Greenwich Board of Education Follow Up Questions
Following November 2, 2023 Meeting

Laura Kostin

1. **During the September Curriculum meeting, one of the "challenges" was funding for textbooks and resources under the heading of GHS/NGSS. Does this operating budget remedy this concern?**
   Yes.

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2. **Similarly, during the September Curriculum meeting, under the GHS Math heading, one of the "challenges" was budget constraints for textbooks and materials. Does this operating budget meet this need?**
   Yes.

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3. **I would not, under any circumstances, change the PreK ratio of typical peers to students with IEPs. I think the current 9/6 student ratio is extraordinarily difficult. I would even advocate to have it rolled back to what it previously was at 11/4.**
   It is good to note that the state expectation is no lower than 50/50. Many of the districts around Greenwich do have a higher classroom size than 15. It is just an option should the BOE need to consider them. The BOE Budget Committee has asked for a comparison to peer districts and the Administration is working on this.

Michael-Joseph Mercanti-Anthony

1. **Does the 14% special ed rate include 504?**
   No, this number only represents students identified under IDEA

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2. **How many of the FTE additions are actually new hires and how many are transfers from other lines (ARP and IDEA)?**
   2.0 were hired September 2023 (new positions at Old Greenwich and Glenville)
   2.0 are the current FY24 Interim (ISD and Riverside shared teacher, psychologist)
   3.0 Social Workers from ARP
   1.0 Special Educ Co-Teach program at Cos Cob; new position per Action Plan
   1.5 PreK Teachers - new for growth and legislative change
   3.0 Special Ed from ARP (Must retain due to growth of 200+ students)
   2.0 Special Ed from IDEA Grant (grant not increasing at the same rate as salaries)
   1.0 Psychologist - ARP (must retain due to growth)
   .5 Speech - New for PreK growth
   1.0 Financial Analyst - ARP (there is a planned reduction for savings in positions)

   To Offset:
   **Reductions of 1.0 in K-5, 3.0 in middle school, 2,0 at GHS)

3. **Is our Medicaid reimbursement work completed by a district employee or outside consultant? If an employee, does this position include other functions?**
   Our Medicaid is supported by a District employee. The position is an Accounting and Medicaid Clerk for the SESS department. We can draw down revenue to help cover associated expenses. In FY25, we will fully take the position off general fund operating so it can be covered by the revenue the program generates.

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4. **What makes up the 3.1% reduction in administrative costs?**
   The reduction of $225,086 is administrative, not administration. Administrative includes all expenditures of administrative functions including Administration, Business Operations, Purchasing, Safety and Security, Human Resources, Print Shop, and Communications. The print shop is being outsourced currently, and there is a reduction on that salary line. We also eliminated the SESS Accounting & Medicaid Clerk so that the revenue associated can fully cover the expense of the position. In addition, there are minor adjustments across other lines to make up the difference.

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5. **Why are we doubling our printing budget? (line 52020)**
   This increase has to do with the outsourcing of the print shop. There are off-sets in other places such as supplies and salary.

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6. **What office PD are we looking to purchase (line 52157)**

   For the Object Code 52157 Office Services-PD, it is for annual memberships in professional organizations. The total District budget is $26,275. The 3 biggest areas (total for $21,300) are as below.
   1. Special Education district program $5,000. This pays for the Urban Collaborative district membership as well as memberships for CT State Special Education Administrators (CASE) memberships.
   2. Math district program $7,000. That money is allocated to pay for NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) memberships for Elementary Math Interventionists and Middle School Math teachers. Membership provides us with access to the latest math instructional practices and resources to support math instructions.
   3. Dundee school $9,300. This pays the annual IB membership. FY2023-24 IB membership fee is $8,946.

   The YTY increase in Object Code 52157 is also due to the Accounting change to classify the Professional Development expense between 52150 and 52157. The total of the two Object Codes are $1,098,568 and $1,107,40 for FY2024 and FY2025 respectively.

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7. **How does the recreation and playground line (53200) differ from the capital line and Parks and Recs budget?**
   This is a broad category for grounds maintenance. It is specific to annual maintenance work exterior to the building. Per the 2016 MOU with Parks, DPW, and GPS, there are some ground maintenance items the BOE is responsible for. We budget for capital improvements to our grounds, Parks maintains all the Playgrounds and courts.

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8. **To be clear, nothing in the $4,137,470 anticipated revenue is offset in our $194,227,990 total budget?**
   Total GPS Revenue expected is $4,137,470. Of that revenue, $3,783,470 flows directly to the Town of Greenwich. Each percentage point increase or decrease in the budget is approximately $1.8 million. In essence, the $3,783,470 makes the actual budget request close to 4.5%. In most towns, funding, like Excess Cost and Educational Cost Sharing, flow directly to the school district, as well as, other public school revenue.

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9. **Why are we projecting significantly less lunch program reimbursements? Is this a reflection of families not turning in paperwork?**
   This is a direct result of the federal program during COVID that is no longer active. When lunches were free, there was a very high reimbursement rate because the number of meals served was very high. Traditionally, the food service program must be supplemented from the Town of Greenwich.

   Note on page 190 of the budget book the actuals going back to 2020-2021 onward, and the Contribution from the General fund saw an artificial increase in Net Revenue/ (Expense) because of the reimbursements. This was unprecedented. In 2024-2025, the BET also moved the food service capital into the food service budget which will also cause a shortage.

General Questions

What are the class size guidelines utilized in this region for K-5 ?

District	Policy or Guidelines	K	1	2	3	4	5
Westport	Guidelines	22	22	22	25	25	25
Darien	Guidelines	18-22	18-22	19-23	19-23	20-24	20-24
Wilton	Guidelines	18-25	18-25	20-30	20-30	20-30	20-30
Weston	Guidelines	18-20	18-20	24	24	24	
Ridgefield	Guidelines	21	21	24	25	25	25
ER 9	Guidelines	17-18	17-18	18-19	20-22	20-22	20-22
New Canaan	Guidelines	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	20-24	20-24
Greenwich	Guidelines	21	21	24	24	26	26