

ADDITIONAL RTM EDUCATION QUESTIONS-JANUARY 19, 2021

<p>If the 200 level at Darien High School has been eliminated, what will be the impact of a loss of the team teaching on students who may struggle? What could be the impact on instruction and assignments in the 300-level class?</p>	<p>Students who need support will not be left behind at DHS. Through a combination of increasing lab opportunities and reducing class sizes, we are confident that students will receive the instructional support necessary for success.</p>
<p>At MMS what is the tipping point for a reduction of the number of teams under the team model?</p>	<p>In order to reduce a team at MMS, we would need to see a decrease of approximately 70 students in one grade level.</p>
<p>At MMS when staff is added for a "bubble class" should it not be reduced when the enrollment declines?</p>	<p>There is flexibility within the teachers' contract that allows teachers on teams with a "bubble class" to teach an extra section. However, when all teachers are teaching an extra section, it is challenging to schedule the building.</p>
<p>Did the Milone and MacBroom study take into account the exodus of families from NY due to COVID 19?</p>	<p>Yes, they did look at recent housing sales as a result of an exodus of families from the NY area to CT.</p>
<p>Might parent volunteers be trained to work as lunch monitors or is the \$32,000 well spent here?</p>	<p>While volunteers could be trained to work as lunch monitors, it is more likely that the elementary schools will have consistent coverage for the lunch periods if we pay monitors to work for those hours.</p>
<p>Do teachers have adequate instructional para help?</p>	<p>Building principals schedule instructional paraprofessionals based on need. An effective teacher in every classroom is the greatest indicator of a child's success; however, we understand paras are greatly valued by classroom teachers. Continuing to maintain reasonable classes sizes helps mitigate the need for instructional paraprofessionals.</p>
<p>Do you need start- up funds for Open Choice even if the program will not begin for 21 -22? Are these students included in the enrollment numbers? Will siblings of students who begin in Kindergarten be enrolled? How will the District decide what school they will attend?</p>	<p>There are no start up costs for Open Choice. The proposed Open Choice students are not included in enrollment figures, which is why it is proposed to be added in the elementary schools (Hindley, Holmes, Ox Ridge) , which would not tip a class section should Open Choice become available to Darien.</p>

<p>In the recent past, only one elementary school offered intramurals. Were funds available to be equally allocated to all of the elementary schools? Is the money only going to one school? Please explain.</p>	<p>Yes, funds are available for all elementary schools to run intramurals as shown in RC11, however only Holmes ran intramurals through the district as there was not a district staff interested in running intramurals for the other schools. Intramurals previously were run by Darien After School instead.</p>
<p>Why is maintenance not charged to community organizations who rent our facilities?</p>	<p>The district charges a building use fee, which is intended to cover the cost of maintenance plus the cost of staff time to be in the building. The district does not charge the YMCA or Boys/Girl Scouts.</p>
<p>If families must pay for offsite facilities, should families pay for expenses associated with fields and gyms?</p>	<p>This would be a BOE decision as to whether or not they would want to implement pay for participation.</p>
<p>Have you worked with a consultant or security audit?</p>	<p>Last year, we scheduled an audit to be conducted by CIRMA's safety consultant in March of 2020. COVID has put this process on hold. The OX Ridge Building Committee worked with a security consultant.</p>
<p>Do you have enough IT help considering new software and K -2 Chrome books as well as the need for help with remote learning, should it continue?</p>	<p>The district does have the highest ratio of technical support to enrollment in the DRG, which is why we have recommended adding one additional technician to support the department. This technician was added during COVID and we are recommending it remain in the budget. Given the growth in devices and technology in the classroom ensuring technology is properly staffed is vital to ensuring properly functioning devices in the classroom. While we believe two technicians are needed, we have only put forth one coupled with additional repair funds to outsource the repair of devices to be fiscally conscious of the operating budget.</p>
<p>Can you describe the STEP movement and Column Change? Is there an average of the STEPS? Can we get a staff profile? Do we have a veteran staff with many teachers at the top steps or a newer staff? How long does it take for a teacher to become tenured? What does teacher evaluation involve?</p>	<p>3% of Teachers are in the BA Column, 53% are in the MA Column, 7% are in the MA+15 Column, 24% are in the MA+30 Column, 9% are in the MA+60 Column and 3% are in the Doctorate Column. 29% of all teachers are at the top step in their respective column while 36% of teachers are in Step 3 through Step 10 and 35% are between step 11 and 18. It takes teachers four years to become tenured unless they are fast-tracked which results in two years (teachers who have previously received tenure in another Connecticut district obtain tenure in two years)..</p>
<p>What are you doing to improve recruitment ?</p>	<p>While we are always looking for ways in which to improve our recruitment plan, we have had much success attracting excellent candidates for all of our openings, including those in shortage areas. We hope that the inclusion of a Minority Teacher in Residence will increase our ability to</p>

	<p>attract teachers of color. In addition, we are participating in a statewide minority recruitment consortium through CES in Trumbull. Our teacher salary schedule, relatively lower cost of insurance and continued commitment to professional development will all support our recruitment efforts. We have also reached out to partner with some of the teacher preparatory institutions in New York with the hope that they will place interns with us. Successful student internships can result in effective hiring.</p>
<p>The teacher in residence proposal is well intentioned and we like the spirit of the program, but how the program is administered, including definition of responsibilities, will be critical to its success. Please give some thought to this. Can you give examples of the work CREC has done with this program ?</p>	<p>CREC has spent much time and many resources developing this program. The program has already proven its effectiveness over the past two years, graduating 11 candidates for the 2019-20 school year and with the expectation that 15 additional teacher residents will graduate at the end of the current school year. To date, most of those teachers have been placed in districts in northern Connecticut. We expect that the program will continue to be successful as it transitions to lower Fairfield County. The entire Central Services staff is committed to the success of this program and will support our building principal, mentor teacher and the Teacher in Residence to ensure the success of the program.</p>
<p>Can you provide information on how the increase in staffing (including administrators and teachers) over the past five years aligns with the increase in enrollment?</p>	<p>Over the past five years, additions in staffing have been made to support the development and implementation of curriculum (Department Chairs), the implementation of a robust SRBI program at the elementary schools (SRBI specialists) the social and emotional health of our students (guidance counselors, psychologists and the creation of Fitch Academy). At the same time, we have reduced staff at the elementary level due to enrollment decreases and have also decreased staff at the middle and high schools because of efficiencies negotiated in the most recent teachers' contract.</p>
<p>We note that better oversight may be provided by an AP, but is contact with students diminished? Will family support now provided by the SESS facilitators be diminished?</p>	<p>Contact with students will not be diminished and, in fact, will be enhanced since these new assistant principals will be visiting all classrooms while they support teachers. Family support will be enhanced with the addition of these assistant principals since they will now interact with families in a variety of situations, including the support of students and families in the special education process.</p>
<p>Who is responsible for enforcement and the present model of SESS facilitators?</p>	<p>The building administrators and the special education elementary program director are responsible for monitoring IEP implementation and supervision and evaluation of the SESS facilitators. This will not change with the new model.</p>
<p>Who will monitor student individual outcomes in the AP model?</p>	<p>Building level administrators. This will not change with the new model.</p>

<p>Do Consultant costs in RC 24 here represent more / better service or higher prices?</p>	<p>The increase is largely attributed to recovery services.</p>
<p>Can we have a breakdown of the number of outplaced in public schools and in private placements?</p>	<p>98% of outplaced students are in non public schools, while 2% of outplaced students are in public schools.</p>
<p>The Holmes parking lot is in the budget for 2021 -2022 but is considered a level 3. When will the project be done?</p>	<p>As a level three it would be looked at for the 2023-2024 school year. This project would be appropriate to tie into the portable removal project at Holmes.</p>