

FY 17 Budget Priorities

Budget Priorities:

1. **Class size reduction and restoration of academic programs.**
2. **Technology in the classroom for WMS and BHS for instruction, civic engagement in the digital world, and college and career readiness.**
3. **Safe and supportive learning environments for all students in all schools.**

Park Avenue Elementary School		
High Priority	Grade 1 Teacher (1.0 FTE)¹ Grade 2 Teacher (1.0 FTE)¹	Restoration of two teaching positions will reduce class sizes in the earliest grades. With the addition one classroom teacher, Grade 1 will have have an average class size of 22.5, instead of a projected class size of 26.3. Grade 2, the largest class at the school with a total enrollment of 174 students, would have an average class size of 24.5 with the addition of one classroom teacher, instead of 29 students.
	Family Engagement and At Risk Services Coordinator (1.0 FTE)³	While it was acceptable in the past to say that younger students have more manageable behaviors, it is no longer an appropriate assumption with the increasing intensity of needs of younger students and increasing multi-agency involvement with families. This position will provide the necessary case management of our highest need students, intervening with students and families proactively, and insuring more immediate response and ongoing communication with parents and guardians.
Other Priorities	1.0 FTE Grade 4 Teacher 1.0 FTE K-SPED Teacher 1.0 FTE Information Literacy Specialist 0.5 FTE Nurses Assistant 1.0 FTE K-Para Student Support Team Stipend	N/A

	0.5 FTE SPED Team Leader 0.5 FTE Custodian 0.05 Nurses Assistant	
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Bartlett High School		
High Priority	Teachers (1.8 FTE) ¹ 0.2 World Language 0.2 Art 0.2 English 0.2 Math 0.6 Science 0.4 Social Studies	Due to the increased graduation requirements by School Committee policy more students will need to take core classes. The purpose of the policy is to align the the Massachusetts High School Program of Studies known as the MassCore. The MassCore is intended to help the state's high school graduates arrive at college or the workplace well prepared and reduce the number of students taking remedial courses in college. This will require adding sections to English language arts, mathematics, science, foreign language, art, and music. Without the restoration of these sections, either class sizes will need to increase or enrichment opportunities in Advanced Placement courses or fine and performing arts may need to be eliminated.
Other Priorities	0.5 FTE SPED Team Leader 0.6 FTE Music 0.05 Nurses Assistant	N/A

Special Education

**High
Priority**

**Out-of-District/Early
Childhood Team Chair (1.0
FTE) ¹**

The monitoring of students placed in Special Education schools, as well as those placed in alternative placements for disciplinary reasons, is essential to successfully bringing students back to the district or creating in-district programs. At this time, given the current caseload, case management for these students is minimal and not sufficient to cover the regulatory monitoring of students placed out of the district and to plan for returning students to the district. Increasing this position from a .2 (currently not filled) to a 1.0 will allow providing the basic necessity of holding a team meetings, maintaining routine contact with program staff, providing case management for the complex monitoring and coordination of services for our most intensive needs students, and to begin to plan for internal programs for students. Tuitions and transportation for students in out of district programs represents the largest expenditure in Special Education. An out of district coordinator would allow us to better manage these cases, improve student outcomes and potentially have a significant cost savings.

Early childhood referrals account for 75-80% of our referral activity in Special Education at the Elementary level. The process for early childhood services and procedures is highly regulated. The preschool program is complex. In addition to the referral process, the integrated program model requires us to identify typical peers to place within the program. These students must go through an application process, undergo a screening and ultimately become enrolled in the school where they will attend. Last year, the district underwent a Program Evaluation of our Early Childhood program through Walker Partnerships. The primary recommendation was to have a Preschool Coordinator to oversee the entire process, including the special education referral and implementation process. The recommendation was for at least a .5 FTE Preschool Coordinator.

	<p>By blending the needs for out of district and early childhood management, we will be able to improve the overall outcomes and management of these two time intensive and high stakes processes.</p>
<p>Psychologist (1.0 FTE)¹</p>	<p>The National Association of School Psychologists recommends a 1.0 equivalent of school psychology services for every 800 students. At this time, the district has the equivalent of a 1.2 FTE for school psychology, which is well below the recommended level. With the ever growing demands for special education testing, as well as the need for other clinical supports offered by the school psychologist, the role of our personnel now does not cover the bare necessities for Special Education testing. Over the past three years, the district has covered the needs for our caseloads by increasing the time provided by our 0.2 FTE school psychologist at the upper grades has worked twice the number of hours equivalent to a .5 position. The district has used an outside resource to cover the overflow of evaluations and out of district students. The cost for every student tested by an outside resource can range from \$500.00 to \$800.00 per student.</p>
<p>Speech Pathology Assistant (0.5 FTE)¹</p>	<p>The current Speech and Language caseload at the elementary level has reached a significant level due to the intensity of needs as well as referrals made for expressive and receptive communication deficits. Despite implementation and adherence to specific entry and exit criteria, the numbers of students presenting with communication disabilities is on the rise. 3.8 FTE Speech Pathologists have completed more than 125 evaluations year to date. Evaluations and treating students has been supplemented by a 1.25 days per week contracted provider. He district recently contracted for an additional day per week to cover service delivery.</p>
<p>Occupational Therapy (0.1 FTE)¹</p>	<p>Based on the current caseload trend, evaluation demands and supervision requirements, the district is requesting an increase of 0.1 FTE to a full time compliment for OT/R services. The biggest area of concern in this specialty has been the inability to maintain timeline requirements for completion of evaluations.</p>

		Year to date, the OT/R has completed more than 50 evaluations while being responsible for staff supervision for the Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA) and maintaining a treatment caseload for students across three buildings.
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District		
High Priority	Technology ²	Use of technology for communication and information is an integral component of college and career preparation. In order for students to understand how to navigate the modern economy requires that they learn with technology. This investment is a cost effective approach to insuring that the technology is readily available, up to date, and in good repair through a lease agreement or purchase of 1200 devices for grades 5 - 12.
	Technology Systems (1.0 FTE) ²	With an increase in demand for the effective use of technology in the district, there would be a need for additional staffing to assist in the deployment and management of technology for students and staff as a means of safeguarding the town investment.
	Custodian (0.25 FTE) ³	This position would provide an additional ten hours of custodial services for the buildings and grounds of the district schools. With the opening of Park Avenue Elementary School there is a significant need for additional landscaping services to protect the investment by the town.
Other Priorities	0.5 FTE Administrative Assistant	N/A

1-3 Superscripts refer to the budget priority (class size and caseload reduction, technology, safe and supportive learning environments).

FY 17 Improvement Budget	\$19, 859,495. 00	
Increase	\$ 1, 588,000. 00	8.7%
<u>Town Appropriation</u>	<u>\$ 850, 000. 00</u>	
Difference	\$ 738, 000.00	

What does a Family Engagement and At-Risk Student Support Services Coordinator do?

The Family Engagement and At-Risk Student Support Services Coordinator serves as the liaison between schools and elementary parents; educates teachers and staff on how to communicate and work effectively with parents as equal partners; advises and trains parents on how to address issues with the leadership staff in school meetings; serves as a school-based intermediary contact for concerns and comments made by parents and community members; provides referrals to community-based services for families; expands opportunities for continued learning, voluntary community service and civic participation; develops community collaborations; promotes sharing of information with parents as decision-makers; helps parents understand the educational system so they can become better advocates for their children’s education; and maintains a parent resource center.

What are School Adjustment Counselors?

Middle School counselors must address the social/emotional issues that arise among this age group, such as peer pressure, bullying, depression and academic challenges. Also, the Middle School counselor usually spends time on vocational exploration and assessment with seventh and eighth grade students as they prepare for high school. The role of the School Adjustment Counselor is

to provide social and emotional support to students as they develop. Students meet individually or in small groups with the School Adjustment Counselor, though services may include meetings or consultations with parents, teachers, administrators, or community health providers to address concerns that may potentially affect a student's success in school.

What does a School Psychologist do?

School psychologists are uniquely qualified members of school teams that support students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to teach. They apply expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior, to help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. School psychologists partner with families, teachers, school administrators, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community.

What is an "FTE"?

An FTE stands for "full time equivalent". A 1.0 FTE represents a single full time position.