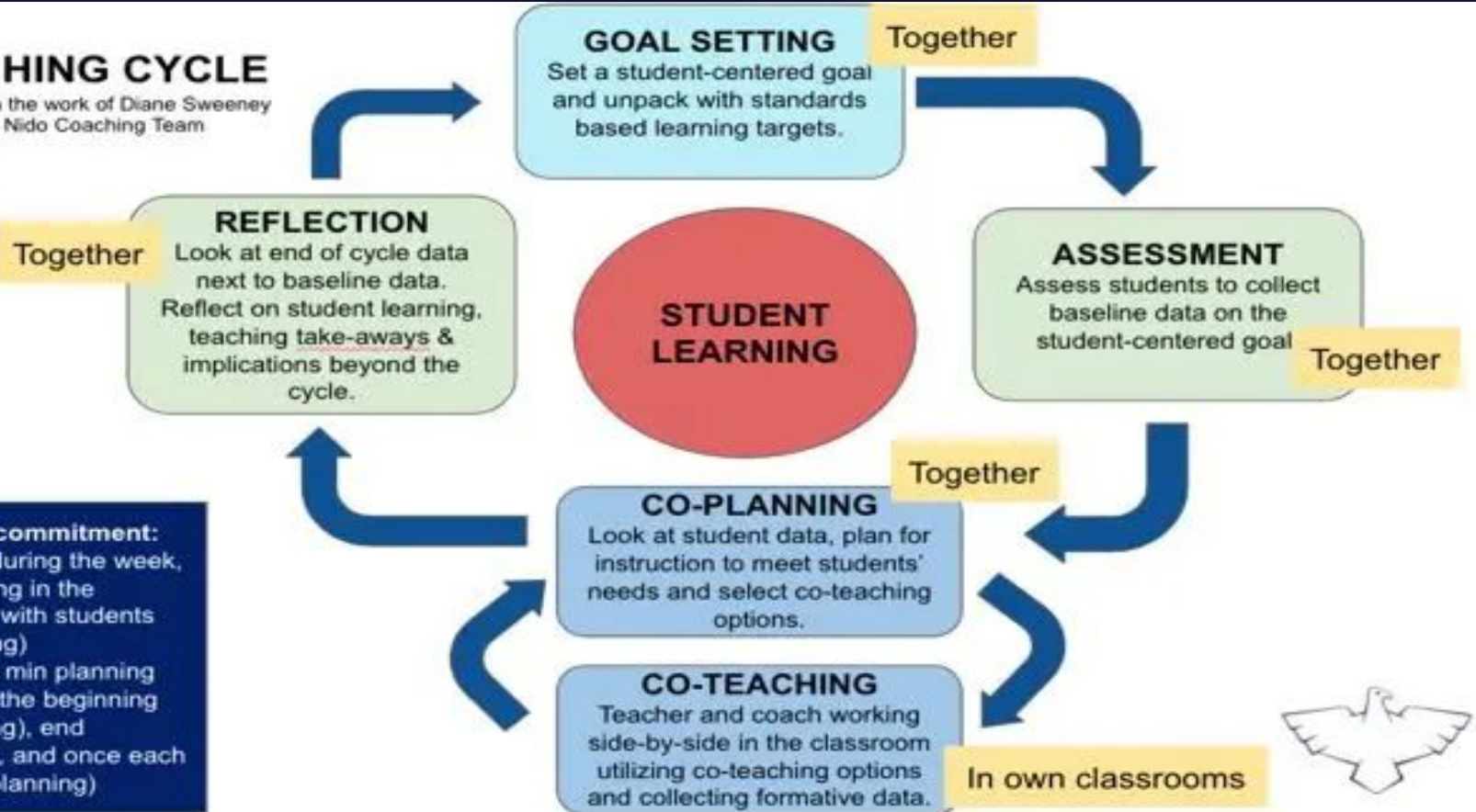
- A results driven response to a targeted group in the school which determines a specific cycle of targeted support for a group of students/teachers.



Model Coaching Cycle

COACHING CYCLE

Adapted from the work of Diane Sweeney
by the Nido Coaching Team



Our partnership commitment:

- 2-3 times during the week, collaborating in the classroom with students (co-teaching)
- One 30-45 min planning session at the beginning (goal setting), end (reflection), and once each week (co-planning)



Coaching Cycle

Teacher's Name: Ms. Tom	Coach's Name: Ms. Jones
Coaching Cycle Focus: Maximize classroom activities and engagement	Dates of Coaching Cycle: 3 weeks 1/24-2/11

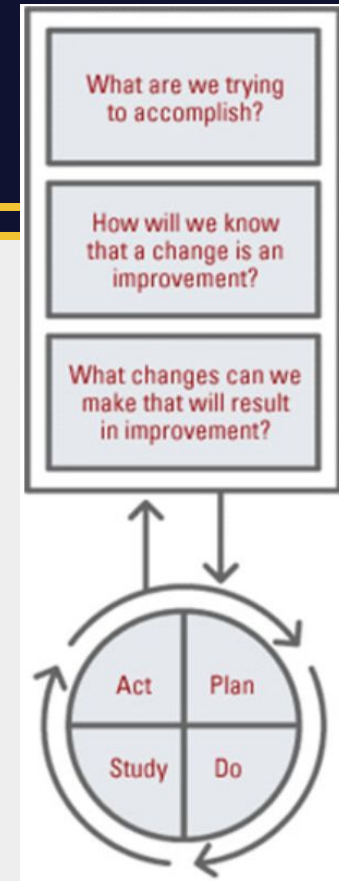
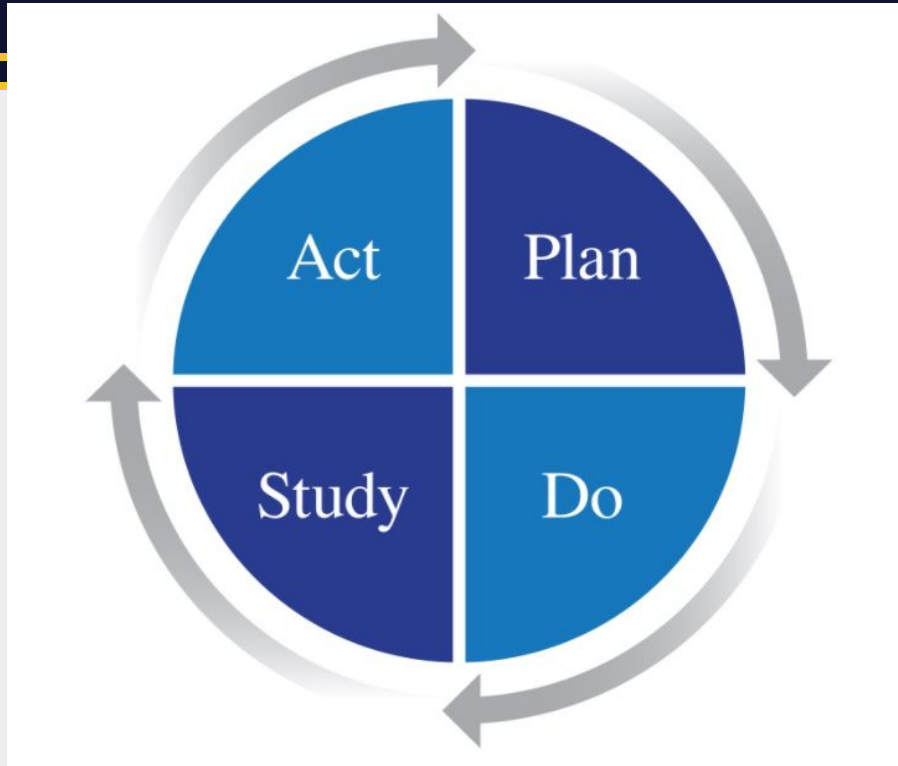
Date	Session Goals	Bridge to Practice	Evidence of Student Work/Experience
1/7	Teacher will observe the Coach modeling one of the strategies	Teacher will implement the strategy over the next week	Student work Observation of student discourse.
1/14	Teacher will implement strategy #1 for observation & feedback	Reflection of the shift in classroom discourse	Student work with teacher feedback
1/21	Adjusted lesson for strategy 1 to be implemented	Reflection	Student work with teacher feedback
1/28	Coach models strategy 2	Teacher will implement the strategy over the next week	Student work Observation of student discourse.

Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

Other



CIL Framework



Current Elementary CIL Schedule (.5 Intervention)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:15-8:30	Arrival/Attendance	Arrival/Attendance	Arrival/Attendance	Arrival/Attendance	Arrival/Attendance
8:30-8:45	8:30-9:10 Intervention	8:30-9:10 Intervention	8:30-8:55 Intervention	8:30 - 9:00 Intervention	8:30 - 9:00 Intervention
8:45-9:00				9:00 - 9:20 Intervention	9:00-9:30 Intervention
9:00-9:15	9:10 - 9:30 Intervention	9:10 - 9:30 Planning with Teacher	8:55 - 9:30 Intervention	9:20 - 9:50 4th Grade Coaching Class 2	
9:15-9:30					9:30 - 10:00 5th Grade Coaching
9:30-9:45					
9:45-10:00					
10:00-10:15	10:00 - 10:30 5th Grade Coaching	10:15 - 10:45 5th Grade Coaching	10:20 - 10:50 Intervention	10:20 - 10:50 Intervention	
10:15-10:30					
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5:15-5:30					
5:30-5:45					
5:45-6:00					

Sample 1 FTE CIL Schedule

9/6/22 - 10/14/22					
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:50 - 9:30	Arrival	Arrival	SLT	Arrival	Arrival
9:30	teacher requests and Coordinate		teacher requests and Coordinate	teacher requests and Coordinate	
9:45	coaching cycles				Admin/CIL Meeting
10:00		Classroom Visits all 4th Grade Math			
10:15			Visit 3rd Grade Math	Visit 3rd Grade Math	
10:30					
10:45					
11:00	Classroom Visits all 5th Grade Math	Co-Teach Acc. 5 Math			School Based SRBI Meeting
11:15					
11:30			LUNCH	Guide 3rd Grade Data Team	
11:45					
12:00	LUNCH	LUNCH			LUNCH
12:15			Guide Grade 5 Data Team		
12:30				LUNCH	
12:45					Visit-Acc. 5 Math
1:00	Classroom Visits all 4th Grade Math	Small group PD Gr 3: Coaching Cycle Book	Co-Teach Acc. 5 Math	Co-Teach Acc. 5 Math	
1:15					
1:30					
1:45					Guide 1st Grade Data Team
2:00					
2:15	Prepare for 4th Grade Teacher Team	Prepare for Grade 5 Data Team	Prepare for 3rd Grade Teacher Team	Prepare for SRBI Data Team	
2:30					
2:45					Prep for next week's schedule
3:00					
3:15					
3:20-3:55	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal

Evaluation of a Curriculum and Instruction Leader (CIL)

- Report to and are evaluated by the Assistant Superintendent
- The CIL position is a teaching position and falls within the WTA contract.
 - All WTA contracted positions follow the same goal setting and structure of evaluation
- Metrics of performance and evidence of impact include but are not limited to:
 - Classroom/grade level performance
 - School improvement plan goals and performance
 - Teacher surveys/questionnaires of effectiveness and levels of support



Curriculum and Instruction Leader (CIL) Application and Interview Process

Similar to all positions needing to be filled in Weston, these positions will be:

- Apply through WPS Applitrack System
- An interview committee will be formed
- Scoring rubrics and specific “look-for’s” will be used within the process
- Round 1 Interview - Focus on content knowledge, pedagogy and teaching experience, adult learning experiences
- Round 2 Interview - Engage in scenario-driven simulation
- Committee recommends candidates to the Superintendent



“Coaching done well may be the most effective intervention designed for human performance...even expert practitioners have significant room for improvement.”

-Dr. Gawande



Science Lab Experiments at WMS

- Every science course at WMS incorporates hands-on lab experiments to either introduce or reinforce/extend the concepts embedded in the curriculum. Many other concepts are reinforced through digital simulations (such as Gizmos) or models/activities that do not rely on actual science experiments, but still afford the students the opportunities to build up their science skill levels.
- Almost all of the science experiments would be more effective and efficient with dedicated lab spaces in the classrooms that each provide a large work space, a sink, and power outlets.

6th Grade - [Classrooms B8 and B9: 1 sink and eye wash; Ample windows,; 1 lab counter available (along with windowsill); power outlets for student groups]

Lab Experiment	Equipment Used
1. Experimentation to reinforce essential science skills and instruments needed for labs	-Various lab instruments for measuring volume, mass, temperature, etc. -Sink/water supply needed for volume "Rainbow Lab" part.
2. Investigating factors that impact the evaporation of water	-Various lab instruments for designing inquiry investigations: Counterspace, sinks/water, power outlets.
3. Investigating how water flow is impacted by gravity (<i>Wax Paper Watershed Lab</i>)	-Trays and other materials to create a "landscape"; Source of water to see impact on water flow and pooling.
4. Investigating the relationship between temperature and density of water (and air).	-Density flow tanks filled with water to investigate the movement of warmer vs colder water.
5. Investigating adaptations in organisms (<i>Bird Beak Lab</i>)	-Variety of classroom supplies to mimic organisms and food to model "Survival of Fittest"
6. Workshop on Exploring Reverse-Engineering and Biomimicry	- Variety of classroom supplies based on individual project needs



7th Grade - [Classrooms A5 and A7: 1 sink and eye wash (A5) vs 2 sinks and eye washes (A7); Ample windows, 1-2 lab counters available; Power outlets for student groups]

Lab Experiment	Equipment Used
1. Exploring chemical reactions using bath bombs	Many chemicals and glassware; Sinks for water and cleanup; counter space; electronic scales
2. Exploring energy transfer in chemical reactions	Various chemical substances, including root killer (copper sulfate); glassware, sinks, power outlets
3. Analyzing rocks and minerals to study geologic processes	Various rock and mineral samples and magnifiers
4. Studying erosion and sediment deposition	Large stream tables, sinks/water, counter space, various sediment materials
5. Analyzing factors that influence seasons on Earth	Models of globes, light sources
6. Workshop on investigating the changing chemistry of the oceans and ecosystems	Various chemical solutions (acids and bases) and organic samples; pH testers



8th Grade - [Classrooms C19 and C20: Lab counters exist on 3 out of 4 classroom walls; 4 sinks; 13 outlets on lab counters, 1 eye wash station; 1 window]

Lab Experiment	Equipment Used
1. Investigating types of forces – Inquiry Lab	Lab counter space, stations with various instruments and objects
2. Investigating relationship between force and distance	Lab counters, meter sticks and other supplies
3. Investigating forces of collisions	Lab counters, meter sticks, objects of varying masses
4. Investigating properties of sound waves	Motion detector, strips of wood, heavy clamps
5. Investigating energy transfer of amplitude and frequency of waves	Lab counters, meter sticks, various lab supplies
6. Investigating properties of magnetic forces	Lab counters, bricks, large frictionless tracks and cars
7. Investigating cells under the microscope	Live specimens (protists) and other cell sources on slides
8. Exploring pigments used in photosynthesis	Chromatography solvent that requires high ventilation; other materials
9. “The Working Cell” Experience	Plastic fencing, many other supplies and objects
10. Workshop on Rocket Science	Various rocket kits; altitude and distance tracking equipment



**Multi Year
Pro-Forma Statement**

	<u>FY 24- 25</u>	<u>FY 25-26</u>	<u>FY 26-27</u>
Enrollment	2,178	2,179	2,188
Previous Year Base Budget	\$ 58,305,290	\$ 60,231,004	\$ 62,230,678
<u>YoY Change</u>			
Salaries	\$ 1,189,384	\$ 1,143,501.2	\$ 1,161,651.8 *
Total Wage Increases	\$ 1,189,384 2.04%	\$ 1,143,501 1.90%	\$ 1,161,652 1.87%
Health & Dental Estimated Increase after Employee Cost Share	\$ 495,174	\$ 611,285	\$ 702,511 *
Payroll Taxes	\$ 46,374	\$ 46,617	\$ 46,061
Pension Increase			
Total Benefits	\$ 541,548 0.93%	\$ 657,902 1.09%	\$ 748,572 1.20%
Contractual Facility and Security Increases			
Estimated Increase in Contracted Cleaning Contract			
Utilities	\$ 69,782	\$ 73,271	\$ 76,935
Total Facility and Security Increases	\$ 69,782 0.12%	\$ 73,271 0.12%	\$ 76,935 0.12%
Other Increases			
-Insurance, Professional Services, Cleaning, ETC.	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000
Total Increases	\$ 125,000 0.21%	\$ 125,000 0.21%	\$ 125,000 0.20%
Total Potential Increase:	\$ 1,925,714	\$ 1,999,674	\$ 2,112,158
Pro Forma Budget	\$ 60,231,004	\$ 62,230,678	\$ 64,342,837
% Increase	3.30%	3.32%	3.39%

*Note:

Exclusion of GWI if applicable upon negotiations significantly distorts out year projections. Predetermining, or appearing to predetermine, future negotiated increases would constitute a prohibited labor practice under State of Connecticut law. Likewise, using assumptions for future increases may violate these legal requirements.

The current contract period for all three bargaining units is 7/1/23-6/30/26

Assumptions:

1) No change to staffing based on enrollment

2) CMERs rate -18.26%

3) Health Insurance:

-WTA & WAA on HDHP. AFSCME (Pending Negotiations)

-8.5% premium increase each year

4) All other cost remains unchanged

Expiring Contracts

First Student 6/30/2024

Cleaning service contract 6/30/2024

Technology Integration and Purpose at the K-2 Level

Below is feedback gathered from our K-2 Teachers and Administrators regarding the safe and appropriate use of technology to enhance the learning experience for students and better prepare them for 21-C learning.

Overview:

Obligations: State law - Standards of ISTE and CT-CS

Maximizing instruction: Time to login/ assessments administered lessen impact on instructional time

Differentiation: individualized tasks based on their needs; includes ELL as some apps and ebook sources are available in other languages

Enhancement: typing, research, applications that provided redefinition of tasks SAMR model; student research databases that read the facts to the students; resources such as Tumblebooks read books to students (this supports student in hearing reading fluency, they can then turn off voice and practice reading, also makes texts available to students above reading level for when reading is not the main objective, but practicing comprehension skills)

Sustainability Costs: less paper and ink with printing

Specifics:

- The tools do not replace the teachers, it is for enhancement
- In addition, we currently are aligned and are required to the National ISTE Standards (<https://www.iste.org/standards/iste-standards-for-students>) as well as the Computer Science Standards K-12.
- Typing applications to prepare them for projects, researching, using the device to
- We used to print some of the activities, now there is less paper to print
- While students are working on explicit tasks, teachers pull small groups to provide differentiated instruction and individualized conferencing
- Real-time data is gathered for us to respond much more quickly.
- Some of these programs are adaptive and provide a much larger range of levels within one room than
- Logging into individual devices and remember their login - efficiency of time-QR codes
- Using it to learn and produce something- consumption vs. production
- The technology is also helping us with the increased number of non-speaking students (3-4 per year), using tools to gather data on reading for example.
- Assessments done electronically in conjunction with teacher led assessments
- Devices allow students to record their reading to practice fluency

Technology Integration Examples in K-2:

In Kindergarten and first grades, for example, students use technology to record their voices, taking a screenshot to demonstrate their knowledge and performance. When students want to plan what to write in their stories across multiple pages, it is helpful for children to record what they want to say. Recording what they want to write allows students to not only remember what they want to say but also fosters greater

independence, ensuring that students experience that they can write independently right from the beginning of their educational careers. It is harder at the early ages, when our students are learning to read and write but speaking and listening is a higher level skill and their thinking is a higher level that we can evaluate for them. We need to be sure that we encourage our students to demonstrate their thinking and utilize their oral vocabulary when learning in school. We do not want our students to limit their responses to what they can write and spell conventionally. As students become more proficient in the application of the literacy skills they are acquiring, these supports that promote greater independence, can be scaffolded away.

In 2nd grade, for example, students use technology to access databases that are used to learn about people during their biography unit. Students need to be able to access information about people that they want to learn about, regardless of their ability to read the text. For their biography presentations, students get to choose how to present their research. Their choices range from physical posters to applying technology skills (from standards) to create a digital presentation.

Many of our youngest learners come to school with an overgeneralization that they play games on devices. Students need to learn that technology is a means to support the learning process. Understanding the difference between a game, and a tool to help them learn and the choices they make on these applications to help them learn.

Students arrive at 8:15, our instructional day doesn't begin until 8:35. As students come in at different times, part of morning work can be working on instructional programs we have introduced such as Lexia, Khan Academy and Symphony. This wrap around time is also used for specific activities on other programs such as Seesaw or sight word apps, typing practice, etc. These programs are self paced and differentiated to each individual student. Teachers are able to assign additional practice and enrichment for students to continuously progress through grade level standards and beyond.

In addition to the Teacher's small group instruction, the iPads may be used as a center rotation during a math block.

At Hurlbutt our policy is to not send home any homework. The only homework we send is the book buddy bags that go home every night. iPads only stay in school. We do send home instructions to get on Lexia and Dreambox (as an option for parents requesting extra practice at home)

Benefits of using a digital learning platform like SeeSaw in a 1-1 environment

- Support student creation, agency and motivation
- Helps make learning accessible to diverse learners
- Intuitive multimodal tools allow students show what they know (through video or audio recording and more)
- Supports differentiation- different assignments can be given to whole class, small group or individual students

The benefits of having a class set are:

1. The NWEA assessments in the Fall, Winter and Spring would be difficult to administer if we didn't have individual devices
2. Teachers acquire many purposeful digital resources to aid in student learning
3. They are used during lessons for computer class and LRC
4. Students who need snap word review or math fact review, they can be used as a center
5. Digital Citizenship can not be taught without individual devices

Kindergarten:

Applications on Devices

Symphony/ DreamBox- 45 minutes per week

Lexia- 25-30 per week outside of reading block i.e. morning arrival

Administration of Assessments

F&P/Dibels/Heggerty - 3 times a year average 30 minutes per child

Writing On Demands (Pre and Post) 6 times per year 45 Minutes per on demand

Math Screening - 2 times per year average 30 minutes per test

First Grade

Applications on Devices

Symphony/DreamBox- 45 minutes per week

Lexia- 30 minutes per week outside of reading block i.e. morning arrival

Administration of Assessments

F&P/Dibels- 3 times a year average 25 minutes per child (The first assessment of the year takes longer)

Writing On Demands (Pre and Post) 6 times per year 45 Minutes per on demand

Math Unit Tests (13 unit tests a year) - 30-45 minutes per test

Foundations Unit Tests - (14 units) 30 minutes per test

NWEA Math - 3 times per year 60 minutes per test

Second Grade

Applications on Devices

Symphony/DreamBox- 45 minutes per week

Lexia- 30 minutes per week outside of reading block i.e. morning arrival

Our science program has modeling tools beginning in second grade. Students can demonstrate their understanding in ways they otherwise could not. (3 - 5 times a unit)

Assessments

F&P/Dibels- 3 times a year average 25 minutes per child (The first assessment of the year takes longer)

Writing On Demands (Pre and Post) 6 times per year 60 Minutes per on demand

Math Unit Tests - (13 unit tests a year) - 30-45 minutes per test

Foundations Unit Tests - (14 units) 30 minutes per test

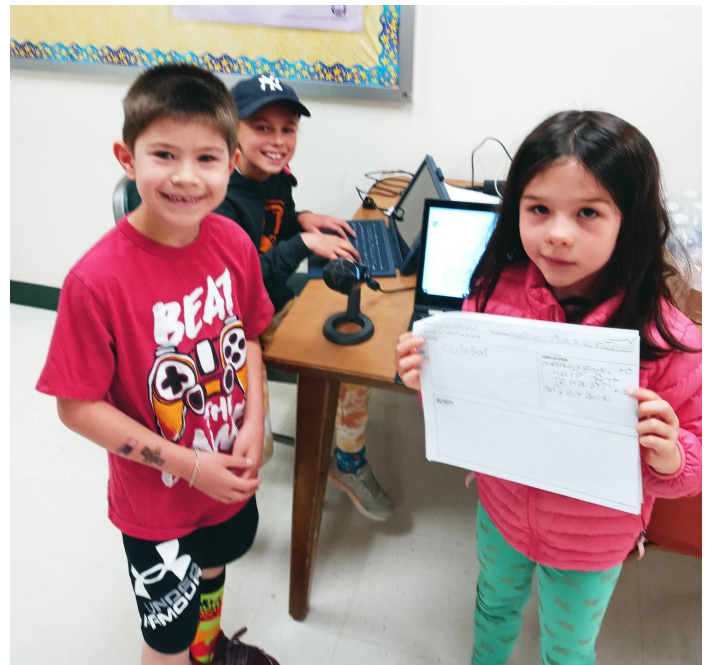
PHOTOS



First grade students transfer learning from math Geometry lessons and coding lessons to apply skills to program Dash Robot to move in a square and then with marker attachment draw a square. Observations were made about the similarities and differences in programs and resulting squares. The activity also fostered collaboration and critical thinking skills, practicing perseverance strategies and utilizing the Mood Meter (from SEL RULER method) to shift moods if needed (ie feeling frustration or sadness).



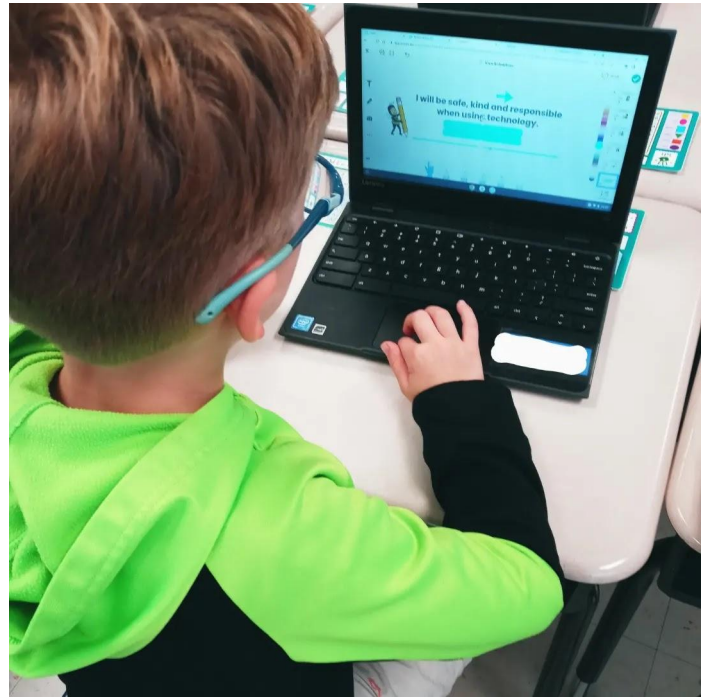
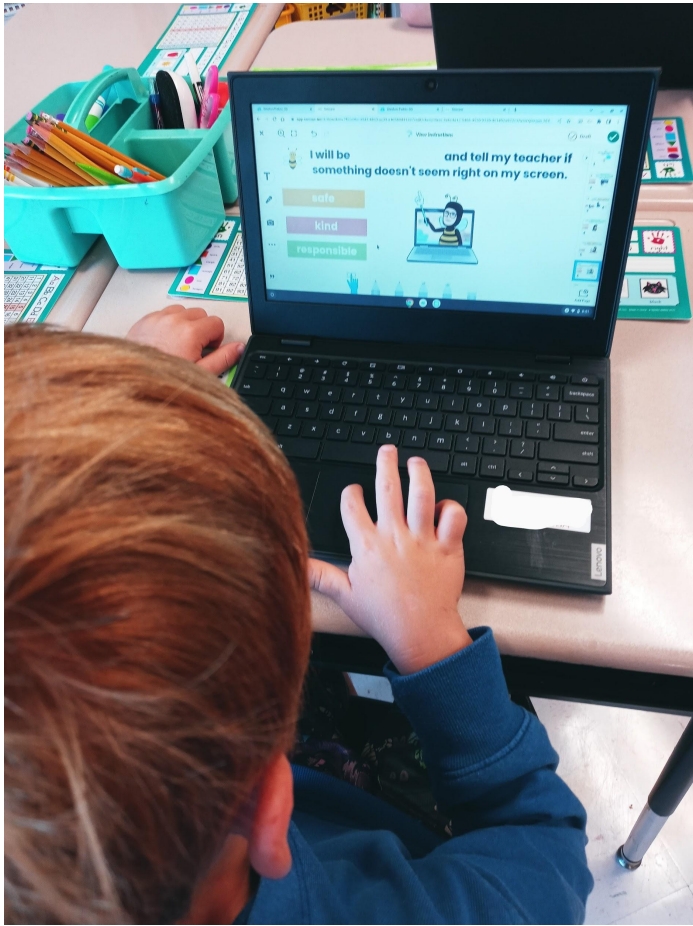
K-2 students participate in a state book election. After hearing each nominee read, they rate it and record their opinion with evidence as to why they gave the book that rating. This is tied to LA writing opinion writing units. SeeSaw allows students to record their voice, type, draw or take pictures of parts of the book as evidence to support their opinion. Second graders have made digital election posters with video, audio, etc. to try to persuade others students to vote for a particular nominee. (I have examples if needed).



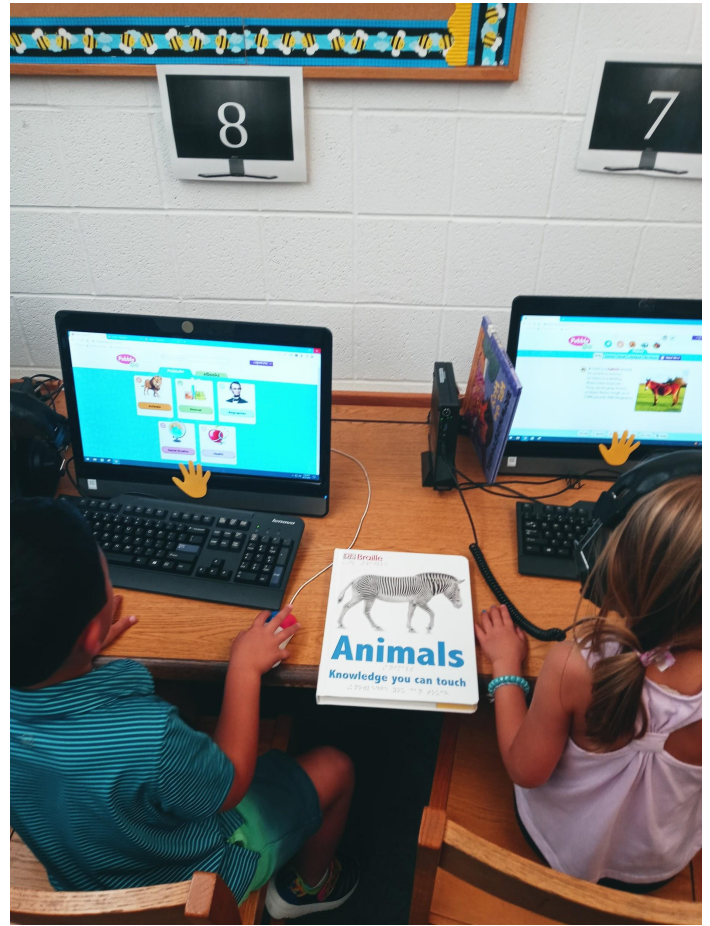
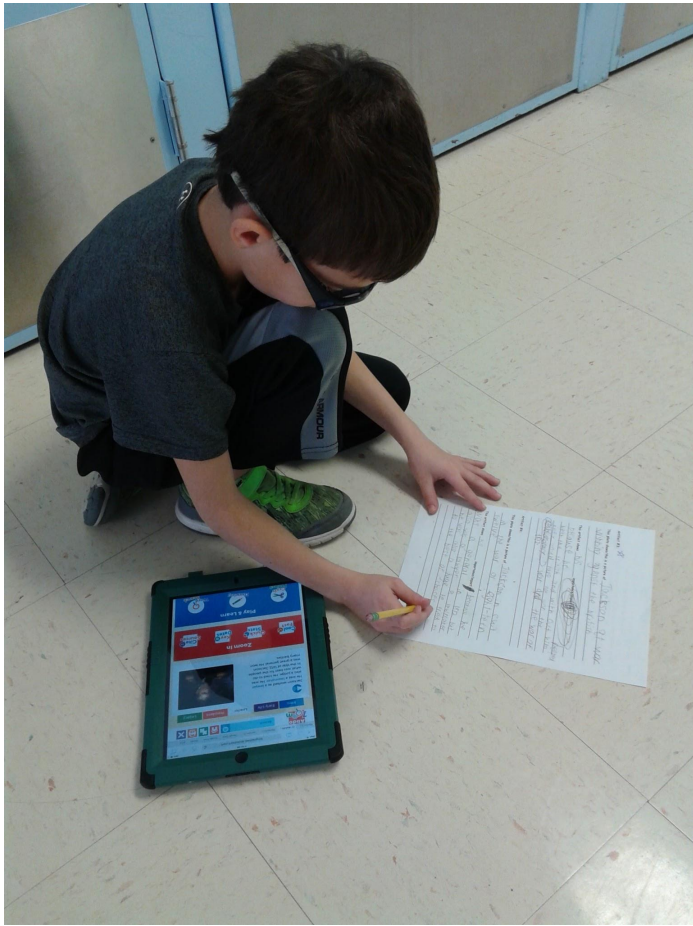
Second grades students using technology to create a PSA about the need to help rehabilitate orphaned and injured bats. The final presentation also included a request for Hurlbutt staff and students to donate gently used books for a book sale second grade ran to raise money for the cause. This was tied to our One School One Book Megabat (21-22). It integrated the Social Studies Civics unit. After researching people who have made a difference, students work on a project to help the community.



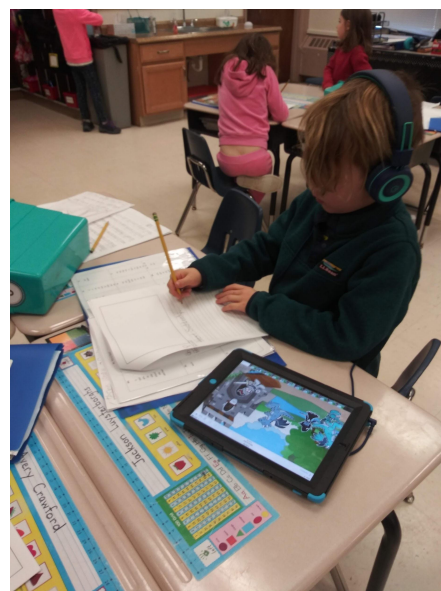
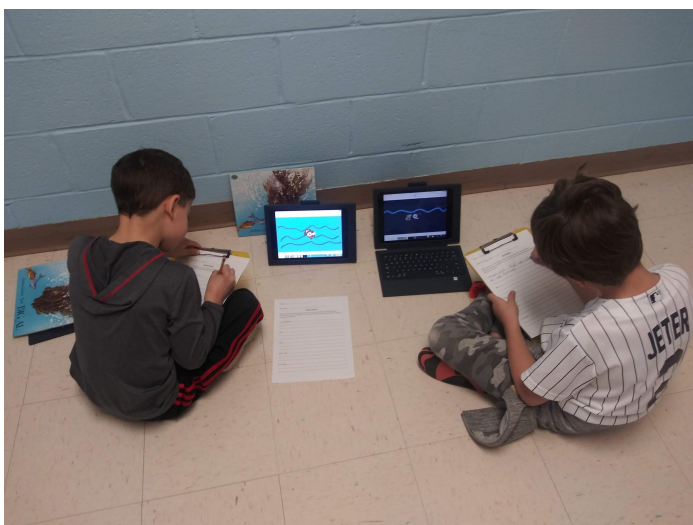
K-2 students learn how to code using curriculum from Code.org. These activities foster problem solving skills. As a class we discuss strategies to help other coders with the activities. We also share and discuss strategies to help us persevere and shift our moods (SEL RULER) if we get frustrated or want to give up. In a previous year, students created videos in SeeSaw to teach other student coders a coding strategy and a mood shifting strategy. The use of SeeSaw allowed students to create videos with audio (which best supported student abilities and the activity) which other students to watch. (I have examples if needed).



Developmentally appropriate digital citizenship lessons are provided to K-2 students. The lessons integrated our school PBIS motto, Be Safe, Kind and Responsible. Using an activity created in SeeSaw, students discuss ways to be safe, kind and responsible when using technology. These lessons support the CT Computer Science Standards and the International Association of Technology Educators Standards for K-2 students.

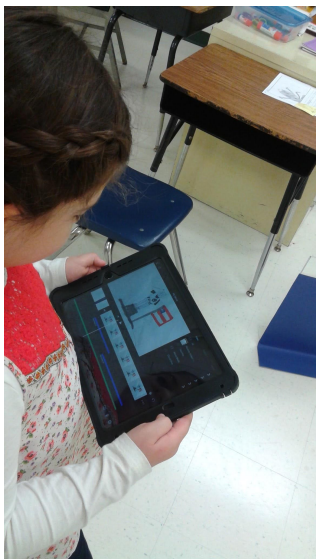
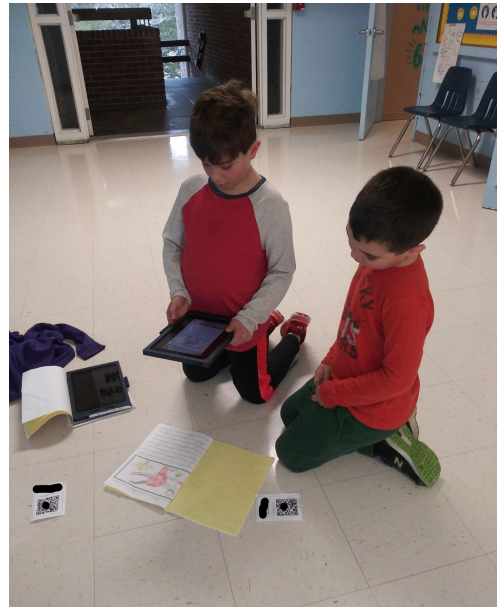


K-2 students use digital resources such as databases to gather information to conduct research and support learning in the content areas. The features of these digital resources such as “read to me feature” and videos support diverse learners and learning styles.



Students using technology to support learning. Retelling story through drawing and audio recording before writing.

Using technology to support learning. Planning a story using an app and recording voice to assist in the writing process.



Students use technology to showcase their learning and share their published writing that they record.

WPS SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE

WPS is committed to embedding sustainability across the schools. At the district level we are in the process of working on a composting plan with a contractor for the 2023-2024 school year. Specific funds that relate to sustainability at the school level would be in the instructional supplies line.

HES Academic Program and Green Team



The Hurlbutt Green Team consists of teachers from each grade level in conjunction with the administrative team. The Green Team meets once a month to plan and promote school programs that educate Hurlbutt's students how to be Safe, Kind, and Responsible citizens and to conserve the environment. At the beginning of the school year, Hurlbutt's students emphasized the need for conserving energy and spearheaded the school-wide movement, "Leave the Room, Leave It Off!" to switch off technology while leaving a room. In December, students at Hurlbutt concentrated on "Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle."



Students at Hurlbutt collaborated with Tree Machine to recycle gently used clothing in exchange for planting trees to help the environment. This month, Hurlbutt's students are emphasizing proper paper recycling: "Recycle PAPER the right way." A big part of this effort is making sure that everyone in our community understands the difference between things that can be recycled and things that can't be recycled.

WIS Academic Program and Green Team



At WIS our Green Team is a group of students with representatives from all three grades. Our librarian oversees this group in conjunction with the administrative team. The focus of this team over the last two years is classroom recycling. Students develop an awareness of the importance of recycling and the effects of plastic on the environment. Every classroom has a recycling bin and students have made posters and presented information on the Morning Announcements specifically on encouraging the use of reusable water bottles and minimizing the use of plastic. Students have started collecting bottles and cans in the cafeteria during the lunch times, and representatives from the Green Team spoke at each lunch wave to the students about what should be recycled and how – i.e. empty bottles and cans, and only certain cans can be recycled. Currently, during their reading and writing unit, our fifth graders are researching and writing an essay on whether we should or shouldn't be using plastic bags in our school. The team is currently researching a project that the entire

school can participate in for Earth Day. In past years, the students have planted bulbs in the courtyard and participated in school-wide clean-up for the courtyard and playground area.

WMS



Our hydroponic garden is a popular sustainability effort. Students learn how vegetables and herbs can grow without soil as a potential solution to feeding the world's growing population. A core group of approximately 15 dedicated students work daily to monitor data and take corrective actions as needed.

In addition, our Student Government Association members, under the direction of our two advisors, maintain a pollinator garden in the courtyard near the library which features native plants. The neighboring courtyard has become a bird sanctuary, with a birdbath, feeders and a variety of birdhouses.



WMS Academic Courses

6th grade interdisciplinary project: Guardians of the Earth. Students research real world environmental issues and propose solutions.



7th grade social studies: The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are a focal point of the seventh grade curriculum. In addition, students study population trends and the impact on the local community and economy.

7th grade science academic workshop: Students learn about the impact of increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere on the pH levels in the ocean and how the ocean wildlife is responding to these changes.

WHS Co-Curricular Program

Green Team currently has approximately 15 active members, with around 20-30 additional students who will participate in larger events (i.e. Tree Plenish planting)

The Green Team's current initiatives are:

- invasive plant removals around campus with community partners
- Tree Plenish, last year we sold 350 tree saplings and about 40 students planted many of them around town in April
- The "swap shop" which we have not executed yet, but students are looking to realize in early March
- The returnables program at the town's Transfer station, where Green Team club members help manage the sports teams who sort the returnables on Saturday mornings.
- Inviting guest speakers in to talk about possible future careers/opportunities that would be of interest to our club members (we did this last year with one of Mike's former students who is studying sustainability in commercial farming at college). We also brought some GT and Sustainability class students to UConn back in September where

they spoke with current college students who were pursuing degrees in various fields related to sustainability and environmental sciences.

- In terms of future initiatives, the Green Team is a student-run club, so as advisors we want to be mindful of supporting and guiding students with projects that they are passionate about and interested in. I personally would like the GT to do some fun "one-time" events like a GT take over of a Trojan TV episode, or a Green Team clean up after a home sports game where the GT could collect returnable cans/bottles, and perhaps receive a portion of any funds generated from that.

WHS Academic Courses

Course: Sustainable Living Full Year Grades 11 and 12

Current Enrollment: 21 students

Course Description: Looking to do something to actually improve our community and our world? Sustainable Living is an interdisciplinary course designed for highly motivated and independent students who are passionate about solving real world environmental problems. Students will identify environmental problems in our school, district, and community and then both develop and implement real sustainable solutions to address them. Unlike many traditional academic courses that focus on specific content, the focus of this class is to develop genuine problem-solving skills through a project-based learning approach. Through a number of specific projects, students will learn the major tenets of sustainability (sustainable food systems, energy conservation/efficiency, sustainable building techniques, waste reduction, water conservation, habitat & biodiversity protection, etc.). Examples of some likely projects include: restoration and management of the school gardens, improving waste management systems in the school (improve recycling, composting, etc.), restoring wildlife habitat around campus, and providing environmental education opportunities for younger ages in the district. While some of the problem solving will be academic (researching problems and designing solution ideas), students are also expected to participate in what is at times demanding physical labor in order to implement their solutions. The course is ideal for those wishing to extend their environmental education beyond Standard or AP Environmental Science but may also serve those who thrive when tasked with solving challenging problems. Enrollment is limited to 20 students per year. (STEM)

Current Course Initiatives: Students are working on a variety of 'Zero Waste' procedures, protocols, and proposals to reduce the waste stream at WHS with the potential to extend some programs to all schools in the district.

1) Bottle/Can collection, sorting, and redemption in the school. Students have built or improved bins for stockpiling bottles/cans collected in the school while also constructing a sorting station/table adjacent to the greenhouse. Students actively and regularly collect bottles/cans throughout the school, remove waste contamination, and sort the recyclables/redeemables which are then brought to a redemption center by the teacher approximately 1/month. Early estimate is to earn ~\$100/month to go towards Sustainability initiatives. Currently we are in the process of refining the process to improve efficiency while also working on measures to spread

awareness about the program to the student body. One particular area of focus in the campaign is to reduce recycling contamination which has been a major issue. We are also currently in the process of extending a bottle/can collection process in the cafeteria at WIS and at WMS. WIS has had a program for several weeks now and sustainability students have begun to retrieve, sort, and redeem those bottles.

2) Redesign classroom recycling protocols: students are designing decals/signage for a series of 3 boxes and bins to go in each classroom (paper/cardboard box, blue cans/bottles bin, black trash bin) at the high school. Currently all the materials in separate classroom bins are discarded in a single waste container by the night cleaning crew. The sustainable students intend to create a schedule where they (the students) collect the classroom bottles/cans and paper/cardboard recycling once per week to ensure they are appropriately recycled (a legal mandate).

3) 'Special' Recyclables: students are developing proposals and procedures for recycling specific items that do not go into single stream recycling. These include: ink/toner cartridges from the school's printers/copiers (some of which may create revenue), textile recycling bins on campus (Baystate Textiles provides revenue per ton of textile collected), and possibly plastic film recycling (TREX takes these plastic materials to create plastic decking). Other options, for example, milk carton recycling, may also be pursued if there is interest. Some research is also being done into converting from disposable plastics in the cafeteria to a system of reusable utensils, trays etc.

4) Food & Waste Audits: students are attempting to collect data to determine what items are most commonly found in our classroom waste stream, along with which items are improperly being recycled or trashed. Students are also collecting data on the amount of food waste produced during lunch in the cafeteria. Data can be used to refine waste collection procedures and to develop potential composting protocols.

5) Food Rescue Program: students are researching options for collecting unused food items in the cafeteria to be distributed to food banks or others in need. Trying to partner with the organization Food Rescue US.

Course: Environmental Science Full Year Grades 11-12

Current Enrollment: 59 students

Course Description: Environmental Science applies interdisciplinary science content and skills to real-world problems in the environment. This course will use a case-based approach to examine problems and solutions in the area of sustainability, ecological management, population growth, conservation, pollution control, and the use of natural resources like water, air, and energy. It will expose students to environmental careers in the Sciences as well as in other areas like law, business, development, and engineering. It may involve outdoor field study throughout the seasons. This course is appropriate for juniors and seniors who want a full-year science course with a lab, who may or may not wish to pursue science-related careers. (STEM) Requirements for admission to this course: • Completion of Chemistry and Biology

Course: AP Environmental Science – Honors Full Year Grades 11 and 12

Current Enrollment: 36 students

Course Description: Advanced Placement Environmental Science is designed to be the equivalent of an introductory college-level course in environmental science. The goal of the AP Environmental Science course is to provide students with the scientific principles, concepts, and methodologies required to understand the interrelationships of the natural world, to identify and analyze environmental problems both natural and human-made, to evaluate the relative risks associated with these problems, and to examine alternative solutions for resolving or preventing them. Topics of study include Earth systems and resources, ecosystems and energy flow, population biology, land and water use, energy resources and consumption, pollution, agriculture, conservation and global change. Laboratory work, case and field studies, and field trips are an integral component of this course. Experiences both in the laboratory and in the field provide students with important opportunities to test concepts and principles that are introduced in the classroom and gain an awareness of the significant and complex variables that exist in the real world. Students taking the course are expected to take the corresponding AP exam in May. (STEM)

BUDGET DRIVERS -FY 23-24

Description	Amount	% of Increase
FY 22-23 Adopted Budget		
	56,391,183	
<u>Salaries</u>		
Salary Increase Before New initiatives and Changes	1,398,560	2.48%
CILs Salary and Stipend	342,886	0.61%
K-5 Security Specialist	38,770	0.07%
Groundskeeper	54,753	0.10%
Change from Psychologist to Asst. PPS Director	49,514	0.09%
Open Choice Funded SPED Teachers	(235,570)	-0.42%
Other Salary Reductions	(163,761)	-0.29%
Total Salaries Increase	1,485,152	2.63%
<u>Benefits</u>		
Health Insurance Plan Change (Approved by WTA & WAA. Pending negotiations with AFSCME)	(185,752)	
Payroll Taxes and other Benefits	117,244	
Total Benefits	(68,508)	-0.12%
<u>Support Partners</u>		
Professional Services	33,996	0.06%
<u>Repairs and Maintenance (R & M)</u>		
Field Maintenance Operational Change	(136,270)	-0.24%
Repairs Allowance	(50,000)	-0.09%
Sewer System Plant Maintenance	(20,000)	-0.04%
End of Security System Lease	(46,245)	-0.08%
Other Contracted Increase (R & M)	85,053	0.15%
Total Repairs and Maintenance (R & M)	(167,462)	-0.30%
<u>Other Purchase Services</u>		
Transportation	263,608	0.47%
Fuel Cost	10,125	0.02%
General Liability & Student Athletic Insurance	(4,521)	-0.01%
SPED Tuition & Settlements	(500,613)	-0.89%
Other Reductions (Net)	(3,736)	-0.01%
Total Other Purchase Services	(235,137)	-0.42%
Total Support Partners	(368,603)	-0.65%

BUDGET DRIVERS -FY 23-24

Description	Amount	% of Increase
<i>Supplies & Materials</i>		
K-2 Reading Program	292,700	0.52%
Software	32,153	0.06%
Utilities	314,428	0.56%
Other Supplies & Materials	44,215	0.08%
<i>Total Supplies & Materials</i>	683,496	1.21%
<i>Equipment</i>		
Technology Equipment	80,069	0.14%
<i>Total Equipment</i>	80,069	0.14%
<i>Other</i>		
Dues & Fees	(3,111)	-0.01%
Revenue Offset Decrease	105,614	0.19%
<i>Total Other</i>	102,503	0.18%
<i>FY 23-24 Budget Increase</i>	1,914,106	3.39%
<i>FY23-24 Requested Budget</i>	58,305,290	3.39%



**RESPONSES TO BOARD OF EDUCATION
QUESTIONS TO BUDGET 2024**

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District Goals

1. Would it be possible to see the budget items organized (as appropriate) by district goal?

The following breakdown provides highlighted budget items that support these particular goals. The dollar amount for staffing is not listed in this document. Page 24 of the budget includes specific salary costs.

Ensure ALL students demonstrate growth and deepen their conceptual understanding of mathematical concepts so that they develop the requisite problem-solving skills.

- CIL positions for math/science K-2 and 3-5 2 FTE
- CIL position for secondary math 6-12 1 FTE
- Math interventionists: HES: 1 FTE, WIS 1 FTE, WMS, 1 FTE, WHS Math lab 1.0 FTE
- Math Teachers WMS 6.0 FTE, WHS 7.7 FTE
- Math instructional supplies:HES \$4007, WIS \$4865, WMS \$970, WHS \$985
- Math Textbooks WMS \$20,000 grades 6-8 online licenses
- Dues and Fees: WHS: Math League Dues \$52 (team transportation in co-curricular transportation total), NCTM membership \$155, UTexas membership split with science \$154, WMS Math Count Registration \$300.
- PD: District Math Training \$10,000 NCTM Annual Conference \$5272 for 3 attendees
- Co-curricular stipends \$11,810 (WIS Math Olympiad, WMS and WHS, Math Leagues)
- *Math technology/software \$17,928*

Ensure ALL students read at grade level or higher by grade 3, and continue to develop their reading abilities in grades 4-12 using reading as a tool to understand content across instructional areas.

Please reference our reading initiative document which outlines the first year implementation budget.

The following items describe other budgetary items that support this language arts/reading goal.

- CIL positions for language arts/social studies K-2 and 3-5, 2 FTE
- CIL position for secondary language arts 6-12, 1 FTE
- Reading interventionists: HES 1.5 FTE, WIS 1.5 FTE. .5 FTE recurring grant allocation TBD between HES/WIS in spring 2023, WMS 1.0 FTE, WHS writing center 1.2 FTE
- Language Arts Teachers WMS 6.0 FTE and WHS 7.7 FTE
- Language Arts instructional supplies: HES - see reading initiative document , WIS \$4451, WMS \$500, WHS \$518
- Language Arts texts WIS \$14,256, WMS \$6563, WHS: \$7345
- Library Books HES \$10,000, WIS \$12,800, WMS \$9000, WHS \$3000 and *Ebooks \$5188 non-fiction*)
- Co-curricular stipends WMS and WHS \$6816 (Newspaper,Literary Magazine)
- *Language Arts/Reading technology/ software \$30,962*

Ensure ALL students have access to a high-quality K-12 science learning experience that simulates the habits and skills that scientists and engineers use every day and stimulate students' interests in science and prepares them for college, careers, and citizenship.

- CIL positions for math/science K-2 and 3-5
- CIL position for secondary math 6-12, .5 FTE
- Science teachers WMS 6.0 FTE, WHS 9.58
- Science Instructional Supplies HES \$3753, WIS \$6223, WMS \$10,500, WHS: \$31,205 includes supplies for sustainability course
- Science Texts WIS \$1246, *WMS license renewal \$8570*
- Science Equipment: WHS spectrophotometer and autoclave \$4140
- Dues and Fees: WHS Science Olympiad registration, TEAMS competition, Science Fair competition \$890, WMS Science World Magazine digital subscription \$1350
- Science Other Professional Services: WMS Soundwaters in-class presentation \$1625
- *Science Technology/software \$5347*

Increase opportunities within the district, school and community for our students to demonstrate creativity and interest through tasks related to the Arts.

- Art Teachers HES .71 FTE, WIS 1.0 FTE, WMS 1.0 FTE, WHS 3.20 FTE
- Art Repairs:HES \$350, WIS \$350, WMS \$500 and WHS \$1500 (kiln upkeep, camera repair, light table repair)
- Art Instructional Supplies HES \$7666, WIS \$8254, WMS \$16000, WHS \$29601 as well as *\$35532 technology supplies at WHS for computer supported courses in visual arts*
- Art Equipment: *WHS Macbooks for visual arts teachers \$7240*
- Art Dues and Fees WMS \$150 WHS Membership to NAEA/CEA \$300
- Art PD WHS \$520
- Music Teachers HES 1.0 FTE, 2.4 WIS, 3.2 FTE, WHS 2.2 FTE
- Music Professional/Technical Services: WIS \$900, WMS \$6120 and WHS \$4295 (accompanists, digital music productions, lighting, tech support)
- Music repairs:HES \$150, WIS \$1800, WMS \$3710 and WHS \$5548 (piano tunings, repairs on school owned instruments, tuning of strings, guitar repairs)
- Music Transportation: WMS \$10,800 and WHS \$3622
- Music Instructional Supplies: HES \$690, WIS \$3235, WMS \$7735, WHS \$13,583
- Music Equipment: WHS \$3519 (replacement keyboard, clarinet)
- Music Dues and Fees: WIS \$1050 (NAFME dues for student participation, ACDA Children's Choir, CMEA fees) WMS \$710 (NAFME participation for student participation in CMEA events) WHS \$3519 (All state, Fairfield County string Festival, NAFME student participation)
- *Music software \$5446*

Promote an inclusive climate that honors the uniqueness of every individual independent of race, skin color, religion, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or other perceived difference.

- Materials: HES WMS \$1745 and WHS \$2498 (PBIS initiatives, awards)
- Dues and Fees: WMS \$2175(Support Middle School memberships examples include: Association for Middle Level, Education, CAS Middle School membership, NELMS school membership) WHS \$10054(NEASC, CAS memberships, National Honor Society)
- The following costs contribute to a positive school climate across the district. They include programs, initiatives, transportation, stipends, etc...
- Stipends HES \$19,563 (PBIS and Team Leaders) WIS \$26,691 (Math Olympiad, Robotics, Team Leaders) WMS \$64,370 (PBIS, clubs, morning show, music groups, student government) WHS \$112,079 (Class advisors, PBIS, clubs, Portrait of a graduate, Trojan TV, Link Crew) Theater stipends WMS \$33,679 and WHS \$57169, Coaching stipends WHS \$438,340, Pupil Personnel Services \$35,040 team leaders
- Professional Tech Services WHS \$4658 (motivational speakers, sound equipment for graduation, technical services)
- Transportation: HES \$350 (Pre- K bus ride) WMS: \$10,00, WHS \$3633 (academic competitions)
- Police/Fire: HES \$500 (family fun nights)WIS \$315 (Musical) WMS \$1640 (grade level social events, concerts, plays, moving up) WHS \$2381(graduation, concerts, plays)
- WMS Moving Up \$1400 (diplomas and covers) WHS Graduation: \$6184(faculty gowns, rental of chairs, staging set up- used for WMS Moving Up), \$5408 (custom printed diplomas and covers, decorations, flowers \$2070 graduation programs
- Athletic Program \$1,038,662
- Theater Program\$118,307

The following academic programs demonstrate the WPS commitment to honoring all of our students:: Pre-school, Talented and Gifted, Academic interventions/supports, Special Education services, ELL services, WHS academic pathways program, WMS Academic Workshop, PPS services

Support the effective use of technology integration to support teaching, learning, and infrastructure. *All italicized items above reference technology integration* There is a complete list of technology on page 232.

Revise various Human Resources and Finance protocols and systems to improve the efficiencies across the departments.

There are no new costs. This is embedded in the recurring cost of Munis software \$93,948

Execute the schools' reunification plans in collaboration with the Weston Police Department. There are no new costs. [We have increased our Security Specialists form 6 to 7 in this budget.](#)

Study the proposals of the FOC in collaboration with the BOE to determine next steps
[No associated cost at this time](#)

Curriculum and Instruction

2. There is a proposed increase of \$318k in the materials section on page # 26. It is attributed to the new reading program that is geared towards the K-2 grades. There is a footnote that next year the focus will be on grades 3-5. Will this be an annual cost for the next two years only or is it something that we'll need to budget for moving forward?

[Over the last four years, except during COVID, our reading achievement for all students has remained constant. We as a district are committed to improving outcomes for all students thereby reducing the gap in achievement and growth for students in reading. The district achievement in grades 3-8,11 reading over the past three years has averaged 79.2. Over the past 3 years, our high students in grades 3-8, 11 and have performed at an average of 62.6 while our non-high students average 81.9.](#)

Process:

- [District Literacy Committee \(DLC\) composition- The District Literacy Committee has 25 members and is composed of K-12 teachers and administrators from all four schools that include English, world language and special education teachers, reading specialists, pupil services directors, and building administrators.](#)
- [# of meetings - To lay the foundation for the new State literacy guidelines, review district performance data, and discuss our current state of curriculum resources aligned to the Science of Reading \(SOR\), the committee has met twice in the district since September. In addition, select committee members spent a day and a half offsite at Cooperative Educational Services \(CES\) in Trumbull, to meet with vendors from the six reading programs approved by the State.](#)
- [Training around SOR with CES - The DLC has partnered with CES to provide training around the science of reading and provide support to audit our current state of curriculum and instructional resources aligned to SOR and the CSDE guidelines.](#)
- [Training for members using the OG program through ISME - Seven district reading specialists and special education teachers attended a five-day comprehensive Orton-Gillingham training. OG focuses on scientifically-based](#)

literacy teaching methods for students with difficulties in reading and writing, including dyslexia. Two additional members will be trained this summer.

- Reviewed the state approved programs 1.5 days - (see above)
- As a result of the offsite vendor meeting, two reading programs were recommended by the District Literacy Committee for a more comprehensive review. Each vendor conducted a two-hour presentation to the full DLC at the December meeting. The presentations included a comprehensive examination of the program and materials as well as an opportunity for each member to ask more explicit questions and evaluate the program.
- Each member of the DLC used a scoring Rubric to evaluate the two programs aligned to the SOR and state guidelines. Each member of the DLC submitted their evaluations to the Asst. Superintendents with the scores were averaged and an overall score determined that as a full District Literacy Committee, the clear choice being recommended moving into next year will be the American Reading Company Core Curriculum (ARC Core).
- On December 15, the Asst. Superintendent submitted Weston's intention for adoption of the CSDE as required. The Asst. Superintendent stated the district's choice for adoption will be ARC Core along with a request for an extension to implement the program over a two-year period of time. Year one will be to implement in grades K-2, year two will be to implement in grades 3-5.
- The budgetary request proposal outlines the materials, digital access to materials, digital assessments and job-embedded professional development for all teachers and CIL's needed to support a multi-year implementation. The request will be to fund a two-year implementation process where year one we transition based on the state mandate coupled with a K-5 district goal for continuity and improved outcomes for all students in K-5. Click [HERE](#) for the 2-year implementation cost breakdown per object code.

The American Reading Company (ARC Core) is designed to integrate science, social studies and literary genres through quality trade literature. Students engage in regular peer discussions around texts, conduct independent research and write daily. ARC Core provides explicit and systematic foundational skills tools for teachers to differentiate for students to meet them where they are to grow their love of reading and to become skilled readers and writers in all aspects of the science of reading. ARC Core includes literature in Spanish as well to connect with our district spanish language development program beginning in grade K.

- An overview of the units of study can be found [HERE](#)
- Results from district partnerships that have been using the ARC Core over a three year period of time can be found [HERE](#)

Next Steps: The WPS will continue to collaborate with CES to conduct an internal audit of resources and literacy instruction based on the components of the Science of Reading (SOR) for the remainder of the school year. These include evidence of instruction and resources aligned to:

- support grade-appropriate, explicit instruction and regular practice in the following areas:
 - oral language;
 - phonemic awareness;
 - phonics;
 - fluency;
 - rapid automatic name or letter name fluency; and
 - reading comprehension.

*Summer work with the CIL's and teachers focusing around professional development planning and curriculum revisions will occur immediately after school ends in June.

3. Recognizing that this is not the same cohort, there is a significant drop off from the number of students taking Algebra in 7 th grade (45) to students taking Geometry in 8 th grade (25). Do we have the proper amount of math support to help students in this advanced track? Page 92

The enrollment in Middle school math depends on the composition of the particular cohorts. Some cohorts are stronger than others which result in different distributions over the courses. Supporting all math students is our priority. In March of this school year, the Tri-state visiting committee will provide the WPS with feedback based on two indicators and essential questions directly connected to our curriculum, specifically in grades 5 through 12. In addition to these reports from tri-state, the WPS mathematical core curriculum has been in review for the past two years. Research was conducted based on the edreports to determine a replacement curriculum for the middle grades. In the fall of 2022, the middle school has teachers, with guidance from the CIL and the Asst. Superintendent, we have been piloting Illustrative Math (IM). The teachers have been shifting their instructional practices to focus more on student-centered learning that integrate an increase in discourse and multiple ways to problem-solve. Next year, all middle school grades will use the Illustrative Math (IM) curriculum to guide their instructional practices and design the learning environment for students.

Illustrative Math is part of the open education movement to provide high-quality evidence based curriculum for free. The curriculum can be accessed by parents, teachers and students through the Kendall Hunt website at <https://im.kendallhunt.com/>. The district will support the teachers' use of this resource through digital access, printed

resources and professional development. Teachers will also continue to use strategies from the [*Building Thinking Classrooms*](#) text to engage students in collaborative problem-solving that support perseverance and growth mindset which aligns to the philosophy of Illustrative Math.

In addition to the standards driven curriculum courses in Illustrative Math (IM) for students, K-12, IM also provides an accelerated 6 and 7 option. These courses prepare students for high school Algebra 1 in grade 8. We need to be careful about propelling students through quickly through the middle grade mathematics curriculum without ensuring they have a strong foundation of pre-algebra skills prior to engaging in a high school level course such as Algebra 1, especially given the interruption of instruction due to COVID in March of 2020 through Sept 2021 school year. Over two decades of research discussed how to prepare and teach mathematics for students in middle and high school grades. Within this research, a discussion around mastery of concepts and applications of mathematics in the middle grades were critical to ensure that students were successful in higher level mathematics courses once they entered high school.

Curriculum and Instruction Leader (CIL's):

A presentation has been prepared which outline the various questions related to the Full-time reading and Math CIL position requested in next year's budget. The following questions are addressed in the presentation.

4. How are CILs evaluated? Does it differ from a typical teacher evaluation? What metrics are currently in place to evaluate the CILs? What metrics will be in place to evaluate the CILs after this change? Are there peer reviews (reviews by teachers impacted by the CILs)? And what are the quantified deliverables the new program will need to deliver to be considered a success?
5. How do we measure the success of this new CIL model? Page 140 [PG,MW]
6. Are there any contractual changes required by changing the CILs role not to be in the classroom?
7. And any contractual changes required to spread their workload among the existing teachers? I.e.: How many hours / sections a teacher is expected to teach?
8. How much classroom time will CILs have?
9. Will the new proposal be a push-in model?
10. What does CIL coaching look like?
11. How are teachers identified and promoted to the CIL position? Page 140 [MW]
How is the District determining which teachers will fill those classes vacated by the CILs under the new proposal? Page 140

*Please click [HERE](#) for a full presentation regarding the CIL position, structure and answers to all questions above.

Technology

12. If smart tablet apps and technologies are necessary, then a 1:1 student to device ratio is needed to avoid loss of learning time, opportunity to track student development, and more. But focusing on that initial assumption, for what learning are smart tablet apps and technologies necessary, and superior to traditional instructional methods —particularly at Hurlbutt?
13. By what metrics or data is WPS determining that smart device-enabled learning is superior to traditional instruction methods, and therefore justified as an ongoing budget item for providing smart devices?

Click [HERE](#) for the document that addresses these two questions.

14. Has Weston exhaustively investigated lower cost or free alternatives rather than technology-enabled learning?

We use a balanced approach to learning where we integrate technology to enhance the curriculum and learning for all students.

15. Does the 6 year technology cycle accurately account for the speed of technological obsolescence and historical cost trajectory of new technology?

Yes - each year we perform exhaustive research to ensure that we are walking the fine line between maximizing funding to ensure the longest life cycle of equipment while making sure that equipment does not reach past EOL. Moore's 18 month law had been mentioned during the budget presentation; this only speaks to technological advances, not obsolescence. The lifecycle of the student equipment we have in the district - Chromebooks for Grades 2-8, and iPads for K and 1, is completely dependent on the support by their respective companies. Once Apple and Google announce EOL for a model, then it is time to replace the equipment. The average lifespan Apple and Google support their devices is 4-6 years. The majority of products we use in district are web based, meaning that they do not heavily rely on the computing power of the device, only the bandwidth of our internet connection. As such, we do not have to rely on cutting edge technology, and can instead maximize a 4-5 year lifecycle.

Making WPS Exceptional/Metrics/Evidence Indicators of Success

16. Does this budget sufficiently take into account the more specific metrics the State of CT will be requiring to evaluate and assess schools?

Next Generation Accountability Metrics includes 12 broad indicators to help tell the story of how we as a district are preparing students for success in college, career, and life. The system is designed to go beyond test scores and graduation rates. It is a holistic, multifactor perspective of district and school performance. This system takes into account achievement as well as growth for all students and for High needs students. Although there was a gap in district results after the 2018-19 school year due to COVID, the 2021-22 is now live on the CSDE edsight website for public viewing.

The district and each school is provided with an overall score called an Accountability Index which is the percentage of points earned across all available indicators. Schools may also receive notification of distinction, focus, or turnaround. Based on the 21-22 data, WIS is a level 2 category of distinction based on the high growth of ALL students in Math. And WHS received category 1 status for achievement based on High Performance.

Below outlines the overall performance index according to the CSDE based on the NextGen Accountability System per school year in Weston:

SY15-16: 85.4
SY16-17: 82.1
SY17-18: 86.5
SY18-19: 85.4
SY20-21: 84.3

17. What other metrics besides test scores can WPS track, improve, and share to justify this budget to the community, and potentially persuade those who might be tempted to educate their children elsewhere?

Our district goals outline an increase of the number of events offered to students and those in attendance within the performing and visual arts events across the district. These events are inclusive for those in the performing arts, visual arts, sports, and club activities. The number of extension opportunities of the curriculum, such as field trips and academic enrichment opportunities such as math Olympiad, or robotics will also be quantified to discuss our ongoing commitment to creativity and innovation for students to explore new and exciting ways to apply their learning outside of the classroom experiences.

We would also like to include how the students see themselves as learners in their classrooms. How do our students see themselves as members of the Weston PS community? Are their voices heard and do they feel like they contribute to the educational experience? These may evolve data collected from questionnaires, focus groups and interviews.

18. Given the steps needed to track those more robust metrics the state of CT is requiring, how could WPS go farther than the state in evaluating ourselves?

In addition to the metrics described above, other metrics include the following:

- Performance on SAT,ACT, AP exams
- WHS enrollment in AP courses
- District enrollment in co-curricular programs including theater, sports, clubs, performing arts
- Portrait of a Graduate Portfolios
- 8th and 10th grade writing portfolio scores
- NEASC commendations and recommendations from WHS NEASC accreditation
- Student disciplinary logs
- Number of students participating in academic competitions and their performance/awards
- Survey results from a variety of surveys students/staff/parents

19. Can Blue Ribbon school status be reclaimed?

At the January 6 budget workshop it was explained that Blue Ribbon status is complicated. It is a national award. The Department of Education invites nominated schools to apply for this honor. Schools cannot attain this status every year. Simply put, that is not the process. In addition, the configuration for nominated elementary schools is very specific and HES does not fall in that category. WHS has received the blue ribbon status twice in its history. It should be noted that the blue ribbon banner cannot be flown indefinitely outside a school. It is against the parameters of the award. Here is additional information regarding [The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program](#)

20. How do we measure the success of Alternative Pathways at WHS and the Academic Workshop Model at WMS?

We look at a number of metrics when assessing the Alternative Pathways program at the high school including grades, attendance, participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities, and student and teacher feedback.

10/12 students in the program have attendance above 90% for all class periods. The median GPA for students in the program is 3.19, which equates to a B.

Students in this program are not only actively engaged academically, but they are also engaged in extracurricular and cocurricular activities. Five of the students in the

program participate on the Weston High School athletic teams. Other students participate in Company Crew and the music program.

Student feedback this year has included the following highlights:

“Pathways offers more support, smaller groups, and one-on-one teaching. We can move at our own pace, and the smaller class sizes allow us to be more flexible with our learning.”

“The teachers are very respectful to my individual needs, and the environment is very safe.”

“I found it very hard to keep up in the regular classes last year, and I felt very uncomfortable in the classroom environment. This year I feel so much more comfortable and have learned more in this environment than I have ever learned in the past.”

In response to the question regarding WMS Academic Workshop, please see the [WMS Academic Workshop Update](#).

21. I did not see a line item for sustainability initiatives as has been discussed. Can we please create a line item with an estimate for initial outlays for sustainability initiatives? These initiatives are critical to track because they should become cost neutral or provide savings to the District in the future.

Please see document [WPS Sustainability Update](#).

Enrollment

22. Given the already significant efforts made in the past to get accurate demographic data on the Weston community — including number of potential and actual WPS students — how can the school work with the town to get more data?

Our BOE Chair has reached out to the town about a possible survey.

23. Based on what enrollment numbers WPS and the town of Weston are able to gather — along with the ad hoc “exit interview” information that Superintendent Barbiero has been able to gather about those families and students who leave the district, what can the WPS do to gain those students back and/or prevent others from leaving WPS? Does this current budget take into account outreach and improvement efforts to make WPS a more attractive option to families who might be on the fence about enrolling?

There is not a direct link to specific budget line items and this effort. It is a multi-pronged approach. We strive to highlight our schools and district in a variety of ways. Examples

include: our district website (the new one will go live in late winter) which is full of information about our schools- monthly district and school updates, What's up in the Weston Public Schools? Podcast, our district calendar etc. We continually reach out to the wider community groups. Our administrators reach out to the prospective new residents and give tours of our facilities.

Enrollment:

Referencing the FY 2022 Budget book verse FY 2024:

Projected WHS Enrollment: 796 verse 710

Projected WMS Enrollment: 546 verse 530

Projected WIS Enrollment: 486 verse 476

Projected HES: 448 verse 463

24. With declining enrollment, has there been a reduction in FTEs? Or a reallocation of FTEs? If reallocation, from where to where?

This is very complicated. In order to understand the FTE reallocation or reduction, one needs to look specifically at the class sections per school (HES/WIS/WMS) and department (WHS). One needs to take into consideration how the academic program may have changed- eg: new courses at WHS, or an increase in time in sixth grade world language at WMS. The most important takeaway is that we budget for the staff needed to deliver a particular program, grade, school. There is no extra staff.

Pre-K:

25. Has there been consideration to increase tuition for non-identified needs students?

We increased the tuition last year in an amount consistent with the district's overall budget increase. We will discuss whether or not there will be an increase for next year in Spring 2023.

26. Has there been consideration to have 7 sections of first grade instead of 8? With 7 sections based on projected enrollment the average class size would be 20.4 which is still smaller than grade 2.

The board of education guidelines for first grade is 18-20 students. We need 8 sections to stay within the guidelines for first grade.

27. Has there been consideration to have 7 sections of sixth grade instead of 8. With 8 sections based on projected enrollment the average class size would be 22.5 which is still smaller than both seventh and eighth grade.

When we looked at the enrollment projections we did consider the impact of reducing 6th grade from 8 sections to 7 sections. Based on the SLAM medium projected enrollment for 2023-24, sixth grade shows 158 students. Board of Education Guidelines are 20-24 students at the secondary level. 7 sections would provide an average of 22.5 students per class. 8 sections would provide an average of 19.75 students per class.

We strongly believe that it is critical to maintain pure teams at the middle school level. This model impacts the culture of the school by providing an interdisciplinary team of teachers who share the same group of students. The connections that students are able to form with their team of teachers cannot be overstated. Pure teams allow us to run the academic workshop which has had an overwhelming positive reception from both students and teachers. Not only does this allow students and teachers to explore aspects of the curriculum in greater depth, it also fosters closer relationships among students and staff.

The reduction of one section in sixth grade would mean that we could no longer provide the current model of programming for our middle school. In past years, when we had one large team and one small team, we experienced great inequities in the delivery of our programs. For example, when an 8th grade math teacher taught "off grade level" and "off team" by teaching a section of sixth grade math, he was not available for team meetings, curriculum planning meetings and perhaps most importantly, was not available to provide students with extra help when they were available to receive it.

A reduction from 8 sections to seven sections in the core academics would also mean that 4 teachers would become less than full-time. That would pose a very real challenge in terms of retaining high quality teachers.

We feel that it is appropriate to take the .2 reduction in world language based on several factors, but we cannot support a reduction in the sixth grade core academic areas.

28. There will be fewer students in grade 6 and more kids in grade 8, but the same amount of sections will be maintained at WMS? Is there any opportunity for resource reallocation?

Please see the answer above. This would destroy the teaming model.

Staffing

29. According to page 11, there is a 27 student decrease at WHS, so why only a 1.05 support staff decrease?

WHS has a certified staffing- teachers- reduction of a 1.05 and no support staff decrease. Support staff is non-certified staff.

Teacher staffing is complicated at the high school because the majority of our courses are multi-grade courses. However, with a decrease of 13 students in the freshman class, we were able to reduce .2 sections of English, math, world language social studies, and visual arts and reduce a .25 science section (.05 is the lab) The ability to reduce sections is dependent on the overall number of students in the course and how that number breaks into sections. BOE class guidelines are 20-24 students.

30. Please explain the rationale for a decrease in the school psychologist position, particularly amid post-covid world and our enhanced focus on the social emotional needs of students. Page 24 and 123.

The district wide school psychologist position was designed solely for the purpose of conducting evaluations districtwide. We were unable to find someone to fill the position for the start of this school year. At the same time, we had a transition in our Assistant Director of PPS position at the middle school and high school level, which prompted a discussion about the efficacy of our current PPS leadership model. After assessing the needs of the district and looking at PPS structures in other area districts, we decided it would be best for us to add an additional Assistant Director of PPS to our team to meet our overall needs as a district and provide greater support to students, staff and families in a number of areas, including social-emotional learning.

31. Is the transition coordinator a new hire or re-allocation of resources? Page 24
We have one full-time (1.0 FTE) position in the budget that is a part-time special education teacher, part-time transition coordinator. The amount of time allocated for each part of the position depends on the needs in any given year. The position is also split between Weston Middle School and Weston High School. The FY 24 budget maintains the current position and reflects the anticipated breakdown of how it will be allocated next year.

32. What will be the responsibilities and caseload of the Assistant Directors of PPS?

Approximately 13% of the students in the district receive special education services, with more students receiving accommodations through 504 plans.

Our PPS Department also oversees other programs like Homebound Instruction, English Language Learners, and Social Emotional Learning. Our Assistant Directors of PPS are responsible for supervising and evaluating staff, including our special education teachers, related service team members (Speech and Language Pathologists, OTs and PTs), mental health staff (Psychologists, Social Workers, and Counselors), and paraeducators. Our Social Workers and Counselors support general and special education students, and many of our PPS team members support students in the general education classroom. In short, our PPS department not only supports identified special education students but also works collaboratively with general education teachers and administrators to support all students in the district.

33. Please explain the increase of 11.04% for the library media specialist at WIS when every other school has a 2.5% increase. Page 133 [MW]

This is a salary increase due to a degree change

34. Please explain the 1.0 loss for the Finance Coordinator position? Page 110

The Finance Coordinator position has been vacant for some time. After several unsuccessful attempts to fill the position, we decided to take another approach.

We have assigned the responsibilities of the coordinator to other members of the department. These changes have not only ensured continuity but have also increased the professional capacity of these employees.

In addition, as we implement the various improvements that the upgrade of Munis will bring and to achieve the many department goals, it is important to optimize the department's staff. With this in mind, we have changed the job responsibilities and title from District Bookkeeper to Accounting Manager.

In addition to her responsibility for the district's student activity accounts, she will also be responsible for the following:

1. Examine, analyze and interpret financial records and to recommend improvements for increased accuracy, efficiency and productivity.
2. Assist in the preparation of the annual budget, monthly reports and other analysis as needed.
3. Coordinate the annual audit of all accounts by the external auditors.

4. Monthly reconciliation of all BOE funds, grants and bank reconciliation with the Town's Finance Office.
5. Provide backup for payroll and accounts payable when necessary.

35. What is turnover savings? Page 24.

When an employee retires or resigns and is subsequently replaced by a new hire at a lower rate. The amount also includes salary savings for any unpaid leave.

36. How are the differing amounts for stipends determined? Page 138

Stipends are collectively bargained in the WTA contract. The district completed negotiations for the new 3 year contract this past fall. With regards to increasing particular stipends including robotics and green team this must be negotiated with the WTA.

Facilities

37. Please explain the rationale for returning to in-house field maintenance from a contracted company? Is this a strictly budgetary decision? Page 167

There was a series of events that necessitated the hiring of a contractor. While the contractor has performed its responsibilities adequately, we are confident that we can maintain them with additional staff. Our grounds supervisor with three grounds staff are committed to taking over this task and improving the quality and consistency of our athletic fields. While our staff will still do the majority of the work, it is important to note that we will still need to use a contractor for fertilizing and some other services.

38. Is our rubbish removal paid by volume or weight? Page 190

Our weekly waste and recycle pickups are not by volume or weight. However, for bulk pickups that are over 5 tons, there is an additional per ton charge.

Transportation

39. Given the statewide bus driver shortage and related transportation challenges, do we have any thoughts as to proposed long term solutions to alleviate these pressures? Page 26, 198

We continually monitor the driver shortage issue and are pleased to report that we have a driver for each bus. Our transportation providers, First Student and ST Management (Relia), are actively recruiting drivers. In recent weeks, there has been an increase not only in applications for First Student, but also in applicants who are in training. The district has one more year to its contract with First Student.

Security/Safety

40. Please explain the 56% decrease in security monitoring? Page 195

Security system lease paid in full at the end of FY22. The lease was for alarming all of the doors in the schools.

41. Why are the fire panels and East House HVAC expenses no longer in the capital budget?

Fire Panels: After obtaining a second opinion, it has been determined that the useful life of the panels is approximately another 15 years.

East House HVAC expenses: In last year's capital budget the East House was inadvertently listed as part of the project, but it should only have been the North House. The North House HVAC remains in the capital budget as a 2025 project.

42. Why was there an increase in athletic transportation (62%) yet a decrease in extra curricular transportation? Page 198

The increase in athletic transportation is due to two factors. The first is our contract with First Student which reflects a 6.5% increase each year in the athletic budget. The second is the driver shortage at First Student which means that they cannot meet the needs of our teams on many occasions. This forces us to outsource any trip that takes place before 4:15 pm, and some that take place after 4:15 pm. The large increase is caused due to the number of trips that must take place before 4:15 and the cost of the outside transportation being almost triple the cost of a First Student bus

43. Why is there a decrease in bus aides? Is this purposeful or recruiting-related? Page 170

The reduction is based on current and anticipated needs.

Miscellaneous

44. According to the proposed budget, our non-resident fees will be increasing from \$62k (down from an all time high of \$76k) to \$87k. What does the administration have to support this change.

This is the revenue for tuition students. We project an increase in this revenue. Page. 239

Please provide the multi-year pro forma budget as in the previous year.
[See document Multi-year Budget](#)

Cost of Supplies and Materials

45. What is the 62.58% increase for materials? Page 26

[The increase in supplies are for the K-2 reading initiative and utilities.](#)

46. For custodial supplies (and all other materials like books), are we allocating enough for inflation? What rate are we using and what is the rationale for that rate? Pages 217, 226

[At our committee meeting on October 14, we discussed increasing the rate for goods and services by 3.5% rather than the CPI as it normally is. Given the fact that the current CPI for the northeast is 7.2%, this increase is more conservative increase will place the District in a better position](#)

Grants

47. Please provide a chart detailing the FY22 - 23 vs FY 23 -24 staffing grant / certified / admin staffing comparisons chart? We need to see a comparison of FTE funded by Esser this school year to FTE requested to transition to be funded by operating budget?

[Please see Grants Summary and Explanation 2024 document](#)

48. How many FTEs are in the FY 2024 budget that are funded in part or in whole (please provide both) by a grant which is not guaranteed in future years.

[Please see Grants Summary and Explanation 2024 document](#)