



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED 1786

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

DOUGLAS B. HARDING
Chairman

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187
www.ellington-ct.gov

MICHAEL J. PURCARO
Vice Chairman

BOARD OF FINANCE

KEITH R. DURAO
DAVID J. OLENDER
BARRY C. PINTO
JOSEPH E. WEHR

BUDGET MEETING MARCH 16, 2021 MINUTES

Members Present: Douglas Harding-Chairman, David Olender, Barry Pinto, Michael Purcaro, Joseph Wehr

Present via Zoom: Keith Durao

Others Present Scott Nicol-Superintendent of Schools, Brian Greenleaf-Director Finance & Operations-BOE, Jennifer Dzen-Chair BOE, Elizabeth Nord and Kerri Socha-BOE.

Via Zoom: Sean Kelly, Kristen Picard-Wambolt, Steve Autieri, several unidentified phone calls

1. Call to Order

Chairman Douglas Harding called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Board of Education FY 2021-22 Budget Presentation

Dr. Nicol presented the budget with a power point presentation (attached). He spoke about Ellington's per pupil spending being the lowest for the surrounding towns but that Ellington is getting the best return on its investment. The original proposed budget was \$41,987,223 or a 3.38% increase. The adopted budget is \$41,633,751 or 2.51% increase. He told the Board that there is a meeting tomorrow with the BOE Finance Board to review their recommendations concerning the Health Insurance. There is a possible savings of \$113,000.

The major drivers are salaries and benefits. He explained that Ellington has a thin staffing model with a larger student to staff ratio than surrounding towns. Staffing for 2021-22 includes a gifted and talented teacher, 12 month administrative assistant for Crystal Lake School so all schools will have one 12 month administrative assistant, and a Human Resources Coordinator which was filled this year. Previously the Superintendent's administrative assistant was doing the HR work. This is not acceptable for today's HR climate and all that comes with it. Mr. Wehr asked about shared services with HR, and Dr. Nicol stated that he is having conversations with BOE on shared services

and looking for the right entry point. HR is too complicated as an entry point. The final staffing change is due to Library Media restructuring in the K-8 arenas. This will present no change to the students for their library time but will be a more cost effective way to give the same or better services. They will still be maintaining the 4 full time library specialists. This restructuring of the media specialists will be a savings of \$125,000. Mr. Purcaro stated that there is expectation that there will be shared services and efficiencies in the future.

Projected revenues – the ECS grant is staying flat. Dr. Nicol stated that the formula for this grant was revised and right sized and Ellington's numbers should go up based on student population but the Governor's budget shows it same as last year. Mr. Purcaro asked about the Covid relief funding expected. Dr. Nicol stated that of the \$227,000 received, they plan to spend \$100,000 on the PP&E purchased, \$100,000 for future use for learning loss and \$27,000 to enhance technology.

The next round of funds to be received will be used to fund unexpected and unplanned expenditures due to COVID. Next year's distance learning is an unknown at this time. It will fund summer activities they will be having for the kids to enhance the social emotional learning aspect and the learning loss from this year. Mr. Purcaro stated that funds will be geared for fixing achievement gaps caused by the pandemic. Ms. Dzen stated that the social emotion aspect is very important and that pupils cannot learn if the social and emotional aspect is not dealt with.

Salary and benefits increase is 2.72% of the total. Substitute teachers daily rate has been increased due to the shortage in order to be more competitive. Unemployment budget has not increased, they hired a company to administer unemployment claims and it has saved them a lot of money. Dr. Nicol stated that not one teacher has lost a job due to the budget cuts or reorganization.

Health Insurance is self-funded through Anthem and ACES Collaborative. The \$223,000 that was put into the reserve has enabled the BOE to self-fund the health insurance sooner than they expected. The ACES Collaborative is for catastrophic losses. This year the dental reserve of \$150,000 will be returned to the Town and then requested to be transferred to the Medical Reserve.

Mr. Purcaro asked how much the Board of Ed saves by using the FICA alternative. Mr. Greenleaf stated that they expect to save \$60,000/year. Instead of paying FICA for part time and seasonal workers, the funds are put into a tax deferred retirement account.

Mr. Olender asked Mr. Greenleaf what the Workers Comp MOD factor was and he said he had to check on it for him. Mr. Purcaro asked Mr. Greenleaf to get back to the Town's Finance Officer on the increase in the LAP. CIRMA has dropped the cyber coverage and the Town may need to purchase a separate policy for this. Mr. Greenleaf stated that the cell phone account is for all administrators. Mr. Purcaro asked that he meet with Tiffany to possibly consolidate the accounts for better rates.

Transportation – This is the last year of the First Student Contract. The VoAg increase is due to possibly more students utilizing the program. Currently there are 65-70 students being educated outside the district.

Questions

Mr. Harding asked how many Choice seats the Town currently has. Mr. Greenleaf stated that as of October 1 there were 90, as of February 2021 there are 86. Dr. Nicol stated that the Town receives

\$3,000 per student and there is much discretion on how the funds are allocated. The funds were managed correctly so that funds were available for emergency repairs made at Center School. Mr. Harding asked about the audit finding regarding the IT controls for the Board of Education. Mr. Greenleaf stated that they are working to correct these items. A lot of things cited in the audit were already being worked on and will be corrected with the new technology. Dr. Nicol stated that Mr. Collins is working on them.

Mr. Durao asked about the diversity of 24%. Dr. Nicol stated that the diversity of students includes color and nationality. Mr. Durao asked about the Media Specialists and suggested that perhaps it would be better to retain the specialists during the transition. Mr. Nicol stated that he is confident with the current staffing model. There will be reallocated resources in elementary, in the name of a technology specialist from high school down to elementary and an added gifted and talented position; it works out that there is actually a +.4 in the elementary programming. Dr. Nicol stated they are going to reset the program and actually add staff; it's a rework and a change in roles and responsibilities and he is confident that they can do this well.

Adjournment

MOVED (WEHR) SECONDED (OLENDER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted:



Lori Smith, Recording Secretary



Board of Education's Budget 2021-2022

Dr. Scott V. Nicol, Superintendent

March 16, 2021

Vision

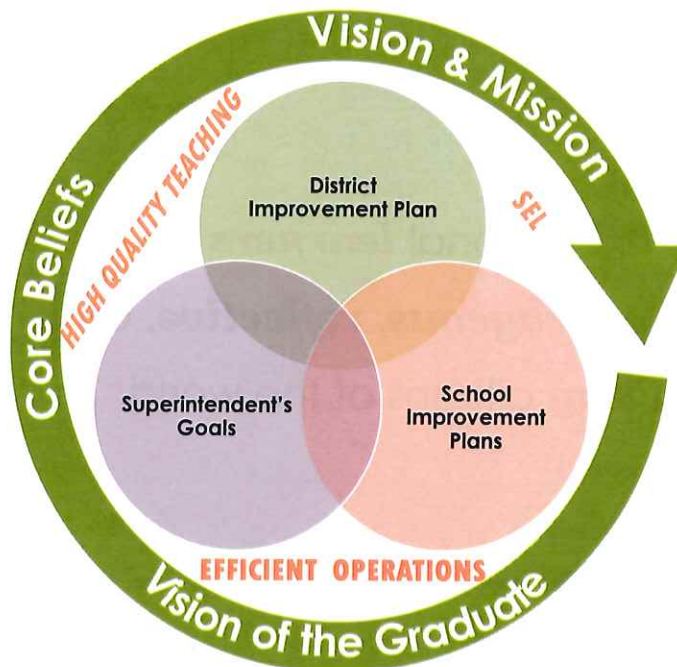


...grows exceptional **learners & leaders**
who are **courageous**, **reflective**, and
contributing citizens of the world.

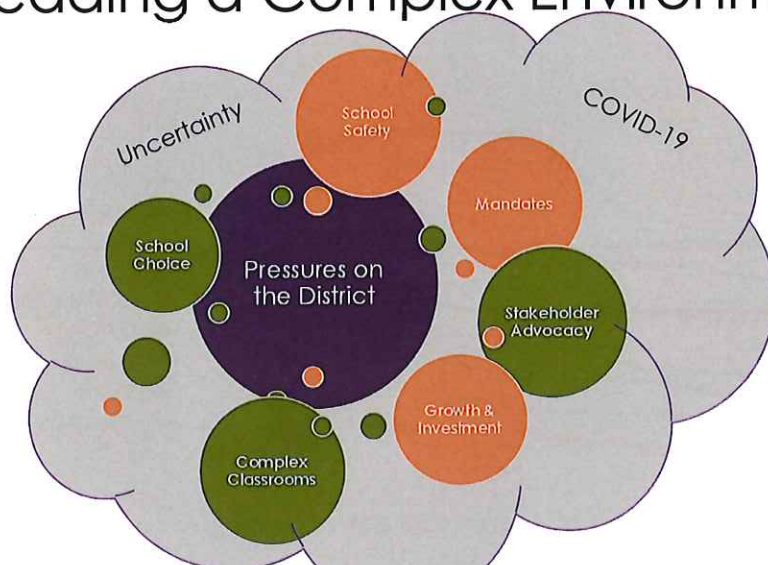
Mission



...creates a *culture of learning* that *challenges & inspires* all students on their *personalized journey*.



Leading a Complex Environment

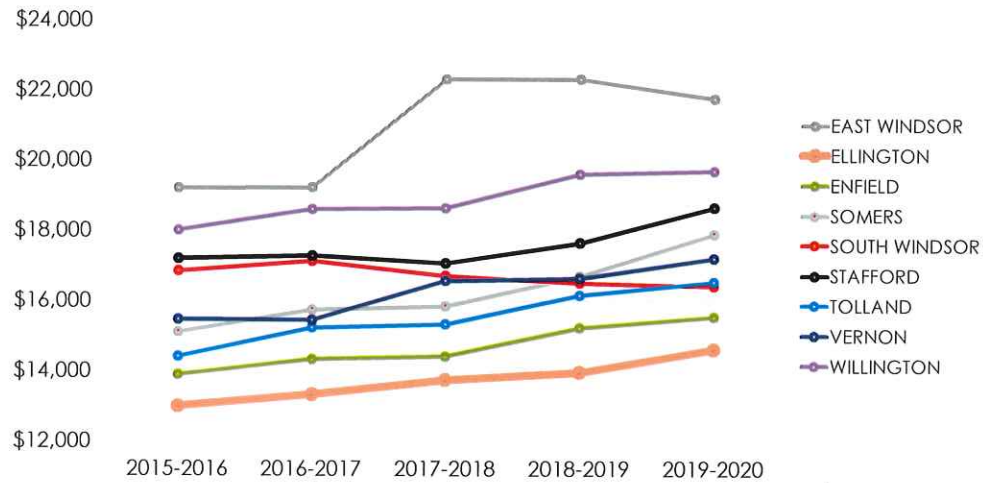


By the Numbers

2627	Number of Students
24.1%	Diversity
1.7%	English Language Learners
13.7%	Special Education Rate
17.6%	Free or Reduced Lunch Eligible

Per Pupil Spending

FY 2016-2020



Surrounding Towns

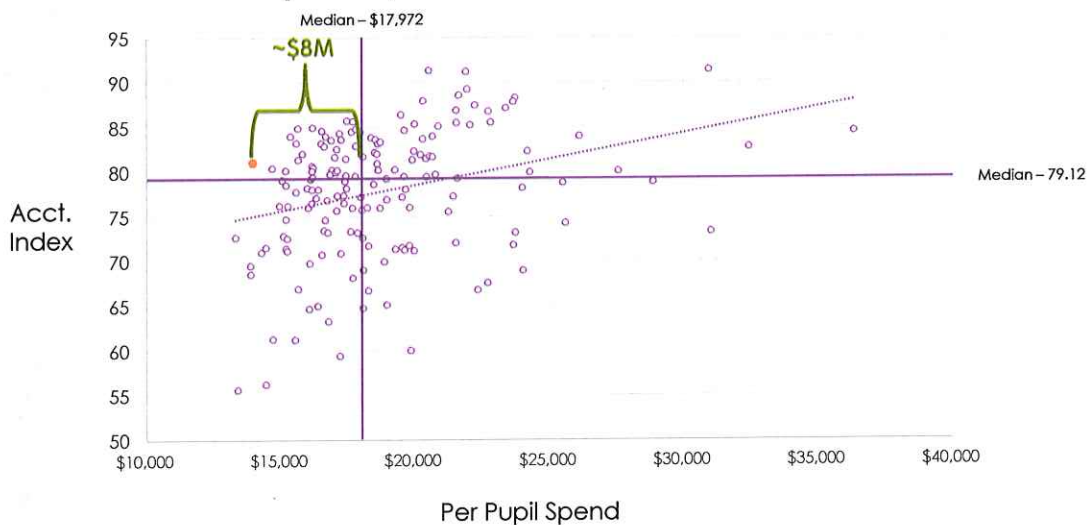
Town	Median Income	Per Pupil Spending
Tolland	\$115,718	\$16,539
South Windsor	\$107,088	\$16,408
Somers	\$105,164	\$17,919
Ellington	\$85,572	\$14,610
East Windsor	\$74,974	\$21,773
Willington	\$74,940	\$19,700
Enfield	\$76,423	\$15,549
Stafford	\$72,806	\$18,672
Vernon	\$62,566	\$17,215

< \$15K per pupil

Town	Median Income	Per Pupil Spending
West Haven	\$58,112	\$14,892
Ellington	\$85,572	\$14,610
New Britain	\$45,258	\$13,872
East Hartford	\$55,468	\$13,852
Meriden	\$57,886	\$13,744
Danbury	\$71,672	\$12,781

Per Pupil Spend vs Test Scores

2018-2019



Return on Investment

"If Connecticut has a school district that is a benchmark for high education outcomes at a relatively low cost, it would be Ellington."
- Orlando J. Rodriguez, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving

District	Accountability Index	Per Pupil (\$)	ROI Index	ROI Rank
Ellington	80.93	\$13,950	172.38	1
Wolcott	80.31	\$14,664	182.59	2
Cromwell	83.87	\$15,351	183.04	3
Danbury	72.61	\$13,297	183.12	4
Brookfield	84.76	\$15,635	184.46	5

ROI Index = Per Pupil divided by Accountability Index
(represents dollars per point, lower is better)

2018-2019 Data (No Accountability Index 2019-2020)

2021-2022 Proposed Budget

\$41,987,223

\$1,371,187

3.38%

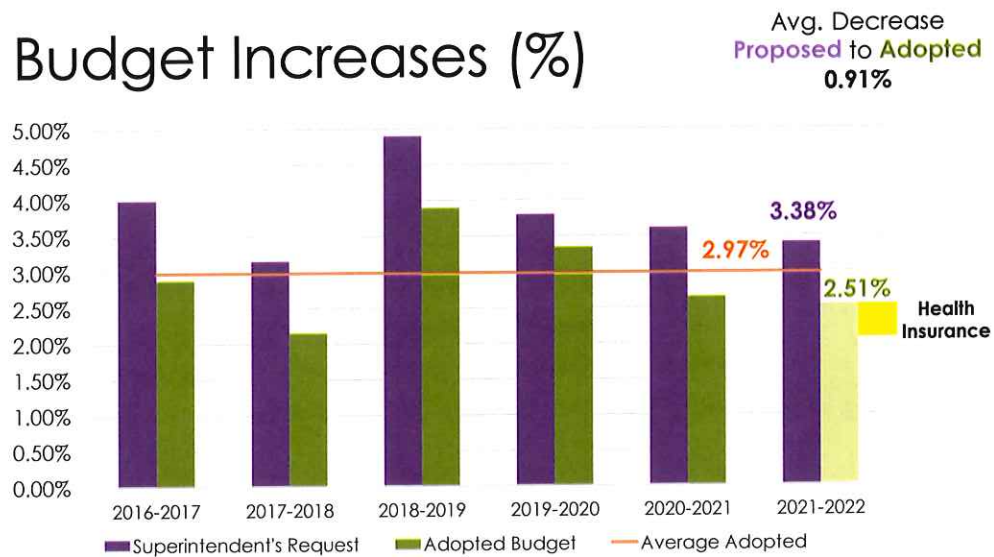
2021-2022 BOE Adopted Budget

~~\$41,987,223~~
\$41,633,751

~~\$1,371,187~~
\$1,017,715

3.38%
2.51%

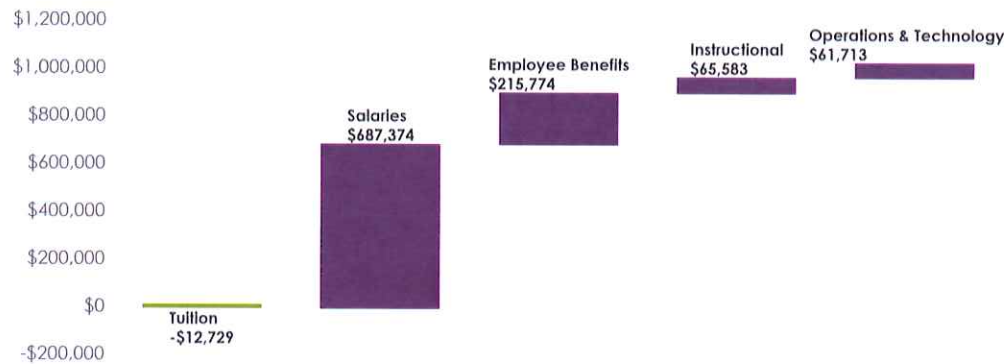
Budget Increases (%)



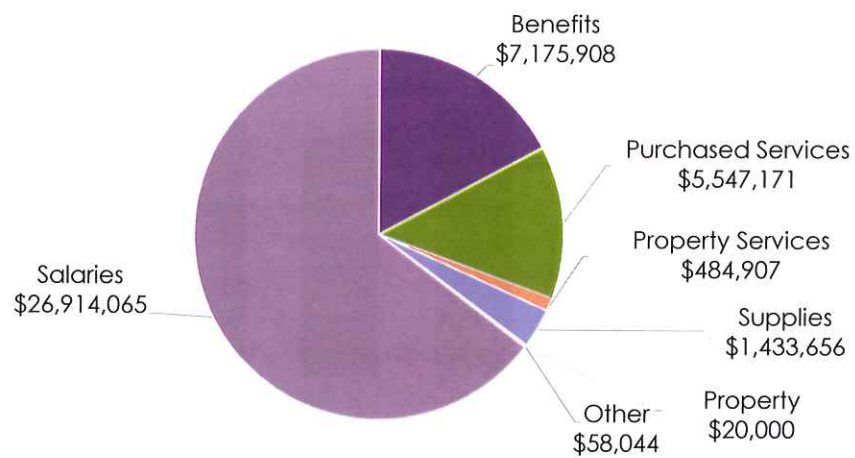
Major Drivers

- Salaries
- Benefits

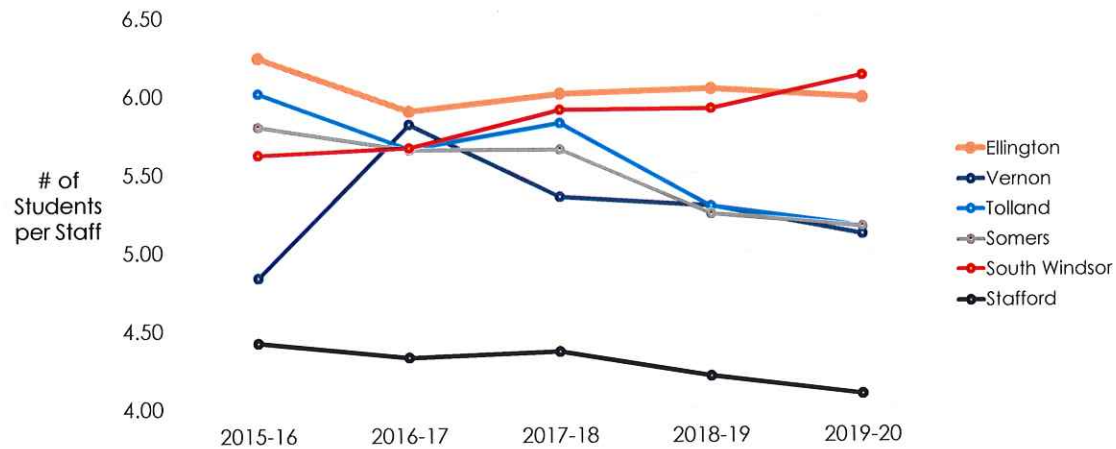
- Transportation
- Instructional



Budget by Category



Student : Staff Ratio



Source: EdSight

To meet other district's ratio

	5 Year Avg.*	# of Additional Staff (5 Year Average)
Ellington	6.03	-
South Windsor	5.80	17.24
Tolland	5.59	34.58
Somers	5.50	42.41
Vernon	5.28	62.69
Stafford	4.30	178.23

*5-Year Average Number of Students Per Staff Member FY 2016-2020

Source: EdSight

Staffing Overview

Position	Source	Cost
1.0 FTE Gifted and Talented	General Fund	\$68K
12 Month Admin Asst. – CLS (Currently 10 Month)	General Fund	\$9K
Human Resources Coordinator	General Fund	\$80K
(1.6 FTE Library Media Specialist Restructure)	General Fund	(\$125K)

Make measurable progress
in reasonable time.

Jim Rohn

© motivation

Projected Revenues

Revenue Source	2021-2022 Proposed
EDUCATION EQUALIZATION (E.C.S.) GRANT	\$9,961,214
ADULT ED	\$22,879
MISCELLANEOUS	\$500
SUBTOTAL – TOWN REVENUE	\$9,984,593
PRE-KINDERGARTEN	\$271,000
SCHOOL READINESS (DIRECT PAYMENT)	\$61,500
SPECIAL EDUCATION REVENUE ACCOUNT	\$900,000
OPEN CHOICE ATTENDANCE FUNDS	\$595,000
RESTRICTED DONATIONS	\$20,000
MEDICAID	\$20,000
SUBTOTAL – BOARD OF EDUCATION REVENUE	\$1,867,500
TOTALS	\$11,852,093

State Funding (Town Revenue)

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Educational Cost Sharing	\$9,699,780	\$9,826,217	\$9,961,214	\$9,961,214 (TBD)

Board of Finance **decides** how to use ECS revenue



MARCH 4, 2021

With billions in federal relief on the way to CT, legislators assert their role in deciding how to spend it

by Keith M. Phaneuf and Mark Pazniokas

The \$4.2 billion that Connecticut could receive under the latest federal stimulus plan – and more specifically \$2.7 billion in funds that come with few strings attached – would be a game-changer for the next two-year state budget.

Notable Accounts

Accounts

- 499 Accounts
- 71% of all accounts held steady or decreased
- Next 109 accounts only equate to 17.3% of total budget increase



Salaries & Benefits

	20-21	21-22
Salaries	\$26,226,691	\$26,914,065
Benefits	\$6,960,134	\$7,175,908
Total	\$33,186,825	\$34,089,973
Difference		\$903,148
% Difference		2.72%

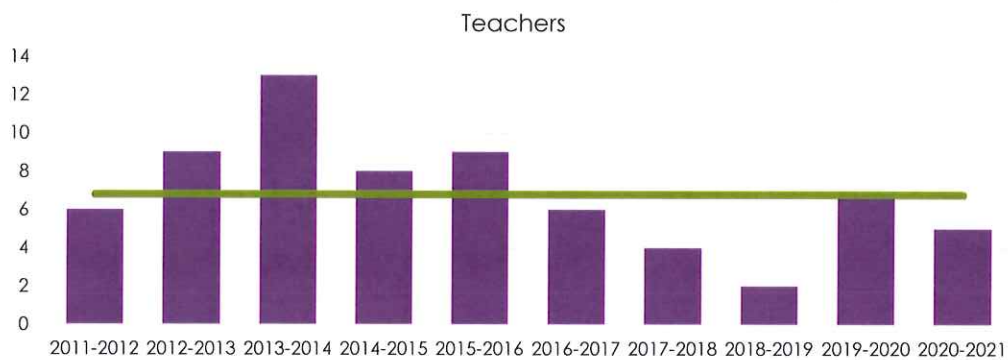
Total Salaries

	Difference	% Impact
Certified	\$325,072	0.80%
Non-Certified	\$280,084	0.69%
Substitutes	\$15,500	0.04%
Other Compensation	\$66,718	0.16%
Total	\$687,374	1.69%

Salary

- Increase offset by retirements (low)
- Large number of lane changes for Teachers
 - 12 for 2020-2021
 - Prior 3 years avg. = 6.33
- Non-Certified includes new position

Retirements per Budget Cycle



*each retirement saves roughly \$30K on salary

Benefits

	Difference	% Impact
Health	\$242,758	0.60%
Dental	-\$26,984	-0.07%
Retirement	\$0	0.0%
Unemployment	\$0	0.00%
Total	\$215,774	0.53%

Health Insurance

	19-20	20-21	21-22
Health Insurance*		\$4,757,641	\$5,000,399
Dental Insurance		\$326,984	\$300,000
Life Insurance		\$40,000	\$40,000
Total	\$4,923,856	\$5,124,625	\$5,340,399
Difference	-\$683	\$200,769	\$215,774
% Difference	-0.01%	4.08%	4.21%

*Total account offset by \$175K Open Choice funding

Health Insurance

- Proposed to move self-funded with Anthem and ACES Collaborative
- Best prospect long-term for district to control costs
- Supported by your efforts

Trends in Claims



Claims Experience

	Total Claims	Total Premium	MLR
2016-2017	\$4,074,906	\$5,273,769	77.3%
2017-2018	\$5,199,161	\$5,239,376	99.2%
2018-2019	\$4,679,590	\$5,262,477	88.9%
2019-2020	\$4,754,960	\$5,236,577	90.8%
Rolling 12	\$4,760,263	\$5,348,389	89.0%

Incurred through September 2020, paid through November 2020

Dental Self Insurance

- Two years of experience
- Roughly \$226K set aside (~60%)
- Currently holding minus 12% in allocation rates
- Plus additional ~\$10K reduction
- Returning \$150K to Town, asking to be moved to Medical Self Insurance Reserve

Social Security & Retirement

	19-20	20-21	21-22
Retirement	\$732,435	\$843,481	\$843,481
FICA	\$705,645	\$722,439	\$722,439
Total	\$1,438,080	\$1,565,920	\$1,565,920
Difference	\$204,401	\$127,840	\$0
% Difference	16.57%	8.89%	0%

Social Security & Retirement

- ▶ Direct tie to salaries
- ▶ Changing rate for CMERS
- ▶ FICA alternative in place

LAP and Workers' Compensation

	19-20	20-21	21-22
LAP	\$153,459	\$143,459	\$147,456
W/C	\$234,589	\$229,589	\$229,589
Athletic	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$12,500
USI	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Total	\$413,048	\$398,048	\$399,545
Difference	\$12,543	-\$15,000	\$1,497
% Difference	3.13%	-3.63%	0.38%

LAP and Workers' Compensation

- Shared risk pool with the Town
- Current increase came in below expected budget

Utilities

	18-19 Actual	19-20 Budget	19-20 Actual	20-21 Budget	21-22 Budget
Electricity	\$459,006	\$458,000	\$354,368	\$410,000	\$389,000
Natural Gas	\$208,946	\$196,250	\$179,228	\$208,000	\$208,000
Telephone	\$23,838	\$25,500	\$23,502	\$25,500	\$26,000
Oil	\$279	\$4,500	\$1,298	\$4,500	\$3,500
Water	\$61,060	\$54,000	\$58,585	\$62,900	\$63,000
Cellphone	\$11,939	\$12,000	\$17,126	\$20,000	\$20,000
Total	\$765,068	\$750,250	\$634,107	\$730,900	\$709,500
Difference		\$25,750		-\$19,350	-\$21,400
% Difference		3.48%		-2.58%	-2.93%

Utilities

- Keeping all accounts on pace with costs
- Saw one time savings due to reduced usage in 2019-2020

Transportation

	19-20	20-21	21-22
Regular Ed.	\$1,754,588	\$1,835,600	\$1,910,744
Gasoline	\$149,500	\$139,500	\$139,500
Stud. Services	\$441,018	\$354,471	\$389,314
Repairs	\$26,000	\$26,000	\$26,000
Tech & VoAg	\$79,084	\$83,077	\$87,272
Total	\$2,450,190	\$2,438,648	\$2,552,830
Difference		-\$11,542	\$114,182
% Difference		-0.47%	4.68%

Transportation

- ▶ Budgeting for Year 5/5 on current contract
- ▶ Increased monthly overages
- ▶ Increase in individualized student transportation

Outside Tuition – Regular Ed

	19-20	20-21	21-22
VoAg Tuition	\$57,400	\$42,400	\$35,000
Adult Ed.	\$59,810	\$65,833	\$65,069
Magnet	\$200,000	\$225,000	\$225,000
Total	\$317,210	\$333,233	\$325,069
Difference	\$27,095	\$16,023	-\$8,164
% Difference	9.34%	5.05%	-2.45%

Outside Tuition – Regular Ed

- Increase in Magnet Tuition account to offset increases
- V.R.A.B.E. re-assessed Adult Education fee
- Partially offset by larger grant for adult ed (Town Revenue)

Special Education Program Budget

- Increase of \$37K
- Changes in Magnet Special Education costs
- Implementation of RULER

Special Services Outside Tuition

	19-20	20-21	21-22
Private*		\$308,155	\$297,320
Public*		\$363,065	\$344,335
DCF Placement		\$50,000	\$50,000
Magnet		\$55,000	\$80,000
VOAG		\$20,000	\$20,000
Outside Tuition	\$729,721	\$796,220	\$791,655
Difference	\$21,725	\$66,499	-\$4,565
% Difference	3.07%	9.11%	-0.57%

*Net of Excess Cost Grant

Tuition & Transportation

- Unpredictable out-of-district placements
 - Each outplacement is big \$\$\$\$
- Several students potentially moving outplacement
- Increase in Magnet School Special Education
- Budget does not represent total expenditures
 - Offset by Excess Cost grant

Outside Tuition & Transportation

	2020-2021 Budget	2020-2021 Projected	2021-2022 Superintendent's Budget
Anticipated High Cost Placements			
LEA Placed	10	8	8
Agency Placement	0	0	0
Unassigned Placement	1	0	1
Total Anticipated Tuition Cost	\$1,366,000	\$944,348	\$1,185,500
Magnet Schools Special Education Costs	\$55,000	\$84,109	\$80,000
Unanticipated DCF & Court Placement	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000
Total Tuition Cost	\$1,471,000	\$1,236,268	\$1,315,500
Excess Cost			
Fully Funded Grant	-\$949,686	-\$672,249	-\$776,921
Unfunded Liability (30%)	\$284,906	\$201,675	\$233,076
Total Anticipated Excess Cost (70%)	-\$664,780	-\$470,574	-\$543,845
Outside Tuition Account	\$806,220	\$765,694	\$771,655
Transportation	\$110,956	\$158,052	\$149,799
Total Cost	\$917,176	\$923,746	\$921,454

Strong Programs = Lower Costs

- Program for Alternative Learning Programs (PAL)
- Multiple Ability Programs (MAP)
- Applied Behavior Analysis Programs (ABA)
- Students Achieving For Excellence (SAFE)
- Ellington Continuing Life Independence Post Secondary Education (ECLIPSE)
- The Ellington Public School Expulsion Program (TEPSEP)
- Individualized Programming for School Avoidance Students

Long-Term Strategies

- Maintain current programming
- Expand programming for high value areas
 - S.E.D.
 - Autism
- Establish regional centers to tuition students into district
- Current limitation: facilities usage

Questions

