

Budget Questions FY 16

1. Page 7 – I thought the Town Manager had previously included an annual amount in the Capital Plan for technology replacement. I thought the annual amount was \$100,000. Wasn't this agreed upon a couple of years ago?

In the Capital Plan, there is \$75,000 every other year that is allocated to technology infrastructure, which includes servers, wireless routers, and switches. The funding that we are proposing is for instructional technology replacement such as computers and SMART Boards. We are not able to use the capital funds for instructional expenses.

2. Page 7 – What is the projected long term savings to add the BCBA (Figure A)?

We currently contract these services out with SEEM at a rate of \$100 per hour as needed. We spend annually about \$60,000 for these services. Our thought is that we could bring this function in-house with no cost impact and have this expertise on staff to help with other supports. This is a cost neutral restructuring and will not necessarily result in long term savings.

3. Page 8 – How much would the rate increase be to maintain the Regular Day Bus Transportation (Figure B)?

The contract price for the bus for FY16 for the year is \$52,200 assuming paid ridership is consistent with FY15 it would be \$435 per student with no cap. We recommend \$450 with no cap to allow for a slight decline in ridership.

	SY 12-13				SY 13-14				SY 14-15			
	Mandated	Paid	FRL	Total	Mandated	Paid	FRL	Total	Mandated	Paid	FRL	Total
Killam	15	19	7	41	27	33	11	71	29	25	16	70
Coolidge	10	9		19	9	10	-	19	8	14	-	22
Parker	-	27	3	30	1	18	2	21	1	18	4	23
RMHS		72	1	73	-	67	10	77	-	63	7	70
Totals	25	127	11	163	37	128	23	188	38	120	27	185

4. Page 8 – What are the various schools losing by reducing the Per Pupil Budgets (Figure B)? I don't want this to fall back on parents through additional supply requests.

We currently have about an eighteen month purchasing cycle for our consumables (workbooks) supplies and materials. In other words, when we release the 30% holdback in April, principals pre-purchase their materials for the following year. It is our belief that the real impact of this reduction will not be felt until FY17 which is when we intend to restore funding. This reduction can only be done for one year and it needs to be restored in FY17.

5. Page 8 – Please provide more color on the reduction in substitute teachers (Figure B). Last year we had lengthy discussions on increasing substitute pay. Could this have been maintained if we had not increased the pay?

The FY15 budget was developed assuming an increase in our rates paid for long-term and daily substitutes. We budgeted \$469,788 for FY15 assuming the increase to the daily rate (we now pay daily rates of \$75 non-certified, \$95 certified, and \$125 long-term). As you can see from Figure 80, our three year average for our daily substitutes (FY12 – FY14) was \$231,592. This expense (\$247,328, \$228,262, and \$219,186) was for the cost of the Daily Substitutes that worked due to teachers out for bereavement, family or personal illness, Field Trips, Jury Duty and Professional Development. Based on annualized YTD data we forecast the cost of Daily Substitutes will be \$270,586 which represents a 23% increase over FY14. This seems reasonable given the trend in absences year over year and the 26% increase in the daily rate.

The cost associated with Long Term Substitutes is budgeted in Districtwide Reg'l Day budget but the actual expenditure is captured as part of the Teacher Salary line. The FY15 and FY16 Budget amounts of \$469,788 and \$332,702 include both categories of substitutes – short and long term. The table below breaks out the historical costs for both short and long term substitutes.

	FY12 ACTUALS	FY13 ACTUALS	FY14 ACTUALS	FY15 Forecast	FY15 BUDGET	FY16 BUDGET
DAILY TEACHER SUBS	247,458	228,262	219,121	270,586	324,188	230,342
LONG TERM TEACHER SUBSTITUTE	102,000	84,464	138,800	140,221	145,600	102,360
TOTALS	349,458	312,726	357,921	410,806	469,788	332,702

The total number of daily substitutes needed during the same time period FY14 to FY15 has remained consistent, (1,794 vs 1,779). Our Unfilled percentage has improved from 9.9% to 7.6% and our Substitute Not Needed has also increased while our Filled has declined slightly as a result of these two factors.

We feel the \$137,000 savings is achievable as we plan on reducing the amount of daily substitute coverage needed for professional development with the addition of the two coaching positions. We will also be using the Mental Health First Aid, Title 1, and School Transformation grant to fund substitutes for those related activities. We have also had two consecutive years with multiple staff out due to long term illness. We feel the Long Term Substitute line can be reduced back to FY13 actual adjusted for the 25% increase.

FY15 (8/30 - 12/31)	(Vacancy Position)	Bereavement	Family Illness	Field Trip	Jury Duty	Personal Day	Personal Illness	Prof. Development	Grand Total	% of Total
FILLED	142	44	169	25	11	165	319	332	1,207	67.3%
Held	-	-	-	-	-	1	8	3	12	0.7%
Substitute Not Needed	-	20	72	5	3	53	134	151	438	24.4%
Unfilled	20	5	21	-	-	10	55	26	137	7.6%
Totals	162	69	262	30	14	229	516	512	1,794	100%

FY14 (8/30 - 12/31)	(Vacancy Position)	Bereavement	Family Illness	Field Trip	Jury Duty	Personal Day	Personal Illness	Prof. Development	Grand Total	% of Total
Filled	81	32	214	31	13	141	335	396	1,243	69.9%
Held	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	3	0.2%
Substitute Not Needed	-	12	58	2	4	59	124	97	356	20.0%
Unfilled	-	1	36	1	1	10	81	47	177	9.9%
Totals	81	45	308	34	18	212	541	540	1,779	100.0%

6. Page 8 – Is there any change in the projected METCO Grant in the Governor’s FY 16 Budget?

Yes, we were informed of a \$6,492 reduction to our grant in mid-November. This represented a 1.68% change. We feel confident that we have sufficient funds remaining to support this program.

7. Page 8 – With all of the proposed increase in the use of offsets (Figure B) where does this leave our revolving accounts in terms sustainability going forward?

Each year as part of the budget process we provide an update on all the district revolving funds balances as of the previous year end (Figure 104) and we forecast a two year roll forward of ending balances on the funds that we utilize for budget offsets, (Figure 105). The challenge with this two year roll forward is that the exact amount of revenue, expense and offset is being estimated for both fiscal 2015 and 2016. If we use the full budgeted offset amounts and revenue and expenses trend as predicted for FY15 and FY16 then we will reduce the balance in the revolving accounts as follows:

*Athletics, \$14,000
Use of School Property \$40,000
RISE \$103,000
Full Day Kindergarten \$170,000
Special Education \$344,000*

The level of offsets taken to balance the FY16 Budget will not be sustainable over time. The revolving fund that will be most impacted is our Use of School Property followed by the Full Day Kindergarten fund.

8. Page 8 – What does the reduction in Regular Education Paraeducator and Tutor hours (Figure B) do with our remediation plans for our recently attained Level 3 status at Joshua Eaton and the District?

Our proposal reduces regular education paraeducator hours and FTE’s, not tutor hours. Regular education paraeducators do not provide instructional support as part of their job description. This will not have an impact on instructional support at Joshua Eaton or across the district. In addition, Joshua Eaton receives Title 1 tutorial support which is not funded by the operational budget, but the Title 1 grant.

9. Page 8 – Does the proposed reduction in Regular Education Paraeducator and Tutor hours (Figure B) impact any benefit availability for current Paraeducators?

We are currently working with Principals to determine the reductions. Most likely there will be reductions in hours and FTE’s which may result in paraeducators not receiving benefits.

10. Page 8 – Where does the proposed increase in the Athletic and Extracurricular User Fees (Figure B) compare us to other districts?

We selected 18 communities based on league, proximity and comparable communities used in the budget book. Eight of these communities (Belmont, Chelmsford, Easton, Milton, Melrose, North Andover, North Reading, and Winchester) have either tiered pricing or an upcharge for specific sports.

The fees for Wakefield, Winchester, and Andover are \$260, \$290, and \$350 respectively conversely the fees for Dedham, Easton, and Mansfield are \$125, \$150, and \$150 respectively. At \$250 we would still be on the low end of our neighboring communities.

11. Page 8 – When was the last time we increased our RISE Tuition? Why isn't this being proposed?

We last increased the RISE tuition in 2011. We could look into increasing the RISE Tuition for next year, however, like full day kindergarten, we have already begun the registration process for RISE for next year and we have already communicated the tuition cost.

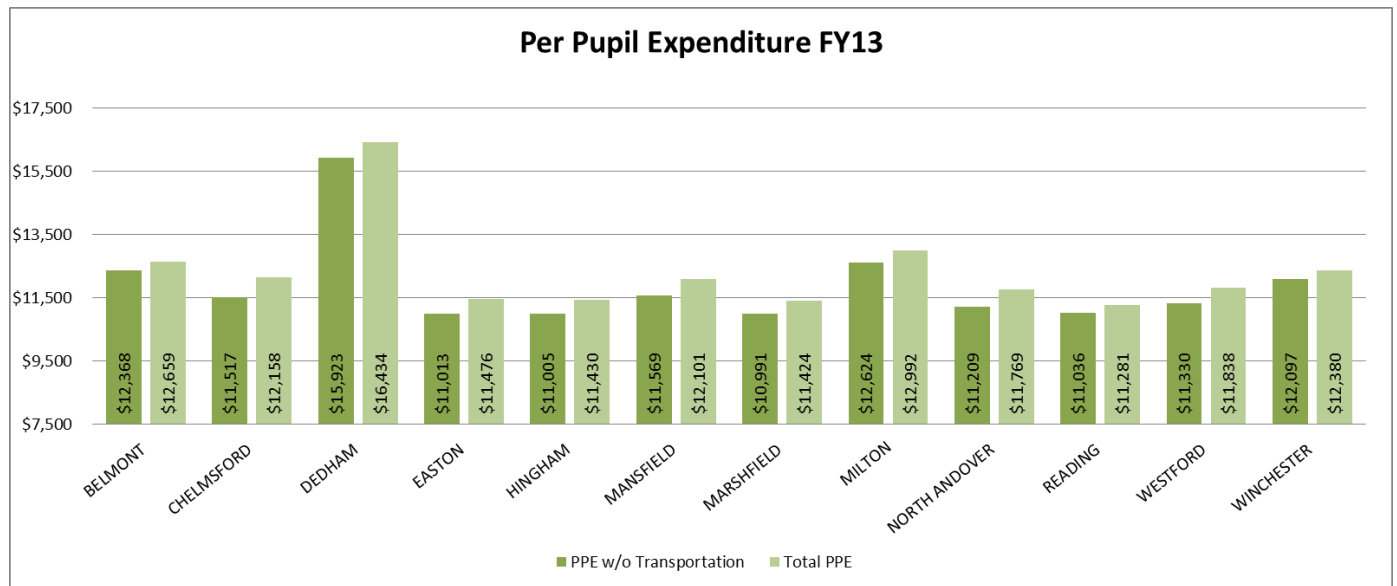
12. Page 8 – What are programmatic changes in the METCO and Extended Day programs mentioned in the narrative?

In the past we used METCO Grant funds for outside tutoring and late buses and other various opportunities for our METCO students. While we continue to direct funds for late buses we have found more cost effective tutoring opportunities for our METCO students. The increase in the offset by \$25,000 to \$100,000 restores us to the FY13 level. The past few years we have had funds available at the end of the year.

The Extended Day program has grown considerably under the direction of Sandy Calandrella. The program is run in our five elementary schools and provides before and after school care.

13. Page 10 – At some point during the budget process please provide a line item list of exactly what the State includes in their Per Pupil Amount. We have this discussion every year and I am never completely comfortable that we are comparing apples to apples i.e. is bussing included for other districts? We pat ourselves on the back every year with how well we are doing with little spending compared to others and I want to be sure that we are really spending less for the things that really impact learning and teaching. If they are in fact including bussing in this figure than I want to see where we are if that is taken out. I see our analysis on pages 52-55 but I am more interested as to whether this tracks with the same categories analyzed by the State.

In the FY16 Budget book Figure 22 charts the In-District Per Pupil Expenditure for FY13. This chart is for total spending. Using the DESE EDWIN Analytics tool we were able to isolate transportation expenses and re-calculate per pupil expenditures net of ALL transportation expenses (Regular and Special Education, Homeless). Below is an updated chart that has both PPE expenditures. As you can see, Reading ranked 12 out of 12 communities when comparing total Per Pupil Expenditures and 9 out of 12 when comparing PPE net of ALL transportation expense.



14. Page 11 – Please prioritize the Unfunded FY’16 Budget Requests (Figure 3). If we had another \$1,000,000 is this really what we would spend it on before anything else?

Identified Need	Budgetary Impact	Priority	Goal Connection
School adjustment counselors at the elementary and middle levels to provide more counseling to struggling students who need targeted social, emotional, and behavioral supports to succeed	2.0 FTE \$130,000	1	3
Tier 2 academic, social and emotional supports at all levels (e.g. general education tutors, staff trained in applied behavior analysis)	5.0 FTE \$100,000	2	3
Additional special education staff to address the growing teaching and administrative demands on teachers, the increasing complexity of the needs with which students are presenting, the pervasive and growing proficiency gap between special education and general education students, and the need to provide for more inclusive settings throughout the district	3.0 FTE \$195,000	3	1
Additional time for paraeducators to collaborate with teachers, serve as a teacher resource, learn how to modify curriculum and implement accommodations, and take advantage of professional development opportunities (two hours per week for instructional paraeducators)	\$115,000	8	2
Instructional technology specialist at the elementary level (currently five schools share one full-time specialist)	1.0 FTE \$65,000	6	1
Data or information management specialist to assist administrators and teachers in managing, monitoring, reporting, and analyzing all of the educational data available to districts and schools	1.0 FTE \$50,000	5	3
Districtwide technology leadership position to lead and manage the day to day operations of our technology and data rich 21 st century learning and teaching environment	1.0 FTE \$95,000	7	1
Increased funding for technology maintenance and replenishment	\$100,000	4	1
Additional general maintenance staff for facilities department	1.0 FTE \$50,000	9	4
Additional funding to allow for planned painting cycle of 15-20% of classrooms per building per year	\$120,000	10	4
TOTAL BUDGETARY IMPACT	\$1,020,000		

15. Page 11 – How many hours does the \$115,000 in additional paraeducator collaboration time equate to (Figure 3)?

On an annual basis this would equate to approximately 7,420 hours.

16. Page 11 – Please be more specific as to the 3 FTE or \$195,000 in special education staff (Figure 3). What would these positions be? Where would they be located?

These positions would most likely be learning center positions. Currently, we have some learning centers and programs with higher than normal caseloads. The 3.0 FTE would be allocated to schools that have a higher per teacher caseload than other schools.

17. Page 11 – Planned Painting Cycle? Has this been cut? If we don't have the \$120,000 will painting not be done?

As you know painting is an operational cost. We do not have a planned painting cycle. If there are funds available at the end of the fiscal year in our Facilities cost center due to cost savings we will do some planned summer painting.

18. Page 21 – Why are we proposing a 3% salary increase for non-union employees when the budget is only going up 2.5%? This increase should track with the overall budget increase. I

understand the rationale given in the narrative, but I still feel with should be staying with the 2.5%.

The 3.0% COLA proposed for the non-represented employees who make up approximately 7% of the entire permanent work force of the school department. Reducing their COLA slightly would yield a savings to the FY16 budget of approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000. The 3% COLA represents what the teachers collective bargaining unit is receiving. Administrators do not have steps and columns like union employees.

19. Page 22 – Please explain the increase of \$313,471 In Special Education Tuition & Transportation. I can't get the numbers in the narrative to add up to the projected increase. The net amounts for tuition and transportation noted in the narrative don't add up to \$313,471.

The FY15 Adopted Budget amount referenced, \$3,584,350 is from prior years budget narrative. The correct amount is \$3,724,795 and the difference between the two (\$4,038,269 – \$3,724,795) is the \$313,471.

	Adopted Budget FY2015	Requested Budget FY2016
330 Pupil Transportation	938,913	983,441
910 Tuition to Other Districts	245,000	147,173
920 Tuition, Out-of-State	49,919	239,744
930 Tuition, In-State	1,857,539	1,919,856
940 Tuition, Collaboratives	633,424	748,055
	3,724,795	4,038,269

20. Page 23 – A statement is made that we do expect our natural gas costs to increase in the next contract. What is the basis for this statement? How much?

The district uses Tradition Energy to procure its natural gas contract. We are at the end of a favorable three year contract and currently pay \$7.30 per dekatherm. When the budget was developed the market pricing was closer to \$10 per dekatherm which equates to a 37% increase in costs.

21. Page 37 – (Figure 19). Please explain the 40.8% increase in Debt.

The 40.8% or \$1.3M increase in Debt is a result of the Library project.

22. Page 62 – (Figure 37). Please update the data to reflect the recent contract. If we are going to put this data out there it needs to reflect the increases we have given in recent years. If the state isn't up to date then it is probably not a good idea to show the chart at all. I also noticed that all of the other charts go through 2013-14 except this one.

The data source for many tables is from the DESE End Of Year Report. These reports are filed with DESE each year by all school districts. There is a required audit that must be completed and filed with DESE by March 31st followed by a period for districts to file amendments. Final FY14 data is usually published to the DESE Dart or Edwin by early July.

23. Page 91 – (Figure 75). Why are legal services going up 269.6%?

The FY15 budget appears to be underfunded with regard to Legal Services. In FY13 and FY14 the district legal expenses were \$49,477 and \$27,025 respectively. The FY16 recommended budget of \$27,720 is in line with current spending trends. The increase is as a result of some lengthy personnel issues that the administration has been addressing.

24. Page 91 – (Figure 75). Explain the increase of 23.2% in Employee Benefits.

The employee benefits included in the administration budget are the district's matching contribution to tax sheltered annuities for members of the teachers bargaining unit. By contract, teachers hired after the 1998-1999 school year (these are employees who are not eligible for sick leave buyback) are eligible for an annual \$175 matching contribution to their tax sheltered annuity.

Regular Day Questions

25. This is the 3rd time a proposal to cut paraeducator hours has been put before the School Committee. The first time was primarily in the area of Special Education (Colleen Dolan tenure), and the second time was hours as opposed to FTE's. With the first cut those positions or some level of them were ultimately restored in subsequent years. The second time the SC ultimately restored enough hours so as no one lost their health insurance benefits. I bring this up because it seems like every time we make cuts we go right to para positions or hours. I am opposed to this as we are robbing Peter to pay Paul and these positions are important to teaching and learning and have a direct impact on students. Hypothetically I would be more apt to look toward reducing professional development or cutting back Blue Ribbon expenses.

Our proposal reduces regular education paraeducator hours and FTE's, not tutor hours. This will not have an impact on instructional support in the classroom. Regular education paraeducators provide non-instructional support to teachers, clerical, and nursing staff. The FY16 Budget has been developed to account for continued para support for lunch and recess coverage at the elementary schools as well as support for kindergarten classrooms at the FY14 levels.

26. Page 96 – It is noted that the per pupil cut will be restored in FY '17. I am opposed to anything that is cut that is not sustainable. I feel this is disingenuous and if we can't live at the level going forward then don't cut it now. We are trying to get away from 1 year solutions and this approach flies in the face of this.

27. Please re-explain the need for a 50% increase (Figure 80) in instructional technology. Is this something that can be done in multiple year steps?

The additional technology replenishment funds brings the district back to pre-FY15 Budget levels of \$100,000 and allows us to continue to strive towards a 5 to 6 year technology replacement cycle for student and staff computers. It should be noted that we currently have over 70 computers in the district that run on Windows XP and no longer receive any updates or supports from Microsoft. These computers need to be replaced, which would be one of the first priorities with this funding.

28. Explain the 12.3% (Figure 80) in guidance.

We restructured at the High School to increase a .4FTE Guidance Counselor to a 1.0FTE or a .6FTE increase. This was done last year as we continue to increase our social and emotional supports at the High School.

29. Explain the significant increases in middle school and high school curriculum supplies (Figure 81).

These are funds in the Districtwide Regular Day lines that the Assistant Superintendent of Learning and Teaching sets aside to purchase things like additional Math or ELA materials for alignment to the frameworks. We also pay for our Virtual High School and Discovery Learning Licenses from this line.

30. What is the other expense that went up 1235% (Figure 81)? If something is going to jump by that amount it should have more color to it as opposed to being buried in "other".

There are a few grouping errors that occurred within the Other Expenses line; specifically the Other, Software License and Support and Technology categories. The increase in Software Licensing & Support is our Microsoft 365 renewal which was previously reported as other expense. The Technology line was also misstated as prior year expenses were grouped with Other Expenses. The corrected lines are below.

OBJ Description	Actual Expended FY2012	Actual Expended FY2013	Actual Expended FY2014	Adopted Budget FY2015	Requested Budget FY2016	PCT CHANGE
Other	2,429	4,079	2,169	2,000	2,700	35.0%
Software Licensing & Support	77,093	132,023	93,428	96,905	109,800	13.3%
Technology	88,087	268,724	92,401	50,500	100,000	98.0%

Special Education Questions

31. Explain the 8.8% increase in Other Expenses (Figure 84).

Tuition expense is grouped with Other Expense in the Special Education Budget by Object chart and is the driver for the overall increase.

32. Explain the District SSP/TSP program director. Is this a position that we didn't previously have? The narrative mentions that the BCBA will have this as part of the position. In looking at (Figure 85) it appears that we are adding 2 positions at a total cost of \$135,000. Did I miss something?

The TSP/SSP program director is an administrative position to oversee the social/emotional programming from elementary through high school. This position will focus on providing support and supervision to the staff working in these programs, professional development and consultation. Additionally this position will provide support to families through assistance with coordination of care and trainings for parents.

The Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) will be a position providing district wide support. This position will be able to provide consultation to teams for students with behavioral issues whether they are in one of the district's programs or learning center. This position will

also provide us with the ability to have a highly trained person completing functional behavioral assessments when needed.

33. Why are we reducing District Admin and Support Services by 0.4 FTE (Figure 85)?

In FY16 we budgeted to charge .45 of the District Administrator of Support Services to the School Climate Transformation grant as she will be acting in the roll as grant administrator.

34. With the recent decrease in fuel costs is it possible to reduce transportation costs? Is a 4.7% increase realistic? I would think that a decrease or flat is more acceptable. (Figure 86)
We leverage our membership in the SEEM Collaborative to gain efficiencies with regard to Special Education Transportation for both our in-district and out-of-district students that require transportation as a condition of their IEP. We developed the FY16 Budget by reviewing the most current transportation invoices and forecasted for known and anticipated placements. This costs includes the bus charge and bus monitor charges. SEEM holds the contract and we are a third party beneficiary of the contract. Our current contract on the Regular Day transportation expense does not have a fuel escalation or de-escalation clause. This is something we can explore doing when we bid out the contract in January 2016.

35. Figure 87 – Why is the Team Chair up 87.5%?

\$135,000 of this 87.5% or \$172,112 increase is for the Board Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA) and the Program Director for the Student Support and Therapeutic Support Programs districtwide. The balance or \$37,112 of this increase is a function of contract and non-contract increases and a shifting of staff charged to the IDEA grant. It should be noted that we have restricted the BCBA and Program Director from an existing position and consultation services. These are not additions to the overall budget.

36. Figure 87 – Why are Teacher Salaries up 6.8%?

The FY16 Budget funds all salary and benefit obligations to employees per the collective bargaining agreement. The increase is a function of step, column and COLA increases.

37. Figure 87 – Explain to the extent that we can the collaborative tuition increase of 18.1% and out of state private residence of 14,558.5%.

The increase is a result of the change in the number of students in those programs combined with the increase in tuitions. The placements of these students are through the TEAM process.

Districtwide Programs – FY 16 Budget Questions

38. Page 106 – Have we seen a difference with the fill rates and quality due the change in the nurse substitute rate?

The unfilled percentage for FY14 for Nurse Substitutes was 5.7% compared to the FY15 (year to date) percentage of 5.9% through December 31, 2014.

39. Figure 91 - Why is the Director's salary going up 12.9%?

The increase in compensation was to bring into alignment with the nurses contract.

40. Please explain the competency stipends.

There are seven competency stipends that are outlined in Article XVIII of the collective bargaining agreement; Dual Licensure, Advance Technology Proficiency, National Institute for School Leadership (NISL), National Board Certification, English Language Learner, national Certified School Nurse program and a Behavioral Health competency stipend. Teachers and Nurses must submit evidence of completion in order to be eligible for the stipend.

41. Page 108 – Don't assume the same number of home games for FY'16. Especially football as this fluctuates from year to year. Please get the accurate amount and budget appropriately.

I will confirm this assumption with the Athletic Director.

42. Page 108 – I have already expressed my concern about the increase in athletic fees.

43. Page 108 – Why are officials going up 3%? This is not part of collective bargaining.

The Middlesex league and the MIAA determine the costs of the officials. We anticipate an increase and budgeted a 3% or \$1,986 increase in expense.

44. Page 108 – Explain 12.1% increase in clerical salary.

The FY16 Budget funds all salary and benefit obligations to employees per the collective bargaining agreement. The increase is a function of step, COLA increases and an increase in annual hours as the hours per week was raised from 35 to 37.5 effective July 1, 2014.

45. Page 110 – I have the same concerns about raising the Extracurricular Activities Fee.

46. Page 110 – Is there any other rationale for not raising the band fee other than it is already at \$175. My opinion on this is the same as others, but if we were to raise we need a financial reason as opposed to it's already at \$175.

We can certainly increase the band fee along with the other fees. Our intent was to align the drama fee closer to the band fee.

47. Page 111 – It looks like roughly \$50,000 is being added for the additional technician. Is it realistic to think we can get quality for that salary level?

We do feel this estimated salary will be adequate to fund this restricted position. Our current technician staff are in the range of \$50,000-\$54,000.

48. Page 113 – Please review the process for bidding the natural gas contract. A 37% projected increase is alarming.

The district has used Tradition Energy for a number of years. Tradition Energy is one of the world's largest, independent full-service energy management consultants and works with many local school and municipalities. We benefit from their experience and knowledge of the marketplace. The current contract expires June 30, 2015 and we anticipate executing a new contract in the coming weeks. This type of procurement is exempt from MGL Chapter 30B. It should be noted that we have had a lower natural gas cost for the last several years and the market is beginning to change.

49. Page 115 (Figure 101) – Explain the HVAC increase of 73%. Is this related to the projected dekatherm increase?

This is not related to the anticipated increase in natural gas pricing. We do not have licensed HVAC personnel as part of our dedicated maintenance staff. This function is outsourced. We are in the third year of a three year HVAC contract with Cooling and Heating. YTD we have spent approximately \$28,000 for HVAC contracted services. The combined knowledge that this contract is expiring and our increase in HVAC calls resulted in our increasing the FY16 Budget to accommodate an anticipated increase in expense.

50. Page 118. When was the last time the RISE Tuition was increased?

We last increased the RISE tuition in 2011. We could look into increasing the RISE Tuition for next year, however, like full day kindergarten, we have already begun the registration process for RISE for next year and we have already communicated the tuition cost.

51. Page 120 (Figure 108) – Explain the 43.3% increase for DPW Garage. I couldn't find anything in the narrative.

The increase in the overall DPW Garage budget is driven largely by the significant spike in natural gas consumption. We attribute much of the 73.9% increase from FY13 to FY14 to the severe weather and snow in FY14. Through December the DPW consumption is out pacing the 5 year consumption trend that was used to develop the FY15 budget.

	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14
DPW Natural Gas Consumption in Therms	20,787	26,844	17,651	28,833	50,150

General Questions:

52. Can we see the amount we've used from each revolving fund as a budget offset for the past 3 years (with a percentage decrease/increase for each year)?

	Balance 30-Jun-11	FY12 Revenues	FY12 Expenditures	Balance 30-Jun-12	Net Gain/(Loss)	FY13 Revenues	FY13 Expenditures	Balance 30-Jun-13	Net Gain/(Loss)	FY14 Revenues	FY14 Expenditures	Balance 30-Jun-14	Net Gain/(Loss)
Revolving Fund:													
Athletic Activities	190,368	296,054	289,816	196,606	6,238	324,465	330,305	190,767	(5,839)	349,985	364,845	175,907	(14,860)
Drama Activities RMHS	37,575	94,455	105,670	26,360	(11,215)	109,882	88,909	47,334	20,973	117,993	115,800	49,527	2,193
Extended Day Program	230,176	633,992	402,457	461,710	231,534	711,204	630,889	542,025	80,315	883,035	764,430	660,630	118,605
RISE Preschool Program	259,413	173,652	199,727	233,338	(26,075)	250,233	33,899	449,671	216,334	254,310	230,172	473,809	24,138
Use of School Property	136,197	255,511	247,954	143,754	7,557	210,369	192,311	161,812	18,058	200,715	265,825	96,701	(65,110)
Special Education Tuition	411,505	197,130	189,223	419,412	7,907	246,023	-	665,435	246,023	239,098	63,828	840,705	175,270
Full Day Kindergarten Tuition	479,033	636,901	626,759	489,175	10,142	659,922	536,003	613,094	123,919	707,048	665,000	655,141	42,048
TOTALS	1,744,267	2,287,695	2,061,608	1,970,355	226,088	2,512,098	1,812,316	2,670,137	699,782	2,752,184	2,469,900	2,952,421	282,284

53. We're using a large amount in offsets from the Revolving Funds. How much of this is sustainable, and how much is not? Can you provide numbers to show this?

Figure 105 provides projected ending balances. Please see the response to question 7.

54. I'd like more detail on how a math or literacy coach would work in the district. How is one full time employee going to meaningful impact teaching and learning across 7 buildings, and more than 100 teachers?

The coaches will certainly provide some leadership and direction in the middle level grades (for instance in connection with vertical transition); however, their main focus—especially for the first couple of years—will be at the elementary level in order to provide a consistent foundation across the district. Our goal will be to establish a weekly schedule that allows the coaches to be in the classrooms regularly (and in each building every week). They will also play a key role in impacting both teacher instruction and student achievement through their regular involvement with the teacher professional learning communities (PLCs) and by coordinating professional development during in-service times. The vision also is for our Math, Literacy, and Technology specialists to work very closely together as well—so that the natural overlap in these areas are evident and so that there is positive impact across all content areas. Overall, by working together as coaches—and by collaborating as well with our curriculum teacher leaders, these positions will allow us to incorporate a more on-the-job, embedded approach to continuous professional development that will not only enhance all other professional development teachers receive but also provide a more effective way of applying that learning in the actual classrooms with students—and consistently across all classrooms and grade levels.

55. How/when will families be notified of changes to bussing should this budget pass? What options will they be given? What will the new fee be? What is the timeframe for them to make decisions and/or alternate transportation arrangements?

We will begin communicating with families after the FY16 Budget is approved (May timeframe). If we have enough interest and deposits to support the second bus we will continue to provide non-mandated transportation. Please see question 3 for further information.

56. What percentage of overall sub payroll does the \$137K cut represent? Do you anticipate this will only impact teachers out of the classroom for Professional Development, or will the impact be greater?

Please see the response to question 5.

Specific Questions

57. Page 11 – Please prioritize these unfunded needs and show how they are connected to the District Improvement Plan.

Please see the response to question 14.

58. Page 15 - Please explain the timeline for when we'll know the amount of our federal Title 1 and IDEA grants and if/how this information might change our budgeting outlook.

We will not know our FY16 award amounts until August 2015 which is too late to change the budget outlook.

59. Page 31 - Of the cut to 7.4 FTE regular education paraeducators, please break out the percentage that represent the Joshua Eaton paras currently covering the oversized K class; the percentage that do administrative/paperwork that is not student-facing; and the percentage that work day to day with students directly.

Our proposal reduces regular education paraeducator hours and FTE's, not tutor hours. This will not have an impact on instructional support at Joshua Eaton or across the district. In addition, Joshua Eaton receives Title 1 tutorial support which is not funded by the operational budget, but the Title 1 grant. The funding for the three, fifteen hour kindergarten paraeducators for the larger class sizes in the Eaton Kindergarten will be restructured to fund the Grade 1 teacher for next year.

The reductions that we are proposing for the regular education paraeducators is for areas that are less involved with working with students. There will be reductions in teacher, clerical, and nurse support such as secretarial help, copying, bulletin board and material preparation, and other areas. We are maintaining lunch and recess coverage, as well as, kindergarten support similar to FY14 levels.

60. Page – 35 – Why are we assuming no increase in Ch. 70 funding?

We learned in December that Reading's equalize property values and per capita income grew at a faster pace than the state average and that the District was now considered over funded in terms of Chapter 70. We will most likely receive the hold harmless \$25 per student increase but this will not result in a change to our FY16 Budget of \$41,350,043. As discussed at the Financial Forum, any additional Chapter 70 funding increase beyond the 2.5% will go back to the general fund to offset the amount of reserves that will be used in the FY16 budget.

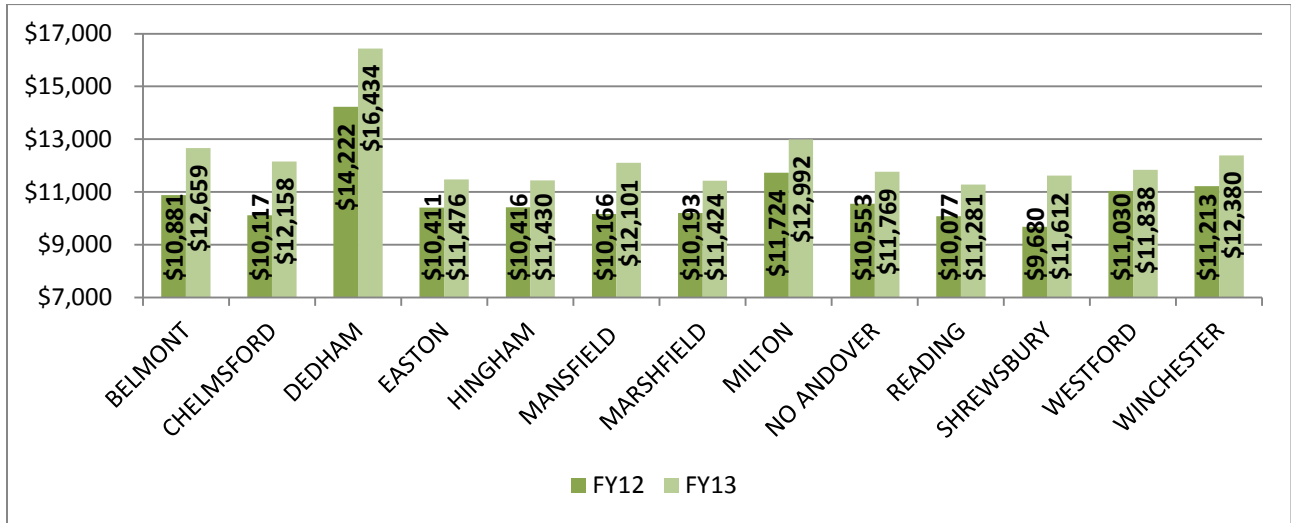
61. Page 37 – The decrease to materials and supplies is huge. It's \$36,000 more than the \$76K for principal per pupil budgets and the reallocation for technology replenishment. What will be cut to make up the extra \$36,000?

While Figure 19 does indicate a \$112,353 reduction in Materials, Supplies and Equipment this is across all cost centers and not just Regular Day. The impact of the combined restructuring of \$76K of per pupil funds can be seen in better detail in Figure 80 on page 97. When developing the FY16 Budget we reviewed three year trend data and FY15 Budget data to make budget corrections where appropriate. As a result of this review we reduced approximately \$18,000 in the Special Education Cost Center to have the FY16 Budget be in line with actual spending and future needs.

62. Page 53 – Is the 71/29% health insurance split consistent on both Town and School side?

Health Insurance is negotiated by the Town Manager with a representation of all of the collective bargaining units for both Town and Schools. All costs associated with this benefit are funded through the Town budget. The percentage split is consistent with all collective bargaining units on both the Town and School side, including retirees.

63. Page 55 – Please add FY12 numbers to Figure 28 and add a percentage change note to each town. I'd like to see how the PPE are growing over time and how our growth is or isn't keeping pace.



64. Page 55 - Have we given any thought to removing Dedham from our peer group of communities? Their Per Pupil Expenditure is more than \$3000 more than their nearest peer. The other 12 communities are all within \$1700 of each other. It would seem that Dedham might distort averages.

We can always update our peer communities. It might be helpful to identify our peer group in September. This would allow for adequate time to collect historical and current data for the various charts in the budget book.

65. Page 60 – We budgeted 566.2 FTEs for FY15, but ended up with 570.8 FTEs. The list indicates several positions that were added, especially 4.6 more paraprofessionals than originally budgeted for, 1 elementary teacher more than budgeted for, .6 of a guidance counselor position, and .4 more in secretarial positions that budgeted for. Why did we add those positions? Similarly, it appears we cut several positions from the FY15 budget including 1 middle school teacher and 1.2 high school teachers. What positions were cut and why?

The Staffing tables (in their current format) were first included in the FY14 Budget book. This file is manually updated and as such may contain human error. It is also important to note that the 'Actual' is at a point in time as we have turnover throughout the year. The .4 secretarial position was approved by the School Committee earlier this year to hire a dedicated resource to oversee our Facility Rental activities. As you may recall, there was a gap between the requested FY15 Budget and the approved FY15 Budget that required the School Committee to reduce the budget

by \$285K. This reduction impacted FTE's and the FY15 staffing tables were not updated to reflect the changes.

The 4.6 paraeducators are special education paraeducators that are driven by student's Individualized Education Plans. The additional elementary teacher was to address a class size issue at Killam last year. The middle school teacher that was cut was the middle school health teacher. The high school reduction was a physical education teacher.

66. Page 60 – it appears we are cut 1.2 FTE high school teaching positions in FY15 and are restoring them in FY16. What positions?

There are a few staff at the High School that are currently on leave. The coverage FTE was omitted from the FY15 Actual columns. They are included in the FY16 Budget at their correct levels.

67. Page 61 - Where will the \$47K/2.9 FTE cut to tutors be felt?

The Staffing tables (in their current format) were first included in the FY14 Budget book. This file is manually updated and as such is prone to human error. This is part of the paraeducator reduction but was inadvertently included on a Tutor line in the staffing pivot data. There are no tutors being reduced in this budget.

68. Page 63 – Given the relative youth of our staff and the recent contract changes, are we sure that this chart is helpful?

We do have a high percentage of staff that are receiving step and COLA increases. It might be more informative to conduct compensation survey or analysis where we compare our steps and lanes to other districts. Here is a quick comparison of Reading and Milton for a few lanes and columns. As you can see the dollar and percentage variance grows the higher the step.

	Milton	Reading	\$ Variance	% Variance
B-4	52,938	51,224	(1,714)	-3.2%
M-4	54,476	52,198	(2,278)	-4.2%
M-8	68,064	60,521	(7,543)	-11.1%

69. Page 84 – Why did we increase clerical hours from 35 to 37.5 hours per week? What is budget impact of this increase?

This was part of the collective bargaining negotiation for the most recent contract effective July 1, 2014. The increase at the elementary and support secretarial (athletics, facilities and food services) were to bring them in line with the middle and high school levels. This increase was also offset by a reduction in hours for two positions located at the high school. The net impact of this change was \$

70. Page 85 – Please explain the large cuts in athletic & extracurricular salaries and the large increase in facilities clerical salaries.

The contracted coaching and advisor stipend expense along with the budgeted offsets are reported in the other salary line for both the Athletic and Extracurricular. The significant decrease is the net of the contracted increase and the increase in the budgeted offsets from our Revolving Accounts. The large increase in facilities clerical salaries is due to the .6 facility rental coordinator position that was approved by the School Committee in August. This position was restructured from existing funds from Extended Day and a decrease in salary from the Custodian Supervisor position.

71. Page 87 – Why are we projecting such a large decrease in SPED spending at Joshua Eaton?

This location receives revenue support from a special education student from another district that is paying tuition to our district. We have increased our use of offsets from our Special Education Revolving funds to mitigate the reduction in our Circuit Breaker award.

72. Page 98 – Please explain the “other” line under “other expenses.” What is covered there, and why is there so much volatility in that number?

There are a few grouping errors that occurred within the Other Expenses line; specifically the Other, Software License and Support and Technology categories. The increase in Software Licensing & Support is our Microsoft 365 renewal which was previously reported as other expense. The Technology line was also misstated as prior year expenses were grouped with Other Expenses. The corrected lines are below.

OBJ Description	Actual Expended FY2012	Actual Expended FY2013	Actual Expended FY2014	Adopted Budget FY2015	Requested Budget FY2016	PCT CHANGE
Other	2,429	4,079	2,169	2,000	2,700	35.0%
Software Licensing & Support	77,093	132,023	93,428	96,905	109,800	13.3%
Technology	88,087	268,724	92,401	50,500	100,000	98.0%

73. Page 108 – Why is the secretarial salary line increasing by 12%?

The FY16 Budget funds all salary and benefit obligations to employees per the collective bargaining agreement. The increase is a function of step, COLA increases and an increase in annual hours as the hours per week was raised from 35 to 37.5 effective July 1, 2014.

74. Page 108 – How much of athletics revenue fund support is due to proposed increases in fees (therefore, sustainable) versus just using more of the revolving fund (perhaps unsustainable)?

We estimate the increased fee should generate a net of approximately \$50,000 as we are also adjusting the individual and family cap. This assumes similar participation levels.

75. Page 110 - How much of extracurricular revenue fund support is due to proposed increases in fees (therefore, sustainable) versus just using more of the revolving fund (perhaps unsustainable)?

We estimate the increased fee should generate a net of approximately \$10,000 as we are also adjusting the individual and family cap. This assumes similar participation levels.

76. With respect to the \$849,620 budget reductions: How much of that amount derived from budget offsets? How much is derived from actual cuts?

Figure B details the increased use of offsets to balance the budget. The total increase to offsets is \$412,215 with the remaining \$437,405 coming from the area's listed in Figure B.

77. What are the current responsibilities of the Middle / HS Transition Psychologist position (6-12 District Psychologist)? Who will provide those services next year?

The focus of the current position is psychological evaluations for students with social/emotional needs, supporting students who are transitioning in and out of hospitalizations at the Middle School and High School Levels and providing supervision for some of our behavioral health interns. The TSP/SSP Program Director will be able to support the transition for hospitalization for the students in those programs district wide and provide supervision for our interns. For general education high school students who are hospitalized we have a general education social worker who can coordinate this care. At the middle school level for students not in SSP we will need to rely on our counseling staff.

78. Why do we need the proposed administrative position of Program Director for Student Support Program and Therapeutic Support Program?

The Student Support Program (SSP) and Therapeutic Support Program (TSP) are programs designed to service students with social, emotional and behavioral needs. These students require consistent programming as they move from elementary to middle and on to high school. Additionally, the staff working in these programs need to have regular meetings to discuss student needs, adjust behavior plans and remain connected with families and outside providers. The Director of these programs will coordinate weekly building based meetings with program staff along with monthly vertical meetings. The Director will also assist in the development of parent outreach and support programming, along with coordinating with outside providers to support wrap around services. This position will ensure that consistent social and behavioral supports are in place for one of our most fragile populations.

79. How will those services currently provided by EMARC for our 18-22 year old SPED students be continued next year?

We are looking to increase our own internship and job coaching opportunities with the staff we have. We are looking to decrease any duplication of supports that are being provided by our own staff and EMARC.

80. Will the proposed para-educator cuts place an additional work load on teachers or remaining para educators?

Anytime a reduction is made to support staff who provide teacher and clerical support, there will be an impact on other staff. This reduction will affect copying, office coverage, classroom coverage and small group supervision. It will also affect the ability for us to use paraeducators to cover for teachers on a short term basis while a teacher is at a meeting. There will be a reduction of kindergarten para support back to the FY14 levels. The FY16 Budget has been developed to account for continued para support for lunch and recess coverage at the elementary schools as well as support per kindergarten classroom.

81. Please provide the budget allocation for substitute teachers for FY 2015 and amount expended to date.

Please see the response to question 5.

82. Please provide the budget allocation for substitute teachers for FY 2014 and total amount expended.

Please see the response to question 5.

83. Please provide the budget allocation for professional development for FY 2015 and amount expended to date.

There are a number of accounts that are combined to arrive at the total regular day professional development. Below is the detail support for the amounts in Figure 81.

Professional Development	FY15 BUDGET	FY15 YTD ACTUAL
CONFERENCE/WORKSHOP	4,680	2,523
PD EXPENSES DISTRICTWIDE	21,930	43,924
PD EXPENSES ELEMENTARY	67,600	7,938
PD EXPENSES GENERAL ED	7,800	-
PD EXPENSES HIGH SCHOOL	45,420	20,581
PD EXPENSES MIDDLE SCHOOL	42,800	6,825
PROF DEV/TRAINING TRAVEL	300	-
PROFESSIONAL DEV/TRAINING	100	-
TUITION REIMBURSEMENT	98,000	61,980
Grand Total	288,630	143,771

84. Please provide the budget allocation for substitute teachers for FY 2014 and total amount expended.

There are a number of accounts that are combined to arrive at the total regular day substitute amount. Below is the detail by school for the amounts in Figure 81.

		FY12 ACTUALS	FY13 ACTUALS	FY14 ACTUALS	FY15 Forecast	FY15 BUDGET	FY16 BUDGET
DISTRICT WIDE	DAILY TEACHER SUBSTITUTES					17,500	
BARROWS	DAILY TEACHER SUBSTITUTES	15,975	20,677	17,012	20,494	28,000	17,880
BIRCH MEADOW	DAILY TEACHER SUBSTITUTES	26,240	19,841	13,885	25,948	26,688	19,999
EATON	DAILY TEACHER SUBSTITUTES	20,405	23,444	23,706	25,180	31,500	22,510
KILLAM	DAILY TEACHER SUBSTITUTES	21,767	16,515	19,588	19,192	23,188	19,290
WOOD END	DAILY TEACHER SUBSTITUTES	22,918	17,255	14,526	21,662	23,188	18,230
COOLIDGE	DAILY TEACHER SUBSTITUTES	31,244	36,687	30,155	41,767	49,438	32,695
PARKER	DAILY TEACHER SUBSTITUTES	28,324	30,192	33,183	28,888	40,688	30,566
RMHS	DAILY TEACHER SUBSTITUTES	78,602	62,160	66,753	87,456	84,000	69,172
TOTAL SHORT TERM DAILY SUBS		247,458	228,262	219,121	270,586	324,188	230,342
	LONG TERM TEACHER SUBSTITUTE	102,000	84,464	138,800	140,221	145,600	102,360
TOTAL REGULAR DAY SUBSTITUTE BUDGET		349,458	312,726	357,921	410,806	469,788	332,702

85. Please provide the specific categories from the FY 2015 professional development line item and their allocations.

Please see the response to questions 83.

86. Please provide the salary offsets that are a result of the grant funding for Sara Burd and Sara Lennon

The FY16 Budget includes an offset to the School Climate Grant of approximately \$60,000 for .45FTE of Ms. Burd, Grant Coordinator and .25 FTE of Mr. Strutt, Data Analyst.

87. One thing I was wondering was: I thought the goal was to prepare 2 budgets – one that met the 2.5% which cut \$849,620 and the other which would level fund the budget. I have seen the former, which items would be added in order to make the level funded budget?

Figure B details the list of items that would be added back to achieve a level funded budget.

88. Are exit interviews a regular part of staff departure? Is salary size a prevalent reason for leaving or is it other factors? How does per pupil spending impact the longevity of staff in direct and indirect ways? How is the staff culture impacting the expense necessary to recruit and keep new staff?

We do conduct exit interviews for staff that choose to participate. Salary is one of the major reasons that teachers, administrators, and other staff leave our district. That reason has increased over the last few years. Other reasons include proximity to home, benefits, relocation to another state, and looking for new job opportunities that are not available here.

What we cannot provide in salary, we try to provide with building our culture through professional development opportunities like the Blue Ribbon Conference, a strong induction program for first year teachers, support to take risks and new challenges, updated curriculum materials and technology, and clean and pleasant working environments.

In the TELL Mass survey that was completed last year, well over 90% of our teachers stated that their school was a great place to work and learn.

89. (p.7/ 101) I appreciate the restructuring of our staff to include the benefit of a K-12 Student Support Program director and the Board Certified Behavior Analyst. Who will this director work with – teachers? Administration? Students? All three?

Please see the response to question 78.

90. Will we be losing staff who have connected with students in the process of bringing on board these new positions? What roles do those staff play now and will they leave holes that will be detrimental to the students/ schools?

The only restructured position that works directly with students in that capacity is the middle school/high school transition psychologist for students who have been hospitalized. Question 77 explains how those services will be re-assigned.

91. Are there ways we can utilize the grants received by RCASA and the RPS, which enable us to meet student needs in new and creative ways, which free up staff and support time for behavioral health in each school? For instance, the School Transformation Grant might help teachers get up to speed on Baseline Edge and enable the monitoring of statistics that catch students who are consistently tardy/ absent before the detriment to their classwork. This question relates to the budget but also to the follow up after the difficult decisions are made.

Unfortunately, we cannot utilize the RCASA and RPS grants to offset out FY16 Budget. The RCASA grant funds the salaries and programs to run RCASA, which comes out of the Town budget. We do utilize the RCASA services significantly in providing support and education for all of our students, especially in our high school health classes and with students who have violated the chemical health policy.

92. If we need to increase the fees for athletics/ drama/ band – is it possible to ease this burden by lowering or eliminating the cost of entry fees? This will help folks maintain their donations for raffles, purchase of food at events, and their and other family members' presence at their children's competitions/ performances. This would be especially helpful at the more expensive venues such as the Reggie Lewis Center...

Unfortunately, we cannot control the cost of entry at other venues. Without extensive analysis of our gate receipts it would be difficult to quantify the impact of reducing or eliminating admission fees for spectators.

93. Could there be two tiered charging at events – cost for local participant families being different from those who come from other towns? I am not sure this is a good idea given it might start a chain reaction with other towns, but am wondering if Tom Zaya can look into this...

Without extensive analysis of our gate receipts it would be difficult to quantify the impact of reducing or eliminating admission fees for spectators.

94. How much is the gym open and accessible to students above and beyond athletic teams? Is this impacted by the current budget?

The fitness center is available four days a week and there is no impact to the staffing of the fitness center in this budget. The gym is available to students in between seasons , but it not available when sports are in season.

95. Football / Hockey Helmets – do we have the most protective kind? If not, we should try for maximum protection of our students' brains – is this an expense on the horizon and will it be paid by the school or boosters?

Our equipment is in line with safety regulations for football. There are some student athletes in football who have chosen to purchase helmets that are more geared for students who have had

concussions. We also have those helmets available for those students who have suffered head injuries. Hockey players purchase their own helmets.

96. If Para-Educators are cut, who is going to do the smaller reading groups? The interim assessments of student progress?

The reductions in paraeducators does not affect instructional support. Tutors, reading specialists, and special education staff provide small group instructional support for students. Teachers and tutors provide the assessments of student progress.

97. Who is going to enable the second tier of MTSS to happen smoothly and in the classroom? I think these cuts will especially work in opposition to District Improvement Goals 1 and 3 (p. 42 & 44/45).

The reductions in paraeducators does not affect instructional support or Tier 2 services. Tutors, reading specialists, and special education staff provide small group instructional support for students. Teachers provide the assessments of student progress.

98. If this cut is implemented how do the schools think they can compensate?

See question 97.

99. Are there ways that we can cut time and spending on standardized tests and re-focus on meaningful education, and convey to colleges and further education why and what changes are being implemented and their benefits? If not now, when? If the Race to the Top funds prevent this, then when are we released from this obligation and how do we work towards not becoming obligated again?

We currently do not spend any funds on standardized tests. The only standardized tests that we administer is the PARCC and the amount of testing time for PARCC is less than the MCAS. State testing is required by law and was first enacted with the Educational Reform Act of 1993.

100. At what point should/ can our district take a stand on limiting the cost and amount of time spent on standardized testing? This relates to budget in terms of amount of preparation and support as well as for costs for standardized tests.

Please see the answer to number 99.

101. On page 11, the budget document talks about wanting a Data or Information Management Specialist but not funding this request. I thought this was a part-time position that would fall within the Transformation Grant? Was I wrong?

The School Transformation Grant is funding a .25 FTE Data Analyst position, which will only satisfy what we need for the grant. There are several other school districts who have hired data

analysts over the last few years and it has significantly improved how a school district is able to use data to improve student learning.

102. How are we going to deal with the shortage of subs combined with the cutting back of para-educators along with an increase in professional development and assessment?

Please see the response to question 5.

103. This SPED budget does not account for any unanticipated placements, para-educators or special ed teachers – how is this going to be impacted by the decrease in regular education para-educators and substitute teachers? Are para-educators going to be filling in for teachers, leaving classes short on support staff and both regular and SPED students treading water when they should be swimming?

Regular Education and Special Education are two distinct and different cost centers. There is no budgeted increase in special education paraeducators. We are in the process of requesting quotes to engage a consultant to conduct a Special Education program review to help us determine appropriate staffing levels and re-allocation of resources. From time to time a paraeducator will cover a class so that a teacher can attend an IEP meeting. We expect this will continue.

104. Offsets from SPED and RISE Tuitions are going to be used to “accommodate the decrease in the circuit breaker and the reduction in regular ed para-educator hours.” Does this mean tuition will be used to lessen the decrease in reg ed para-educators? (minutes 1/8 p. 4)

The increase in offset from the Special Education and RISE Revolving funds are to mitigate the impact of the circuit breaker loss. There is no increase in this offset to mitigate the reduction to Regular Education Paraeducators. We could not legally use a Special Education Revolving fund to support our Regular Education operating expenses.

105. What is the cost of running the summer Geometry class for high school students?

\$5,000, which is the cost for the planning and teaching hours for the teacher. Last year, over 20 students participated in the summer geometry class.