

Westwood Public Schools

Superintendent's Report to SC

October 12, 2023

2023-2024 ENROLLMENT					
	Deerfield	Downey	Hanlon	Martha Jones	Sheehan
Kindergarten	34	50	32	55	54
Grade 1	34	51	37	39	42
Grade 2	41	52	43	43	47
Grade 3	36	48	41	57	52
Grade 4	32	44	32	35	45
Grade 5	24	67	32	47	60
Total Students	201	312	217	276	300
Total Sections	12	14	12	13	15
Elementary Schools			High School		
Kindergarten	225			Grade 9	226
Grade 1	201			Grade 10	201
Grade 2	228			Grade 11	206
Grade 3	230			Grade 12	242
Grade 4	185			SP	10
Grade 5	232			Total	885
Total	1301				
Total Sections	66				
Middle School			Summary		
Grade 6	229			Preschool	46
Grade 7	214			Elementary	1301
Grade 8	219			Middle	662
Total	662			High	885
				Total	2894

Budget Development Process:

- **Oct:** Initial discussion of budget context at Oct. SC meeting
- **Nov:** Cost center leaders prepare budget requests
- **Dec:** District leadership team evaluates priorities and develops proposed budget
- **Jan:** Supt's proposed budget presented at Jan. SC
- **Feb:** SC holds public budget hearing; presents proposed budget at Fin Com
- **Mar:** Fin Com public hearings
- **May:** Town Meeting

Budget
Steering
meets
monthly

Budget Priorities:

Budget Priorities will be informed by the following:

- District Goals and Strategic Priorities
 - Approved by the Committee in September
 - Highlighted Priority: Hire a Director of Human Resources
 - Supported by findings from District Equity Audit
- Findings of Superintendent's Entry Plan
 - To be presented in November
- Other priorities identified by School Committee

Annual budget drivers:

- Meet contractual **salary obligations**
- Meet other **inflation-impacted costs** (e.g., transportation, utilities)
- Maintain reasonable **class sizes**
- Address **special education** needs
- Continue to make progress on the **educational goals** articulated in the WPS *Strategy for District Improvement*

Specific FY'24 and FY'25 Budget Drivers

Specific FY'24 and FY'25 Budget Drivers:

- Personnel costs
- Pine Hill consolidation
- Transportation for ESY
 - New regulation; not budgeted in FY24
- Inflationary and supply chain pressures
- Increased costs and volatility in special education
- Specific capital needs

Personnel Costs:

- Implementation of contractual salary increases
 - Entering negotiations with custodial union for FY'25
 - All other collective bargaining agreements settled
- Labor market disruption
 - Continued difficulty finding candidates for paraprofessional roles (e.g. ABA Tutors, substitute teachers and substitute nurses, cafeteria workers)
 - Forced to use contracted service providers to meet legal obligations in special education
 - Model is more costly and creates non-financial impacts: Level of disruption, uncertainty, increased need for ongoing hiring and training, frequently onboarding/offboarding

Class Sizes:

- School Committee guidelines for class sizes (Policy IIB):
 - Grades K-3: 18-22
 - Grades 4-5: 18-24
 - Grades 6-12: Reasonable class sizes (18-24), ideally not higher than 28, with the exception of traditionally large group classes (e.g.band)
- FY24 class sizes within guidelines
- Continued desire to maintain guidelines for FY25
- Over the last two years, we have seen more movement in the early grades over the summer, making kindergarten enrollment harder to predict.

Pine Hill Consolidation:

- New building scheduled to open in February 2024.
- Budget development is being conducted with an eye toward consolidation.
 - General education classrooms will not be consolidated in Feb. 2024 (i.e. existing sections will simply be moved to new buildings)
 - Using class size guidelines, there may be a reduction in classroom sections in FY25
 - Need to examine other non-classroom teaching staffing
 - Delivery/efficiency of student support services
 - Custodial services with larger building
 - Other support staffing

Inflation and Supply Chain Pressures:

- Rising transportation costs:
 - In year 2 of a 3-year yellow bus contract, with 3.6% increase for FY'25
 - In year 1 of a 3-year Special Education van contract, with 6% increase for FY'25
- Rising operating costs:
 - Service contracts for elevators, fire alarms, security systems, HVAC control systems, etc
 - Software services such as HR systems, Student Information System, Endpoint security for cyberattacks
- Utilities
 - Fuel budget increase was made for FY'24, but continuing to monitor fuel cost
 - Electric utility costs are locked in through a fixed price contract until FY'27

Increased costs and volatility in special education:

- Notification from state's Operational Services Division (OSD) to expect a 4.69% increase in social service costs, at least 75K impact
 - This is on top of the 14% increase for FY'24
 - Prior 12 years the average increase was below 2% per year
- Multiple special education student "move-ins" requiring out-of-district placements or additional in-district staffing on IEPs
- Continued increase in mental health needs of students
- Extended School Year (ESY) transportation requirements, approx. 25K

Special Education Costs:

- FY'24 special education costs are generally in line with budget
 - Tuitions have shifted, but are still within budget
 - Excess transportation cost is primarily ESY buses this summer
- Contracted services line is being closely watched
 - Using fewer contractors to fill vacancies, but we do have 2 contractors to address services that could not be provided by staff
 - Cost overage is 8%, as compared to 112% last year
 - This line has been over budget for multiple years
 - A 340K adjustment of this line (85K per year x 4 years) was proposed in FY'22 but implementation was delayed
- Overall volatility in costs
 - Approach is to use Special Education reserve in 1st year
 - Budget in operating budget going forward

Capital Needs:

- Facilities Master Plan to determine inform district capital strategy
 - Must include an educational visioning component at its core
 - Need to identify long-term plans for Sheehan, Thurston
 - Current estimate for new Sheehan construction is \$70 million
- Building needs that exceed the capacity of our \$1.1M capital allotment:
 - Thurston Heating System: \$1.9M in improvements that could be phased over 2 years to minimize disruption to teaching and learning
 - Thurston Roof: \$2M targeted replacement per moisture study
 - High School Roof: \$2.5M restoration, which can be implemented phases, would provide 30 year warranty and prolong life of the roof

School Calendar

- Considerations include, but are not limited to:
 - Academic/learning considerations
 - Consistency
 - Other district approaches
 - Westwood Staff and Parent considerations
 - Historical context

School Calendar

School District	Teacher Start Date	Start Date (1-12)	Start Date (K-12)
Canton	8/28/23	8/30/23	9/5/23
Dedham	9/1	9/6	9/7/23
Dover-Sherborn	8/28/2023	8/30/2023	8/31/2023
Framingham	8/28/2023	8/30/2023	8/31/2023
Holliston	8/28/2023	8/29/2023	8/30/2023
Hopkinton	8/28/2023	8/30/2023	8/31/2023
Medfield	8/28/2023	8/30/2023	9/5/2023
Medway	8/28/2023	8/30/23	8/31/2023
Millis	8/28/2023	8/30/23	9/5/23
Natick	8/28/2023	8/30/2023	8/30/2023
Needham	8/28/2023	8/30/2023	8/31/2023
Norwood	9/5/2023	9/6/2023	9/8/2023
Walpole	8/28/2023	8/30/2023	9/5/2023
Wayland	8/29/2023	9/5/2023	9/5/2023
Westwood	8/28/2023	8/30/2023	9/5/2023