

Webster Public Schools
Webster, Massachusetts

School Budget

July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016

Public Hearing

X:XX P.M. XXXXX, MMMM DD, 2015

Filmer / BHS Auditorium

Town Meeting

7:00 P.M. Monday May 11, 2015

BHS Auditorium

Webster Public Schools Vision Statement

Our mission is to provide a quality education and a safe learning environment for all students and to empower them to succeed as responsible, productive citizens in an ever-changing global society.

Contents

Superintendent's Message.....	page 3
Budget Guidelines.....	page 5
Factors Affecting FY16 Educational Costs.....	page 6
Program Budget Overview.....	page 9
Operating Budget Summary.....	page 9
Chapter 70 Trends.....	page 10
Staffing.....	page 11
FY16 - New Positions.....	page 12

We welcome your questions, comments and suggestions regarding this publication.
Details concerning the budget summarized here may be requested from the

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Message from the Superintendent of Schools

As the Webster Public Schools district leadership team began preparing for the FY 16 Budget, we did so knowing that the three schools would look very different due to the opening of the new Park Avenue Elementary School and the grade reconfiguration. The task was not as simple as shifting current resources because the needs across grade spans were inherently different and the logistics of transportation and continuity of services posed specific challenges. This prompted the district leadership team to enter into zero-based budgeting in order to prepare a budget that would identify the needs of each school in the future grade configuration.

“Zero based budgeting (ZBB) is a method of budgeting in which all expenses must be justified for each new year. Zero-based budgeting starts from a "zero base" and every function within an organization is analyzed for its needs and costs. Budgets are then built around what is needed for the upcoming year, regardless of whether the budget is higher or lower than the previous one. ZBB allows top-level strategic goals to be implemented into the budgeting process by tying them to specific functional areas of the organization, where costs can be first grouped, then measured against previous results and current expectations” (Investopedia, 2015).

After months of analysis, research, and discussion, the budget presented here represents the collective work of our district administration and instructional staff through facilitated discussion regarding the grade reconfiguration and the budget implications through the zero based budgeting process. The grade reconfiguration challenges became budget priorities, and in turn the budget priorities defined the financial investments needed to continue the work of the district to meet our strategic objectives for improvement.

The new Park Avenue Elementary School representing grades Pre K to 4, focused on developing a strong educational foundation in literacy and mathematics coupled with a dynamic school environment that is academically engaging to prepare our youngest students to be learners and thinkers. Webster Middle School with students in grades 5 to 8, has prioritized the development of a middle school philosophy with the transition to high school readiness impacting scheduling, athletic opportunities, and rigorous academic expectations through curriculum development. Bartlett High School, as a grade 9 to 12 high school, focused on creating a culture of college and career readiness by supporting the ninth grade transition to high school and expanded Advanced Placement opportunities. All three schools identified and prioritized two areas of challenge: a continuum of Special Education services and Technology for instruction.

The identification and provision of services for students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) can be costly to the local education budget and it is always in the students best interests to provide the least restrictive educational environment. The investment to provide in district services meets both of these criteria. Out-of-district tuition costs continue to grow while meeting federal and state requirements for compliance can require strategic investment by the community, it is still a much lower cost option to provide in-district programs for meeting the needs of all of our students. In addition, the supervision and monitoring

of students in out-of-district placements should not be a final decision, but instead a fluid and adaptive process with the ultimate goal of reintegration of the student into the home district. By insuring that our in-district programs are in compliance and provide a cohesive transition between grade spans, and that students can reintegrate whenever feasible, we can lower our district costs and provide the best options for students' educational planning.

The new Park Avenue Elementary School will open with a state of the art technology infrastructure and hardware. Each classroom will have access to tablets and laptops that will provide 1 to 1 student access to the virtual world to support and enhance student learning. In order to support the integration of these resources into each classroom, personnel with the technical expertise to support teacher and student use of technology and maintain and protect the inventory are needed. In addition, the infrastructure for wireless access and hardware needs at Webster Middle School and Bartlett High School must be addressed.

The investment into technology for education meets several challenges that the students of Webster Public Schools face. First, while technology access is more pervasive in our society, the skill set for learning with technology requires high levels of comprehension, critical thinking, and decision making in order to discern valid and reliable sources of information. This skill set is a necessary precursor to success in postsecondary education and the modern workplace. Second, public schools have always had a responsibility to teach students about civic engagement in the community, state, and country, but now the safe and appropriate use of information and social media requires a new understanding of civic responsibility in the digital world in order to navigate and understand the world at large. Finally, assessment of student learning and the analysis of student data to inform instruction has become a regular part of a student's education along with rigorous curriculum and relevant, high quality instruction. The assessment of student learning is going to move to a technology based model statewide in the next few years and it will put the students of Webster Public Schools at a distinct disadvantage to not have regular opportunities to learn using technology when they will be assessed using technology.

While Webster Public Schools takes great pride in the work accomplished to date, there remains much more to do. It is with great humility that we accept the responsibility entrusted to us through the Town of Webster, and we are very thankful for the community's support as we look to the future.

Sincerely,

Barbara Malkas, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Webster Public Schools

Budget Guidelines

The Town of Webster has a long and proud history of a quality educational system. As the Town demographics has changed over the last 30 years, so has our school system. As such the School Administration has continuously identified system needs to ensure continued success. The following guidelines are meant to assist the School Administration in preparing the school budget. These guidelines reflect the Town's desire to improve the overall strength of our school system while recognizing continuing local and general economic challenges.

Achieving Excellence in Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Execution of the Long Range Plan requires that we provide adequate resources and funding for major curriculum, instruction and assessment programs. Preserving the quality of our programs and services provide the opportunity for our students to reach high standards and expectations in every classroom. In Fiscal Year 2015 the success of these programs will be achieved through continued Technology Enhancements and data-driven decision making as measured through local benchmark assessments, *District Determined Measures* (DDM) and Webster's *Progress and Performance Index* (PPI) score. With the continued technology advancements faculty will be able to transfer all current curricula to an online system, create online benchmark exams at the new Park Avenue School and continue to progress monitor academic performance in all grades in the Webster Public Schools.

Maintain a Safe and Secure Environment and Infrastructure

The budget should continue to support safe, secure and educationally sound school environments, while seeking energy conservation, sustainability and appropriate efficiencies to reduce costs. We should continue to collaborate with the Town to achieve economies of scale in the maintenance and operation of our facilities. We should continue routine maintenance of our facilities, regular building reviews and the multi-year capital project plan. Technology planning should assess the needs of all networking and other infrastructure as it relates to system security and optimization.

Maintain the Rate of Budget Growth at a Responsible Level

The School Administration must continue its sensitivity to the Town's financial constraints, including the tax burden of budgetary decisions and the uncertainty of state and federal funds. Staffing levels should be regularly assessed with attention focused on a minimum class size policy. Primary consideration should be given to offsetting budget reductions in support of program enhancements.

Factors Affecting FY16 Educational Costs

Contractual increases in employee step and lane compensation, special education mandates, and the anticipated level of state aid funding annually present a challenge for preparing the school budget. FY2016 presents an even bigger challenge with the opening the new Park Ave Elementary School and the entire grade reconfiguration across all three schools. The school department has worked diligently to develop a budget that preserves the quality of our core services and incorporates necessary program changes and improvements.

Along with curriculum & instruction improvements and mandates in special education, technology upgrades require additional support. Increasing student and staff skills requires infrastructure upgrades for wireless accessibility.

The School Department proposes a total budget of \$19,581,293 that is \$2,077,143 or a 11.87% increase over the FY15 budget. This budget allows us to maintain current programs while addressing the changing needs of our three “new” schools.

The factors that have a direct impact on the quality of education in Webster and on the FY16 Proposed Budget are summarized in the following sections.

Staffing and Enrollment

Our staff is our most important asset and we believe the compensation packages negotiated with each of our bargaining units serve to attract and retain highly qualified professional staff in a very competitive market. However, since staff wages and salaries account for more than 80% of the school budget these compensation packages have a significant impact on our overall budget.

It is predicted that overall enrollment will increase slightly at the Elementary, Middle and High School levels. With our new elementary school on line and the subsequent grade reconfiguration we anticipate a shift of students from private and public (school choice) schools resulting in an overall gain in each school. We carefully monitor class sizes throughout the system, and the FY16 budget includes personnel adjustments in response to individual grade fluctuations. This close management of our staffing patterns enables us to educate Webster students as effectively and efficiently as possible and to project our personnel costs.

Technology

The Park Ave Elementary School opens in August 2015 as a new PK - 4 school house. The new building creates a wonderful opportunity for staff and students to take advantage of all the latest technologies, including a one to one device initiative for each of our 750 students. This can only be accomplished through a state of the art wireless infrastructure that has been installed throughout the school.

It is the goal of the Webster Public Schools to match the technology now available at Park Ave with our other two schools. A three year plan has been developed that includes providing devices for a one to one initiative in grades 5 - 10 and allowing a "bring your own device" for grades 11 -12. This can only be accomplished by first, upgrading our infrastructure to accommodate the number of wireless devices. Second, a three year leasing plan has been developed to put devices in the hands of our Grade 5-10 students. Third, staffing levels in technology will need to be increased to meet the demands of instruction and support.

Special Education

School districts are required by federal and state laws to provide a range of special education services beginning at age 3 and ending at age 22. Special Education poses many challenges for school districts; both fiscally and programmatically, especially as the severity of needs are increasing. The increased intensity experienced in our schools appears excessive compared to other school districts in our region. Services are provided within the classroom whenever possible, or when necessary in specialized out-of-district placements for students whose disabilities preclude them from being able to make adequate progress. In FY15 a new 18 - 22 Classroom was introduced with 6 students. The classroom offers an in-house program as opposed to sending students to out-of-district facilities, allowing our students to stay in district while avoiding placement and transportation costs.

Total special education out of district tuition spending in FY16, including a net reduction in available State reimbursements ("circuit breaker") of \$200,000, is projected to be \$7,500 or 0.5% over the FY15 budget. This can only be accomplished with the introduction of a new Life Skills Class which will allow 6 students to receive education services in district. Although this will require the hiring of new staff and some fixed start up costs, the savings of out of district tuition and transportation costs is substantial.

Despite the uncertainty of state aid, the quantity and severity of individual cases, and the lack of control over private placement tuition costs, cost analyses and comparison demonstrate that Webster provides effective and efficient special education services for its special needs population.

Revenue Offsets

The Webster Public Schools continues to seek offsets to increasing operating costs in the school budget by identifying new revenue sources. Federal and State grants contribute over \$1.9 million but are not guaranteed and fluctuate annually. We have been able to generate fee income through the use of school facilities by outside groups. We also encourage school choice students to enroll in our district while working to retain those Webster families who may chose to enroll their students elsewhere.

Our schools also benefit from the efforts of groups like the Webster Educational Foundation, Parent-Teacher Organizations, Music and Athletic Booster Clubs and private donations.

FY14 Federal & State Grant Revenues

Academic Support (Directors, Clerical, etc.)	\$343,737
Department Heads/Team Leaders	\$ 26,063
Teachers - Regular Education	\$371,439
Teachers - Special Ed	\$139,326
Instructional Assistants (Regular & Sped)	\$635,227
Professional Development	\$196,476
Textbooks/Supplies/Testing	\$ 52,228
Technology	\$ 25,424
Guidance/Adjustment Counselors	\$ 85,978
Psychological Services	\$ 13,583
Other (Transportation, MTRA, Ins.)	\$ 46,550
Total FY14 Grant Revenues	\$1,937.258

Program Budget Overview

School / Department	Approved FY15 Budget	Recommended FY16 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Park Ave Elementary	\$3,905,533	\$5,268,943	\$1,363,410	35%
Webster Middle School	\$3,196,087	\$4,579,648	\$1,383,561	43%
Bartlett High School	\$6,398,004	\$5,248,440	-\$1,149,564	-18%
Special Education	\$2,704,166	\$3,000,401	\$ 296,235	11%
District Administration	\$1,300,359	\$1,476,063	\$ 175,704	13.5%
Total Proposed Budget	\$17,504,150	\$19,573,496	\$2,069,346	11.8%
Salaries	\$1,848,152	\$2,217,406	\$1,717,822	12.5%

Operating Budget Summary

Notes		FY15 Approved Budget	FY16 Proposed Budget	\$ Change	% Change
1	Minimum Foundation Budget	\$20,776,506	\$21,711,449	\$ 934,943	4.50%
2	Local Contribution	\$ 6,988,926	\$ 8,585,087	\$ 1,596,161	22.80%
3	Chapter 70 State Aid	\$10,515,224	\$10,988,384	\$ 473,184	4.50%
4	Schedule 19 Town Expenses	\$ 4,604,137	\$ 4,759,166	\$ 155,029	3.4%
5	Town Meeting Budget	\$17,504,150	\$19,573,496	\$ 2,069,346	11.87%

Notes:

1. A school districts Foundation Budget is a precise calculation of how much funding is needed to provide an adequate education.
2. The Minimum Local Contribution is determined through a formula that takes into account a communities property value and income levels. Town Meeting can vote to increase the amount of local contribution over and above the minimum. In Massachusetts the FY15 average of local contribution above minimum is 19.2%.
3. Chapter 70 state funding is determined by taking the minimum foundation budget minus the local contribution.
4. Schedule 19 Town expenses are a calculation of specific town services that are allocated for the school district and therefore reimbursed through Schedule 19.
5. Town Meeting Budget is the amount presented/approved by town meeting voters for education.

Chapter 70 Trends

Statewide general funding for education has hovered between 13 and 19 percent above foundation the past 10 years with spending budgeted at 19 percent above foundation in FY15. One third of all districts spend at foundation levels, while twenty one percent of all districts spend at a rate of 21% and higher above foundation.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Chapter 70 Trends

316 WEBSTER													Town Percent Over/ Under	State Percent Over/ Under
Foundation Enrollment	Pct Chg	Foundation Budget	Pct Chg	Required Local Con- tribution	Chapter 70 Aid	Pct Chg	Required Net School Spending (NSS)	Pct Chg	Actual Net School Spending	Pct Chg	Dollars Over/Under Requirement			
FY06	1,926	3.8	\$ 15,041,385	6.5	\$ 7,642,041	\$ 7,399,344	6.9	\$ 15,041,385	6.5	\$ 16,517,233	8.2	\$ 1,475,848	9.8	13.0
FY07	1,930	0.2	\$ 16,432,267	9.2	\$ 8,289,809	\$ 8,162,458	10.3	\$ 16,432,267	9.2	\$ 17,138,371	3.8	\$ 706,104	4.3	13.3
FY08	1,994	3.3	\$ 17,755,145	8.1	\$ 8,781,928	\$ 8,973,217	9.9	\$ 17,755,145	8.1	\$ 18,612,794	8.6	\$ 857,649	4.8	14.3
FY09	1,947	-2.4	\$ 18,280,916	3.0	\$ 9,216,413	\$ 8,231,908	-8.3	\$ 17,448,321	-1.7	\$ 18,381,472	-1.2	\$ 933,151	5.3	16.2
FY10	1,990	2.2	\$ 19,369,599	6.0	\$ 9,323,234	\$ 9,015,364	9.5	\$ 18,338,598	5.1	\$ 18,411,398	0.2	\$ 72,800	0.4	13.9
FY11	1,988	-0.1	\$ 19,122,110	-1.3	\$ 9,432,847	\$ 9,503,351	5.4	\$ 18,938,198	3.3	\$ 19,934,087	8.3	\$ 997,889	5.3	15.4
FY12	1,957	-1.6	\$ 19,221,499	0.5	\$ 9,741,513	\$ 9,554,369	0.5	\$ 19,295,882	1.9	\$ 20,019,606	0.4	\$ 723,724	3.8	15.4
FY13	1,929	-1.4	\$ 19,780,304	2.9	\$ 9,875,242	\$ 9,905,062	3.7	\$ 19,780,304	2.5	\$ 20,990,241	4.8	\$ 1,209,937	6.1	15.3
FY14	1,974	2.3	\$ 20,497,533	3.6	\$ 10,176,657	\$ 10,320,876	4.2	\$ 20,497,533	3.6	\$ 21,536,089	2.6	\$ 1,038,536	5.1	16.1
FY15	1,980	0.3	\$ 20,776,506	1.4	\$ 10,261,282	\$ 10,515,224	1.9	\$ 20,776,506	1.4	\$ 22,311,906 *	3.6	\$ 1,535,400	7.5	19.2

In Webster, education funding has averaged between 0.4 and 9.8 percent above foundation the last 10 years with spending budgeted at 7.5% above foundation for FY15. While these amounts show a tremendous effort to support education in our community, it is difficult to maintain a competitive edge with other districts in the state that are at 19% and above minimum foundation levels.

Professional Staffing

	FY15	FY16			FY15	FY16
Park Ave Elementary				Bartlett High		
Teachers - Regular Ed	24.5	40.0		Teachers - Regular Ed	50.2	30.8
Teachers - Special Ed	8.8	12.8		Teachers - Special Ed	13.0	10.5
Teachers - ESL	1.0	1.5		Teachers - ESL	1.0	1.0
Instructional Aides - Reg Ed	13.0	20.0		Instructional Aides - Reg Ed	1.0	1.0
Instructional Aides - Spec Ed	12.0	11.0		Instructional Aides - Spec Ed	13.0	14.0
Technology Services	0.0	1.0		Technology Services	0.0	1.0
Information Literacy Specialist	0.0	1.0		Information Literacy Specialist	1.0	1.0
Adjustment Counselors	1.0	2.0		Guidance/Adjust. Counselors	4.0	4.0
Nurses/Medical Counselor	2.0	2.6		Nurses	1.0	1.2
Administrators	1.0	2.0		Administrators	4.0	3.0
Administrative Assistants	1.0	2.0		Administrative Assistants	3.0	3.0
Maintenance	2.5	3.5		Maintenance	<u>4.0</u>	<u>5.0</u>
Instructional Coach	<u>0.5</u>	<u>1.0</u>				
PAE Totals	67.3	100.4		BHS Totals	95.2	75.5
Webster Middle				District Wide		
Teachers - Regular Ed	30.0	37.4		Administrators	7.0	7.0
Teachers - Special Ed	11.0	10.5		Administrative Assistants	8.0	8.0
Teachers - ESL	1.0	1.0		ABA - Sped	23.0	23.0
Instructional Aides - Reg Ed	4.0	5.0		Technology Services	1.0	2.0
Instructional Aides - Spec Ed	11.0	10.0		Sped Related Services	8.5	9.4
Technology Services	0.0	1.0		Maintenance	<u>0.75</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Library Assistant	1.0	0.0				
Information Literacy Specialist	0.0	1.0		District Wide Totals	48.25	50.4
Adjustment Counselors	2.0	3.0				
Nurses	1.0	1.2				
Administrators	2.0	2.0		Grand Total	278.8	303.9
Administrative Assistants	1.0	2.0				
Maintenance	3.5	3.5				
Instructional Coach	<u>0.5</u>	<u>0.0</u>				
WMS Totals	68.0	77.6				

FY2016 Budget - New Positions

FY16 - New Positions					
FTE	Assignment	LEA Salary	FTE	Assignment	LEA Salary
Park Ave			Webster Middle		
1.0	Administrative Assistant - School year	\$22,359	1.0	Administrative Assistant - School Year	\$22,359
1.0	Grade 2 Teacher	\$59,483	1.0	Art Teacher	\$59,483
1.0	Literacy Coach	\$59,483	1.0	Adjustment Counselor	\$62,698
0.5	Computer Teacher	\$29,742	1.0	Information Literacy Specialist	\$59,483
1.0	STEM Teacher	\$59,483	1.0	Instructional Aide - Star	\$21,209
0.5	ESL Teacher	\$29,742	1.0	Instructional Aide - Gr 7 Inclusion	\$21,209
1.0	Information Literacy Specialist	\$59,483	1.0	Instructional Aide - Gr 8 Inclusion	\$21,209
0.4	Nurses Assistant	\$15,460	1.0	Instructional Aide - Gr 7&8 Inclusion	\$21,209
1.0	Adjustment Counselor	\$62,698	<u>1.0</u>	IT Support	<u>\$27,800</u>
1.0	Instructional Aide - Star	\$20,709	9.0		\$316,659
1.0	IT Support	\$27,300			
<u>1.0</u>	Custodian	<u>\$46,848</u>			
10.4		\$492,789			
			Special Education		
			0.3	Out Of District Team Chair (OOD)	\$17,845
			0.5	Psychologist (5-10)	\$38,987
			<u>0.5</u>	Psychologist (9-12))	<u>\$29,742</u>
			1.3		\$86,573
			District		
			1.0	IT - Technology Systems Support	\$50,000
			<u>0.25</u>	Custodian	<u>\$11,712</u>
			1.25		\$61,712
Totals					
FTE		LEA			
26.95		\$1,134,282			

In Summary

The FY16 Budget reflects our commitment to meet our strategic plan goals that ensure the quality of education in Webster. This budget provides the highest quality education to our students, meets the federal and state mandates for targeted student support and continues our goal to implement the latest technologies into our curriculum. We are grateful to the for the support of our taxpayers in this shared goal.