



Brookfield Public Schools



"Create Your Tomorrow"

To: Brookfield Board of Education
From: John W. Barile, Superintendent
Re: 2017-2018 Budget Proposal
Date: December 21, 2016

Introduction

The proposed budget estimate for 2017-2018 as presented represents our commitment to maintain an excellent educational program and continue to advance the Brookfield Public Schools to continually improve and remain among the finest in Connecticut. The budget maintains a balance among core programs despite increased costs. In a fiscally responsible manner, this spending plan requests limited new funding necessary to meet the cost of continuing and maintaining the quality of current programs and compliance with legal mandates.

Intentionally, with the Board of Education Strategic Coherence Plan Goals as our guide; we will stay the course, enhancing several key areas by addressing curriculum development, professional learning, assessment literacy, reading instruction, and organizational structures. This budget will continue to fund all mandated programs and will comply with new commitments reached through collective bargaining, arbitration, and other contractual agreements. Savings will be achieved by continuing to leverage conservative purchasing practices and implementing collaborative purchasing via our participation in the CREC consortium and utilizing the new Town/BOE purchasing agent.

The proposed 2017-2018 budget request is \$41,530,966. This represents a 2.85% or \$1,149,494 increase over the 2016-2017 budget.

District Enhancements

The spending plan continues to support our district World Language program as well as programs in the Performing Arts. Additionally, the budget continues to responsibly support school sponsored extracurricular activities, including academic enrichment, arts, athletics, and service related endeavors.

The plan strategically strengthens student academic achievement by enhancing professional practice through intentional and aligned professional development activities. Improvement in student performance demands focused and embedded professional development opportunities. Faculty professional development will be focused in the areas of reading, writing, math, science, social studies, and social/emotional awareness. Technology will be enhanced through upgrades to presentation stations and bandwidth at each school, which will support the growing need for wireless access. Additionally, we will implement a data assessment and analytics platform to manage student learning data. Administrators will continue to enhance their supervisory and evaluative feedback skills through ongoing training with ReVision Learning.

Administration and faculty must continue to strategically align the curricula with the standards by developing plans and materials necessary to implement support for increasingly rigorous learning. The Brookfield Public Schools has fully complied with and implemented the Teacher Evaluation and Administrator Evaluation Plans by complying with this statewide initiative. Continued adherence to this unfunded mandate necessitates engagement in administrator professional learning focused on feedback

and supervisory skills so that evaluation becomes a tool to support teacher and administrator growth, rather than simply an endeavor of compliance. The proposal continues to anticipate the need for the commitment of professional meeting time and training in this area in order to meet the standards and provide students with personalized and cutting edge instruction and assessment.

Center and Huckleberry Elementary Schools Grades PreK - 4

Based upon enrollment history and projections we will reduce one Kindergarten section at Center School and reallocate this classroom section to Grade 2 at Huckleberry Hill.

The newly arbitrated contract with the Brookfield Education Association provides teachers with one hour of collaboration time per week after school hours. This eliminates the need of the current practice at CES of dismissing kindergarten children early on Mondays for teacher grade level collaboration/planning. Therefore, it is recommended that kindergarten students complete a full day of school on Mondays. This translates to an increase for our kindergarten children of 66 hours or 2 weeks of instructional time per year.

Currently, World Language is not being offered at CES (Gr. K-1) due to a dearth of certified/qualified Spanish teachers. We propose that K-2 Spanish no longer be offered, so as to provide the necessary time for critical skill development in language arts, and the demands of state science & social studies standards. Several CT districts, including Wallingford, Wilton and West Hartford begin foreign language introduction in third grade. Up to 1 hour per week will be gained for instruction in social studies and science. This translates to an increase of time in these areas of 36 hours or 1 week of instruction over the course of the academic year.

Whisconier Middle School: Grades 5-8

We propose to pilot an inclusive enrichment program at Whisconier Middle School. This pilot utilizes our existing technology education program staff and focuses on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), creativity & innovation, and communication & collaborative skills.

We also will increase the social studies time grade 5 and 6 students are offered to align with the demands of social studies state standards and with our DRG B/neighboring middle schools. This will be accomplished by reorganizing the existing, traditional middle school teaming model in grade 5 by transitioning to a developmentally appropriate model which will address many of the executive function and transitional needs of our preadolescent students.

Furthermore, we will address revealed needs in reading at Whisconier by hiring a reading teacher. By reallocating existing funds from positions no longer necessary we will add this critical support staff to the middle school.

Brookfield High School: Grades 9-12

After a review of student data and instructional needs, the proposal adds one reading instructor at Brookfield High School. The addition of this much needed faculty member will allow us to support the identified needs in developing literacy skills for incoming high school students transitioning from our middle school. Similar to Whisconier, the new high school reading teacher position requested will be paid for with a reallocation of funding from the reduction of staffing in other areas due to changing student needs.

Our high school data also supports a change in the Writing and Numeracy Center models at the high school. Current staffing is no longer needed as the English and mathematics teachers will take the lead on this important offering.

Our alternative high school model needs one less paraprofessional position as we continue to meet the needs of the students in this program. Finally, our athletic training services will be supported by an outside agency rather than a school employee, providing the district with more flexibility and reducing trainer costs by almost fifty percent.

Athletics/ Elimination of Participation Fees

You may recall that we eliminated pay to participate across the district for all students by utilizing existing activity funds in the 16-17 school year. As anticipated, for 2017-2018 we must budget for the athletic/extra-curricular expenses formerly supported with family participation fees. Therefore, an increase to the funding of our athletic budget is proposed to completely support our existing program which includes the middle school. Historically, middle school funding for athletics has been dispersed from the high school budget. Furthermore, other CIAC activities such as our new, award winning Unified Sports program have been self sufficient for the majority of their needs and should receive appropriate funding from the athletic budget.

Summary Review of 2016-2017 Investments

The Boards of Education, Selectmen and Finance along with the community were extremely responsive in supporting the administration in developing the current year's budget and the Strategic Coherence Plan. Below is a summary of enhancements and new positions that have been undergirding the accomplishment of our Strategic Coherence Plan Goals:

- At our elementary schools we have implemented a Reading Foundation Program, Math Program, Columbia Teachers College Reading & Writing Programs and new Spelling Inventory. These programs & materials are supported by embedded professional learning and assessment protocols. Specifically, Huckleberry received faculty to support student speech & language needs as well as a math specialist to provide leadership in curriculum development and coaching.
- At Whisconier two special education teachers and a speech & language teacher were hired to support the increasing need in this area. A math specialist was hired to provide leadership in curriculum development and coaching to support a rigorous mathematics experience for all.
- Brookfield High School hired a business teacher and a social studies teacher to remedy years of burgeoning class sizes and limited student offerings due to attrition. The school to career position was reallocated and replaced with a college counselor in the guidance department to address long standing needs.
- As a district we addressed multiple long standing needs to provide systematic alignment, consistency and coherence:
 - Blum Shapiro business audit recommendations:
 - We plan to convert to MUNIS on July 1, 2017 and we addressed almost all Policy & Procedure Revisions including the hiring of a Benefits Coordinator, Technology Director and a Purchasing Agent which the BOE shares with the Town
 - Developed and Implemented our Strategic Coherence Plan
 - Developed and Implemented our Communications Plan
 - Redesigned the district and school websites
 - Hired the district English Language Learner Teacher to support the increasing ELL enrollment

- Established and delivered district wide, embedded Professional Development to support Math, ELA, Social Studies
- Adopted, purchased and implemented a K-8 Math Program

Capital Improvement Plan

The 2017-2018 spending plan also includes projects necessary to maintain and update our facilities. These plans can be viewed in the Capital Improvement Plan document. It is important to note that in November after consultation with the Business and Facilities subcommittee, the Administration submitted a draft 10 year CIP to the First Selectman's office.

Conclusion

Much care and thought went into the development of this budget proposal. All involved are cognizant of the continuing economic conditions of the state and the Town, and are mindful of the need to bring forth a budget that minimizes the financial burden on the community. At the same time, we are aware of our responsibility to insure the adequate resources necessary to move the Brookfield Public Schools forward as an organization that propels students to become exceptional young people who will shape our future. By restoring the necessary positions eliminated after years of attrition and strategically reallocating resources, this budget accomplishes the aims of the Strategic Coherence Plan.

The budget is lean, responsible and respectful of the Brookfield tax payers. We will be able to sustain and strengthen the educational program currently provided to the children of Brookfield as we propel them to *Create Their Tomorrow*.