

December 2021

Dear Suffield Board of Education:

Please accept the following as an overview of the Board of Education budget for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Next year's proposal of \$36,808,545 is a net increase of \$907,523 over this year's current budget of \$35,901,022. Although the budget represents a modest increase of 2.53%, I believe it meets the current programming needs of the Suffield Public Schools and will be commensurate with proposed budgets across the State of Connecticut.

To arrive at the FY23 budget proposal, our school and district administration spent countless hours reviewing academic, social, and emotional programming needs of our students, as well as, thoroughly assessing our operations and the personnel needed to meet the district's vision and goals. Further, special attention was given to situating our FY23 resource requests within the short and long-term objectives of the Suffield Public Schools. We believe our district sits among the very best within our region and state, and we look forward to capitalizing on the momentum we have created in recent years. With the requested resources found within this budget proposal, and the continued support of the entire community of Suffield, we believe our potential as an institution of public education is limitless.

As I have shared on many occasions, it has been an honor leading the Suffield Public Schools in partnership with the Board of Education, our faculty and staff, our families, and the Town of Suffield. The community of Suffield should be tremendously proud of its schools, as the culture and opportunities we provide to the community's children are by dint of hard work, the financial support of taxpayers, and the commitment to excellence that is shared by all. I am already looking forward to experiencing what school year 2022-2023 will bring.

The following synopsis will provide you with considerations for the 2022-2023 budget proposal.

Budget Drivers

Key Budget Initiatives

As we look into the future, our key initiatives in the 2022-2023 budget reflect the most current trends happening in schools across the country. This budget proposal enhances our ability to provide new opportunities in athletics, academics, social emotional programming, and custodial support.

- 1.0 FTE Primary Teacher (FTE Reduction in MIS PE position)
- 1.0 FTE Career and Technical Education Teacher (FTE Reduction in SMS Special Education)
- 0.5 FTE Instrumental Music Teacher (MIS)
- 0.5 FTE Custodial Support
- 0.5 FTE Financial Assistant
- EASTCONN Psychological and Behavioral Support Services
- Teachers College Readers and Writers Project Professional Development

Wage and Benefit Increases:

In May 2021, the Board of Education collaborated with the Board of Finance in setting a 0% increase to the Board of Education budget. Although we anticipate a slight enrollment decline of 62 students in 2022-2023, our fixed operating costs that substantiate our most significant drivers cannot be easily adjusted due to contractual obligations. The budget drivers that represent the greatest share of our overall proposed 2.53% increase are the increases to our negotiated contracts and the projected increase to our self-funded health insurance costs. This represents \$24,293,750 (salaries) and \$6,975,716 (benefits) of the budget proposal.

Negotiated Wage Increases without Increment:

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|--|------|
| • SEA (Teachers) | TBD |
| • SAG (Administrators): | 2.0% |
| • CHCA (Nurses): | TBD |
| • Teamsters Local 671 (Para, Custodians, Secretaries, Academic Support): | 2.5% |
| • CILU Local 222, Unit 38 (Food Service): | 2.0% |

Health Insurance Collaborative w/Town:

- Increase: 10%

Personnel Addition and Restructuring

Our efforts to meet the needs of our current student population and district objectives provide the reasoning for the following projected staff changes for the 2022-2023 school year. In our efforts to minimize a significant budget increase and create efficiencies, the following positions will be added or repurposed to provide additional services that are in alignment with school district objectives. We will be eliminating an elementary Physical Education Teacher at McAlister Intermediate School. This will result in each school having one Physical Education teacher. We are proposing an additional Primary Teacher; however, enrollment trends will determine whether this position is necessary. We are proposing a 0.5 FTE Instrumental Music Teacher at McAlister Intermediate School. This will expand the instrumental music program to Grade 4. In terms of the secondary schools, we will be eliminating a middle school Special Education Teacher due to special education student enrollment. Due to student interest in manufacturing classes and career pathway opportunities, we are proposing the addition of a Career and Technical Education Teacher at Suffield High School. The addition of a 0.5 FTE Custodial position is to provide support at Suffield High School to ensure that there is more than one Custodian on staff during the school day. This is our largest facility with the greatest number of students; however, the daytime custodial team remains the same as our other three schools.

In terms of Central Office succession planning, we are proposing a 0.5 FTE Financial Assistant to support Accounts Payable, Payroll, Health Benefits, and additional Finance Department functions. This position will phase-out through the attrition within our Finance Department.

The following represent the proposed personnel changes to the 2022-2023 budget proposal.

Budget Increase Personnel Changes

- 0.5 FTE Instrumental Music Teacher (MIS)
- 0.5 FTE Custodial Support
- 0.5 FTE Financial Assistant

Budget Neutral Personnel Changes

- 1.0 FTE Primary Teacher (FTE Reduction in MIS PE position)
- 1.0 FTE Career and Technical Education Teacher (FTE Reduction in SMS Special Education)

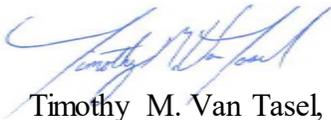
Budget Book

With this transmittal, you are receiving a formal budget book. The purpose in creating this budget book is to provide an organized, transparent and comprehensive resource to Board of Education members about our current and projected revenues and expenses. Further, the budget book will serve as an accurate point of reference regarding our current spending projections. The format provides the answers to many questions that Board members may have or receive from community members seeking greater clarity around our fixed and variable operating expenditures.

In preparing this book, school and district leadership spent months reviewing our current programs and services with district staff. To arrive at the next year's proposed increase has been a lengthy and detail-oriented process. Both formal and informal discussions have been occurring at all levels, which gives me great confidence that the request is in alignment with the needs of the district. Please take the next several weeks to review the information in this book and note any questions you may wish to present during our January workshops.

In conclusion, as we enter into another collaborative budget cycle, I would like to begin by thanking the entire Board of Education for the many hours you will devote to fulfilling our budget responsibilities. Additionally, I view the proposal you are receiving today as the beginning to a very collective, informative, and strategic planning process that will ensure our schools remain an attractive asset to our entire community.

Sincerely,



Timothy M. Van Tassel, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools