

# WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## PROPOSED FY'20 OPERATING BUDGET EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**DEVELOPED BY**

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AND THE ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY, AND STAFF  
OF THE WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



# WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Excellence, Shaping the Future*

January 10, 2019

Dear Westwood School Committee and Westwood Residents,

I am pleased to present to you an Executive Summary of the *FY'20 Superintendent's Recommended Budget*. This document provides an overview of the budget, including information about budget drivers and resource allocation as well as insight into how decisions are made. In addition to this summary, all of our detailed budget documents and spreadsheets are available to the public on the district website. We provide both this summary and detailed information, so that our community can be confident that our budget moves forward the district's strategic priorities, while also maintaining a sense of financial responsibility and stewardship for the town's resources.

At the beginning of this school year, the district published its *Strategy for District Improvement* which articulates four strategic objectives for the next 3-5 years. It should not be a surprise to anyone that one of those priorities is "Facilities for the Future" and includes our efforts to partner with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to address some significant infrastructure needs with a school building project. We are grateful for residents' support at last spring's Town Meeting to allocate funding for the Feasibility Study with the MSBA. We know that within the next 2 years, at the conclusion of the Feasibility Study, we will be asking residents to fund an elementary building project. With this need on the horizon, when developing this budget, we were especially mindful to keep any increase to the School Department operating budget at a reasonable and sustainable level.

The budget request for FY'20 totals \$1,559,896 which represents a modest 3.47% increase over FY'19. I am confident that this increase will allow us to continue to provide the high level of service that the community expects, including addressing shifting enrollment across the district and continuing to move forward with strategic priorities that enhance the educational opportunities for all students.

Major highlights of the FY'20 budget request include:

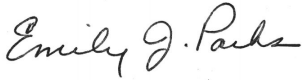
- A 3.47% increase over FY'19
- No cuts to programs or services
- Funding for contractual salary increases
- The reallocation of several positions among levels in the district to reflect shifting student enrollment
- Year 2 of a 4-year plan to eliminate the full-day kindergarten tuition fee
- Continued implementation of the district's strategic priorities for improvement

Last year, as I transitioned to the role of Superintendent, my many conversations with a wide array of constituents confirmed what I already knew: the quality of the school system is a central feature of this

community, and residents' investment in its schools reflects the values of the community and its commitment to its children's education. As a district, we are proud of the work we do to meet these community expectations and to ensure that all of our students continue to learn, grow, and thrive.

Please let me know if you have any questions about this budget or any other school related matter. I can be reached by email at [eparks@westwood.k12.ma.us](mailto:eparks@westwood.k12.ma.us) or by phone at 781-326-7500 x1341. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Emily J. Parks  
Superintendent of Schools

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## WHAT IS THE FY'20 SCHOOL DEPARTMENT BUDGET REQUEST?

As the table below illustrates, our recommended budget for FY'20 totals \$46,463,031, which represents a 3.47% increase over FY'19.

Final FY'19 Budget	\$44,903,135
Proposed FY'20 Budget	\$46,463,031
Increase (\$)	\$1,559,896
Increase (%)	3.47%

This proposed increase is consistent with the last two years of relatively modest budget requests and builds upon the strong foundation created by the larger budget increases in FY'16 and FY'17 made possible by the new growth revenue from the University Station development:

WPS Operating Budget Increases				
FY'16	FY'17	FY'18	FY'19	Proposed FY'20
5.39%	5.97%	3.3%	3.4%	3.47%

## WHAT ARE THE MAJOR BUDGET CATEGORIES?

The following table breaks down the total budget into five categories. As is evident, in school budgets, **salaries** are by far the greatest budget driver. In the proposed FY'20 budget, salaries account for 86.7% of the overall budget and correspondingly comprise most of the proposed budget increase.

Major Budget Category	FY'19 Budget	Proposed FY'20 Budget	Incremental Change (\$)	Incremental Change (%)
Total Salaries	38,810,528	40,275,301	1,464,773	3.77%
Non-Salary				
Special Education	1,186,429	1,186,627	198	0.02%
Utilities	1,231,000	1,181,000	(50,000)	-4.06%
Operations and Maintenance	964,010	993,335	29,325	3.04%
All other non-salary	2,711,168	2,826,768	115,600	4.26%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44,903,135</b>	<b>46,463,031</b>	<b>1,559,896</b>	<b>3.47%</b>

## HOW DOES THE PROPOSED BUDGET SUPPORT THE DISTRICT'S SHORT- AND LONG-TERM GOALS?

When developing the district's budget, we think about three major issues:

- Meeting contractual salary obligations and other fixed costs, such as transportation and utilities
- Addressing shifts in enrollment and maintaining reasonable class sizes
- Continuing to make progress on the program goals articulated in the *Strategy for District Improvement* (See Appendix A)

The first two issues largely pertain to staffing and typically represent the majority of the proposed budget increase. Addressing just these issues is often described as “maintaining level services.” In other words, they represent our analysis of what it will take to continue to provide the same experiences and opportunities for students next year that are available to students today. Most of the budget details in the pages that follow are related to these issues.

It's important, however, that we don't lose sight of our district improvement goals and that we continue as a district to respond to students' needs and adapt to changes in the educational landscape. Our success in Westwood is partly attributable to our commitment to continuous improvement. For this reason, you will see that the proposed budget continues to advocate for robust line items related to curriculum, instruction, and professional development. Though the proposed budget includes virtually no increase in the Curriculum and Instruction cost center, within the existing level of funding we have made strategic decisions about how to allocate the funds in FY'20 in order to meet student needs and work toward educational goals. For example, in FY'20, curriculum alignment funding will be focused on conducting a review of our PreK-12 English Language Arts program and updating and expanding our elementary and middle school classroom libraries (Strategic Priority 2.1). Instructional supply funds and FF&E allocations will allow continued investment in elementary coding and makerspaces (Strategic Priority 1.2) and new equipment for the middle school engineering program (Strategic Priority 1.1).



## WHAT ARE THE CHANGES TO THE BUDGET FY'19 TO FY'20?

The following chart lists all of the changes included in my budget proposal. It is intended to show the progression from the Final FY'19 Budget to the FY'20 Recommended Budget. In short, it is "how the budget is built." Each of these items is explained in more detail in the sections that follow.

Budget Request	FTE if personnel	Budget Impact																								
<b>Final FY'19 Budget</b>		\$44,903,135																								
<b>Increase salaries for existing personnel (contractual)</b>		\$1,435,474																								
<b>Faculty Positions</b>																										
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Elementary: Add .5 FTE Social Studies Coordinator</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">0.5 FTE</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;">\$30,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Elementary: Reduce 3.0 FTE Classroom Teachers</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">(3.0 FTE)</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;">(\$180,000)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">TMS: Reduce 2.0 FTE Teachers (incremental reductions across multiple departments)</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">(2.0 FTE)</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;">(\$120,000)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">TMS: Increase .4 FTE ELA/Social Studies Coordinator</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">0.4 FTE</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;">\$24,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">WHS: Add 1.0 FTE English Teacher</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">1.0 FTE</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;">\$60,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">WHS: Add 1.0 FTE Social Studies Teacher</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">1.0 FTE</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;">\$60,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">WHS: Add .6 FTE Guidance Counselor</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">0.6 FTE</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;">\$36,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">District: Add 1.0 FTE PreK-8 Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Coordinator/Coach</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">1.0 FTE</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;">\$60,000</td> </tr> </table>	Elementary: Add .5 FTE Social Studies Coordinator	0.5 FTE	\$30,000	Elementary: Reduce 3.0 FTE Classroom Teachers	(3.0 FTE)	(\$180,000)	TMS: Reduce 2.0 FTE Teachers (incremental reductions across multiple departments)	(2.0 FTE)	(\$120,000)	TMS: Increase .4 FTE ELA/Social Studies Coordinator	0.4 FTE	\$24,000	WHS: Add 1.0 FTE English Teacher	1.0 FTE	\$60,000	WHS: Add 1.0 FTE Social Studies Teacher	1.0 FTE	\$60,000	WHS: Add .6 FTE Guidance Counselor	0.6 FTE	\$36,000	District: Add 1.0 FTE PreK-8 Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Coordinator/Coach	1.0 FTE	\$60,000	(0.5 FTE)	(\$30,000)
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Reduce kindergarten tuition as part of a 4-year elimination plan <sup>1</sup>		\$85,000																								
Net decrease to various non-salary accounts, including increase in regular transportation, increase to contracted services, increase in extended school year budget, decrease to SPED out-of-district tuitions, decrease in electricity costs due to energy savings from solar panels, a new offset to transportation from University Station funds		(\$15,078)																								
<b>FY'20 Superintendent's Recommended Budget</b>	<b>1.0 FTE</b>	<b>\$46,463,031</b>																								

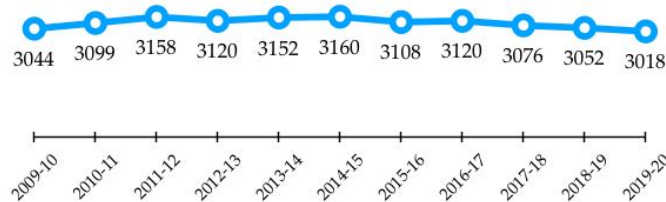
<sup>1</sup>As of FY'20, families will no longer be charged tuition for full-day kindergarten. However, it will take until FY'22 to fully eliminate the tuition offset in the budget.

In addition to the net increase of 0.5 FTE staff in the FY'20 budget, several positions were added this fall to address new and changing needs related to services in students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). These positions were added within the FY'19 budget allocation from the net savings realized through the hiring process and retirements and are included in the level services calculation. More detail can be found on page 11 under "What are the staffing changes in Special Education?"

## HOW ARE ENROLLMENT CHANGES IMPACTING STAFFING ALLOCATION?

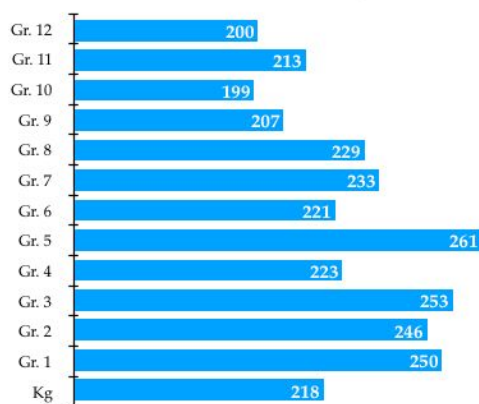
Over the last ten years, though there has been some fluctuation, the overall district enrollment has been relatively stable. Ten years ago, during the 2009-2010 school year, 3,044 students were enrolled in the Westwood Public Schools. Today, the district serves 3,052 students and next year's projection is slightly lower at 3,018.

**District Enrollment**

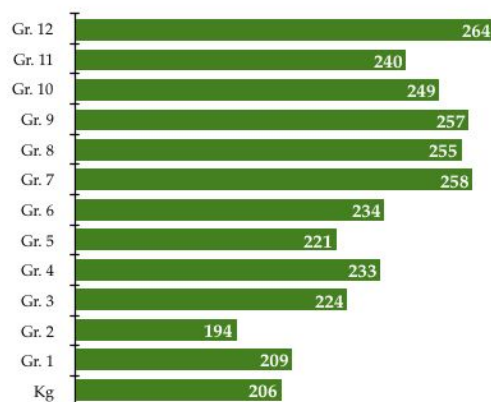


However, over the last several years, the distribution of students across grade levels has shifted, effectively creating an enrollment "bubble" making its way through the district. The charts below show the distribution of students across each grade level 10 years ago versus today:

**District Enrollment by Grade (2008-2009)**



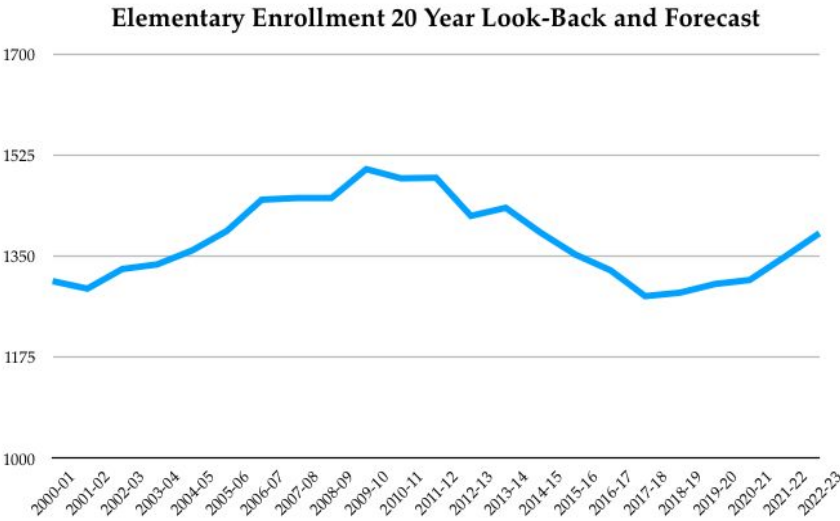
**District Enrollment by Grade (2018-2019)**



As illustrated above, while the current kindergarten is 206 students, this year's senior class has 264 students. The enrollment in the 4 youngest elementary grades in the district (i.e K-gr. 3) is currently 833 students as compared to the enrollment in the 4 oldest grades in the district (i.e. gr. 9-12), which is currently 1010 students.

Shifts in enrollment impact how we budget for and allocate staff. Over the last 10 years, as the enrollment at the elementary level has declined, the enrollment at the middle school and high school increased, necessitating an increase in staff at the secondary level. In the last several years, positions have been added at both Thurston Middle School and Westwood High School, either by reallocating elementary positions or adding new positions. In FY'19, there were no staffing changes at the middle school though the enrollment at Thurston began to decline. In FY'20, middle school enrollment is projected to continue decreasing, with a projected enrollment of 715 (down from its 2014-2015 peak of 800), thereby allowing us to make incremental staffing reductions across departments while maintaining reasonable class sizes and the middle school team structure. At the high school, as enrollment continues to be high, more staff will be needed to mitigate relatively high class sizes. However, in the FY'20 budget, the additional general education teaching positions at the high school are offset by corresponding reductions in staffing at the elementary level, where we anticipate fewer incoming kindergarten sections.

Though we have been in a 10-year period of declining enrollment at the elementary level and have reduced staff accordingly, it is important to keep in mind that school enrollments tend to be cyclical. A 20-year look back reveals that our current, relatively low, elementary enrollment (1287 students) is nearly identical to elementary enrollment during the 1999-2000 school year after which the elementary student population steadily grew to its peak of 1,501 students in 2009-2010:



The most recent enrollment projections for the district suggest that within the next couple of years elementary enrollment will again begin to climb at a similar, or perhaps faster, rate than in the 2000s. These projections will be important as we consider long-range budget planning and the elementary building project.



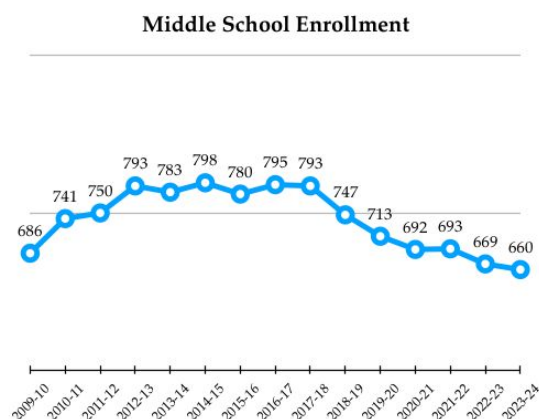
## WHAT ARE THE PROPOSED STAFFING CHANGES RELATED TO ENROLLMENT?

Through staffing reallocations across elementary schools in FY'19 and the creation of a “buffer zone” district at University Station that assigns students to three different elementary schools (Downey, Hanlon, and Deerfield), we have been able to create elementary class sizes that are within School Committee guidelines and lessen the disparity in class sizes among the elementary schools, providing a good foundation for the FY'20 budget process. The main driver in determining the number of classroom teachers to serve students next year, therefore, is the size of the incoming kindergarten class.

### **Decrease of 3.0 FTE Classroom Teachers (Deerfield, Martha Jones, and Sheehan): -\$180,000**

At three of our elementary schools, census data indicates that the incoming kindergarten class will be small, with more students exiting grade five than entering kindergarten. This difference results in one fewer class section in each school overall. We anticipate one kindergarten classroom at Deerfield and two kindergarten classrooms at Martha Jones and Sheehan, resulting in a reduction of 3.0 FTE elementary teachers.

Enrollment at Thurston Middle School increased steadily from 2000 to 2014 and then remained stable for several years at nearly 800 students. This year, the enrollment at TMS began declining and will continue to decline for several years. In FY'20, enrollment at TMS is projected to be 713 students.



Thurston gained numerous positions during the period of expanding enrollment, including core teaching staff to address class size issues, several special educators to augment special education programming, an adjustment counselor, a computer science teacher, and an engineering teacher. Music and PE positions have expanded as well. Enrollment has now decreased sufficiently to reduce staff incrementally across departments while still maintaining the team structure that is important to the middle school model and keeping class sizes within the School Committee’s class size guideline.

### **Reduce 1.0 FTE ELA Teacher (TMS): -\$60,000**

This reduction will require eliminating 4 ELA class sections, which will be possible given the decreased student population next year.

### **Reduce .2 FTE Science Teacher (TMS): -\$12,000**

This reduction will require eliminating 1 class section in science, but will maintain the co-taught science model between general education and special education.

**Reduce .4 FTE Math Teacher (TMS): -\$24,000**

This reduction will require eliminating 2 math class sections, but will not impact the school’s ability to offer supported as well as accelerated courses.

**Reduce .4 FTE PE Teacher (TMS): -\$24,000**

This reduction will require eliminating 2 class sections, while maintaining the flexibility required for effectively scheduling the PE and arts rotation.

With enrollment at Westwood High School still on the rise, the budget priorities at WHS are focused, once again, on mitigating higher than desirable class sizes. During the last budget cycle, we added teachers in math and science at the high school. In FY’20, we have turned our attention to the other departments.

**Add 1.0 FTE English Teacher (WHS): \$60,000**

The increased enrollment at the high school has resulted in approximately 25% of English classes having 25 or more students. This position will lower class sizes.

**Add 1.0 FTE Social Studies Teacher (WHS): \$60,000**

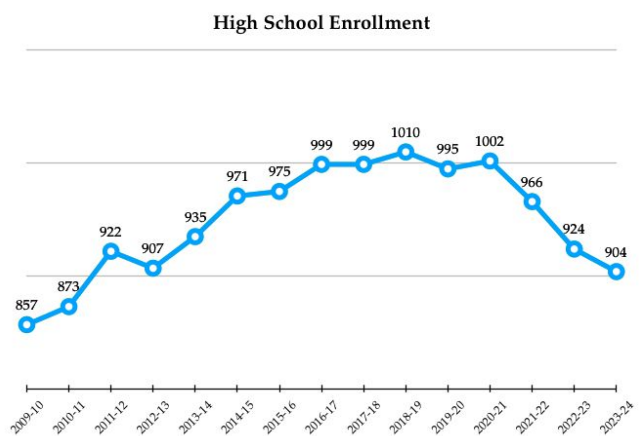
A combination of increased enrollment and expanded social studies elective offerings (e.g. Market Dynamics, AP U.S. Government, Early Childhood Development, Global Conflicts and Crises) has resulted in large class sizes. This position will lower class sizes while allowing us to retain a high-interest elective program.

**Add .6 FTE Guidance Counselor (WHS): \$36,000**

As high school enrollment has increased, counselor caseloads have increased as well. Guidance counselors at WHS serve a dual function, providing both counseling to support students’ social-emotional wellness and a high-level of service related to the college admissions process. This position would reduce the counselor student ratio to 200:1, a reasonable caseload.



Next year, Westwood High School is projected to serve 995 students, a population that has grown by 16% in the last ten years.



## WHAT ARE THE PROPOSED STAFFING CHANGES RELATED TO PROGRAM NEEDS AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES?

In addition to changes in staffing related to enrollment, the proposed FY'20 staffing changes reflect identified needs in curriculum and instruction that further the objectives in the WPS Strategy for District Improvement.

### **Add .5 FTE Elementary Social Studies Coordinator: \$30,000**

One of the district's strategic objectives is "Coherent, Connected Curriculum," and the creation of elementary curriculum leadership positions has proven an effective strategy for ensuring that all K-5 students engage in high-quality learning experiences in math, literacy and science. Recently revised state Social Studies and History frameworks have made civics education a priority, and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is currently developing a project-based assessment requirement in lieu of a traditional MCAS test for these standards.

Next fall, the Westwood Public Schools will launch a Social Studies curriculum review and course realignment process. The new social studies coordinator will provide leadership and support for the review itself as well as the implementation of recommended curriculum changes. The coordinator will also support individual teacher growth through coaching and professional development.

### **Add .4 FTE Middle School ELA/Social Studies Coordinator: \$24,000**

This additional FTE will be combined with an existing allocation to create a .8 FTE ELA/Social Studies Coordinator position. This individual will provide important curriculum leadership and instructional coaching as we embark on a PreK-12 ELA Curriculum Review, begin to implement the new MA History and Social Science Standards, and meet the state's new requirements in civics education. In combination with the proposed .5 FTE Elementary Social Studies Coordinator, this position will further the district's strategic priority of aligning curriculum vertically across the district.

### **Add 1.0 FTE PreK-8 Social Emotional Learning Coordinator/Coach: \$60,000**

As the Social Emotional Learning needs assessment and curriculum review draws to a close, we anticipate the need for substantial teacher training and support as well as parent and community outreach. Investing in a qualified educator who can steer the program selection process, implement teacher training, organize parent education sessions, and support teachers as they learn to incorporate explicit SEL into their instructional practice is a cost-effective strategy. Typical program training sessions led by outside providers are very costly (e.g, \$21,000 to train 30 teachers to implement Responsive Classroom, one of the programs we are considering). An SEL Coordinator/Coach position represents a more cost-effective investment with in-house expertise.

## WHAT ARE THE PROPOSED STAFFING CHANGES IN OPERATIONS AND SUPPORT STAFF?

### **Add 1.0 FTE Custodian: \$42,000**

Due to the increase in student population at the High School along with the increased use of the building both during the school year and in the summer, we need to increase the amount of custodial hours to keep up with the demand. This position will be .5 FTE at the High School and will be .5 FTE coverage throughout the district. This district coverage is necessary to cover sick calls, vacations and leaves during the course of the year. The 1.0 FTE Custodian position will go a long way to ensure that we continue to consistently and properly maintain our facilities.

### **Add .5 FTE School-Year Administrative Assistant (TMS): \$22,500**

Currently 2.0 FTE administrative assistants provide administrative support for special education, guidance, the principal, and the assistant principal while also attending to the needs of parents, students, and members of the public who call or visit the main office. The level of staffing is insufficient for a school the size of Thurston. (By comparison, the staffing level at WHS compared to TMS, proportional to number of students, is nearly double to perform the same functions.) This additional .5 FTE will be combined with .5 FTE reallocated from the high school to create a full-time administrative assistant position at TMS in order create more parity between the two schools.

### **Increase Short-Term Substitute Teacher line item: \$20,000**

Securing an adequate number of daily substitutes is an ongoing challenge for school districts, including Westwood. This funding will help us to adjust our daily substitute rate to be more competitive with surrounding towns with whom we share a candidate pool.

## WHAT ARE THE STAFFING CHANGES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION?

In public schools, we are legally mandated to provide a certain level of service to students with special needs, as defined in a student's Individualized Education Plan or "IEP." When students' needs change, the budget also changes. This interdependent relationship between a) legally mandated services, b) student needs, and c) school budgets means that forecasting Special Education expenses presents a particular challenge for school administrators. As a result, Special Education is the most variable of all school department budget items. We analyze student needs both as part of the budget process, and also on an on-going basis throughout the school year.

In order to increase our ability to educate special education students in-district, we have added positions to the budget over the last several budget cycles. In FY'19, special education staffing was a major driver in the budget with the creation of an additional applied behavior analysis program serving students on the autism spectrum. In addition, since the FY'19 allocation was approved, changing student needs has required the addition of several incremental professional staff positions (.5 FTE Board Certified Behavior Analyst, .4 FTE Occupational Therapist, .3 FTE Speech and Language Pathologist, .5 FTE ABA Tutor) and 6.5 FTE instructional assistants. These positions have been added during the school year within the FY'19 appropriation by utilizing salary turnover resulting from personnel changes such as retirements. As the need for these services to students are ongoing, when calculating level services for FY'20, we have included these positions. Therefore, the FY'20 proposed budget includes no change in Special Education staffing.

## WHAT ARE THE NON-SALARY BUDGET DRIVERS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION?

There are four main non-salary drivers in special education: **tuition, transportation, contracted services**, and the cost of providing **extended school year (ESY)** services to special education students during the summer.

### **Decrease in Special Education Tuition and Transportation: -\$66,802**

In the FY'20 budget, we estimate that the largest non-salary Special Education budget drivers, **tuition and transportation**, will decrease. This decrease reflects a stable, and relatively low, number of students in out-of-district placements, an accounting of actual students who will turn 22 years old in FY'20 and exit the district, and our continued efforts to increase our capacity to educate our special education students in-district. We expect to have between 22 and 24 students in out-of-district placements next year, which is approximately 4% of our total special education population.

	FY'19	FY'20	Difference
<b>Residential Tuition</b>	\$227,005	\$239,263	\$12,258
<b>Day Tuition</b>	\$644,186	\$562,795	(\$81,391)
<b>Collaborative Tuition</b>	\$503,790	\$507,814	\$4,024
<b>Out-of-District SPED Transportation</b>	\$445,791	\$404,194	(\$41,597)
<b>In-District SPED Transportation</b>	\$281,829	\$321,733	\$39,904
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,102,601</b>	<b>\$2,035,799</b>	<b>(\$66,802)</b>

It is important to note that a decreased number of students in out of district placements results in a decreased Circuit Breaker reimbursement (i.e. state funds to offset the impact of high cost special education instruction and tuition). While the total request for out of district tuitions for FY '20 continues to be accounted for entirely by federal grant and circuit breaker funds, this is an area to watch in the future if out of district placement numbers rise.

### **Increase in Special Education Contracted Services: \$40,000**

The District purchases legally mandated services (ex. Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Orientation and Mobility Specialist, Adaptive Physical Education) from vendors, when necessary. Each year, the rates charged by these companies have increased incrementally. This request allows the district to keep pace with actual costs and provide appropriate services to students.

### **Increase in Extended School Year (ESY): \$26,802**

As more students have stayed in district to receive their special education services during the school year, there has been a corresponding growth in the need for IEP required Extended School Year (ESY) services via in-district summer programming. This request allows the district to fund the additional summer hours for teachers, nursing, instructional assistants and other related service providers required by student IEP's.

## WHAT ARE THE NON-SALARY BUDGET DRIVERS IN GENERAL EDUCATION?

### **Reduce Kindergarten Tuition Offset: \$85,000**

Westwood is currently one of 45 districts out of 317 in Massachusetts that has a tuition-based full-day kindergarten program. While the half-day kindergarten program is free, families are charged a fee to send students to the full-day program. In reality, nearly all families in Westwood choose the full-day option. In FY'19 we reduced the kindergarten tuition fee from \$1800 to \$900 per year. In FY'20, we will eliminate the fee entirely. We are able to eliminate this fee by reducing the kindergarten tuition offset by \$85,000 per year for four years. FY'20 is year two of this process.

### **Decrease in Utilities: -\$50,000**

In Westwood we have a dedicated Energy Manager who works with both the town and the schools to identify energy saving projects. We are also part of the Green Communities of Massachusetts and have received multiple grants for our various energy saving projects. One of these projects was the installation of solar panels on four of our school buildings. The projected net savings in electrical costs of this project for FY'20 is approximately \$50,000.

### **Increase in Project-Based Learning: \$10,000**

One of the district's strategic objectives is to provide authentic, meaningful learning experiences for students. This funding will support specific initiatives toward that objective, including the high school's J-Term program and the coding and makerspace experiences that elementary librarians and instructional technology coaches are piloting in grades 4 and 5.

### **Increase in Regular Transportation: \$30,000**

This funding addresses cost increases contained in our bus company contract.

### **New Transportation Offset (University Station): -\$50,000**

This funding will support additional transportation required due to the creation of a "buffer zone" district at University Station for elementary students. The funding is a result of increased tax revenue from the University Station Development project.

## WHAT IS MISSING FROM THE BUDGET? ARE THERE UNFUNDED NEEDS?

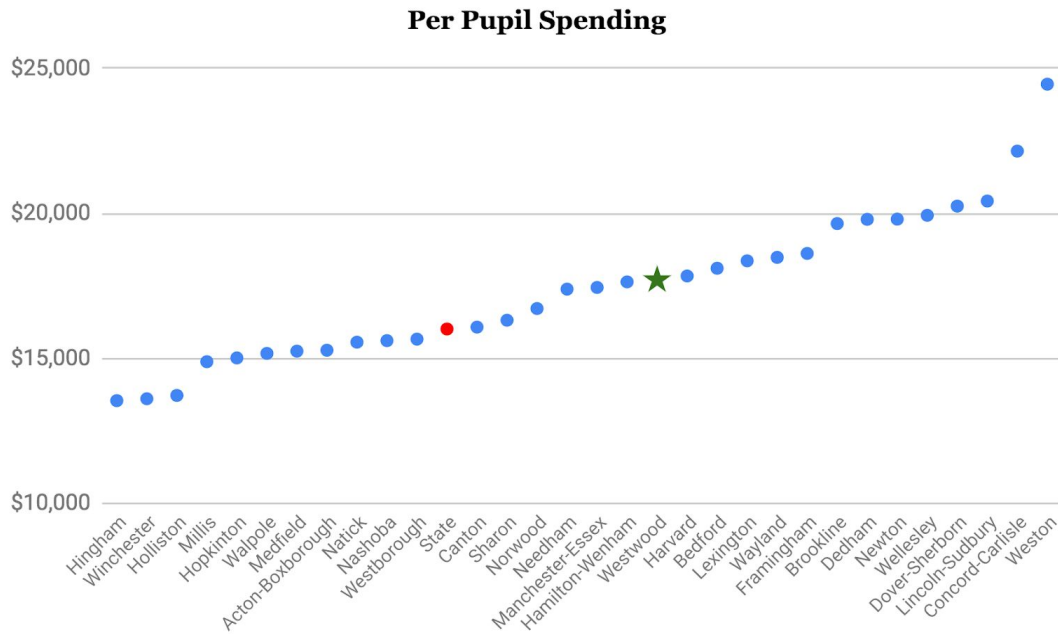
Every year cost center leaders submit both short-term and long-term budget requests. The district leadership team (central office administrators, principals, and assistant principals) meet to review and discuss all of the requests and to reach consensus about the upcoming year's priorities, PreK-12, based on district goals and initiatives. While the initial requests during this process represented a 5.05% increase over FY'19, choices were made. This FY'20 proposed budget, reflecting a 3.47% increase, represents a reasonable and sustainable budget for Westwood residents. Through a combination of reallocating existing resources, carefully reducing line items that do not impact student service, and requesting modest additional resources, this proposed budget amply meets the district's needs. Some of the items that have been deferred for future budget discussions include:

- Additional school psychologist staffing
- An increase in literacy and math specialists
- Additional instructional assistants
- Reduction or elimination of user fees for Transportation and Athletics
- Recess monitors to provide elementary teachers time for consultation with specialists

- Permanent building substitutes
- An additional custodian, beyond the current request
- A guidance counselor at the middle school
- A part-time elementary orchestra teacher
- A mobile science lab to serve all 5 elementary schools

## HOW DOES WESTWOOD'S PER PUPIL SPENDING COMPARE TO OTHER DISTRICTS?

The chart below compares the per pupil spending in Westwood to spending in 30 other Massachusetts districts. The included districts are either: a) on the Finance Commission's "comparable districts" list; b) members of TEC, Westwood's education collaborative; or c) on Boston Magazine's "top 25" high schools list for 2018. The data presented is from the MA Department of Education website and reflects FY'17 spending, the most recent data that is available.



As illustrated above:

- The state-average per pupil expenditure is \$16,015.
- The average per pupil expenditure for districts on this list is \$17,436.
- The median per pupil expenditure for districts on this list is \$17,448.

Westwood's per pupil expenditure of \$17,708 is generally on par, or below, other high-performing districts and suggests that Westwood provides a good value for its investment.

