

**1. SPED programs: How many students are served in each SPED program on average? Could we have smaller/half classrooms for these programs?**

*The charts below are from the FY15 School Committee Budget Document and show the total number of special education students, both in district and out of district, and the in-district special education program enrollment. We are currently in the process of updating these numbers for the FY16 budget document, but the numbers are fairly comparable.*

**Table 1: Special Education Enrollment**

Academic Year	Total Enrollment	# of Students	% of Students	% of Students Statewide	# of Students Out of District
2005-06	4282	694	16.0	16.4	73
2006-07	4332	707	16.1	16.7	67
2007-08	4416	753	16.8	16.9	73
2008-09	4428	771	17.2	17.1	63
2009-10	4392	758	17.0	17.0	59
2010-11	4509	734	16.3	17.0	51
2011-12	4447	768	16.9	17.0	64
2012-13	4483	737	16.4	N/A	64
2013-14	4432	767	17.3	N/A	50

**Table 2: SY'14-15 In-District Special Education Program Enrollment**

Program	School	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Developmental Learning Center 1	Barrows					4	3	7
Developmental Learning Center 1	Birch Meadow	5	3	4	4			16
Developmental Learning Center 2	Birch Meadow		2	1	2			5
Integrated Learning Program	Wood End		1	1	2	1	1	6
Language Learning Disabilities	Joshua Eaton			1	3	3	4	11
Student Support Program	Killam		1	2	0	3	1	7

*Each elementary school has several different types of special education programs/services. First, each elementary school has a special education program that addresses the needs of students with specific disabilities. Birch Meadow and Barrows service students who have severe autism disabilities, Killam services students with social and emotional needs, Joshua Eaton services students with learning language disabilities, and Wood End services students with developmentally delayed and low cognitive disabilities. In addition, each school has learning center services for students with general learning disabilities. Finally, students can receive special education services such as occupational and physical therapy, speech and language, assistive technology, and other services. Each of these programs/services require space if they cannot be done in the general classroom setting.*

*The enrollment numbers fluctuate from year to year based upon need. Our learning center spaces do need to be full size classrooms, to allow teachers and paraeducators to work with students in both large group and small group settings. Students in special education programs tend to have smaller numbers, but may require more space due to additional technology and service needs. It may be possible to have a slightly smaller classroom*

space for special education programs, assuming that you have a K-2 and 3-5 designated space. However, we should note that when you permanently change a classroom into 2 smaller classrooms, you lose that flexibility for future classroom space if there are population increases in a grade level in later years.

2. **Learning Centers. Is it necessary to have two separate classrooms in each building, or can that be accommodated by through scheduling? i.e. is the regulation that children within 48 months work in separate groups or literally in separate classrooms?**

*For developmental and legal reasons, it is important to have two separate learning centers. We have tried to address the 48 month rule in a variety of ways, including constructing partitions or accordion walls in regular size classrooms. Sometimes the state has approved a waiver for such a setup and other times they have not. It would be difficult to create a schedule that would limit the 48 month age space because of the different types of classes each grade has and how students need to be serviced according to their Individualized Education Plan.*

3. **If we did NOT implement full day K, what are the space needs at each elementary? (I assume the answer is the total # of SPED classrooms needed).**

*The chart below shows the total breakdown of the different classroom space needs for the elementary schools and RISE. This is the chart that was shown at the first Early Childhood Space Needs Working Group. If we did not implement Full Day Kindergarten and the assumption is that three classrooms were dedicated to each elementary school for kindergarten, then we would need an additional 9 classrooms at the elementary level for special education and an additional 4 classrooms for dedicated art and music.*

Table 3-Breakdown of classrooms at RISE and Elementary Schools

Program/Type	Barrows	Eaton	Birch Meadow	Wood End	Killam	RISE
Existing FDK/RISE Classrooms	2	3	3	2	2	4 + 1 Therapy Room
Existing HDK Classrooms	1 (Music Room)	0 (Integrated)	0 (Integrated)	1	1	0
Existing Special Education Classrooms	1 (LC)	2 (LC; P)	2 (LC; P)	2 (LC;P)	1 (LC)	0
Existing Overflow Classroom Spaces for population increases	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total RISE spaces currently used	0	0	0	2	0	5
Total FDK Classrooms Needed if FDK was fully implemented	3	4	3	3	4	

Additional FDK Classrooms Needed Above Existing Classrooms if FDK Fully Implemented	1	2	0	0	2	
Additional RISE Classrooms Needed to meet demand						3
Additional Special Education Classrooms Needed to have a K-2 and 3-5 LC and a K-2 and 3-5 program space	1	2	2	2	2	
Additional Art/Music Classrooms Needed if FDK Classrooms are added	0	0	0	0	0	
Additional Art/Music Classrooms Needed if FDK Classrooms are not added	1	1	0	0	1	1
Total Additional Classrooms Needed for Space Needs, RISE and FDK	2	4	2	2	4	2 (WE) + 1 (Therapy) + 3 (Waiting List) = 6

**4. Cost of OOD placements versus in-district costs. Average. Range. Just something for people to understand the significant financial impact if we did not have appropriate in-district programs for these students.**

*Over the last several years, we have worked diligently to put in place quality in district programs so that our special education students can be part of the Reading Community with their peers. When a student goes out on an out of district placement, the tuition cost can range from \$35,000 to over \$300,000, depending upon the type of placement and the need. In addition, we are required to transport each student to the out of district placement each day. The cost depends on the distance that we are transporting to and if we are able to cost share with other communities on the transportation.*

*Conservatively, if the average out of district placement is \$55,000, with transportation, then it would cost on average an additional \$10,890,000 per year to place all 198 of our program students in an out of district placement. Legally, we are required to give students the least restrictive environment for learning when placing a student, so we may not even be able to send all of our students to out of district placements without facing litigation.*

*To compare this amount, our entire special education budget is \$11,198,659, of which, \$3,858,195 is allocated for tuition and transportation for students that are currently in out of district placements.*

## **5. What happened to FDK implementation in Holliston?**

*Holliston has delayed their FDK implementation for at least a year due to budgetary restrictions. In conversations that they had with the state, they found out that they would not receive additional Chapter 70 funding one year after implementation of tuition free full day kindergarten. In conversations that then Assistant Superintendent Mary DeLai had with the state, Reading would be eligible for additional funding if they implemented tuition free full day kindergarten. We will have Director of Finance and Operations Martha Sybert contact the state again to receive clarification. In addition, this topic did surface at the Chapter 70 hearings held last week in Danvers.*

## **6. If the RMHS were to be included in the decided upon "space problem" by the committee, what are the space needs specifically at the RMHS. For example, how much storage is needed? Additional classrooms? Large project spaces? etc.**

*Currently, Reading Memorial High School has some of the same space needs as the elementary school. Because of programmatic additions in special education and STEM, there is the need for classroom space and storage space at the High School. Here are some of the space needs:*

- 1. Since the High School was built in 2007, there have been two programs added, the Student Support Program and the Therapeutic Support program to address students who have social and emotional disabilities. In addition, we do not have space for our 18-22 year old program at the high school which teaches life skills to our students.*
- 2. The Science Department has added four engineering courses to allow our students to be able to access additional STEM classes prior to college.*
- 3. Over the last two years, we have added a very competitive Robotics team which requires storage and working space. Recently, the team received word that they have been offered a piece of equipment that would greatly enhance their program. This piece of equipment is large and would need to be permanently installed in a location where the Robotics team could access it and use it for creating their robots. Currently, we do not have the classroom space to accommodate this donation.*
- 4. In the old high school, there was an RCTV studio that was used for all RCTV programming. When the new high school was designed, the studio was not part of the plan. In many communities, the studio is connected to the high school to allow high school students the ability to take courses during the school day. Currently, in Reading, that is not the case.*
- 5. There is an overall lack of storage space at the high school for books, equipment, technology, and other program needs.*

## **7. If at all possible, could people from the committee visit the RISE Preschool during the school day to get the complete experience of what the hallways are like during drop-off and pick-up and see the space when the children and professionals are there?**

*Absolutely, we can schedule that at any time. The hours for RISE are at 8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. and 12:00-2:30 p.m.*

- 8. During the discussed visits to elementary schools can music classes being taught on the stage be viewed and the music/ art spaces that have been converted into classrooms?**

*Yes. We would be more than happy to take members of the Working Group on tours of our schools during the school day.*

- 9. Could you formulate a prioritized list of the related service space needs?**

*This is a difficult question to answer with accuracy because it is based on the needs of students on their individualized education plans. We currently have OT/PT, Speech and Language, Assistive Technology, reading, and psychological services at all of our schools. In addition, we are seeing a growing need for adaptive physical education for some of our students. Our biggest space need for related services is at RISE, where most of the non-inclusive services are given in the back of the Director's Office Area. The original space was converted to a classroom a few years ago.*

- 10. In regards to helping the community develop a better understanding of why it is educationally and financially beneficial for students to remain in district, could a range of the cost of an out-of-district placement be provided with the numbers from past budgets showing the fluctuation in those numbers from year to year. I am thinking a refresher for some and new to others that the school district is legally obligated to provide services and that if you are a resident of Reading the town/district is responsible for the cost. For example, when you get a call that a family who has a child in an out-of-district placement has moved into Reading it becomes part of the special education budget. When you get a call that a family who has a child on an IEP has moved into town that IEP must be followed and funded by Reading.**

*Most of this question is answered in #4. We are required under Federal (IDEA) and State (Chapter 766) law to provide the least restrictive learning environment for our students. In addition, all children are entitled to a Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE). What this means is that we are required to provide that education using a TEAM process when a student has been diagnosed with a disability. Under the law, the Reading Public Schools is required to provide those services and access to FAPE from ages 3-22, if the student qualifies. Services can range from related services to adaptive equipment to program placement to out of district placement, depending upon the need in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).*

*Some of these services can be provided in the regular educational setting and would not require additional space. However, many, such as our programs and learning centers, require additional classroom space.*

*If a student moves into Reading from another community, before April of the previous year, we are required to provide those services out of our budget. If the child moves into Reading after April, the district where they came from funds the services for that year, but we will need to fund those services from that point forward.*

- 11. A question hit me on my ride home last night. We were talking about whether the 29% who are in HDK would want to send their children to FDK so that we can plan numbers, but surely when we move to non-tuition FDK that will be the only option? We can't continue to support HDK as well, I would have thought, and we need to be clear about that. So part of our communications plan has to cover those parents who would prefer their children to have a half day option.**

*If we implemented tuition free full day kindergarten, we would no longer have a half day program. We could make an exception the first year or two by integrating those students in the integrated program, but eventually, we would need to phase out the half day.*

**12. In one of the meetings last year, someone asked if the ECE studies that show the benefits for young children are relevant in communities like Reading. Do we have studies on-hand that are based in well-off communities also?**

*We will be more than happy to provide research studies on the benefits of Full Day. Overall, the research does show that students who are categorized as “high needs” (English Language Learners, High Poverty, and Special Education) would benefit more from full day kindergarten than “non-high needs” students. However, the research indicates that all students would benefit from full day kindergarten, regardless of background.*

*It should be noted that Reading has approximately 22% of the student population who are in the high needs category as designated by the state. That equates to 983 students or on average, 76 per grade.*

**13. We talked about breaking down the space needs. I think it is great to look at these as whole numbers of needs, since this is aiming to solve several issues, but people will want to know:**

*The chart on question 3 will be able to provide more information. In summary, the answers are below.*

*How many spaces to solve all our needs? 14 elementary classrooms, 6 RISE*

*How many do we need if we don't move to FDK? 9 special education classrooms*

*How many to get back our music/art spaces? 3 classrooms*

*How many spaces do we need just to follow the law on Special Education? 9 special education classrooms.*

**14. For the RISE, do we want to accommodate all the kids on the waiting list? Debbie mentioned we do make money from RISE, but in theory we only need enough space to support the special needs kids and 51% typical population. Can we break down the numbers between what we need in order to fulfill our obligations vs. what we would like in order to meet demand? And how do we forecast how that demand will grow (hard enough to forecast demand for special needs pre-schoolers.)**

*As mentioned above, we are required to provide special education services and programs for students who qualify, beginning at age 3. Although the law states for any classroom in the district (regardless of age), that we cannot have a population of special education students that is greater than “typical” students, the lower the percentage of special education students in a classroom, the more optimum a learning environment for all students. Our special education population for the district is approximately 18.5%, therefore, the closer we are to the 18.5%, the more heterogeneous the class.*

*Since we need to provide program services for students beginning at age 3, we need to accept more “typical” students in RISE at the beginning of the school year because the number of students on IEPs will grow during the year. The chart below shows our population in past years.*

**Table 4-RISE Preschool population (2005-present)**

Year	General Education	Special Education	Number of Classrooms	Total
2005-06	46	36	4	82
2006-07	43	35	4	78
2007-08	42	37	4	79
2008-09	45	35	4	80
2009-10	49	43	5	92
2010-11	56	52	5	108
2011-12	52	56	5	108
2012-13	60	56	7	116
2013-14	66	46	7	112
2014-15 (As of 12/1/14)	65	48	7	113

*It is not easy to forecast how many 3 year olds require services. We use a pre-referral process, but, if parents do not make us aware that their child may require services, we cannot predict those numbers.*

**15. If we grow RISE, what will that mean for other in-town pre-schools?** *Parents have the choice of several preschool options in our community. This past year, we had a waiting list of 25 students because of the strong reputation RISE has as a quality preschool program. Our goal is to provide a strong quality integrated program for our 3 and 4 year old students. We do not know the effect this will have on private preschool programs because it comes down to parent choice.*

**16. You mentioned we are moving the LC from Barrows, and there are no Programs there; does this mean any special needs kid in the Barrows district will need to attend Joshua Eaton (or BM if on the spectrum)?** *We are in the middle of a four year transition to move the Developmental Learning Center (DLC) program from Barrows to Birch Meadow because when students leave Birch Meadow, they enter Coolidge and the DLC program for middle school students is at Coolidge. Conversely, students at Barrows go to Parker and what was happening when the DLC program was at Barrows was that the students who were in the DLC program had to leave their peers and go to Coolidge.*

*Students with disabilities will still attend Barrows. Most of those students require learning center or other services that can be delivered at Barrows. If a student requires services for a program that is not at Barrows, they would attend the elementary school that has that program.*

**17. We need to share survey data on “what parents want” that you did a year or so ago, and collect new data both from this audience of “parents with young kids” and a new group of residents who don’t have kids that will be impacted by the early childhood center. It would be great for the working group, or a subgroup perhaps would be even better, to brainstorm on the questions to be asked in the surveys. We can share the survey data from 2012 and if it is the will of the group, we can send out a new survey.**

**18. I still believe that a “regional” solution (more than one community attending a facility) could work here and needs to be explored...even if it is unconventional. I believe that most other communities will want certified teachers, etc....and these costs would all be shared. perhaps this starts with a review of what all of our contiguous towns are doing, are considering and could they be interested? we are regionalizing many government activities ranging from health to assessment and more. why not schools (at least with a centralized opportunity at the Pre-k or K levels)? I know that many kids attend out of district pre-k already so it is not really a foreign concept. Also, people are used to attending out of district schools for special ed programs (I realize this is more other communities sending kids to Reading, but it is still the same concept). I think it should at least be explored and then we could ask about it in a survey once we knew better about how we could frame it. Again, other communities are facing the same needs so lets explore out of the box solutions.**

*For preschool, you could easily offer opportunities for other school districts or families to have their students attend the Reading Public Schools. This would be on a tuition basis similar to what we offer our “typical” students now.*

*As for a regional solution for kindergarten, we would only have two options: create a regional school district with a separate School Committee, a separate budget, and a separate governance structure or offer a school choice program. There are regulations in developing a regional school district, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr41.html?section=03>, which is a very complicated process. You would need another district to regionalize with and it would be for multiple grades, not just kindergarten.*

*For the school choice option, if you take in students for kindergarten from other districts, they would remain in the Reading Public Schools until they leave or graduate. You cannot tuition in “typical” students for one year and then dis-enroll them the following year. For school choice, the receiving district would receive \$5,000 per student per year. The School Committee would need to approve any school choice option.*

*If we were to pursue either of the above options, additional space would still be required.*

**19. I think it would be helpful to share the evaluation criteria that the last group used and ask the new group to review/comment/add/subtract from that list.**

*Below is the criteria that was used by the previous working group.*



**Table 5-Criteria Used by Early Childhood Center Working Group for Space Needs Analysis**

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>
<b>Education</b>
Does the option provide the necessary educational program space?
Does the option allow for the creation of optimally-sized classrooms?
Does the option allow for the ideal configuration of the educational program?
Does the option provide educational program areas which are "above and beyond" basic needs?
Does the option optimize educational (staff) resources?
Does the option allow for the creation of an innovative 21st Century educational environment?
Does the option represent "forward thinking" for the Reading Public Schools?
Does the option allow for required outdoor fitness opportunities?
Does the option provide outdoor educational opportunities?
Does the option increase educational opportunities for all Reading PK-1 students (parity)?
Does the project relieve space needs across other grade levels or schools?
Does the option avoid disruption to existing educational environments?
Can the option be executed in a timely fashion?
<b>Costs</b>
Is the proposed project cost efficient compared to other options?
Does the proposed project represent economical long-term operating and maintenance costs?
Does the option minimize financial risk by reducing unknowns during construction?
<b>Parents</b>
Will the option be perceived by parents as an improvement to current learning environments?
Is the option perceived as assisting parents with their daily routine (more convenient / less convenient)?
Does the option improve education across the entire Town?
<b>Community</b>
Does the option provide indoor space for expanded community opportunities?
Does the option provide outdoor space for expanded community opportunities?
Does the project offer benefits to the entire community, including non-school?
Does the option represent good sustainable design practices?
Does the option represent good community-wide planning?
<b>Site</b>
Is the site convenient for parents, teachers, and students?
Is the site capable of supporting adequate parking?
Is the site located in an area where abutters will be supportive?
Is the site convenient for walkers?
Is the site capable of supporting adequate bus and auto circulation?
Is the site acceptable to local Town departments?
Does the option minimize traffic impacts?

**20. Who is working with our state legislators to lobby SBA to consider early childhood programs as a need to be reimbursable? Likewise we need our ears to the legislature about what they are doing about their mandate for full day K. The Superintendent has recently met with Senator Jason Lewis, and in the past with Representative Jones about this issue. At this point, there has not been any movement in funding early childhood centers because it does not fit one of MSBA's requirements of need.**

*It should be noted that full day kindergarten is not mandated in the Commonwealth.*

**21. Will someone be publishing meeting minutes that go out to the group before the following meeting(s) to support those who are not able to attend?**

*Yes. Once the meetings are approved by the group, they will be published.*

**22. Will you be talking about frequency of meetings and then a calendar of proposed meeting dates at this upcoming meeting?**

*Yes. At the meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup>, we will decide on the meeting schedule.*

**23. In looking at the chart that was part of the hand out, can you tell me how Rise classrooms are in each of the four schools? Not FDK but Rise. Is it only the 2 in Woods End? All other are FDK in the first column?**

*On the chart in question 3, the only two locations where there are preschool classes are the Wood End Elementary School and the RISE preschool.*

**24. There are 5 Rise classrooms in your building, and you mentioned that if your office was relocated, another 4 (?) could be created, correct? The 2014 allocated classrooms for Rise is 7, what is the projected need for Rise 2015-2016?**

*If the Superintendent's Office was relocated, we could probably convert the space into 2 or 3 preschool classrooms. Using historical enrollment data, we are currently developing our budget and program needs for 7 classrooms in 2015-16. The only variable that would change that projection is if we have more special education students enrolled than regular education students. We would then be out of compliance with the state and may have to look for additional space.*

**25. How many classrooms are currently used for kindergarten (both half and full) in each school? Is it 15 over the four schools? If FDK was only offered in one classroom per school (as per school commit. meeting last week) how many classrooms does that free up in each school?**

*The chart in Question 3 illustrates that we are currently using 3 classrooms for kindergarten at each of our schools. If we limited Full Day Kindergarten to one classroom per school, we would still need classrooms for half day kindergarten. Depending on enrollment, we may be able to free up one classroom at some schools. Full day registration ends on December 19<sup>th</sup>, so we will have a better idea of our potential full day enrollment on that date.*

**26. How many classrooms are lost for Art? Music in each school due to FDK in each school?**

*With the exception of Birch Meadow and Wood End, the other three elementary schools have lost one classroom each for Art/Music.*

**27. What are the State requirements for attendance in Rise per calendar year? For kindergarten?**

*According to 603 CMR 27.00-Student Learning Time, students in Kindergarten are required to attend a minimum of 180 school days and 425 hours of structured learning time. There is no time and learning requirements for public preschool, however, the programs offered must be aligned to the child's IEP. The RISE preschool follows the K-12 school calendar year.*

**28. Has there ever been consideration given to having Special Needs Education offered thru the summer? as a supplement to the full year? Would that conform to state requirements?**

*Special education students have to have the same school year and time and learning requirements as regular education students or it would be a violation of their Free and Appropriate Education rights (FAPE). We do have several special education students that require summer programming and services because if they did not receive those services, they would have substantial learning regression prior to the start of the next school year.*

**29. What is the proposed increase to tuition for FDK next year?**

*The current tuition for Full Day Kindergarten is \$4200 per year. There has been no discussion by the Reading School Committee to increase that tuition for next year. It should be noted that our tuition is among the top 20 highest tuition rates for Full Day Kindergarten in the Commonwealth.*

**30. How many offices are needed for your Dept? Besides the large meeting room is there another conference room in your dept?**

*The Reading Public Schools Administration Offices is currently in two locations; near the RISE preschool and adjacent to the High School Main Office. We would need approximately 4500 square feet, which includes office space for the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources Administrator, Director of Finance and Operations, Director of Student Services, Community and Extended Day Education, and administrative support staff for those departments. Currently, we have one large meeting room and one smaller conference room.*

**31. Best guess, if the parking lot was used outside your building for building needs could it be two stories? three? The high school classrooms adjacent to the RISE preschool have four stories and conceivable, an addition could be built that high in elevation.**

**32. My take away from not only the initial meetings where the Oakland site was being presented last spring but even our group meeting is that this all comes down to a space issue and should we consider changing the name of the working group so that it doesn't focus so much on the early childhood aspect? I just feel as though we can get more buy in from the overall community if there is a general concern for school space vs a smaller group of early childhood age students?**

*You are correct in the fact that we have space limitations at every level, except for middle school. These space issues are being driven by changes in programmatic needs, both in regular education and special education since the schools were originally built.*

- 33. In addition to that, if we are talking about space issues and the high school has its own set of space constraints then I agree we should consider the high school in these discussions and does the proposed Oakland site block future expansion of the high school? (I know this was brought up towards the end of our meeting)?**

*This past summer, we had a geotechnical study completed on the Oakland Road site and the study came back favorable for building on the four acre lot. It is possible that one of the areas that could be looked at for Oakland Road is an expansion of RMHS.*

- 34. Is there a way to quantify cost of doing FDK vs not doing it? Is it significant?**

*Last year, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Mary DeLai created the chart below to show the financial difference in the operating budget over time between publicly funded full day K and our current structure.*

	<u>2012-13</u>	<u>2013-14</u>	<u>2014-15</u>	<u>2015-16</u>	<u>2016-17</u>	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>
<b>Universal FDK Expense and Revenue Projections</b>							
Total Staffing Expense	1,014,072	1,225,724	1,472,158	1,516,322	1,561,812	1,608,666	1,656,926
Total Supplies, Materials, and Other Expense	101,407	122,572	147,216	151,632	156,181	160,867	165,693
Tuition Offset	600,000	750,000	450,000	-	-	-	-
Additional Chapter 70	-	-	-	1,100,000	1,122,000	1,144,440	1,167,329
General Fund Expense - Universal FDK	515,479	598,296	1,169,373	567,954	595,993	625,093	655,290
General Fund Expense - New School	-	-	314,830	327,051	335,497	344,175	353,091
Total General Fund Expense	515,479	598,296	1,484,203	895,005	931,490	969,268	1,008,382
<b>Optional FDK Expense and Revenue Projection</b>							
Total Staffing Expense - No Universal FDK	1,014,072	1,225,724	1,322,273	1,361,941	1,402,800	1,444,884	1,488,230
Total Supplies, Materials, and Other	101,407	122,572	132,227	136,194	140,280	144,488	148,823
Tuition Offset	600,000	820,000	775,000	750,000	725,000	700,000	675,000
Additional Chapter 70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
General Fund Expense - Optional FDK	515,479	528,296	679,500	748,136	818,080	889,372	962,053
<b>Difference - Universal versus Optional FDK</b>			<b>804,703</b>	<b>146,870</b>	<b>113,411</b>	<b>79,896</b>	<b>46,328</b>

- 35. Additionally can we quantify costs of non-compliance in regards to special needs (if we are not in compliance what are the monetary costs the town faces or could face? ie if we had to outsource a student b/c we don't have room in the current school system to provide services in town, etc).**

*Question 4 answers the majority of this question. It should be noted that we legally have to provide special education services that are on a student's IEP, regardless of cost.*

- 36. Regarding space needs at Wood End (this is our currently assigned school) I know that there are only 2 classrooms for both 1st and 2nd grade respectively...when talking about future space needs at WE, has it been taken into consideration that 3-4 years from now incoming kindergarten classrooms will continue to require 3 classrooms. (or most likely will especially with redistricting going on).**

*If we are able to solve the RISE space situation without the use of Wood End, the two classrooms that are currently used by RISE can be used for Wood End, if there is an enrollment increase.*

- 37. Is there a representative from the state education board that could give us clearer vision on FDK being required in the state in the near future?**

*We can certainly try to bring in the Commissioner of the Department of Early Education and Care, Tom Weber, who is a Reading resident to talk to the group.*

- 38. Should we consider assigning a 'chair' to this group. Someone who can navigate and better communicate with the major stakeholders. Someone maybe outside the realm of superintendent/SC role....possibly fin com?**

*This Working group is a subcommittee of the Reading School Committee. As part of the creation of this subcommittee, the Reading School Committee voted Chuck Robinson and Jeanne Borawski as co-chairs of the Committee. Both have been members of the Finance Committee in the past and have a wide range of experiences in the community.*

- 39. Curious to understand how much of an effort/time kindergarten teachers are spending on equalizing the full day vs half day students. I know that they meet to ensure all students are on an equal learning level but is this significant time spent and taking away from other aspects of curriculum that should be focused on.**

*Both half day and full day students are being taught the kindergarten standards in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and our social/emotional curriculum, as well as physical education and music. The difference between the full day and half day programs lies in the depth to which they are taught. Full day programs can go into the standards in further depth and reinforcement and are able to teach it with additional experiences, including more active hands-on and project based learning.*

- 40. IF we could provide FDK for everyone....what would this look like? What more would our kids be learning? What would the curriculum look like?**

*Question 39 explains in detail what it would look like.*

- 41. I am a board member of Connect the Tots, a Reading social group for parents of toddlers and preschoolers with 150 member families, so I have quick and easy access to a large chunk of this preschool-age population. As our working group considers what this population (with kids 1-5 years away from kindergarten) wants down the road in terms of full day kindergarten, I could potentially facilitate reaching out to this population for polls/feedback from time to time during this process. I can also, as needed, post pertinent info on our Connect the Tots facebook page to get families with young kids interested and informed about our work.**

*This is great news. If the group decides to conduct a survey, we could send it out to this group.*

- 42. Why is RISE accepting so many more regular ed students recently? In 2013-14 they had only 46 special ed students to 66 regular ed. In 2014-15 it's only 43 special ed to 73 regular ed. I understand that families of regular ed students seem to want RISE, but if there is a space crunch anyway, why did they accept so many more reg ed students than what would meet the 50/50 rule?**

*Question 14 explains this in detail.*

- 43. Can you share with us the key research/studies that show that FDK benefits all students? Is the research clear, or are there studies that suggest otherwise? I don't have that info at my fingertips when people question the value of FDK.**

*There are several studies that measure the benefits of Full Day Kindergarten. Here are some of the research studies.*

### **1. Full-Day Kindergarten Boosts Student Achievement**

Longitudinal data demonstrates that children in full-day classes show greater reading and mathematics achievement gains than those in half-day classes.

Walston, Jill and West, Jerry. Full-Day and Half-Day Kindergarten in the United States: Findings from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2004/web/2004078.asp>.

Ackerman, Debora J., Barnett, W. Steven, and Robin, Kenneth B. Making the Most of Kindergarten: Present Trends and Future Issues in the Provision of Full-day Programs. National Institute for Early Education Research, March, 2005. <http://nieer.org/docs/?DocID=118>.

Full-day kindergarten can produce long-term educational gains, especially for low-income and minority students.

Plucker, Jonathan A, Eaton, Jessica J., Rapp, Kelly E., et. al. The Effects of Full Day Versus Half Day Kindergarten: Review and Analysis of National and Indiana Data. Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, January 2004. [www.doe.state.in.us/primetime/pdf/fulldaykreport.pdf](http://www.doe.state.in.us/primetime/pdf/fulldaykreport.pdf).

Cryan, John R., Sheehan, Robert, Wiechel, Jane, and Bandy-Hedden, Irene G. "Success outcomes of full-day kindergarten: More positive behavior and increased achievement in the years after."

Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 1992, v. 7, no. 2, 187-203.

Education Commission of the States. Full-Day Kindergarten Programs Improve Chances of Academic Success. The Progress of Education Reform 2004, ECS, v. 5, no. 4, September 2004.

Montgomery County Public Schools. Early Success: Closing the Opportunity Gap for Our Youngest Learners. Montgomery County (Maryland) Public Schools, July 2004, [www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/superintendent/docs/early\\_success.pdf](http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/superintendent/docs/early_success.pdf)

Viadero, Debra. "Study: Full Day Kindergarten Boosts Academic Performance." Education Week, April 17, 2002, v. 21, no. 31, p. 14.

## **2. Full-Day Kindergarten Improves Students' Social and Emotional Skills**

A full day of learning offers social, emotional and intellectual benefits to kindergartners. They have more time to focus on activities, to reflect on activities and to transition between activities.

Ackerman, Debora J., Barnett, W. Steven, and Robin, Kenneth B. Making the Most of Kindergarten: Present Trends and Future Issues in the Provision of Full-day Programs. National Institute for Early Education Research, March, 2005. <http://nieer.org/docs/?DocID=118>.

Cryan, John R., Sheehan, Robert, Wiechel, Jane, and Bandy-Hedden, Irene G. "Success outcomes of full-day kindergarten: More positive behavior and increased achievement in the years after."

Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 1992, v. 7, no. 2, 187-203.

## **3. Full-Day Kindergarten Is a Sound Educational Investment**

Recent research has demonstrated that funds invested in quality early education programs produce powerful returns on investment.

Heckman, James J. and Masterov, Dimitriy V. The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children. Working Paper 5, Invest in Kids Working Group, Committee for Economic Development, October 2004. <http://jenni.uchicago.edu/Invest/>.

Lynch, Robert. Exceptional Returns: Economic, Fiscal and Social Benefits of Investment in Early Childhood Education. Economic Policy Institute, 2005. [www.epinet.org/content.cfm/books\\_exceptional\\_returns](http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/books_exceptional_returns).

Full-day kindergarten provides a bridge between prekindergarten programs and the early elementary years. Education Commission of the States. Full-Day Kindergarten: A Study of State Policies in the United States. ECS, June 2005. [fcd-us.org/PDFs/ECS\\_FDK.pdf](http://fcd-us.org/PDFs/ECS_FDK.pdf).

Full-day kindergarten enables teachers to assess students' needs and abilities more effectively, leading to early intervention.

Plucker, Jonathan A, Eaton, Jessica J., Rapp, Kelly E., et. al. The Effects of Full Day Versus Half Day Kindergarten: Review and Analysis of National and Indiana Data. Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, January 2004. [www.doe.state.in.us/primetime/pdf/fulldaykreport.pdf](http://www.doe.state.in.us/primetime/pdf/fulldaykreport.pdf).

#### **4. Teachers Prefer Full-Day Kindergarten**

Teachers get to know students better; they are able to develop a richer understanding of students' needs and, in turn, to develop activities and lessons to meet those needs.

Elicker, J. and Mathur, S. "What do they do all day? Comprehensive evaluation of a full-day kindergarten." Early Childhood Research Quarterly, v.12, no. 4, pp. 459-480, 1997.

#### **5. Full-Day Kindergarten Is Optimal for Parents**

Comparison studies demonstrate that parents prefer full-day kindergarten.

Early Education for All. "Investing in Full-Day Kindergarten Is Essential." Citing West, Jerry,

Denton, Kristin, and Germino-Hausken, Elvira. America's Kindergartners. National Center for Educational Statistics, 2000.

Education Commission of the States. Full-Day Kindergarten: A Study of State Policies in the United States. ECS, June 2005. [fcd-us.org/PDFs/ECS\\_FDK.pdf](http://fcd-us.org/PDFs/ECS_FDK.pdf).

**44. What is the cost of a modular classroom, all told? I don't see that info in the slides, but maybe I'm overlooking it.** *We are currently researching prices for modular classrooms, both to rent and to own. The cost will be different at each elementary school because of the cost associated with site preparation and connection to utilities. It is our goal to have options available to the School Committee at the December 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.*

**45. I wanted to clarify a funding question for full day k, does any of it come from Title 1 funding? If so, what else can Title 1 funding be used for besides FDK?**

*We receive approximately \$100,000 per year in Title 1 funding. Title 1 funding is based on a school's poverty index, which is determined by the percentage of students on free and reduced lunch. Currently, Killam and Joshua Eaton receive Title 1 funding. That funding is used to provide tutorial support for students who are struggling in math and literacy. Because Joshua Eaton is a Level 3 school, we are required to use that funding for tutorial and instructional support.*

*We do not use Title 1 funding for Full Day Kindergarten in our district.*

**46. On average, how many kids from Rise enter into kindergarten each fall? Can you breakdown students with special needs?**

*We began tracking these numbers in 2013-14. In 2013-14 there were 55 students enrolled in K from RISE – 5 of which were DLC students. In 2014-15 there were 44 students enrolled in K from RISE – 5 of which were DLC students. We do not have the breakdown by disability for any other students.*