

Budget Message
Wayland School Committee
Budget Recommendation to the Finance Committee
January 2010

Introduction

The School Committee recommends that the Finance Committee approve a FY11 budget appropriation of \$30,596,713 to educate 2,675 K-12 students in the Wayland Public Schools. With the addition of revenue and other offsets of \$786,000, the Committee plans on a total operating budget of \$31,382,713 for the 2010-2011 school year. The Committee also recommends that the Finance Committee approve \$750,000 for the purchase of educational technology.

These budget recommendations are consistent with the School Committee's Budget Principles, which are available at www.waylandschoolcommittee.org/budget-principles.htm. Supporting details for the budget items described below are available on the School Committee's web site at www.waylandschoolcommittee.org and on the Wayland Public Schools web site at www.wayland.k12.ma.us/district/district_info/departments/superintendent/reports.htm.

Operating budget

Since FY07, enrollment-driven reductions and other measures continue a reworking of the district providing structural changes, such as section reductions and school reconfiguration at the elementary level, cluster reductions at the Middle School, the FY08-FY10 salary settlement with a 6.5% cost of living adjustment over three years and lower cost health insurance, and fee increases and new fees for Middle School and High School athletics, elementary instrumental music, High School parking, and transportation. The proposed FY11 budget, which meets the Finance Committee guideline, is part of this longer term view and includes both structural changes and reductions due to financial constraints.

The Finance Committee guideline

The Finance Committee's FY11 guideline was arrived at by starting with the FY10 school budget appropriation, adding \$410,000 for contracted step and lane changes and \$55,000 for projected utility increases, then subtracting \$980,000 for the school's share of town-wide reductions. The resulting \$515,050 budget reduction, the first in nearly three decades, represents a 1.7% decline relative to the current year.

Meeting the Finance Committee guideline

To reach the Finance Committee's guideline, the Wayland Public Schools propose a budget for FY11 with reductions in personnel of \$634,696 and non-personnel of \$42,433 and increases in special education non-personnel expenses of \$224,579 and offsets of \$62,500 (which are subtracted), for an overall reduction of \$515,050.

Major changes for FY11

Enrollment driven changes for FY11 include 2 additional elementary school classrooms, 1 fewer Kindergarten section at Loker, and 1 fewer cluster at the Middle School, completing the process of moving from 3 to 2 clusters at each grade level.

Shift in resources in response to changing needs in student services include increased guidance at Happy Hollow, the addition of special education (SPED) teaching assistants (TAs) at the elementary and Middle School levels, and the addition of SPED TAs at the High School in place of a portion of a SPED teacher's time.

With regard to administrative staff, a number of changes are being made including a reduction in SPED secretarial time at Loker and the Middle School, part of a benefits position at the Central Office and half of the Middle School/High School Athletic Director position, as well as the elimination of a student supervisor position and certain department secretarial positions at the High School.

Due to certain programmatic adjustments and smaller class sizes, the following changes are being made: reduced science, English, world language, and art at the High School which will result in fewer sections and larger class sizes, elimination of stipends for 9 clubs (some of which will continue without paid leadership and/or will be combined with other clubs), and fewer athletic coaching positions.

Finally, High School athletic fees will be increased, parking fees at the High School will be eliminated (student parking during the high school building project is yet to be determined), and concert fees will be instituted.

Wayland relative to its peer districts

Relative to its peer districts, Acton-Boxborough, Belmont, Brookline, Concord-Carlisle, Dover-Sherborn, Lexington, Lincoln-Sudbury, Needham, Wayland, Wellesley, and Weston, Wayland's position remains unchanged versus last year on the metrics of average teacher salary, per pupil expenditure (both 6th highest out of 11 districts), and student-teacher ratio (7th, with 1st being lowest ratio).

Future budget reduction activities

In light of challenging fiscal times, the School Committee plans to investigate the following throughout the remainder of this school year and into the future: enrollment-driven consolidation, independent evaluation of administrative staffing, investment in technology to enhance learning and to drive cost efficiencies, consolidation of town and school services where appropriate and exploration of revenue opportunities (e.g., School Choice, building naming, advertising, alumni fundraising and others).

Capital budget

The FY11 capital request is limited to spending for educational technology. The funds will be used to complete the infrastructure fiber and network build-out, complete the Teacher Computer Initiative supplying appropriate computers to all teachers, replace a portion of our obsolete computers, and potentially begin the Student Computer Initiative initially at the High School increasing student computer use throughout the curriculum and to purchase peripheral devices. Professional development expenses for teachers, along with general technology staffing and materials and supplies, are carried in the operating budget.

Concluding remarks

The Wayland School Committee recommends approval of the operating and capital budgets in order to continue delivering a high-quality educational program to the children served by the Wayland Public Schools. With changes in services combined with declining enrollment, we are able to keep the reductions as far away as possible from the students' classroom experiences in light of these difficult financial times.

The Committee appreciates the school-community partnership. Wayland has a very dedicated group of professional educators and school employees. We thank them for the educational opportunities they provide for the students entrusted to our care. We also thank the numerous organizations and individuals throughout the town who play a vital role in our schools and who continue to plan for Wayland's future.

Thank you.

The Wayland School Committee

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