

**Board of Education Questions
January 18, 2024**

<p>What is our DRG comparison for ELP type programs in terms of number of days?</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th align="center">District</th> <th align="center">Days Per Week</th> <th align="center">Hours Week</th> <th align="center">Tuition</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Weston</td> <td align="center">5 Days</td> <td align="center">22.75</td> <td align="center">\$7,315</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New Canaan</td> <td align="center">5 Days</td> <td align="center">17</td> <td align="center">\$6,150</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Westport</td> <td align="center">5 Days</td> <td align="center">25</td> <td align="center">\$11,907</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wilton</td> <td align="center">5 Days</td> <td align="center">20.75</td> <td align="center">\$8,100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ridgefield</td> <td align="center">5 Days</td> <td align="center">12.5</td> <td align="center">\$2,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Darien Proposed</td> <td align="center">5 days</td> <td align="center">19</td> <td align="center">\$11,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Darien Current</td> <td align="center">4 Days</td> <td align="center">16</td> <td align="center">\$7,630</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	District	Days Per Week	Hours Week	Tuition	Weston	5 Days	22.75	\$7,315	New Canaan	5 Days	17	\$6,150	Westport	5 Days	25	\$11,907	Wilton	5 Days	20.75	\$8,100	Ridgefield	5 Days	12.5	\$2,000	Darien Proposed	5 days	19	\$11,500	Darien Current	4 Days	16	\$7,630
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<p>Is 1 building substitute for ELP sufficient and how many hours would be expected that the building sub would be covering for teachers due to evaluations?</p>	<p>One building substitute is sufficient given the program is increasing 3 hours per week (4 hours for specialized programming).</p> <p>Related service providers, classroom teachers, and the building substitute may be utilized to cover classes when evaluations cannot be scheduled when students are not in attendance (Monday through Thursday 2pm-3pm and Friday 1pm to 3pm).</p>																																
<p>Can ELP 5 days per week wait until FY26?</p>	<p>We continue to recommend a five day program. To support a transition period we could offer for the 2024-2025 school year a transition period where parents have the option to choose either 4 or 5 day week. If this option is selected we would have to make the following:</p> <p>4 Day per week posted tuition: \$7,975 (tentative price posted on the website) 5 Day per week posted tuition: \$11,500</p> <p>Anticipated Tuition Reduction: \$52,875</p> <p>This loss in tuition would bring the budget from 6.19% to 6.24%</p> <p>If this was selected we would have to work with our payment provider web solutions to help update the platform at a cost of \$2,500.</p>																																

<p>Can parents be given the option of 4 days or 5 days for ELP for the 2024-2025 school year?</p>	<p>We continue to recommend a five day program. To support a transition period we suggest offering the option to choose either 4 or 5 day week for the 2024-2025 school year. See above.</p>
<p>Please share the application for ELP SY 2024-2025? Also, share communications regarding the program/registration.</p>	<p>https://www.darienelp.org/elp-application/</p> <p><u>Date of Distribution: January 5, 2024</u></p> <p>Dear Parents, Congratulations!!</p> <p>Your child is accepted into ELP for the 2024-2025 School Year.</p> <p>Please respond to this email by January 12, 2024 indicating if you would like to take the ELP slot. The \$800 deposit will be due by February 15, 2024.</p> <p>Current ELP is 16 hours Monday-Thursday 9:30 to 1:30. Proposed Tuition is \$7,975.00</p> <p>Last night at the Board of Education Meeting, the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Addley proposed a 5-day ELP program. The Board of Education will review the proposal and make a final decision by February 13, 2024. If the Board of Education moves forward with the 5 day per week program the following hours and tuition is listed below.</p> <p>New Proposed ELP is 19 hours Monday-Friday</p> <p>Days and Hours:</p> <p>Monday-Thursday: 9:30 to 1:30</p> <p>Fridays: 9:30-12:30</p> <p>Proposed tuition \$11,500.</p> <p>Please note that the processing fee for next year will be raised to 3.5%, due to an increase in merchant fees.</p> <p>Upon acceptance to the program, payment of your non-refundable deposit of approximately 10% of the tuition, or \$800.00 (whether or not the Board decides to move forward with the 5 day program), and the remainder of your tuition payments can be made by Visa or MasterCard.</p> <p>After payment of your initial deposit, the remaining balance can be paid with two options: payment in full by August</p>

31st (you will receive a 2% discount for this option) or in three recurring payments on 8/31, 11/30 and 2/28. If you are eligible for free and reduced lunch the tuition will be reduced.

Congratulations and welcome to ELP!

Warmest Regards,

Laura Straiton

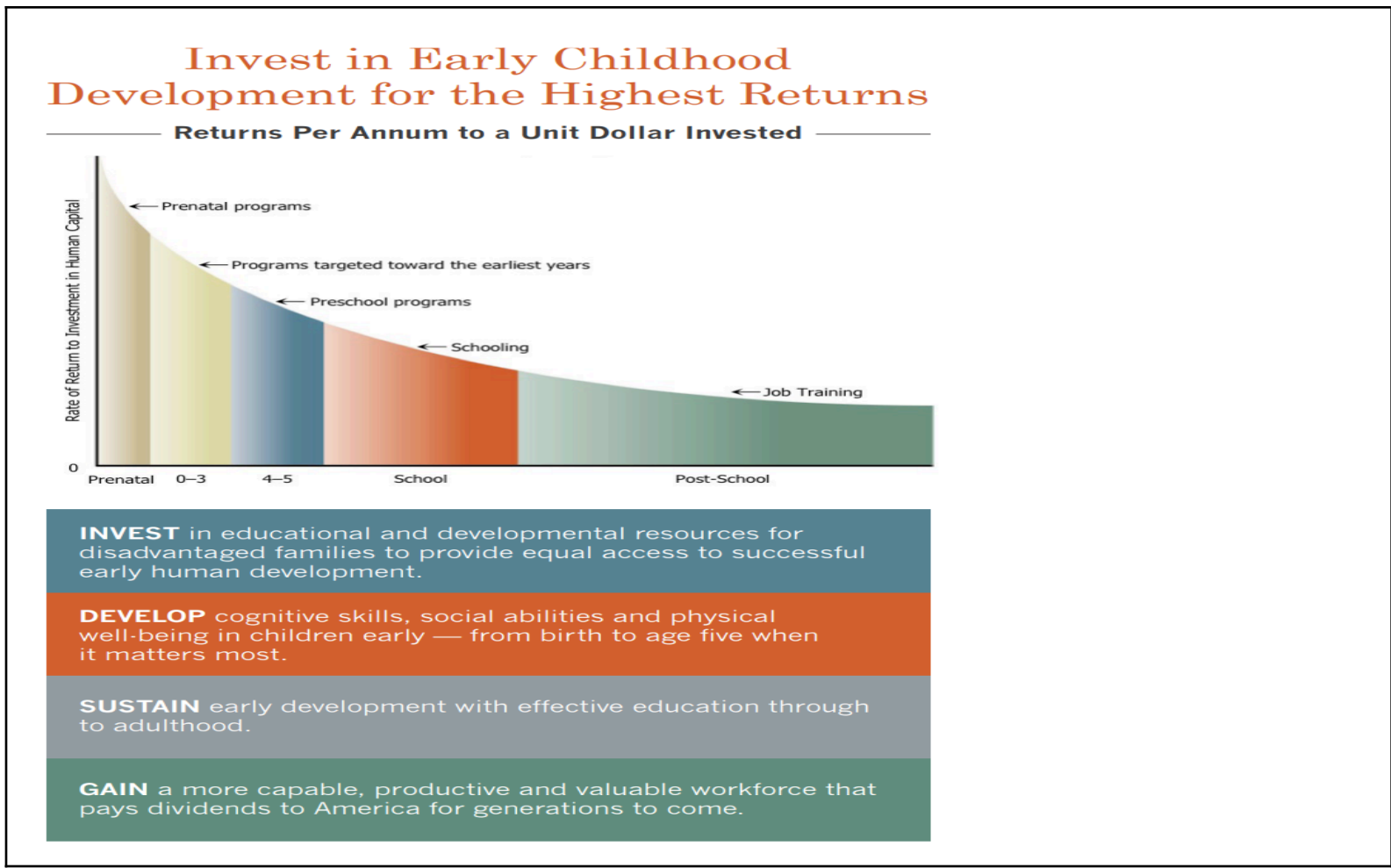
Program Director of Early Childhood, SESS

[Heckman Effect \(2016\)](#)

“Professor James Heckman’s groundbreaking work with a consortium of economists, developmental psychologists, sociologists, statisticians and neuroscientists shows that quality early childhood development is essential for better education, health and economic outcomes. Investing in early childhood development changes the equation, creating widespread American prosperity through early skills building that prevents the achievement gap and promotes income equality through abilities and personal initiative. Those looking to create a better economic life for all Americans need to know four simple facts to build the human capital we need for economic success.”

- 1. Intelligence and social skills are developed at an early age — and both are essential for success.*
- 2. Early investment produces the greatest returns in human capital.*
- 3. America’s advantage will come from helping the disadvantaged.*
- 4. Quality economic returns come from quality investments in early childhood development.*

Share data about recommended hours for 3s and 4s?



How many PPTs are in person vs. Zoom

The District's Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan (Updates 8/25/22, see [here](#)) informed families that all PPT meetings will be conducted in-person or remotely, based on the families' preferences. In response to this question, the building administrations were asked to provide estimates regarding the percentage of meetings held by Zoom at each level. At the elementary level, 35 percent of meetings are held by Zoom, and at the secondary level, 97 percent of meetings are held by Zoom.

Please share with the Board the materials related to transition to SESS Directors (second elementary APs).

The presentation regarding the elimination of SESS Facilitators and the addition of Assistant Principals (SESS) can be found [here](#). This was presented at the January 12, 2021 Board of Education meeting.

Why can't the department chairs support the PPT

Department Chairs are primarily intended to support the development and implementation of curriculum, instructional design and assessment to monitor student learning. Department Chairs serve as a primary resource

<p>process and not add the two Assistant Principals?</p>	<p>for domain specific professional learning as shifts in curriculum are made. Significant time is dedicated to their work in providing discipline specific expertise while supporting, supervising and evaluating staff. Targeted and intentional professional learning would be required for the Department Chairs to chair PPTs. Although this professional learning can be facilitated, devoting time for this would compromise the distribution of Department Chair time taking away from their essential primary responsibilities. Since the Department Chairs are assigned to both MMS and DHS, it would not be recommended for the role to take leadership of the PPT process. The Department Chairs currently have demanding and time-consuming positions. Adding PPT's to the workload of the Department Chairs would mean time away from the primary focus of their positions, monitoring, reviewing and revising curriculum and supporting teachers both formally and informally. In addition, as was stated at the Board of Education meeting on January 18, 2024, the administration feels strongly that the best model to support both students and families is for the Assistant Principal who is assigned to a student and family (including siblings) chair the PPT.</p>
<p>What are the measures of success for adding the Assistant Principals? (3 measures)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased instructional leadership as evidenced by co-facilitation of the development of curricula and related professional learning ● Increased classroom visits providing personalized feedback over time measuring progress toward professional goals ● Feedback from stakeholders
<p>What is the process for APs to work with curriculum and instruction?</p>	<p>The proposed addition of an assistant principal at both MMS and DHS will provide increased opportunities for building administration to engage with curriculum writing teams (lead by Department Chairs and supported by teaching staff). Developing a greater familiarity with the content and practice standards across the various disciplines at the secondary level will enhance the building administrator's influence as an instructional leader and better position them to provide support, supervision and evaluation of teaching and learning. Strengthening the building administrators' knowledge base of the curricula and instructional practices will also aid in their ability to design targeted and meaningful professional learning providing greater coherence across professional goals, school and department goals and the District Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>Why is the elementary AP model and secondary AP model different?</p>	<p>The administrative model at each level is designed to be responsive to the needs of students at each level. At both levels, Assistant Principals support students and families and provide instructional leadership.</p> <p>At the elementary level, the transition from SESS Facilitator to Special Education Assistant Principal realized the current model to balance compliance, fidelity of implementation and instructional leadership in Specially Designed Instruction. We continue to work towards an inclusive model similar to the secondary assistant principal model.</p>
<p>Has there been more frequent PPTs for students? How does this compare to our DRG?</p>	<p>During the 2022-2023 School Year, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)'s Bureau of Special Education (BSE) began utilizing CT-SEDS as the data management platform for all PPT processes. CT-SEDS does not currently have the capacity to provide District data regarding the volume of PPT meetings held during a school year.</p> <p>Prior, the Darien Public Schools utilized IEP Direct, which does have the functionality to provide District data</p>

regarding the volume of PPT meetings held during a school year. Information through the 2017-2018 school year is below. In addition, the volume of 504 Meetings are provided for the years available (they are currently also managed by CT-SEDS; from 2019-2022 they were managed in 504 Direct and are available. Prior to 2019 the volume is not available).

School Year	# of Students with IEPs	# of PPT Meetings	# of 504 Meetings
2023-2024	969		
2022-2023	882		
2021-2022	873	2606	550
2020-2021	802	2515	485
2019-2020	807	1940	351
2018-2019	727	2530	
2017-2018	683	2541	

The CSDE does not provide information regarding the volume of PPT meetings held in other districts.

How many hours should a child be seen in relation to caseloads?

The Planning and Placement Team (PPT) recommends the frequency and duration of SDI and related services in the development of the student IEP.

Prior to the beginning of each school year, the administration of each building thoughtfully assigns balanced caseloads to the special education teachers (SETs). At the elementary level, the administration considers the total frequency and duration of services for each student when assigning SET caseloads. At the middle school, SET caseloads are assigned by grade and team, and administrators similarly consider the composition of each caseload to ensure balance. The high school assigns SET caseloads by student grade, again considering the total composition of each caseload and the students' schedules to create balanced schedules. In addition, when assigning caseloads, administrators consider students' schedules, appropriate groupings for services, provider expertise, and provider/building schedules. SET and related service provider caseloads vary both by number of students and hours of service. For example, a case manager in an elementary specialized program may manage five students while a case manager of eleventh grade students accessing learning centers or co-taught classes may manage 20 students. The total composition of caseload hours per provider is consistent with the contractual requirements outlined in the Darien Education Association (DEA) collective bargaining agreement.

	<p>The January 18, 2024 BOE Q and A provided a list of the caseloads of special education teachers, speech and language pathologists, school psychologists and social workers in grades K-12+. The subsequent question asked by the Board was to provide the number of minutes related to the instructional caseloads for providers.</p> <p>In order to better understand the number of minutes students are recommended for in their IEPs, it is necessary to understand how the service delivery model supports the student’s IEP recommended services. There is a continuum of services, in which specialized instruction is delivered to students, including one-to-one, small group, resource room, learning centers, co-taught and comprehensive classes. The instructional model needs to be considered when reviewing the appropriateness of the instructional caseload of providers. For example, a special education teacher who provides instruction within a comprehensive class (DLC, for example) with 6 students may provide approximately 8,640 minutes of SDI in a 6 day cycle (6 students receive 240 minutes daily in a 6 day cycle totalling 1440 minutes). A special education teacher delivering small group (3 students) specialized reading instruction for 5 class periods a day may provide approximately 15,750 minutes of SDI weekly (total of 15 students times 1,050 minutes per week). This example highlights the comparison of caseloads by total number of minutes of instruction per week is not a useful metric to assess provider caseloads.</p> <p>We are inquiring with the CSDE and CT-SEDS to determine if there is a mechanism to acquire this data.</p>
<p>How many referrals for evaluations are coming from parents or staff?</p>	<p>During the 2022-2023 School Year, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)’s Bureau of Special Education (BSE) began utilizing CT-SEDS as the data management platform for all PPT processes. The Special Education Standard Operating Procedure Manual for the Darien Public Schools (see here) outlines the various ways in which a student can be referred to special education. A request for an evaluation of a child who is suspected of having a disability and may be in need of special education/related services can be made by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The student, 18 years or older ● A parent, guardian, or surrogate parent ● School personnel ● Any individual from other agencies (physician, social worker) to whom a parent has given permission to make a referral <p>Once a referral is received, an Initial Referral Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting is scheduled to consider the referral. While CT-SEDS stores referrals, if made in writing, it does not currently have the capacity to provide District-based data regarding the origination of referrals.</p> <p>We will manually collect the data from staff and forward the information in a memorandum to the Superintendent.</p>
<p>Can we model future enrollment in middle school and class sizes?</p>	<p>MMS Sections through FY28</p>
<p>How many students are in</p>	<p>There are 90 students in off team classes (of which 53 are in math). The proposed changes would not add students</p>

off TEAM classes this year and how many will be projected off TEAM next year?

off team other than Math, which is already off team. We would anticipate Math would create 3 additional students off team in grade 6 Advanced Math, 8 students off team in Grade 7 Advanced Math and 8 in Grade 8 Accelerated Geometry, bringing the total students in Math off team to 72 and total students to 109.

Current Year						Proposed				
Social Studies	# of Teams	# of Classes	# of Teachers Teaching 4	# of Teachers Teaching 5	Total Teachers	# of Teams	# of Proposed Classes	# of Teachers Teaching 4	# of Teachers Teaching 5	Total Teachers
6th Grade	4	18	2	2	4	4	16	4	0	4
7th Grade	4	18	2	2	4	4	17	3	1	4
8th Grade	4	17	3	1	4	4	15	0	3	3
Total	12	53	7	5	12	12	48	7	4	11

Current Year						Proposed				
Science	# of Teams	# of Classes	# of Teachers Teaching 4	# of Teachers Teaching 5	Total Teachers	# of Teams	# of Proposed Classes	# of Teachers Teaching 4	# of Teachers Teaching 5	Total Teachers
6th Grade	4	18	2	2	4	4	15	0	3	3
7th Grade	4	18	2	2	4	4	17	3	1	4
8th Grade	4	17	3	1	4	4	16	4	0	4
Total	12	53	7	5	12	12	48	7	4	11

Current Year						Proposed				
English	# of Teams	# of Classes	# of Teachers Teaching 4	# of Teachers Teaching 5	Total Teachers	# of Teams	# of Proposed Classes	# of Teachers Teaching 4	# of Teachers Teaching 5	Total Teachers
6th Grade	4	36	4	4	8	4	32	3	4	7
7th Grade	4	18	2	2	4	4	17	3	1	4
8th Grade	4	17	3	1	4	4	17	3	1	4
Total	12	71	9	7	16	12	66	9	6	15

Current Year						Proposed				
Spanish	# of Teams	# of Classes	# of Teachers Teaching 4	# of Teachers Teaching 5	Total Teachers	# of Teams	# of Proposed Classes	# of Teachers Teaching 4	# of Teachers Teaching 5	Total Teachers
6th Grade	Rainbow	13	2	1	3	Rainbow	11	2	1	3
7th Grade	Rainbow	12	3	0	3	Rainbow	11	2	1	3
8th Grade	Rainbow	12	0	3*	3	Rainbow	10	0	2	2
Total		37	5	4	9		32	4	4	8

*1 Teacher teachers 4 in 6th and 1 in 8th

	*1 Teacher teaches 4 in 7th and 1 in 8th
Provide a job description for the proposed Director of Visual and Performing Arts position?	The job descriptions for the current Director of Music and the proposed Director of Visual and Performing Arts positions are attached.
Are elementary special's shortage areas?	Only Elementary Spanish
How will the reductions affect adaptive PE? How many sections of adaptive PE are currently proposed?	The 0.4FTE reduction in PE will have no effect on adaptive PE. There are currently 4 APE classes with a total of 18 students at Ox Ridge and we anticipate maintaining 4 sections of APE next year at Ox Ridge.
Will the Director of Visual and Performing Arts position need to be posted?	Yes, the position will have to be posted.
How are the responsibilities of the 2nd campus monitor being distributed?	The second campus monitor typically was an outside presence during lunch and recess. Coverage during lunch and recess will be absorbed by six different bus drivers. Unlike the High School there is not an open campus at the middle school, which mitigates the need for the additional full time position. The role of this is to provide adult supervision which is fulfilled with other resources (drivers).
How are the ratios for coaching determined?	Coaching ratios are determined depending on if the sport has cuts or not cuts. A no cut sport would require more coaches due to higher participation levels. This is the case for boys and girls soccer. Other coaching ratios are determined based on safety and supervision such as hockey and cheerleading. Other ratios are determined by the sport having multiple locations such as golf.