

WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



PROPOSED FY'19 OPERATING BUDGET EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DEVELOPED BY

EMILY PARKS, *SUPERINTENDENT*

ALLISON BORCHERS, *ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT*

HEATH PETRACCA, *DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE*

ABIGAIL HANSCOM, *DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES*

STEVE OUELLETTE, *DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY, LEARNING, AND INNOVATION*

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



WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Excellence, Shaping the Future

January 5, 2018

Dear Westwood School Committee and Westwood Residents,

I am pleased to present to you an Executive Summary of the *FY'19 Superintendent's Recommended Budget*. As a district, we strive to provide a high level of transparency during the budget process so that our community can be confident that our budget reflects the goals and priorities of the district and that our allocation of resources continues to strategically and responsibly move forward the important work of our schools. This document provides an overview of our budget, including information about the factors that drive the budget, insight into how we are allocating our resources and why we have made those choices, and what we believe are our areas of need. In addition to this summary, all of our detailed budget documents and spreadsheets are available to the public on the district website.

The budget request for FY'19 totals \$44,688,335 which represents a modest 3.38% increase over FY'18. I am confident that this increase will allow us to continue to provide the high level of service that the community expects of its schools while addressing shifting enrollment across the district and continuing to move forward key teaching and learning initiatives, such as in the area of science. When developing this budget, I was also mindful to keep any increase to the School Department operating budget at a reasonable and sustainable level as we prepare to engage residents in addressing our school building needs in the near future.

Major highlights of my FY'19 budget request include:

- A 3.38% increase over FY'18
- No cuts to programs or services
- Contractual salary increases of \$1,100,045
- The addition of 8.75 FTE new personnel district-wide. This total includes 5.6 FTE Special Education staff that are required due to students' legally-mandated Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and are partially offset by decreases in special education tuition and transportation
- Year 1 of a 2-year plan to eliminate the full-day kindergarten tuition fee

The public schools in Massachusetts lead the nation. Students in Massachusetts rank first in the U.S. in both reading and math on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), first in the world in reading on the PISA international assessment, and #1 in Advanced Placement success in the country. Westwood can be particularly proud, therefore, of our designation last year by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) as one of only six "level 1" PreK-12 districts in the state and as one of only seven high schools that received a commendation this fall from DESE for students' high achievement and progress on MCAS. As Superintendent, I am incredibly proud of the Westwood Public Schools and these academic outcomes. I am equally proud that we are a system that values supporting all students in all of their dimensions -- as students, as athletes, as artists -- and that continues to nurture students' growth as individuals and as community members.

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 or by phone at 781-326-7500 x1341. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Emily J. Parks
Superintendent of Schools

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What is the FY'19 School Department budget request?	3
What are the major budget categories?	3
What enrollment changes are impacting the budget?	4
What are the changes to the budget – FY'18 to FY'19?	5
What are the budget drivers in Special Education?	7
What are the budget priorities at Westwood High School?	9
What are the budget priorities at Thurston Middle School?	10
What are the budget priorities at the PK/Elementary level?	11
Are there other increases to the salary budget?	12
What are the budget drivers in non-salary accounts?	12
Does this budget cut any programs or services?	14
What's missing from the budget (are there unfunded needs)?	14
Is this the final FY'19 budget?	15



Look for this symbol which marks important definitions.



Look for this symbol which marks any mention of personnel additions or changes. Note also that the term "FTE" is often used as an abbreviation for Full-Time Equivalent.



Look for this symbol which marks items for your information (FYI).

WHAT IS THE FY'19 SCHOOL DEPARTMENT BUDGET REQUEST?

As the table below illustrates, my recommended budget for FY'19 totals \$44,688,335, which represents a 3.38% increase over FY'18.

Final FY'18 Budget	\$43,226,362
Proposed FY'19 Budget	\$44,688,335
Increase (\$)	\$1,461,972
Increase (%)	3.38%

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR BUDGET CATEGORIES?

The following table breaks down the total budget into five major categories. As you can see, **salaries**, by far, are the greatest budget driver. Salaries account for 86.5% of the overall budget, which is consistent with past years.

Major Budget Category	FY'18 Budget	Proposed FY'19 Budget	Incremental Change (\$)	Incremental Change (%)
Total Salaries	37,150,299	38,630,529	1,480,230	3.98%%
Special Education (non-salary)	1,089,216	1,073,279	(15,937)	-1.46%
Utilities	1,432,650	1,231,000	(201,650)	-14.08%
Operations and Maintenance (non-salary)	918,376	964,010	45,634	4.97%
All other non-salary	2,635,822	2,789,517	153,695	5.83%
TOTAL	43,226,362	44,688,335	1,461,972	3.38%

WHAT ENROLLMENT CHANGES ARE IMPACTING THE BUDGET?

The overall enrollment of the district has fluctuated slightly over the last ten years (Fig. 1a). Enrollment in the 2009-2010 school year was 3,044 students. The current enrollment is 3,073 students. However, in recent years, the size of our incoming kindergarten classes has been declining. While next year's senior class will be 263 students, the incoming kindergarten is currently projected to be 185 students. Effectively, there has been an enrollment "bubble" making its way through the district with the largest class currently in grade 6. (Figure 1b) The enrollment at Thurston Middle School peaked at close to 800 in 2014-2015 and will begin to decline next year. The enrollment at Westwood High School will continue to increase until a peak in 2020-2021.

The elementary enrollment has declined 15% over a 10 year period from a peak of 1501 students in 2009-2010 to 1281 students in the current school year, a difference of 220 students. To provide a point of reference, 220 students is the current enrollment of the Hanlon School and is more students than are currently enrolled at Deerfield. During this 10-year time period, the number of elementary classrooms, and corresponding teaching positions, has decreased as well. However, given the structure of our district, with five small elementary schools, while the number of elementary classrooms has decreased, it has not decreased proportionally (a 15% reduction in the number of elementary students versus an 8% reduction in the number of elementary classrooms over the same time period). In addition, the decrease in elementary enrollment has not happened evenly across the five elementary schools or across grades, sometimes necessitating a reallocation of positions from one school to another, as is the case in FY'19.

During the last 10 years, as the elementary enrollment has declined, the enrollment at the middle school and high school has increased, necessitating an increase in staff at the secondary level. Over 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. Since the middle school has plateaued, no changes in staffing will be required next year. At the high school, as enrollment continues to increase, more staff will be needed to mitigate increased class sizes. However, in the FY'19 budget, the additional general education teaching positions at the high school are offset by corresponding reductions in staffing at the elementary level.

Fig. 1a District Enrollment

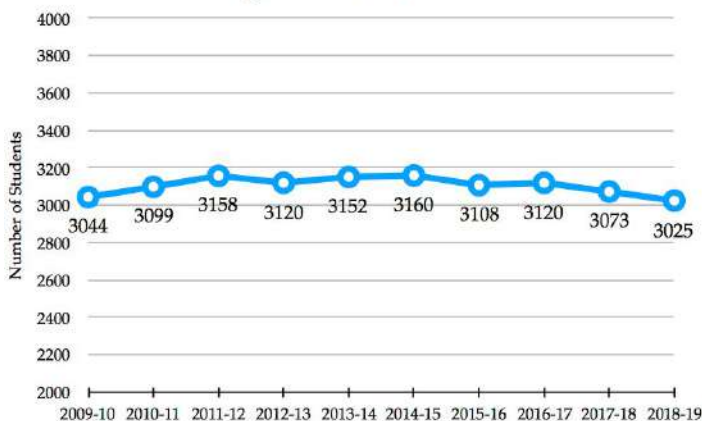
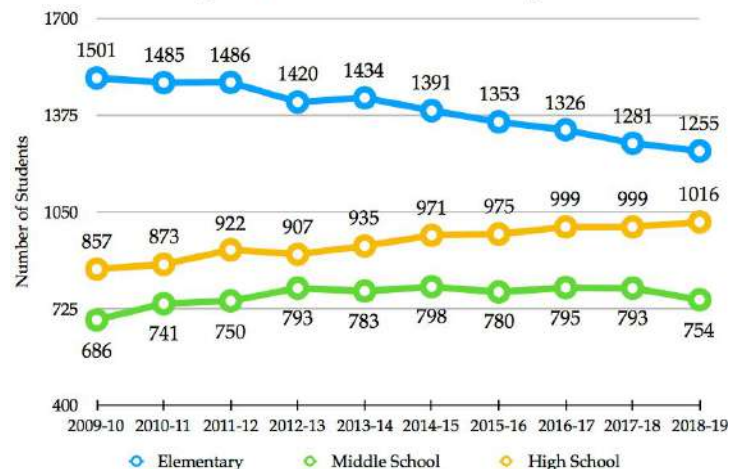


Fig. 1b District Enrollment by Level



WHAT ARE THE CHANGES TO THE BUDGET FY'18 TO FY'19?

The following chart lists all of the changes included in my budget proposal. It is intended to show the progression from the Final FY'18 Budget to the FY'19 Recommended Budget. In short, it is "how the budget is built."

Budget Request	FTE if personnel	Budget Impact																					
Final FY'18 Budget		43,226,362																					
Increase salaries for existing personnel (contractual)		\$1,100,045																					
Reallocate staff across district due to shifting enrollment, as follows:		\$0																					
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Elementary (Deerfield): Reduce 2 teachers</td><td>(2.0 FTE)</td><td>(\$120,000)</td></tr> <tr> <td>High School: Add science teacher</td><td>1.0 FTE</td><td>\$60,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>High School: Add teacher (unallocated)</td><td>1.0 FTE</td><td>\$60,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Elementary (Martha Jones): Reduce 1 teacher</td><td>(1.0 FTE)</td><td>(\$60,000)</td></tr> <tr> <td>Elementary (Downey): Add kindergarten teacher</td><td>1.0 FTE</td><td>\$60,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Elementary (Hanlon): Reduce class size aide</td><td>(1.0 FTE)</td><td>(\$24,000)</td></tr> <tr> <td>Elementary (Downey): Add kindergarten assistant</td><td>1.0 FTE</td><td>\$24,000</td></tr> </table>	Elementary (Deerfield): Reduce 2 teachers	(2.0 FTE)	(\$120,000)	High School: Add science teacher	1.0 FTE	\$60,000	High School: Add teacher (unallocated)	1.0 FTE	\$60,000	Elementary (Martha Jones): Reduce 1 teacher	(1.0 FTE)	(\$60,000)	Elementary (Downey): Add kindergarten teacher	1.0 FTE	\$60,000	Elementary (Hanlon): Reduce class size aide	(1.0 FTE)	(\$24,000)	Elementary (Downey): Add kindergarten assistant	1.0 FTE	\$24,000		
Elementary (Deerfield): Reduce 2 teachers	(2.0 FTE)	(\$120,000)																					
High School: Add science teacher	1.0 FTE	\$60,000																					
High School: Add teacher (unallocated)	1.0 FTE	\$60,000																					
Elementary (Martha Jones): Reduce 1 teacher	(1.0 FTE)	(\$60,000)																					
Elementary (Downey): Add kindergarten teacher	1.0 FTE	\$60,000																					
Elementary (Hanlon): Reduce class size aide	(1.0 FTE)	(\$24,000)																					
Elementary (Downey): Add kindergarten assistant	1.0 FTE	\$24,000																					
Central Office: Reduce district professional development coordinator to part-time	(0.4 FTE)	(\$40,700)																					
High School (Student Services): Add Speech and Language Pathologist to meet requirements of students' Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)	0.6 FTE	\$36,000																					
Elementary (Downey): Add paraprofessionals to mitigate grade 1 class size	2.0 FTE	\$56,000																					
Elementary (Hanlon): Increase math specialist to full time	0.1 FTE	\$ 6,000																					
Elementary (District): Add part-time science materials manager	0.45 FTE	\$10,686																					
Elementary (District): Add ABA Tutor to support social/emotional needs across district in general education classrooms	1.0 FTE	\$30,000																					
Elementary (Student Services): Add Special Education Teacher for Westwood Applied Behavioral Analysis Program (WABA) to meet requirements of students' Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)	1.0 FTE	\$60,000																					
Elementary (Student Services): Add ABA Tutors to meet requirements of	3.0 FTE	\$90,000																					

students' IEPs		
Elementary (Student Services): Add Speech and Language Pathologist for WABA to meet requirements of students' IEPs	0.4 FTE	\$24,000
Elementary (Student Services): Add Occupational Therapist for WABA to meet requirements of students' IEPs	0.2 FTE	\$12,000
Elementary (District): Add instructional assistant time to meet service delivery requirements	0.4 FTE	\$11,200
Reduce kindergarten tuition as part of a 2-year elimination plan		\$85,000
Net decrease to miscellaneous non-salary accounts. Drivers include: increase in science curriculum resources, decrease to SPED out-of-district tuitions, decrease to SPED transportation, increase to contracted services, increase to PD funds to offset elimination of state grant, reduction in Circuit Breaker offset		(\$18,258)
FY'19 Superintendent's Recommended Budget	8.75 FTE	44,688,335

WHAT ARE THE BUDGET DRIVERS 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 volatile of all school department budget items.

In the FY'19 budget, however, we estimate that the two 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'19 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.

SPED Tuition	FY'18	FY'19	Difference
Residential Tuition	\$213,218	\$227,005	\$13,787
Day Tuition	\$909,662	\$644,186	(\$265,476)
Collaborative Tuition	\$334,552	\$503,790	\$169,238
Out-of-District SPED Transportation	\$452,179	\$445,791	(\$6,388)
In-District SPED Transportation	\$281,829	\$281,829	\$0
Total	\$2,191,440	\$2,102,601	(\$88,839)

Though tuition and transportation will decrease, a total of 5.6 FTE new personnel are needed in Special Education. The staffing requests were developed based on IEP requirements for service district-wide and input from principals and staff. An additional driver is our ongoing commitment to educate the vast majority of our students in their community. Most of the FY'19 budget requests respond to an increase in the number of students on the autism spectrum and allow us to continue to educate these students in-district rather than in out-of-district placements. The budget requests include:



Add 1.0 FTE Intensive Special Education/BCBA Teacher (Elementary): \$60,000

The elementary Westwood Applied Behavior Analysis (WABA) program serves students in grades K - 5 who require significant curriculum modification and behavior support via the specialized methodology of Applied Behavior Analysis. It is a districtwide program that is housed at the Downey Elementary School. Currently, the program serves nine students in grades K - 4. Next year, another four students are projected to join the program raising the total to 13 which exceeds program capacity and DESE age/grade span requirements. **The addition of a 1.0 teacher and the support personnel listed below**

will allow the WABA program to be split into two classrooms - Lower WABA (Preschool - Grade 2) and Upper WABA (grades 3-5). This will increase our service capacity for students ages 3 and 4, when needed, as well as decrease caseloads to a manageable level of approximately 7 students in each program level and meet DESE age/grade level span requirements for the entire range of students going forward. The cost of adding this program (Teacher, ABA Tutors, SLP and OT staffing) are partially offset by a continued decrease in out-of-district tuition and a related decrease in out-of-district transportation expenses.



Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a methodology that uses principles of how people learn, such as repeated trials and positive reinforcement, to focus on improving specific behaviors, such as social skills, communication, and academics as well as adaptive learning skills, such as fine motor dexterity, hygiene, grooming, and other daily living skills. It is used to help certain students to learn new skills, minimize negative behaviors, and maintain positive behaviors. It also helps develop students' ability to transfer skills and behaviors to new situations.

Add 3.0 ABA Tutors (Elementary): \$90,000

This request includes the addition of 3.0 FTE ABA Tutors at Downey School to accommodate the needs of students rising from the Westwood Integrated Preschool into district programs at Downey.

Add 0.4 FTE Augmentative Communication Speech & Language Therapist (Elementary): \$24,000

The addition of a 0.4 FTE Speech Language position allows for the hiring of a speech therapist with expertise in assistive technology for students who are non-verbal or use speech output devices as they are acquiring language via the ABA methodology. This provider will support students in both Lower and Upper WABA and reduce current contract service speech and language costs while bringing the expertise in this highly technical area in-house.

Add 0.2 FTE Occupational Therapist (Elementary): \$12,000

The addition of 0.2 FTE Occupational Therapist with expertise encompassing Autism, Behavior, and Sensory Integration therapies will meet IEP service delivery requirements at Downey that will exceed the current OT's caseload next year.

Add 0.4 FTE Instructional Assistants (Elementary): \$11,200

The addition of 0.4 FTE Instructional Assistants will allow for service delivery requirements to be met in all schools across the district.

Add 0.6 FTE Speech Language Therapist (Westwood High School): \$36,000

Tracking with enrollment increases at the High School level and a low and stable number of students in out of district programming, the addition of 0.6 SLP FTE is requested to meet IEP service delivery needs for rising grade 8 to 9 students and the existing WHS students with communication disabilities as well as older students within the district whose IEPs afford access to public education until age 22.

WHAT ARE THE BUDGET PRIORITIES AT WESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL?

With enrollment at Westwood High School still on the rise, the budget priorities are focused, once again, on mitigating higher than desirable class sizes. While there are needs in multiple departments, the highest priority is in science where currently 46% of students are enrolled in science classes with 25 or more students. More detail is below:



Add 1.0 FTE High School Science Teacher: \$60,000

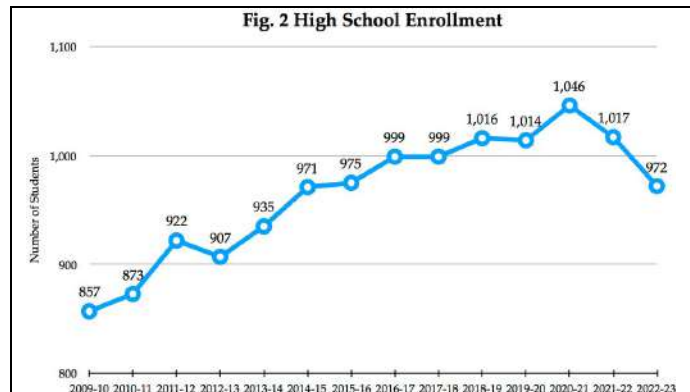
A combination of increased enrollment at the high school and the addition of science electives such as Computer Science, Engineering, Marine Biology, and Environmental Science & Ecology has led to large science classes. This position will lower class sizes.

Add 1.0 FTE High School Teacher - Unallocated: \$60,000

With enrollment at the high school increasing, additional staff is required to mitigate rising class sizes in multiple departments. This position will be allocated after the course selection process in February. By waiting until course selections are completed, the high school administration will be able to determine where additional staff will have the most positive impact on class size, most likely in English and Social Studies, which have extensive elective programs.



Next year, Westwood High School is projected to serve 1016 students, a population that has grown by 18.5% in the last ten years (Fig. 2). The projected student population for the upcoming years show that this marked increase will continue (to a peak of 1,046 in 2020-2021), requiring strategic staffing increases.



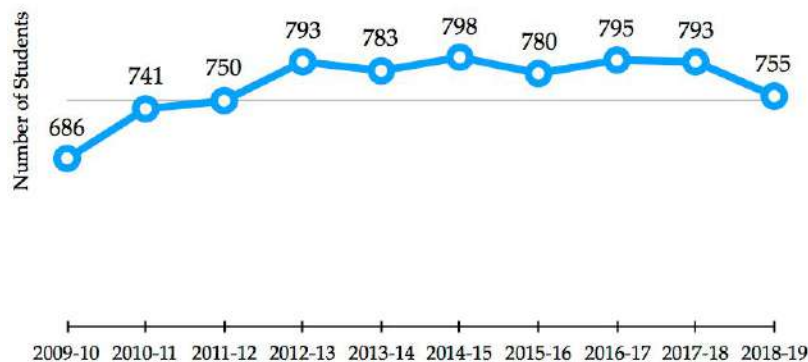
WHAT ARE THE BUDGET PRIORITIES AT THURSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL?

Enrollment at Thurston Middle School increased steadily from 2000 to 2014 and has remained stable for the past several years at nearly 800 students. In FY'19, the enrollment at TMS is projected to begin declining. This decrease in student enrollment will provide much-needed relief in a building that is currently utilizing every available space for teaching and learning.

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. Currently, the building is well-staffed to meet the needs of Westwood's middle school students.

In addition, the previous few budgets have supported strategic and substantive investment in curriculum and instruction. For example, since 2013, Thurston has added new textbooks for Spanish and mathematics and given all students access to Newsela, an online information resource that supports science and social studies classes. The proposed FY19 budget continues this investment by supporting the purchase of additional online and hands on science curriculum materials.

Fig. 3 Middle School Enrollment



WHAT ARE THE BUDGET PRIORITIES AT PK/ELEMENTARY?

As mentioned above, the enrollment at the elementary level has declined by 15% over a ten year period. Whereas this year's grade 5 is 223 students, next year's incoming kindergarten is projected to be only 185 students. In FY'19, however, some schools will experience a greater proportion of this decline in elementary enrollment than others; enrollment at the Downey will actually increase.¹ As such, some shifts in staffing will be necessary to keep class sizes reasonable in all schools. The FY'19 staffing requests reflect the review of research around class size and resulting class size guidelines implemented by the Westwood School Committee this fall. The report to School Committee at its October 11, 2017 meeting regarding class size recommendations is available on the district website.



Decrease of 2.0 FTE Classroom Teachers (Deerfield School): -\$120,000

While Deerfield is “graduating” three grade 5 classrooms, the incoming kindergarten is expected to be a singleton (20 students). Therefore, while there are currently 11 general education classrooms at Deerfield, in FY'19, we expect there to be 9 general education classrooms at Deerfield (a single kindergarten, a single grade 1, and two sections each of grades 2 through 5).

Decrease of 1.0 FTE Classroom Teacher (Martha Jones School): -\$60,000

While Martha Jones is “graduating” three grade 5 classrooms this spring, we expect only two incoming kindergarten classes next year (34 students). The total number of general education classrooms at Martha Jones will decrease from 16 to 15.

Decrease of 1.0 FTE Paraprofessional (Hanlon School): -\$28,000

The current grade 5 at Hanlon School is a singleton class of 26 students with a paraprofessional in the classroom to mitigate the large class size. When this grade 5 class moves to the middle school, this position will no longer be needed.

Add 1.0 FTE Classroom Teacher (Downey School): \$60,000

Though the Downey School currently has two kindergarten classes, we expect the incoming kindergarteners to require three classes (54 students).

Add 1.0 FTE Kindergarten Assistant (Downey School): \$24,000

With an additional kindergarten section next year, we will need to add a kindergarten assistant.

Add 2.0 FTE Paraprofessionals (Downey School): \$56,000

Next year's grade 1 at Downey School is projected to be slightly above class size guidelines for grade 1 at 24 and 23 students. In keeping with the recently-reviewed School Committee class size guidelines, we propose assigning a literacy paraprofessional to each classroom. (There is no classroom available at Downey to create an additional section.)

¹ For example, next year's enrollment at Martha Jones is projected to decrease by about 20 students, while Downey's enrollment is projected to increase by 20 students.

Add 0.1 FTE Math Specialist (Hanlon School): \$6,000

This small increase will bring the math specialist at Hanlon to full time and bring the amount of math support at Hanlon in line with the other four elementary schools.

Add 1.0 ABA Tutor Districtwide: \$30,000

Based at Sheehan Elementary School and working under the supervision of WPS Board Certified Behavior Analysts, this 1.0 FTE Applied Behavior Analysis Tutor will be deployed flexibly to provide coaching and training to general education teachers who are implementing portions of student Behavior Support Plans in the general education setting. This staffing request is also in response to general education teacher feedback that they welcome students with behavior needs into their classrooms, but need additional training, modeling, and feedback from skilled professionals in order to adapt their instruction, classroom routines, and management systems to these students' needs. As a first response during the development of a more robust District-wide network of Social Emotional Learning supports, this ABA tutor will provide needed support to students and teachers K-5.

Add Part-Time (10 hours/week) Elementary Science Materials Manager: \$10,686

This paraprofessional position will assist the Elementary Science Coordinator by tracking inventory and then preparing and transporting science and engineering materials throughout the district. Unlike other academic content areas, science, technology and engineering is a very materials-intensive subject. Each unit of instruction at the elementary level is supported by a classroom kit that includes both reusable and consumable items.

ARE THERE OTHER CHANGES TO THE SALARY BUDGET?

Yes. In the FY'19 budget, I am proposing a **reduction** of 0.4 FTE staff at the Central Office. This reduction reflects a change in the responsibilities of the District Professional Development Coordinator and will result in a savings of \$40,700.

WHAT ARE THE BUDGET DRIVERS IN NON-SALARY ACCOUNTS?

The change in Non-Salary accounts is (\$18,258). It should be noted that this is a *net decrease*, and there are, in fact, increases to several non-salary line items that are offset by reductions in other line items. The district leadership team undertook a careful process as part of this year's budget development to review actual spending over the last 3 years in order to ensure that our FY'19 budget requests closely align with our best estimate of expenditures. For example, both electricity and fuel have been downwardly adjusted for FY'19 (to reflect actual spending and cost savings realized through initiatives such as the installation of energy efficient boilers) and reallocated to transportation and maintenance, line items where we have historically overspent what has been budgeted. Reductions to items such as advertising and textbooks (two areas where there has been a shift to online resources) have provided additional offsets to the increases listed below.

Online science, technology, and engineering curriculum resources: \$15,000

2018-2019 will be the final year of Westwood's transition to new science, technology and engineering curricula PreK-8. Using FY'18 curriculum alignment funds, we have started purchasing updated online curriculum as well as hands on materials. An FY'19 increase will allow us to finish purchasing online curriculum resources for Thurston Middle School and expand supplemental resources (e.g., online texts and subscriptions that support research and in-depth study) at all levels.

Annual Writers Conference at Thurston Middle School: \$4,200

Last year, with grant support from the Foundation for Westwood Education and the Thurston PTO, the middle school English language arts department launched a Writer's Workshop program for 7th graders. Published writers from all fields--poets, sports commentators, fashion bloggers and civil rights activists--offered workshops to students. Funding will allow the program to continue after grant money runs out this year.

Reduce Kindergarten Tuition Offset: \$85,000

Westwood is currently one of 56 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 \$1800 per year to send students to the full-day program. In reality, nearly all families in Westwood choose the full-day option. Given that kindergarten is part of our core academic program, we have a 2-year plan to eliminate the full-day kindergarten fee. In FY'19, the tuition will be reduced from \$1800 to \$900. The tuition offset will need to be reduced accordingly.

Reduction in Circuit Breaker Offset: \$27,902

Due to the relatively small number of Westwood students in out-of-district special education placements, we have fewer services that we can claim for reimbursement through the state's "Circuit Breaker" mechanism. As a result, we need to reduce the Circuit Breaker offset.



In Massachusetts, the state helps local districts defray the costs associated with the most expensive special education students by reimbursing districts for instructional and tuition costs that exceed four times the statewide foundation budget. This reimbursement mechanism is referred to as the "Circuit Breaker."

Restore Professional Development Funding (District-Wide): \$20,000

FY'17 saw the unexpected and very abrupt mid-fall termination State-wide of previous grant funding from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to support professional development of special education and student services staff (the "274 Program Improvement Grant"). This loss of funding for FY'18 has been significant and the Student Services department requests that the district assume funding of the professional development needs for the Student Services Department as part of the larger district professional development structure.

Increase in Special Education Contracted Services: \$25,000

Due to increased medical support needs for students with significant disabilities who are staying in District, a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) will be contracted as an additional program resource grades 9 - 12. The District has not previously employed a CNA and this contract staffing will be used to determine if this is a short- or long-term program need going forward.

DOES THIS BUDGET CUT ANY PROGRAMS OR SERVICES?

No, we are fortunate to have avoided any cuts to programs or services. This is something we should not take for granted, as many districts (even high-performing districts) continue to experience budget difficulties. We are fortunate that the new growth revenue from the University Station development over the last few years has provided for sustainable growth for the school budget above the limits of Proposition 2 ½, while simultaneously helping to limit the increase to residents' tax bills.

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 more than a 6% increase over FY'18, choices were made. This FY'19 proposed budget, reflecting a 3.38% 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. It does not, however, reflect many of the requests from cost center leaders, particularly in the area of innovation or program expansion. Some of the items that did not make it into the proposed budget include:



- Funding for science field trips at the high school
- A mobile science lab to serve all 5 elementary schools
- Additional staffing at the high school to mitigate class sizes
- An elementary social worker or Social Emotional Learning Coach
- Full elimination of kindergarten tuition next year
- An increase in literacy specialist and math specialists
- An increase in elementary science specialists
- Reduction or elimination of user fees for *Transportation* and *Athletics*
- Recess monitors so that elementary teachers can use recess time for professional consultation with specialists
- New preschool and elementary playground equipment and playground storage sheds
- An additional custodian at the high school
- A part-time elementary orchestra teacher

**IS THIS THE FINAL FY'19 BUDGET?
WHAT COULD CHANGE?**

The presentation of the Superintendent's Recommended Budget is only the first step in the budget process. The School Committee will review the budget and deliberate and could make changes, modifications, or additions. In addition, during the budget process, the School Department will work collaboratively with the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Commission to see how the School Department's request fits into the overall Town budget.

Thank you for your continued support of the Westwood Public Schools!