

**Questions from Board Members about the 2012-13 Budget and the Administration's Response –
Questions through March 15, 2012**

What is the difference between “combined” and “general” funds in section ‘C?’

The General Fund is the budget appropriation that the Board will vote on April 10th and will pass on to the Town Council. Listed in Section G of the budget book are the Other Funds which include the major state and federal grant funds as well as the self funded Continuing Ed and Nutrition Services programs. The Combined Funds is just the total of the General Fund and the Other Funds.

Section C-1; 5185: Is the 19.14% increase due to GWI or other salary increases?

The 2011-12 budget was based on funding 68.1 TA positions. We currently have 82.3 positions filled. The 2012-13 budget is based on funding 80.3 positions. It is that increase in the positions that is driving the budget increase. Most all of the increase is in special ed TA's (Page E-35).

How might reducing clerical staff in the schools and central office by 7 positions impact our ability to better serve our families, especially as we work to improve school-family relations? (cf. D-91)

We are reducing 7 clerical positions. Two of them are at the elementary school level. These reductions are mainly an equalization of the staffing across the buildings. During this process we identified 2 positions that could be eliminated with minimal impact. At the secondary level we are reducing 1 clerical para at each building (excluding Bristow). With increasing use of technology - especially PowerSchool we are comfortable with these reductions. The final position is a high school library para that will be replaced with a clerk at the Ed Center whose position is being eliminated. This reduction affects 7 out of 117 clerical positions in the district. These savings will support additional investments in technology and additional staff for increasing enrollments.

C-10: What are the details of the ESOL grant? Is it an entitlement grant? How is it dispersed, etc?

ESOL grants include Title III English Language Acquisition Grant, Immigrant Youth Education Grant, and the Bilingual Education Grant. These are all entitlement grants.

The Title III grant totals \$83,742. The grant is the primary funding source for professional development for ESOL teachers (e.g. SIOP, TESOL conferences, etc.) to include materials associated w/ PD, subs, and the costs of outside trainers and registration fees. We also fund education trips (e.g. Close Up Washington, college visits, etc.) for ESOL students and our ESOL Summer School Program. Any supplies for ESOL teachers to include textbooks, computers, etc. are also funded through this grant.

The Bilingual Education Grant totals \$9,430. The entire amount is used to pay a portion of the salary of the ESOL Coordinator.

The Immigrant Youth Education Grant totals \$52,731. The grant is used to pay a portion of the salary of the ESOL Coordinator as well as educational software, transportation for ESOL trips, instructional supplies and property.

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C-12: what percentage of private school busing does the town reimburse the Board?

The town contributes about \$40,000 (C-7) towards the administrative costs of the transportation office. The Transportation Office supports both the public school and private school transportation system. The actual cost of the private school buses themselves are paid for directly by the town. The Board pays nothing towards private school buses.

Please explain the transfer of positions from paraprofessionals to tutors (D-2, D-97). Is this purely a cost savings measure? How do the roles and responsibilities of each position differ? What impact will this have on the students? The principals/overseeing staff?

The work of implementation of SRBI as well as the new Common Core continues to raise the expectations for instructional support for struggling students.

Changing paras to tutors is not primarily a cost saving measure as the salary costs are a little higher for tutors, but we do save in the long range because tutors receive no pension or benefits. The main value in this shift is in the nature of the tutor. Tutors are typically more skilled in teaching to provide instructional support to students. For example, paraprofessionals may or may not have these required instructional skills. They often do lunch duty, recess duty or provide clerical assistance. They are only required to have a high school diploma. Our tutors have at least a B.A. and many are certified teachers. We get a great "bang for the buck" if you will, as many of our tutors are teaching professionals but who are home with their children and families and are looking for a shorter work day.

Tutors will work with individuals or small groups of students to support the classroom teacher. The demands and needs for intervention at the classroom level underscore this recommended change. Principals will need to be thoughtful regarding their schedules and how they use other adults in the building to meet their duty schedule

D-39: How are numbers like the additional \$12,000 determined? Why this amount?

Tom Moore has been working with a committee of WHEA members to review stipends for extracurricular activities at our schools. The pay rate for each extracurricular activity is set by contract. That list has not been updated in a while. The administration is recommending an increase of \$12,000 for middle school extracurriculars (and a similar amount at the high school D-72). While the pay rate may be set by contract, whether the activity is offered or not depends on the budget. This is the amount of the increase that the administration recommends. The final decision is the Board's.

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D-44/46: Why the large drop in salaries for Business Ed and English?

One of the advantages of the detailed budget that we prepare is that it provides the Board and the public with a detailed look into where we spend the money - program by program. One of the disadvantages is that quirks of the accounting can distort the numbers.

When we developed the 2011-12 budget we assumed that specific teachers who were here in 2010-11 would return in 2011-12. However, after the budget was approved in the spring of 2011 a number of teachers, some of them Business Ed and English teachers retired. These veteran teachers, at the top of the pay scale, were replaced with new teachers at the bottom of the pay scale. Thus when we are projecting the 2012-13 budget based on the 2011-12 actual teachers, their total salaries are quite a bit lower. That is the primary cause for the reduction- changes in the salaries of the teachers employed in those positions.

D-53, 69, 99: Are we considering how these positions and classes will be changing with advent of Wi-Fi and the demands following the implementation of CCSS?

This is the heart of the re-design of the Instructional Technology Department and its interface with Library Media and Technology Ed. Library Media staff has been heavily involved in the design work related to Common Core and are bringing technology into units at the development/design stage versus after. In addition, the proposed infrastructure changes to technology leave Library Media as a central player who will connect into both Instruction and Technology.

D-77: Please clarify the statement, "Use of Spanish decreases as knowledge of English increases". What is the Transitional Language Program?

The Transitional Language Program (TLP) is our bilingual education program. Students enrolled in TLP undergo a set program of bilingual instruction by a certified bilingual instructor. As the name suggests, instruction at the beginning of the year may be presented predominantly in the primary language (typically Spanish). Through a focus on vocabulary acquisition blended with literacy instruction and content area support, the program seeks to transition students to educational supports that would be presented primarily in English. Students continue to receive educational supports through the ESOL program until such time they are no longer identified as English Language Learners. That identification and criteria for exiting are established by the CT State Dept of Ed.

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E-26: How does our student to counselor ratio compare with similar CT districts? Is it sufficient?

Here is the data on high school counselor student ratios. Our ratio is 1:193 - very similar to other towns

District	H.S. Ratio
South Windsor	1:170
Farmington	1:196
Simsbury	1:200
Glastonbury	1:182
Greenwich	1:184
Windsor	1:205
Avon	1:180
West Hartford	1:193

E-30: Please explain the duties of the additional Bilingual Consultant mentioned. For example, where does she/he work?

This Bilingual Consultant is a Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) assigned to support students in Prek through post-secondary. She conducts Bilingual evaluations for students who have Spanish as their primary language. She is a certified Sopris West trainer. Sopris West is a specialized language and reading program. She provides consultation to District SLPs in designing language instruction for our second language learners and special education teachers as they implement Sopris West. Her office is at Sedgwick. Will get you more information tomorrow

F-27: Please explain the Utility Services Fund.

The Town established the Utility Services Fund a couple of years ago. The Board makes a contribution to the Utility Services fund and the Utility Services Fund pays the actual bills for heat, electricity and water. This has the advantage of not subjecting the General Fund to the vicissitudes of fluctuation in energy prices like we had in 2008-2010. In there is a surplus in the Utility Services Fund, then the district uses half of it to reduce our appropriation to the fund. If there is a deficit in the Utility Services Fund, then the district has two years to pay it off. It has been an excellent approach to budgeting. In addition, we are using the fund to support a part-time energy specialist to identify ways to reduce our energy costs further.

Please provide details concerning the 25 homeless students (DS 23).

Section 725 of the federal McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children and youth as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes—

- Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (Doubling up);

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- Children and youth who are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children (as defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended) who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described in this definition.

The residency office tracks the status of the homeless students in the district. That number changes frequently as the students home situation changes. As of January 19, 2012, 4 students were reported as homeless.

In the Superintendent's Budget presentation, you show that our per pupil cost is \$12,797. Could you explain how you obtain that figure?

As referenced in slide 7 of the Supt's PPT, the \$12,767 figure is the Net Current Expenditure per Pupil for the 2010-11 school year. It is not a 2012-13 figure, nor is it even a 2011-12 figure, but rather it is the audited figure from the 2010-11 school year as calculated by the state in a uniform fashion across all 169 towns. This is their definition of NCEP:

NCE 2010-11

Net current expenditures (NCE) are calculated as defined in Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-261(a)(3). NCE includes all current public elementary and secondary expenditures from all sources, excluding reimbursable regular education transportation, tuition revenue, capital expenditures for land, buildings and equipment, and debt service. The information for determining NCE is provided from the End of Year School Report (ED001).

ADM 2010-11

Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-261(a)(2), average daily membership (ADM) is calculated from the October 2010 Public School Information System (PSIS) and the 2010-11 ED001. ADM represents resident students educated in and out of district, adjusted for school sessions in excess of the 180-day/900-hour minimum, tuition-free summer school and participation in Open Choice. Prekindergarten students are counted on a full-time equivalency basis.

NCEP 2010-11

Net current expenditures per pupil (NCEP) represents NCE divided by ADM.

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2012 / 13 negotiated teacher salary was step increase only, but GWI at the top step, right? If so, what was the GWI at the top step?

The GWI for employees on the top step was 2%

What are the factors that contribute to the 2.8% salary increase?

The 2.8% increase comes from the roll forward calculation and it represents the increase required to pay for current employees we have employed now at next year's salary scale. The largest part of the increase - about 60% goes to teachers. Other large components of the increase are paraprofessionals 12% (that unit has very large step increases), Teacher Assistants (8%) - we are over budget on teacher assistants. All the other units account for the remaining 20% of the increase with no one unit accounting for more than 3% of the increase.

What part of the 2.8% does the step increase represent? What part of the 2.8% does the GWI increase represent?

Of the teacher's increase - about 75% pays for the step and about 25% pays for the GWI for employees at the top step

On tuition, can you refresh my memory regarding Interdistrict magnets: what the per pupil tuition is and why it went up.

Page 36 of the Data Supplement has a history of the ID magnet school enrollments. I had projected only a 5 student increase in ID magnet enrollments for 2011-12, similar to what we had seen in previous years. We actually had a 57 student increase in ID magnet enrollments so we are over budget in 2011-12. I am projecting 40 more enrollments next year and a 5% tuition increase. The per pupil tuition varies by magnet school but averages about \$3,700 per student

On the Special Ed outplacements, do we have specific situations that we know in March will impact next year, or is this because we underbudgeted for the current year, or is there some other reason this is going up \$400K?

We looked at this carefully. Every year we have students who leave outplacements and new students who enter outplacements. This year, 2011-12, has been an especially expensive one for the district with several very high cost (>\$150k) placements. We had 16 students leave and 18 new students enter placements at a gross increased cost to the district of \$620,000. For the other students who stayed in outplacements, though perhaps in different schools, their costs increased by \$365,000. Those are the gross tuition only costs. The district does get reimbursed from the state for approximately 75% of the excess costs in 2011-12 dropping to a projected 62% in 2012-13.

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What are some of the "other" increases besides transportation in slide # 12 of the Superintendent's Budget presentation?

Group Life, Long term Disability, Unemployment, Social Security/ Medicare - \$170,000
Utilities - \$60,000 savings
All other costs (basically all the 53xx-56xx accounts except utilities and transportation) - \$90,000

Slide 3 from the Superintendent's budget presentation has 10,150 students, slide 4 has 10,149. Which is it? Also, I thought we were at 9,892 student enrollment for the year. What is the discrepancy? Pre-school? Magnet attendance?

All the numbers in slide 3 were rounded; all the numbers in slide 4 were exact
The 10,148 number is the complete universe of students we report to the state on PSIS. The 9,892 number which only includes K-12 students educated in-district. The 10,148 includes all PreK - at the ELC, at the 4 preschools, and students receiving itinerant services at the ELC, as well as special education students outplaced in private special education facilities.

Can you provide a more detailed explanation of the \$234,000 cost for IT Reorganization listed in the Superintendent's presentation on slide 13?

This budgeted change for 2012-13 is composed of two parts. First is the consolidation of oversight of the Board and Town Information Technology Departments under a single Director of Information Technology. This increases the 2012-13 WHPS budget by \$56,000. The second part is additional investment in people and resources in line with the recommendations of the Technology Blueprint to enhance our use of technology. This part increases the 2012-13 WHPS budget by \$178,000

Information Technology Oversight Consolidation - \$56,000

The Board and the Town have operated separate Information Technology departments for many years. At the end of 2009-10, the Board's Coordinator of Information Technology left and the Board realized budget savings of approximately \$125,000 in the 2010-11 budget (salary and benefits) as this position was not filled upon his departure. Instead the Department Supervisors of Technology Education and Library Media Services shared oversight of the Board's Department of Information Technology which continued through the 2011-12 school year.

With recent retirements in the IT staffs of both the Board and the Town, there is an opportunity to consolidate the two functions (Board and Town) under a single Director of Information Technology. The Board and Town will each fund half the salary and benefits of the employee. This change will add \$56,000 to the Board of Education's budget as the 2011-12 budget did not include any funding for a Director of IT like job. That is approximately half of what the Board budgeted when the position was not vacant two years ago.

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While there is no budget reduction on the Board side for 2012-13, there are significant avoided costs. Under the separately managed system prevalent prior to 2012-13, both the Board and the Town would have each hired a Director/Manager of Information Technology at roughly similar salaries. This proposal avoids the duplicative hiring and additional budget costs from 2 people instead of 1. This consolidation of Town and Board services continues a long evolution of consolidation of service as summarized in the table below.

Consolidation of Town and Board Functions

Year	Function
1962 or earlier	Risk Management – Workers Comp and General Insurance
Early 80's	Health Insurance – one self insurance pool
1986	Business Services – G/L, A/P and Payroll functions
1997	Plant and Facilities – initially out sourced but brought in house in 2007
2007	Human Resources
2008	Grounds Maintenance
2012	Information Technology

On the Board side the Director will be responsible for the hardware, network infrastructure, and the administrative uses of technology. We are keeping the responsibilities for the implementation of instructional technology in the classroom in the revised position of Supervisor of Library Media and Instructional Technology which will remain a 12 month position as it has during the past two years. This person will also continue to oversee the Library Media Specialists.

Information Technology Enhancements - \$178,000

The Technology Blueprint identified significant gaps in funding provided for technology use in the district. The report found the district spent 1.31% of its budget on technology compared to a general rule of thumb that calls for 2% to 5% of the budget to be allocated for technology. The Superintendent's budget does not come near even the 2% threshold but rather proposes two modest increases.

The first is the addition of an Educational Technology Curriculum Specialist who will be a certified teacher responsible for assisting teachers in new and effective uses of instructional technology (software and hardware) to improve student learning outcomes. With benefits and salary, the budget is increased by \$78,000 for this position.

The second area is a modest \$100,000 increase in the equipment budget to provide more funds to purchase technology. In addition, the Department of Information Technology significantly reallocated their 2012-13 funds to be able, within the existing budget, to add \$110,000 for equipment purchases in 2012-13. Based on the current inventory of computers, servers, projectors, and printers in the district, and assuming an average 5 year replacement cycle, we estimate an annual replacement cost of approximately \$800,000. With the Superintendent's budget, support from the CIP and from E-rate reimbursements, we project a total funding availability for technology purchases of about \$600,000 next year. However, it has been many years since we got the full CIP allocation for computers, so the total funding next year may be closer to \$400,000 than \$600,000, even with this increase in general fund support for technology.

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How big is the 11 Wampanoag Facility that houses the STRIVE, Continuing Ed, WAAVE, ACHIEVE programs?

The building has 25,946 square feet.

How does our Special Education spending compare to other towns in the state?

The state has compiled, through fiscal year 2009-2010, a comprehensive database of special education expenditures from all funds, local, state and federal. The table summarizes West Hartford's spending on all special education services.

Special Education Spending in West Hartford

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Total Spending (\$ M)</u>	<u>Spec Ed Student Count</u>	<u>Spending Per Spec Ed Pupil</u>	<u>State Rank on per pupil spending</u>
2009-10	\$29.0	1,130	\$ 25,646	98th
2008-09	\$27.1	1,180	\$ 22,958	109th
2007-08	\$25.1	1,157	\$ 21,685	105th
2006-07	\$23.8	1,196	\$ 19,875	108th

Notes:

Total Spending includes local, state, and federal funding

Did the town receive any rebate from the storm outage in November?

That storm rebate was only for residential customers, not commercial or governmental