

BOE BUDGET QUESTIONS

#	RC	Date	Question	Responses										
1	1	1/4/25	How many students outside of lunch hours visit the wellness center?	<table border="0"> <tr> <td></td> <td align="right">Average per day</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Full Day</td> <td align="right">148</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Before lunch</td> <td align="right">41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>During lunch</td> <td align="right">83</td> </tr> <tr> <td>After lunch</td> <td align="right">25</td> </tr> </table>		Average per day	Full Day	148	Before lunch	41	During lunch	83	After lunch	25
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2	1	1/4/25	What constitutes a visit to the Wellness Center?	<p>A visit at the Wellness Center is when a student stays and engages in some manner; this may include engaging with the Wellness Center Coordinator, another student or adult, an activity, or if they take quiet time for themselves within the space.</p> <p>A visit is not counted if a student passes through (i.e getting some water or a mint). Those who visit multiple times throughout the day are only included once in the count, unless they visit during The Wellness Center Coordinator’s lunch, when the person covering the center is unaware of their previous visit.</p>										
3	1	1/4/25	How many students visit the Wellness Center are referred for services?	Communication between the Wellness Center Coordinator and the support staff at DHS is ongoing. The coordinator asks support staff to check in on two to three students per week. It is also not uncommon for our support staff to introduce the Wellness Center as a resource for their students, connecting them directly with the coordinator.										
4	1	1/4/25	Are there other places for students to relax outside of the Wellness Center at DHS? Why do we need to staff it with a dedicated FTE?	The Wellness Center is a tech free environment for students who may be feeling the pressure of high expectations in a rigorous academic setting as well as space for those who are trying to find their place to connect. In the Wellness Center, students are invited into a space that is defined by its focus on self-awareness, reflection and restoration. Here they are encouraged, supported and welcomed to pause and escape the busy noise of high school life and prepare to transition back into their classroom settings. The Wellness Center is not simply a place to relax. By design, it is a place to disconnect in which students explore techniques to manage stress such as mindfulness, yoga, visits with therapy animals, and expressions of gratitude. Here students may play chess, work with puzzles, color, watch a zoo cam, listen to music or										

				<p>laugh with friends in the comfortable furniture so generously provided by our DHSPA . The creation of a full time, Wellness Center Coordinator position has increased programming, facilitates a full day of supervision of the setting and has fostered a community through the wonderful relationships established with and among students. The coordinator role provides a consistent, trusted adult who notices when students are not themselves and can connect students with resources when needed. A cross section of our student body takes advantage of this space and many who may avoid larger settings find the Wellness Center to be a welcome comfort. When students visit the Wellness Center, they enter a space created solely for this purpose and it serves as a visible expression of how highly we prioritize mental health and wellbeing as a school community.</p>
5	1	1/4/25	Provide a 1 page spend breakdown of mental health that crosses all RC's, including Fitch?	Mental Health Spend
6	1	1/24/25	Why were the 8 guidance counselors at DHS not cut over class size or instructional aides?	School counselors have a different role in the system than that of instructional aides. You would not pass NEASC standards without school counselors. CSDE requires school counselors. Public Act 19-63 requires that all students have access to school counselors.
7	1	1/24/25	Why were the two guidance secretaries at DHS not cut over class size or instructional aides?	The two guidance secretaries are essential to the effective operation of that office. They process transcript requests for college admissions, registration issues and the many other requests from students and staff. We are appropriately staffed for the number of students in the high school.
8	1	1/31/25	Can we please get clarification if the \$50 DHS activity fee was intended to be a one-time annual fee for all students or if it was intended as a per activity fee based on participation.	It is a fee per activity based on participation.
9	1	1/28/25	Are there any alternate funds (grants) to fund wellness center?	At this point there are no State grants available to apply for from the CSDE. We are not currently aware of any funds available from community organizations. The Community Fund of Darien is funding 50% of the MMS Teen Talk. These funding requests have associated timelines and processes.

10	3	1/4/25	What would a theater fee look like?	A \$200 Fee for MS Theater would generate approximately \$18,000																					
11	3	1/4/25	What is the estimated cost of the TEAM model?	If the TEAM model was not in place each teacher would be able to teach a 6th class as there would not be a TEAM meeting. This would result in a reduction of 9.0 FTE Teachers plus TEAM stipends at an approximate cost of \$1.4 million																					
12	3	1/4/25	Provide the total number and enrollment of Middle Schools in the DRG A.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>District</th> <th># of Middle Schools</th> <th>Enrollment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>New Canaan</td> <td>1</td> <td>1,222</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Darien</td> <td>1</td> <td>1,061</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Westport</td> <td>2</td> <td>Bedford: 710 Coley: 454</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ridgefield</td> <td>2</td> <td>East Ridge: 492 Scotts Ridge: 556</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Weston</td> <td>1</td> <td>483</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wilton</td> <td>1</td> <td>837</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	District	# of Middle Schools	Enrollment	New Canaan	1	1,222	Darien	1	1,061	Westport	2	Bedford: 710 Coley: 454	Ridgefield	2	East Ridge: 492 Scotts Ridge: 556	Weston	1	483	Wilton	1	837
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13	5-10	1/24/25	Why were the elementary assistant principals not cut over class size or instructional aides?	The new assistant principals at the elementary schools were implemented as a part of a new model to address special education needs.																					
14	5-10	1/4/25	How are instructional paraprofessional days spent (day in the life)?	Instructional Para Day																					
15	5-10	1/4/25	Day in the life of Elementary Teacher	Elementary Teacher Day																					
16	5-10	1/4/25	What do Interns do?	During the internship period interns are the first people called to cover teacher absences. In the event that there are no teacher absences on any day they will provide assistance in other classrooms and are available to fill in for special education paraeducators who are absent. Interns also assist in supervision of students and may provide small group instruction in classrooms.																					
17	5-10	1/4/25	How often are para's pulled to provide substitute coverage?	Through December paraprofessionals have provided approximately 1,798 hours of coverage or 25% of their work year.																					

18	5-10	1/4/25	Compare Paraprofessionals, Student Interns, Daily Substitutes and Building Substitutes	Para. Intern and Substitute Comparison						
19	5-10	1/4/25	Is there supervisory work for classroom teachers when interns are in place?	Student interns require the same level of supervision as paraeducators, building substitutes and daily substitutes. Teachers are paid a stipend by the universities for the period that they supervise student teaching.						
20	5-10	1/4/25	Provide a breakdown of absences: -Sick -Personal -Professional Development	Teacher Absence Data						
21	5-10	1/21/25	Will Interns work the full school year?	The contract governing student internships specifies that they will be in the District for 10 school months. This period can begin in either August or January.						
22	5-10	1/21/25	10 Week Student Teaching: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the timing of when this occurs? • Will both interns be engaged in this period at the same time? • What are the limitations during this period? • What, specifically, is required of supervising teachers during this period? 	The District and sending university collaborate on an appropriate student teaching timeframe. In the past, the District has staggered the term of the internship so that the Interns do not student teach at the same time. During the 10 weeks that an Intern is student teaching they will be unavailable for other building duties. Supervising teachers must be available to observe and coach a student teacher. This is true of student teaching positions even if they are not student teaching through an internship program.						
23	5-10	1/21/25	Is it realistic to think we can fill all 10 spots? What happens if we can't?	Based on the number of student teaching requests that we have received this year we anticipate that we will be able to find 10 Interns. If we are unable to find them we will allow the principals to hire permanent building substitutes instead so that they will have assistance in covering teacher absences.						
24	5-10	1/21/25	Will interns cover arrival, dismissal and lunch?	They will. They are available for duties in the same manner as teachers.						
25	11	2/4/25	Are there any attendance numbers on intramurals MMS	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>FY</th> <th>Signups</th> <th>Participants</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>FY25</td> <td>109</td> <td>20 per session</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	FY	Signups	Participants	FY25	109	20 per session
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				FY24	160	20 per session
26	11	1/31/25	What participation fees might look like as calculated from a 10% charge based on cost per player to the district?	10% Shared Cost		
27	11	1/28/25	Why have athletic fees increased?	There has been an increase in the number of JV teams participating in competitions.		

28	11	1/28/25	Are athletic trainers used fully for 40 hours per week	<p>Trainers work M-F from around 1:30pm to the end of practices/games, which can sometimes be 8:30-9:00 pm (or later if we have a home night football or hockey game)</p> <p>They will work Saturday & Sundays as well, depending on game schedules on any given weekend.</p> <p>Their work would consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Providing additional athletic training services for all home athletic competitions at Darien High School as well as any away varsity football contest, if requested by Athletic Director. ● Evaluating injuries during practices/games and provide physician referrals when appropriate ● Prescribing & overseeing a treatment plan for students who are recovering from injuries. ● Maintaining communication with parents on the care & treatment of their student-athlete. ● Assisting coaching staff in evaluating and implementing sport specific conditioning programs and methods ● Maintaining accurate records of injuries, treatments, and provide insurance claim for sport injuries ● Communicating directly with coaches, parents, nurses and student/athletes regarding a student's injury ● Acting as a liaison between family physicians and specialists, the school district, athletes and parents ● Following the return to play protocol with any student/athlete having a concussion ● Creating a safe playing environment by monitoring and controlling environmental risks ● Working In collaboration with the athletic director regarding any equipment needs for the athletic training room ● Keeping inventory of all med kits and water coolers that are used by teams during the season ● Maintaining med kits stocked of all necessary items and ensure water coolers are cleaned appropriately before redistributing ● Attending other away contests during a teams postseason play, as requested by the athletic director
29	11	1/28/25	Can a sport go to a club?	A sport would only revert back to a club if the participation fell to a level where it could no longer field a team to compete at a safe level.

30	11	1/4/25	Provide a breakdown of the total contribution parents would have to make including rentals for Non CIAC sports that is proposed.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sport</th> <th>Rental Fee</th> <th>Proposed Fee</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Rugby</td> <td>\$0</td> <td>\$340</td> <td>\$340</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Squash</td> <td>\$531</td> <td>\$340</td> <td>\$871</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skiing</td> <td>\$372</td> <td>\$340</td> <td>\$712</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sailing</td> <td>\$375</td> <td>\$340</td> <td>\$715</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Sport	Rental Fee	Proposed Fee	Total	Rugby	\$0	\$340	\$340	Squash	\$531	\$340	\$871	Skiing	\$372	\$340	\$712	Sailing	\$375	\$340	\$715
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31	11	1/4/25	Provide the athletic funding including outside contributions from parents within the Student Activity Accounts that was shared during last year's budget discussions.	Athletic Total Spend Schedule																				
32	11	1/27/25	Adjust coaching stipends	Coaching stipends are contractual with the DEA and can not be unilaterally adjusted.																				
33	11	1/21/25	5 Year Uniform Replacement Cycle	5 Year Uniform																				
34	11	1/21/25	Breakdown of security by sport	Athletic Security																				
35	11	1/21/25	Can you confirm if the Ski Team has 1 bus or 2. If its 2 it should be cut to 1 bus (RTM)	It's 1 bus with 11 trips.																				
36	11	1/21/25	What were the discussions around athletic dept staffing?	The position of Assistant Athletic Director was reviewed; however, with the elimination of the athletic secretary, the elimination of this position would not allow the athletic department to be staffed appropriately leaving many functions unattended such as ordering, evaluations, online registration, social media pages, maintenance of records, game day site management and student activities.																				
37	11	1/4/25	What would a 70/30 split for diving/swimming look like?	Currently the rental fee for diving is \$17,860. A 70/30 split would reduce the BOE budget by \$12,502. The 70% rental fee on dive athletes would be \$3,126 for Boys and \$1,042 for Girls.																				
38	11	1/4/25	Provide the reciprocal agreement with the YMCA.	YMCA Addendum YMCA Contract YMCA Memo																				

39	11	1/4/25	What else was looked at in athletics besides Non CIAC sport fees?	<p>We considered eliminating elementary intramurals, middle school intramurals and high school open gym due to declining participation. The total of this reduction would have been similar to the proposed non-ciac sport fees at a total reduction of \$58,880.</p> <p>We also looked at what it would look like to implement cuts across sports. This would reduce the budget by \$144,000 as the number of coaches and supplies would be reduced. However, this would reduce opportunities for students and is not the typical practice across the DRG.</p> <p>We also discussed athletic department staffing.</p>				
40	11	1/4/25	What would the minimum number of students per team be?	<p>CIAC does not have a minimum threshold for each team. The attached indicates a reasonable number of student athletes rostered in each sport and level.</p> <p>Min # of Student Athletes</p>				
41	11	1/4/25	Do other DRG A districts implement roster cuts?	<p>Westport: Cuts only in Cheerleading, Field Hockey, Golf, Boy Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Skiing, Squash, Baseball, Tennis</p> <p>New Canaan: Cuts only in Field Hockey, Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Baseball, Golf and Tennis</p> <p>Wilton: Cuts only in Cheerleading, Field Hockey, Golf, Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Ski, Baseball and Tennis</p> <p>Ridgefield: Cuts only in golf, soccer, volleyball, cheerleading, dance, basketball, skiing, tennis and baseball</p> <p>Joel Barlow: Cuts only in volleyball, basketball and baseball</p>				
42	11	1/4/25	Provide various participation fee proposals.	<p>Fee Options</p> <p>Fees Presentation</p>				
43	11	1/4/25	Provide the cost comparison of the 3 year vs 4 year uniform replacement cycle.	<p>3 Year and 4 Year Uniform Cycle</p>				
44	11	1/4/25	How much is security for athletics within sports officials?	<table border="1" data-bbox="1104 1468 2028 1528"> <tr> <td data-bbox="1104 1468 1335 1528">FY23-Actuals</td> <td data-bbox="1335 1468 1566 1528">FY24-Actuals</td> <td data-bbox="1566 1468 1797 1528">FY25 Budget</td> <td data-bbox="1797 1468 2028 1528">FY26 Budget</td> </tr> </table>	FY23-Actuals	FY24-Actuals	FY25 Budget	FY26 Budget
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				\$89,506	\$69,888	\$80,000	\$70,000
45	11	1/4/25	How much revenue does DSS generate from athletics?	In total, athletic camps run through Darien Summer School generated \$378,944. Of this \$291,734 were for students grades 1-8.			
46	11	1/4/25	Are there savings in athletic transportation if we do not send the entire team	No, the buses typically are not at full capacity and there are no opportunities for smaller buses. Thus bringing less students would not impact cost as the cost of transportation is not on a per student basis.			
47	12	1/24/25	Why was the MMS Facility study not cut over class size or instructional aides?	The BOE has made addressing the Middle School facility a priority. The removal of this study would delay or stop any potential request for an upgrade to the facility from the Town.			
48	13	1/4/25	Impact of last years Music FTE reduction	Elementary and Music Art Response			
49	14	1/4/25	Impact of last years Art FTE Reduction	Elementary and Music Art Response			
50	13/14	1/4/25	Are Specials areas and special education seeing a high level of absences?	Teacher Absence Data			
51	15	1/21/25	Is the Jamf cost determined by the number of devices?	Yes, it covers approximately 1,300 devices			
52	15	1/4/25	The description of Jamf is listed for \$15,239 as iPad management. As we no longer hand out iPads to students do we need this software?	JAMF is an Apple device management solution to deploy, configure, and secure iPhones, iPads, Macs, and Apple TVs. It is also the keyholder for many software licenses for those systems and helps ensure applications are assigned and updated appropriately. While it is true that we are no longer using a 1-to-1 iPad distribution to students at the high school, all of those iPads remain available for use for instruction and assessment purposes. Apple TVs are available in every classroom at the high school and support the display of content to projectors. Staff-assigned Macs and iPads are also managed through JAMF. In addition, other iPads are in use in the district including assistive technology, special education, and the robotics program. Eliminating JAMF would open these devices to unmanaged use and we			

				would be unable to reassign software when needed.
53	15	1/28/25	What instructional software is part of our core programming and what is not?	The previously submitted software list includes resources for core programming. The following software programs were removed and/or licenses were reduced during the budget process as they were identified as “non-core”: Ottomatic, RazorSparrow, Quizlet, Quest by University of Austin, SmartNotebook
54	15	1/28/25	What is the difference between the Viewsonics and the LG displays? Is there an educational difference?	There are a number of differences. The LG is a simple TV monitor, whereas the Viewsonics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are interactive where teachers can annotate and manipulate data digitally • Acts as a digital whiteboard • Support casting from all types of devices • Can be remotely managed by IT • Come with a 5 year warranty • Are the district standard in area school districts
55	15	1/4/25	Is the typing club software effective?	TypingClub is provided to students in grade 3 through 5. It offers a structured, interactive, and engaging platform that functions well on a Chromebook. Students work independently and at their own pace, most often during WIN blocks. TypingClub provides students with continuous feedback and includes the most accessibility features of any similar product. For example, students can increase their font size, choose a high-contrast theme, learn to type with one hand, activate the voice-over for audio guidance, or use their choice of screen-reader to learn how to type. Teachers and administrators can track student progress through detailed reports, further ensuring the program's alignment with educational goals. Common Sense Media rates this program 5 out of 5 for engagement, pedagogy, and support.
56	15	1/24/25	Why were grade 5 chromebooks not cut over class size or instructional aides?	Grade 5 chromebooks are required to be purchased to continue the 1:1 initiative. If these chromebooks are cut we would discontinue 1:1. Students bring these chromebooks to the middle school.
57	15	1/24/25	Why were teacher laptops not cut over class size or instructional aides?	The failure rate of laptops has been growing over the past 18 months. Without replacing these devices, elementary teachers would be left with either no device next year or non functioning devices.

58	15	1/24/25	Why can we not cut zoom and utilize Microsoft teams?	Zoom is the current preferred and most familiar model for staff, Board meetings and parents. The use of Microsoft Teams or Google Meet would require additional time to review and implement.
59	15	1/24/25	Why can't we cut JAMF?	If JAMF is eliminated we would need to eliminate all Apple devices in the District including iPads, Apple TVs, Macbooks.
60	15	1/24/25	Why can't we cut Brainpop?	Brainpop covers nearly every subject area, is ad free and data privacy compliant. Cutting this resource would require additional resources in curriculum development and professional development to fill this void, which would be more costly than the software itself. It is also one of the most heavily used softwares in the District.
61	15	1/27/25	Tools like Padlet (\$7,350), Nearpod (\$5,080), and Seesaw (\$15,225) seem to overlap with Google Workspace, which the district already uses. Transitioning to Google Workspace tools like Jamboard, Slides, and Classroom could save \$27,655 . A phased transition could help minimize disruptions for teachers.	<p>Jamboard no longer exists, and even when it was available, it did not offer the depth of options in Padlet, which is available to all staff and students. Unlike Jamboard, Padlet is used for more than just brainstorming. It can be set up to host a variety of content types. This is also being used as a curricular resource and portfolio.</p> <p>We already use Google Slides. NearPod is an add-on for Google Slides that makes presentations much more interactive.</p> <p>We already use Google Classroom 3-12. Unlike Classroom, SeeSaw is image rather than text driven and very friendly for younger students. SeeSaw has built in response tools that are not available in Google Classroom. (Anyone that has used SeeSaw and Google Classroom would see that they are two Distinct tools. Google Classroom is very frustrating for emerging readers.)</p>
62	15	1/27/25	Math and science tools like IXL (\$22,313), Delta Math Plus (\$5,443), and Mystery Science (\$7,500) have overlapping functionalities. Free alternatives like GeoGebra and CK-12 could replace these, saving \$35,256 .	Mystery Science is the primary K-5 science resource in our District. It is a "digital, standards-aligned science curriculum that uses inquiry-based learning to engage students by presenting scientific concepts as mysteries to be solved through hands-on activities and engaging videos, encouraging critical thinking." CK-12 is primarily an online science textbook with images. It is available as a resource for staff and sees some limited use 6-12, but lacks the depth of content and rigor for higher level science (and math) course work. As the science curriculum is revised, instructional materials will be reviewed and selected for alignment.

				IXL is not used for science in our District. It is used for Math and English. All students 3-5 have access, and we use a limited number of additional accounts 6-12 for special education supports. It includes diagnostics, unlimited monitored practice with feedback, and alignment to our text resources. GeoGebra is a graphing tool. We save money on IXL by using Delta Math Plus with our secondary students. Delta Math Plus does not have content for grades K-5.
63	15	1/27/25	The antivirus budget of \$14,600 could be trimmed by using built-in Windows Defender on Windows 10/11 devices, supplemented with a lower-cost solution like Malwarebytes for Education. This could save \$7,000–\$10,000 .	Our antivirus system is an enterprise solution with full management and EDR (endpoint detection and response) capabilities. Windows Defender is a personal standalone version of antivirus software.
64	15	1/27/25	Video and presentation tools like WeVideo (\$11,649) and Screencastify (\$1,800) could be replaced with free software like OBS Studio and OpenShot, saving \$13,449 .	Neither of these open-source products work on Chromebooks. OBS Studio is designed to take live footage from an external video camera and push it to a live stream, such as YouTube or Twitch, through a computer. We used it for band concerts. We do not have students live streaming from the classroom.
65	15	1/27/25	An audit of software usage could reveal underused or redundant licenses. This might also create opportunities to renegotiate contracts for better pricing or reduced seat counts. A conservative estimate suggests potential savings of \$50,000–\$77,000 .	Learn Platform, which we use, monitors usage across the District. It was implemented to audit software use and reduce licenses and cost which is already reflected in the budget. The potential savings here is not realistic.
66	16	1/24/25	Why can't we cut the weather service?	The weather service provides information to school districts regarding decisions around delayed openings and school closures. All 169 school districts in CT participate in this service.
67	16	1/4/25	Provide the breakdown of the catering budget.	

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68	16	1/21/25	Is there duplicate catering for the budget book?	<p>The \$2,500 shown on page 207 is catering for the all day summer BOE retreat.</p> <p>The amounts shown on the Q&A answers for the \$12,500 reflected on page 206 are:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>BOE Meetings (super saturday, negotiations, BOE Orientation)</td> <td>\$3,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Convocation Breakfast</td> <td>\$6,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Special Events</td> <td>\$3,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>\$12,500</td> </tr> </table>	BOE Meetings (super saturday, negotiations, BOE Orientation)	\$3,500	Convocation Breakfast	\$6,000	Special Events	\$3,000		\$12,500
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69	18	1/21/25	What is TEAM Mentor?	Teachers new to the profession are required to complete five modules of the State's Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) program. Teachers who mentor a new teacher in this program are paid a yearly stipend, as required by contract.								
70	19	1/28/25	What other consultants are in the budget	Literacy Consultant (MTSS Tier 1), Ellen Tuckner (\$12,000) Holly Clark, AI (\$7,100) ADL (\$6,000) Medical Advisor \$10,000 Multi Sensory Reading: \$40,000 Insurance Consultant: \$49.80 per member								
71	19	1/28/25	What does the department chair change to	Anticipated impact to future years: Limited discipline specific visionary								

			teacher leader look like not just next year but future years	<p>leadership and oversight within departments; Vertical articulation challenges; Limited consistency and coherence across courses (curricular implementation; instructional strategies; assessment); Limited opportunity for high quality support for teacher goal setting and content specific feedback via coaching, supervision and evaluation by content experts (accountability) ie. 116 teachers to be shifted to building administration for supervision and evaluation; Limited communication/availability for content expertise during curriculum committee meetings and community events; Potential limited innovation in new courses, programming; Lack of development for future curricular pathways; Restricted implementation of a rigorous and high quality hiring process chaired by content experts; Retention and increased turnover; Unrealistic workload including revision of PDEC's evaluation plans (teacher and admin)</p> <p>Additional anticipated impact to building leaders due to increase in workload; reduced visibility in classrooms; reduced supervision during lunch waves; more limited involvement in clubs and activities; hindrance to timeliness of communication with students and families and communication with families on proper placements with subject area expertise</p>															
72	19	1/21/25	DRG A Mental Health Spend Comparison	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Darien</td> <td>\$3,178,380</td> <td>25.80 FTE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ridgefield</td> <td>\$1,992,123</td> <td>18.70 FTE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Westport</td> <td>\$2,754,919</td> <td>24.10 FTE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New Canaan</td> <td>\$2,296,762</td> <td>20.00 FTE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Weston</td> <td>\$981,757</td> <td>9.00 FTE</td> </tr> </table>	Darien	\$3,178,380	25.80 FTE	Ridgefield	\$1,992,123	18.70 FTE	Westport	\$2,754,919	24.10 FTE	New Canaan	\$2,296,762	20.00 FTE	Weston	\$981,757	9.00 FTE
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73	19	1/21/25	List of all Admin both DAA and Unaffiliated	List of Administrators															
74	19	1/21/25	What does the Teacher Leader model look like? Show two years?	Dept Chairs to Teacher Leaders															
75	19	1/21/25	What do other DRG A districts have for administrator curriculum positions	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Westport</td> <td>Dept Chair Math (Admin)</td> </tr> </table>	Westport	Dept Chair Math (Admin)													
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				<p>Dept Chair Science (Admin) Dept Chair Social Studies (Admin) Dept Chair World Language (Admin) Dept Chair English (Admin) Dept Chair for Health & PE (Admin) Elementary Coordinator (Admin) Director of VPA (Admin)</p>
				<p>New Canaan</p> <p>Director of World Language and ESL (Admin) K-4 Literacy Teacher Leader full release 5-8 Literacy Teacher Leader full release K-8 Math Teacher Leader full release K-8 Health & PE Teacher Leader full release K-8 Science Teacher Leader full release K-8 Social Studies Teacher Leader full release Director of VPA (Admin)</p>
				<p>Weston</p> <p>Teacher Leader Literacy and Social Studies 0.8 release and 0.2 Teacher grades K-2 Teacher Leader K-2 Math and Science 0.8 release and 0.2 Teacher grades K-2 Teacher Leader Literacy and Social Studies 0.8 release and 0.2 Teacher grades 3-5 Teacher Leader Math and Science 0.8 release and 0.2 Teacher grades 3-5 Teacher Leader Literacy grades 6 through 12 0.8 release and 0.2 Teacher Teacher Leader Math grades 6 through 12 0.8 release and 0.2 Teacher Teacher Leader Science and Technology grades 6 through 12 0.8 release and 0.2 Teacher Teacher Leader Social Studies grades 6 through 12 0.8 release and 0.2 Teacher Teacher Leader Art and Music</p>
				<p>Wilton</p> <p>Curriculum Coordinator Math/Science (Teacher) Curriculum Coordinator Humanities (Teacher) Instructional Leader Science 9-12 (Teacher) Instructional Leader Social Studies 9-12 (Teacher) Instructional Leader World Language 9-12 (Teacher) Instructional Leader PE/Health 9-12 (Teacher) Instructional Leader Math 9-12 (Teacher)</p>

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Ridgefield	Director of Elementary Education (Admin) Director of Humanities (Admin) Director of STEM (Admin)							
76	19	1/21/25	What is the return on the PLC and how do we measure it?	<p>Professional Learning Communities enhance teacher collaboration, improve instructional practices, and ultimately increase student achievement. PLCs provide time for teachers to engage in focused discussions, share best practices, and analyze student data to refine their teaching strategies. The return on this investment can be measured through improved student performance, increased teacher satisfaction, and stronger school culture. Additionally, measurable outcomes such as student growth data, teacher retention rates, and feedback from surveys can help assess the effectiveness of PLC time, ensuring that the time invested translates into meaningful improvements in teaching and learning.</p> <p>Just as physicians engage in case studies, share insights, work collaboratively as a team, and keep up with the latest medical research to refine their practice, teachers in PLCs collaborate to share best practices, analyze student data, and refine instructional strategies. The return on investment in both fields comes from ongoing improvement in practice that directly impacts outcomes—better health outcomes in medicine, and improved student achievement in education.</p>				
77	19/24	1/24/25	Why can't we cut Universal Design for Learning?	<p>The Board of Education requested the use of Universal Design for Learning framework to support curriculum and instruction. At the Board's request, UDL has been integrated within Goal 1 Enhancing Teaching and Learning. Teaching and leadership staff are in need of professional learning to support Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Growing our capacity in UDL will support our instructional team in meeting the diverse needs of learners through curriculum, instruction and assessment efforts. Research has shown that the UDL framework leads to improved student engagement and academic performance.</p>				

78	19	1/4/25	Provide the Tri State Report & NEASC Presentation to the Board	May 10, 2024 Memo to Board with Tri State Report Tri State Report- May 10, 2024 Curriculum Committee May 28, 2024 Memo with report BOE Meeting and Presentation to Board BOE Presentation on the NEASC Decennial Visit																								
79	19	1/4/25	What have we lost funding for over time that has moved into the operating budget?	Title 1 Funding: \$135,000 (FY25/FY26) Title IV Funding: \$12,000 (FY25/FY26) ARPA Mental Health: \$44,000 (FY25/FY26) Teen Talk MMS: \$50,000 (FY26) Darien Foundation Video Wall: \$12,800 (FY25/FY26) ARPA Funding for Psychologist: \$75,000 (FY23, FY24, FY25, FY26) Team Mentor: \$20,000 (FY20, FY21, FY22, FY23, FY24, FY25, FY26) Darien Foundation Robotics Materials: \$30,000 FY24, FY25, FY26																								
80	19	1/4/25	Provide the curriculum development spending over time.	<table border="1" data-bbox="1102 719 2032 1036"> <tr> <td>FY26-Budget</td> <td>\$134,232</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY25-Budget</td> <td>\$134,350</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY24-Actuals</td> <td>\$97,795</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY23-Actuals</td> <td>\$120,502</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY22-Actuals</td> <td>\$64,406</td> </tr> </table>	FY26-Budget	\$134,232	FY25-Budget	\$134,350	FY24-Actuals	\$97,795	FY23-Actuals	\$120,502	FY22-Actuals	\$64,406														
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81	19	1/4/25	What are we spending on all PD over the years? Include cost of Subs	<table border="1" data-bbox="1102 1136 2032 1515"> <thead> <tr> <th>Fiscal Year</th> <th>PD</th> <th>Substitutes</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>FY26-Budget</td> <td>\$410,425</td> <td>\$20,000</td> <td>\$430,425</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY25-Budget</td> <td>\$402,001</td> <td>\$20,000</td> <td>\$422,001</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY24 Actuals</td> <td>\$409,858</td> <td>\$12,696</td> <td>\$422,554</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY23 Actuals</td> <td>\$459,891</td> <td>\$18,356</td> <td>\$478,247</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY22 Actuals</td> <td>\$471,072</td> <td>\$22,523</td> <td>\$493,595</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Fiscal Year	PD	Substitutes	Total	FY26-Budget	\$410,425	\$20,000	\$430,425	FY25-Budget	\$402,001	\$20,000	\$422,001	FY24 Actuals	\$409,858	\$12,696	\$422,554	FY23 Actuals	\$459,891	\$18,356	\$478,247	FY22 Actuals	\$471,072	\$22,523	\$493,595
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82	19	1/4/25	Provide a chart of enrollment, # of teachers and # of admins over time including costs.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="1100 207 1287 305">Fiscal Year</th> <th data-bbox="1287 207 1528 305">Enrollment</th> <th data-bbox="1528 207 1797 305">Teacher FTE</th> <th data-bbox="1797 207 2041 305">Administrator FTE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 305 1287 367">FY18</td> <td data-bbox="1287 305 1528 367">4,819</td> <td data-bbox="1528 305 1797 367">497.4</td> <td data-bbox="1797 305 2041 367">31.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 367 1287 428">FY19</td> <td data-bbox="1287 367 1528 428">4,729</td> <td data-bbox="1528 367 1797 428">491</td> <td data-bbox="1797 367 2041 428">31.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 428 1287 490">FY20</td> <td data-bbox="1287 428 1528 490">4,788</td> <td data-bbox="1528 428 1797 490">488.7</td> <td data-bbox="1797 428 2041 490">32.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 490 1287 552">FY21</td> <td data-bbox="1287 490 1528 552">4,649</td> <td data-bbox="1528 490 1797 552">477</td> <td data-bbox="1797 490 2041 552">33</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 552 1287 613">FY22</td> <td data-bbox="1287 552 1528 613">4,728</td> <td data-bbox="1528 552 1797 613">482</td> <td data-bbox="1797 552 2041 613">37</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 613 1287 675">FY23</td> <td data-bbox="1287 613 1528 675">4,681</td> <td data-bbox="1528 613 1797 675">482.3</td> <td data-bbox="1797 613 2041 675">37</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 675 1287 737">FY24</td> <td data-bbox="1287 675 1528 737">4,667</td> <td data-bbox="1528 675 1797 737">488</td> <td data-bbox="1797 675 2041 737">36</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 737 1287 799">FY25</td> <td data-bbox="1287 737 1528 799">4,680</td> <td data-bbox="1528 737 1797 799">479.3</td> <td data-bbox="1797 737 2041 799">36</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 799 1287 860">FY26</td> <td data-bbox="1287 799 1528 860">4,678</td> <td data-bbox="1528 799 1797 860">472.4</td> <td data-bbox="1797 799 2041 860">36</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Fiscal Year	Enrollment	Teacher FTE	Administrator FTE	FY18	4,819	497.4	31.7	FY19	4,729	491	31.7	FY20	4,788	488.7	32.7	FY21	4,649	477	33	FY22	4,728	482	37	FY23	4,681	482.3	37	FY24	4,667	488	36	FY25	4,680	479.3	36	FY26	4,678	472.4	36
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83	19	1/4/25	Provide the PDEC survey.	Certified Staff Professional Learning Survey November 2024																																								
84	19	1/4/25	What is the cost if we only do the early release days and not the additional PLC days?	\$58,500																																								

85	19	1/4/25	Breakdown Admin Retreat Costs	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="1100 144 2018 207">Costs for Administrator Retreats</th> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="1100 207 1474 271">Item/Service</th> <th data-bbox="1474 207 2018 271">Cost</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 271 1474 334">\$4,000</td> <td data-bbox="1474 271 2018 334">Fairfield Museum Rental</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 334 1474 397">\$5,120</td> <td data-bbox="1474 334 2018 397">Books, supplies, resources, materials</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 397 1474 461">\$8,988</td> <td data-bbox="1474 397 2018 461">Professional Development</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 461 1474 524">\$3,185</td> <td data-bbox="1474 461 2018 524">Catering fees</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 524 1474 587">Total:</td> <td data-bbox="1474 524 2018 587">\$21,303</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Costs for Administrator Retreats		Item/Service	Cost	\$4,000	Fairfield Museum Rental	\$5,120	Books, supplies, resources, materials	\$8,988	Professional Development	\$3,185	Catering fees	Total:	\$21,303
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86	19	1/21/25	What caused the spikes in curriculum development?	The Fiscal Year 2022 was lower as the curriculum writing that normally would have taken place in the summer of 2021 was limited due to the focus on returning to school due to school closure from COVID.														
87	19	1/21/25	What is the total number of administrators attending the retreat?	Between 40 and 42 which include DAA and unaffiliated staff.														
88	19	1/21/25	Please break out books, supplies, resources, materials for the retreat?	Estimates: 38 copies of UbD text \$1,375 38 copies of Professional Learning Communities text \$1,315 38 copies of UDL text \$1,200 MTSS resources \$600 Dry-Erase Boards and Markers \$380 General Supplies. incl pens, highlighters, post its, folders, photocopies, chart paper, notebooks \$250 Total: \$5,120														

89	19	1/21/25	Who is the catering vendor? Can this be reduced by using chartwells or buying pizza?	Chartwells has catered this in the past; however, they are not staffed during the summer, which makes this event difficult for them to provide catering.
90	19	1/21/25	Why are the stipends for elementary curriculum specialists being eliminated?	Director of Elementary Education has and will continue to take on the responsibilities associated with these stipends.
91	24	1/21/25	SET over time? Are these only SET or all service providers	Only Special Education Teachers not related service providers were shown in the chart.
92	24	1/24/25	How are the 15.0 drivers being used to meet state standard requirements for special education?	IEP's may indicate student need specialized transportation. These drivers operate the vehicles (Suburbans, Wheelchair Vans, Sprinter Vans and Type II Buses) to meet the needs of students requiring specialized transportation as per their PPT recommendations.
93	24	1/24/25	How are the 12.8 FTE psychologists being used to meet state standard requirements for special education?	CSDE requires school psychologists to administer psychological evaluations, classroom observations, and direct service to students based on the frequency and duration of the PPT recommendation.
94	24	1/24/25	How is the \$140,000 for substitutes for special education being used to meet state standard requirements for special education?	The substitutes cover for absent Special Education teachers and special education paraprofessionals.
95	24	1/24/25	How are 63 special education teachers being used to meet state standard requirements for special education?	CSDE requires special education teachers to administer educational evaluations and provide Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) to students based on the PPT recommendations. The frequency and duration of the instruction is indicated in the IEP. SETs are responsible for developing the goals and objectives, implementing the student's IEP, monitoring student progress, and participating in all PPT meetings, as required by the CSDE.
96	24	1/24/25	How are 21.5 speech therapists being used to meet state standard requirements for special education?	CSDE requires speech and language pathologists to administer speech and language evaluations and related services to students based on the frequency and duration of the PPT recommendations. The SLPs are responsible for developing the goals and objectives, implementing the student's IEP, monitoring student progress, and participating in all PPT

				meetings, as required by the CSDE.																																				
97	24	1/24/25	How are 101.5 special education paraprofessionals being used to meet state standard requirements for special education?	The paraprofessionals are IEP mandated.																																				
98	24	1/4/25	Provide OOD Tuition by category and see the growth trends.	Out-of-District Tuition by Category/Growth Trends																																				
99	24	1/4/25	Provide a 1 page document on our in-sourcing of transportation	In House Transportation																																				
100	24	1/4/25	How many special education teachers have we added over time? Can we break out by Elem, Middle and HS?	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>FY</th> <th>ELP</th> <th>Elem</th> <th>MS</th> <th>HS</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>FY26</td> <td>9</td> <td>29.4</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>73.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY25</td> <td>9</td> <td>29.4</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>73.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY24</td> <td>9</td> <td>29</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>73.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY23</td> <td>9</td> <td>28</td> <td>17</td> <td>17</td> <td>71.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY22</td> <td>9</td> <td>28</td> <td>17</td> <td>16</td> <td>70.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Includes grant funds</p>	FY	ELP	Elem	MS	HS	Total	FY26	9	29.4	17	18	73.4	FY25	9	29.4	17	18	73.4	FY24	9	29	17	18	73.0	FY23	9	28	17	17	71.0	FY22	9	28	17	16	70.0
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101	24	1/4/25	What Transition PD is planned in Special Education?	<p>Transition-based Professional Learning during the 2024-2025 school year is utilizing the assessment process to inform transition planning and programming. Transition Assessment (see CSDE information here) professional learning is being supported by a new resource, the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition's Collaborative Assessment Guide for Transition Planning (2024; here). Transition assessment is an ongoing process informed by multiple data points, including information collected by school counselors through Naviance.</p> <p>In collaboration with Ms.Ostar and the school counseling department, transition assessment outcomes will inform Seminar Topics. Professional learning through interdepartmental collaboration between School Counseling and SESS Departments will foster the development of robust transitional programming and planning to meet the needs of students.</p>																																				

				<p>On-going faculty professional learning regarding post-secondary opportunities and pathways is provided by participation and visitation of programs nationwide. School counselors participate in counselor tours annually with a host of universities and colleges that offer programs to support all learners in their post- secondary experience.</p> <p>Tours this year included specialized inclusive college campus programs (e.g. Thames Program at Mitchell College, LIFE Program at College of Charleston) and neighboring transition programs (e.g. Norwalk Community Colleges (NCC) Steps).</p> <p>Annually, college admissions counselors visit DHS and meet individually with the school counselors, prior to meeting with the student, to inform them on new programs and initiatives on campus that may address the student's interest and pathways.</p> <p>Professional development is scheduled to be held on January 17, 2025 for DHS school counselors that will research programs and begin to develop an in-house guide for inclusive post-secondary programs.</p>
102	25	1/27/25	Can we optimize transportation to save money?	<p>We have utilized outside consultants to optimize routes. Given the buses are tiered and there are length of time limits for each route the routes are optimized.</p>
103	25	1/21/25	Have you discussed with the Town Administrator how they are budgeting the public benefit charge for electricity? (RTM)	<p>Yes, the Town Administrator is assuming a reduction in the Public Benefit Charge assuming it is reduced in April. We did reach out to Eversource and they indicated there is a possibility of a reduction no earlier than July but that it is not a guarantee. Should we budget for a reduction in the public benefit charge it would reduce costs by \$44,000. However if the charge is not reduced we would have to transfer funds in the new year.</p>

104	26	1/4/25	Provide area PreK Tuitions	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 142 1415 240">Methodist Family Center</td> <td data-bbox="1415 142 1726 240">\$12,669</td> <td data-bbox="1726 142 2041 240">5 Days</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 240 1415 337">First Congregation Church</td> <td data-bbox="1415 240 1726 337">\$11,874</td> <td data-bbox="1726 240 2041 337">5 Days</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 337 1415 402">Holly Pond</td> <td data-bbox="1415 337 1726 402">\$12,110</td> <td data-bbox="1726 337 2041 402">5 Days</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1100 402 1415 467">Darien Proposed</td> <td data-bbox="1415 402 1726 467">\$11,845</td> <td data-bbox="1726 402 2041 467">5 Days</td> </tr> </table>	Methodist Family Center	\$12,669	5 Days	First Congregation Church	\$11,874	5 Days	Holly Pond	\$12,110	5 Days	Darien Proposed	\$11,845	5 Days
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105	26	1/21/25	St Lukes and Norton Presbyterian Tuition	<p>St Lukes: \$13,170</p> <p>Norton Presbyterian: \$12,291</p>												
106	26	1/21/25	Holly Pond typo? Should be \$12,110 not \$2,110	Yes it should be \$12,110.												
107	Idea	1/4/25	Define a Talented & Gifted Student	<p>Definition of Gifted and Talented Section 10-76a-2 offers the following three important definitions that serve as the foundation for the identification of students as gifted and/or talented:</p> <p><i>(1) "Extraordinary learning ability" means a child identified by the planning and placement team as gifted and talented on the basis of either performance on relevant standardized measuring instruments, or demonstrated or potential achievement or intellectual creativity, or both.</i></p> <p><i>(2) "Gifted and talented" means a child identified by the planning and placement team as (A) possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of very superior intellectual, creative or specific academic capability and (B) needing differentiated instruction or services beyond those being provided in the general education program in order to realize the child's intellectual, creative or specific academic potential. The term shall include children with extraordinary learning ability and children with outstanding talent in the creative arts.</i></p> <p><i>(3) "Outstanding talent in the creative arts" means a child identified by the planning and placement team as gifted and talented on the basis of demonstrated or potential achievement in music, the visual arts or the</i></p>												

				<p><i>performing arts.</i></p> <p>(Gifted and Talented Education: CSDE Guidance Regarding Identification and Service March 2019)</p>																		
108	Idea (3,5-10)	1/4/25	What's the crosswalk to provide in classroom support should Idea be eliminated?	See January 14, 2025 Board of Education Presentation																		
			What would be needed to provide in-classroom support should Idea be eliminated?	Supporting Learners in the Classroom																		
			Provide the 2021 Idea report	Talented and Gifted Report																		
			What is the cost of Idea in Elem and separately MMS?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Elementary Idea Cost</td> <td>1.7 FTE</td> <td>\$(235,711)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MMS Idea Cost</td> <td>1.6 FTE</td> <td>\$(233,304)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>3.3 FTE</td> <td>\$(469,015)</td> </tr> </table>	Elementary Idea Cost	1.7 FTE	\$(235,711)	MMS Idea Cost	1.6 FTE	\$(233,304)	Total	3.3 FTE	\$(469,015)									
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What do other DRG A districts have for Idea	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>District</th> <th>Elementary</th> <th>Middle</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Westport</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New Canaan</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wilton</td> <td>No</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Weston</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ridgefield</td> <td>No</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Easton/Redding</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	District	Elementary	Middle	Westport	Yes	Yes	New Canaan	Yes	Yes	Wilton	No	No	Weston	Yes	Yes	Ridgefield	No	No	Easton/Redding	Yes	No
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109		1/4/25	What alternatives can be considered if the BOE restores the Idea proposed reduction of \$469,015?	<p>Option 1:</p> <p>Increase Class Size to the following:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Grade</th> <th>Current</th> <th>Proposed</th> <th>Change</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Grade	Current	Proposed	Change														
Grade	Current	Proposed	Change																			

K	22	22	0
1st	22	22	0
2nd	23	24	+1
3rd	23	24	+1
4th	24	24	0
5th	24	24	0

Average Class Size							
School	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	Avg
Hindley	17.5	22.0	22.0	18.8	19.8	21.3	20.0
Holmes	17.5	20.0	24.0	21.7	23.7	19.3	20.8
Ox Ridge	20.8	18.6	21.3	21.0	21.8	23.8	21.1
Royle	19.3	21.0	24.0	18.7	21.0	20.3	20.5
Tokeneke	17.8	18.3	19.5	18.8	18.3	21.0	18.8

This would result in a reduction of 2.0 FTE Teachers saving \$226,672.

Eliminate Idea staff at the elementary schools, with the Library Media Specialists supporting the Elementary Gifted & Talented and retain the middle School services as currently in place. Total Savings: \$235,711

Total: \$462,383

Option 2:

Increase Class Size to the following:

Grade	Current	Proposed	Change
K	22	22	0
1st	22	22	0
2nd	23	24	+1
3rd	23	24	+1
4th	24	24	0
5th	24	24	0

Average Class Size							
School	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	Avg
Hindley	17.5	22.0	22.0	18.8	19.8	21.3	20.0
Holmes	17.5	20.0	24.0	21.7	23.7	19.3	20.8
Ox Ridge	20.8	18.6	21.3	21.0	21.8	23.8	21.1
Royle	19.3	21.0	24.0	18.7	21.0	20.3	20.5
Tokeneke	17.8	18.3	19.5	18.8	18.3	21.0	18.8

This would result in a reduction of 2.0 FTE Teachers saving \$226,672.

Athletic Participation Fees of \$150 per student per sport (excluding current Non CIAC sport proposal) with a family cap excluding rentals of \$600. Total revenue: \$266,828

Total Savings: \$493,500

				<div data-bbox="1102 110 2037 555" data-label="Table"> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Grade</th> <th>Current</th> <th>Proposed</th> <th>Change</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>K</td> <td>22</td> <td>22</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1st</td> <td>22</td> <td>22</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2nd</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> <td>+1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3rd</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> <td>+1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4th</td> <td>24</td> <td>24</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5th</td> <td>24</td> <td>24</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <div data-bbox="1115 654 2043 1101" data-label="Table"> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="8">Average Class Size</th> </tr> <tr> <th>School</th> <th>K</th> <th>1st</th> <th>2nd</th> <th>3rd</th> <th>4th</th> <th>5th</th> <th>Avg</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Hindley</td> <td>17.5</td> <td>22.0</td> <td>22.0</td> <td>18.8</td> <td>19.8</td> <td>21.3</td> <td>20.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Holmes</td> <td>17.5</td> <td>20.0</td> <td>24.0</td> <td>21.7</td> <td>23.7</td> <td>19.3</td> <td>20.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ox Ridge</td> <td>20.8</td> <td>18.6</td> <td>21.3</td> <td>21.0</td> <td>21.8</td> <td>23.8</td> <td>21.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Royle</td> <td>19.3</td> <td>21.0</td> <td>24.0</td> <td>18.7</td> <td>21.0</td> <td>20.3</td> <td>20.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tokeneke</td> <td>17.8</td> <td>18.3</td> <td>19.5</td> <td>18.8</td> <td>18.3</td> <td>21.0</td> <td>18.8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <div data-bbox="1102 1140 2009 1170" data-label="Text"> <p>This would result in a reduction of 2.0 FTE Teachers saving \$226,672.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1102 1208 2024 1304" data-label="Text"> <p>Athletic Participation Fees of \$150 per student per sport (excluding current Non CIAC sport proposal) with a family cap excluding rentals of \$600. Total revenue: \$266,828</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1102 1375 1434 1406" data-label="Text"> <p>Total Savings: \$493,500</p> </div>	Grade	Current	Proposed	Change	K	22	22	0	1st	22	22	0	2nd	23	24	+1	3rd	23	24	+1	4th	24	24	0	5th	24	24	0	Average Class Size								School	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	Avg	Hindley	17.5	22.0	22.0	18.8	19.8	21.3	20.0	Holmes	17.5	20.0	24.0	21.7	23.7	19.3	20.8	Ox Ridge	20.8	18.6	21.3	21.0	21.8	23.8	21.1	Royle	19.3	21.0	24.0	18.7	21.0	20.3	20.5	Tokeneke	17.8	18.3	19.5	18.8	18.3	21.0	18.8
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110	Capital	1/4/25	Provide breakout of the paving and drainage/curbing repairs at Tokeneke.	Paving is \$260,000 and the curbing/drainage is \$25,000.																																																																																				

111	Capital	1/28/25	Clarification on Tokeneke projects? Implications on pushing out	<p>Repaving the bus loop, main parking area and asphalt sidewalks has been identified as a priority for several years now. This work was first identified during the previous Facility Master study which was conducted 11-12 years ago. The repaving at Tokeneke was recommended to be done in the 10th year (2024). The project was included in the capital planning process last year; however, it was not funded as part of the budget process.</p> <p>Now in its 12th year, the asphalt is starting to show increased cracks (despite repairs being made over 5 years ago). Additionally, we have had to rebuild one storm drain in the bus loop which had caved in on itself 4 years ago and had become a danger to the bus tires and rims.</p> <p>Deferring another year will result in additional repairs needing to be made as the sidewalks are heaving and cracking in certain areas. These become tripping hazards if left unrepaired.</p> <p>As for the concrete drain at the main entrance, this work needs to be done regardless of paving. The drain is clogged, rotted and deteriorating. The clog as it is designed, is no longer diverting water from the plaza to the storm drains and the metal clips which hold the grate at grade level are all but rusted through and causing a tripping hazard.</p>
112	All	1/24/25	Please provide a historical breakout of all costs the district has incurred since inception of SEL and DEI	<p>Expenses aren't flagged as being associated with SEL or DEI. However some of the expenses associated with consultants or professional development that are associated with SEL or DEI since 2020 include:</p> <p>Elevate Education Consultant: \$55,000 Responsive Classroom: \$77,500 Ruler: \$75,200 Restorative Practices: \$8,200 DBT: \$187,800 2nd Elementary Psychologists: \$2.2 million</p>
113	All	1/24/25	Are there any studies on schools that indicate this level of focus on mental health is effective? Are there studies that indicate that this level of mental health is not effective?	<p>The research supports the effectiveness of mental health programs in schools, particularly when they are comprehensive, integrated and supported with sufficient resources. Research from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) indicates that mental health support in schools can lead to improved student academic outcomes. Some research questions the effectiveness of the implementation of mental health programs in schools due to lack of resources, trained staff and</p>

				adequate funding (American Journal of Public Health and Psychology in the Schools).										
114	All	1/24/25	Please provide a breakdown by age group (K-5, 6-8, 9-12) of the amount of time teachers are spending outside of the classroom, including breakouts for PPTs/504s or other special education meetings/requirements, professional development, curriculum meetings, administrative meetings, parent meetings, personnel days, sick days	<p>Here is a link to the information that we previously shared relating to teacher absences. In order to save the District money on substitute teachers we enter these absences in our absence management system as “positions” which will cover a variety of teacher meetings. Anecdotally, in one of our smaller elementary schools, for the month of November, there were 32 PPT’s and 504 meetings which required coverage for approximately 90 teachers.</p> <p>Breakdown by age group will be addressed during the BOE meeting.</p>										
115	All	1/24/25	Please provide a breakout of how much time teachers are spending on DEI and SEL?	<p>Earlier in this budget season, a Day in the Life of a Teacher was shared. Morning Meeting is a time dedicated to supporting the classroom environment. There are no additional instructional minutes dedicated to DEI/SEL.</p> <p>At the middle school, there is one FLEX period a week (20 minute lesson). Topics include: social media, gratitude, 4 career oriented sessions, managing stress, mindfulness).</p> <p>At the high school, Counseling Seminar has (5) 20 minute sessions per quarter. Topics include: Managing Stress, What to do when you get waitlisted, deferred?; Taking Care of Ourselves, What I Wish I Knew as a Freshman, Time Management and Balance. Advisory meets 19 times throughout the year. Each session is approximately 20 minutes in length. Topics include: Advocating for Yourself, Leadership Skills, The Bystander Effect, Standing Up for What you Believe In.</p>										
116	All	1/24/25	There are a lot of commercials on youtube for replay of BOE meetings. Does the district receive ad revenue for this?	No, we do not receive any revenue.										
117	All	1/28/2025	What are the current FY 26 costs the district spends on SEL and DEI?	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>RC</th> <th>Account</th> <th>Description</th> <th>Notes</th> <th>Budget</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>21413</td> <td>Wellness</td> <td></td> <td>\$44,200</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	RC	Account	Description	Notes	Budget	1	21413	Wellness		\$44,200
RC	Account	Description	Notes	Budget										
1	21413	Wellness		\$44,200										

					Coordinator			
				1	12001	Consultant Services	Teen Talk	\$107,950
				1	21402	Guidance Counselors	Approx 1/3 of Time	\$915,595
				3	21402	Guidance Counselors	Approx 1/3 of Time	\$523,780
				3	25003	Professional Development	ADL, Bullying, SEL PD	\$9,000
				3	12001	Consultant Services	Teen Talk	\$50,000
				5	21403	Psychologists	Time varies	\$72,574
				7	21403	Psychologists	Time varies	\$101,190
				8	21403	Psychologists	Time varies	\$104,501
				9	21403	Psychologists	Time varies	\$105,988
				10	21403	Psychologists	Time varies	\$29,559
				19	21201	Dir of Mental Health	Supports SEL	\$166,800
				19	21312	Cur Development	MTSS Modeling, MMS Flex Advisory	\$6,732
				19	25003	Prof Development	Restorative Practices, Mental Health Conference	\$5,650
				24	21403	Psychologists	Time varies	1,216,100
				24	21404	Social Workers	Time varies	\$205,640
				25	82003	Health Insurance		\$470,430

				Total \$4,135,689
118		1/28/2025	What percentage of the work being done by our school psychologists is related to SEL and/or DEI?	<p>School psychologists spend the majority of their professional time conducting evaluations, student observations, direct counseling to students, attending PPTs and 504 meetings, and supporting teachers and staff to address the needs of all students.</p> <p>Psychologists integrate SEL learning, inclusive of RULER and DBT strategies into their practices. Specifically, through <i>Direct Work with Students</i> (individual and group counseling, skill based lessons, crisis intervention); <i>Support for Staff and Parents</i> (restorative practices, parent workshops, emotional regulation, and managing student behavior anxiety).</p> <p>Like all staff, psychologists help create a school climate that promotes wellness and embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion.</p>
119	All	1/28/2025	Overview of FLEX (Advisory) at MMS - Where did it come from and what was it intended for?	<p>In response to State legislation regarding Safe School Climate, an Advisory Committee was formed during the winter of 2017 to plan for a fall of 2017 implementation of an Advisory program. As outlined at that time, an advisory program is a critical component of middle school because it connects a teacher (the advisor) with a group of students (the advisees) to provide academic and social-emotional support and to strengthen the community of the school. The primary objectives of a structured, purposeful Advisory program are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support students in building positive, meaningful relationships with one or more caring adults at school ● Help students develop positive peer relationships ● Provide a safe place for students to strengthen their academic and social-emotional competencies, explore interests more deeply, and nurture the development of new skills and talents

				<p>Topics at MMS are developed from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CASEL standards (social awareness, self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making) ● RULER and DBT ● District and School Initiatives (i.e., School Climate, Genius Hour) <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills ● Communication ● Study Habits/ Test Taking/ Goal Setting ● Social Media ● Building Community ● Coping with Stress ● Decision-Making <p>Currently, MMS Flex runs five days a week: 2 days are dedicated to extra help/study time, 2 days are dedicated to silent reading, and 1 day is dedicated to SEL/Advisory programming. During Flex time, students also access music lessons, special education services such as counseling or speech, and small group or individual support with their school counselors.</p>
120	6 Year Actuals	1/4/25	Special Education (\$3.8M / 38% increase to \$17M in 2025)	<p>The primary drivers of Special Education costs since 2020 are Paraprofessional Support and Out of District Tuition. Since 2020, the district has added 28 paraprofessionals. This is an added cost of over \$2 million. The additional paraprofessionals are IEP recommended.</p> <p>The other primary driver is the cost of out of district tuition. Tuition has increased \$1.2 million in 6 years and increased almost \$1.6 million just from FY24 to FY25. This is primarily a result of unilateral agreements and out of district placements. While the number of unilateral agreements has been relatively consistent, as have the IEP placements the cost of placement/agreements have increased from approximately \$72,000 per student to \$96,000 per student or 33%.</p>

121	6 Year Actuals	1/4/25	Administrators (\$1.6M / 33% increase to \$6.5M in 2025)	<p>This increase is due in part to the following initiative:</p> <p>Providing administrative expertise and oversight of Special Education: SESS Facilitators (Teachers) were converted into SESS Assistant Principals (Administrators) at the elementary level to allow for administrative oversight of elementary PPTs. The net cost of this switch over six years was \$420,395. This change moves the administrator category from 24% to 33%.</p> <p>The secondary reason for the increase was increasing the work year for the elementary assistant principals from 197 days to 207 days. This change added \$71,250. This coupled with the SESS Facilitator conversion would reduce the 33% increase to 22%.</p> <p>The number of Administrators has fallen from 37 to 36 in this time period.</p>
122	6 Year Actuals	1/4/25	Mental Health (\$560k / 38% increase to \$2.1M in 2025)	<p>This increase is in response to the mental health initiative implemented mid-year in 2023 in response to the tragedy at DHS. This included adding Teen talk at DHS, Wellness Center at DHS and Director of Mental Health. Without these initiatives, the increase would average 4% over 6 years.</p>
123	6 Year Actuals	1/4/25	Home to School Transportation (\$830K / 37% increase to \$3M in 2025)	<p>As discussed previously, since COVID the cost of student transportation throughout Connecticut has significantly increased. When COVID occurred and schools were closed most bus companies laid off drivers. When schools reopened bus companies throughout CT could not staff operations and thus had to significant raise wages, offer bonuses and improve benefits to attract workers. This higher form of compensation has been passed off onto the consumer. This has led to a daily rate going from \$472.50 to \$633.81 per bus. Another driver of the cost is the BOE decision to add an additional bus to service an area of Darien that is considered a walk radius (Fitch Ave Area) due to safety concerns four years ago. This has added \$497,683 across these past six years. The district has looked at ridership data through a census we take each year to review the opportunity to collapse routes however no opportunity</p>

				<p>exists without doubling the length of time in which students ride the bus and also creating significantly earlier pickup times for students.</p> <p>Additionally, given the lack of a bus depot within Darien, there are no bus companies other than First Student willing to provide Transportation services thus limiting the competitive nature of any RFP. Dattco, STA and Durham have all indicated an unwillingness to bid on Darien unless there is a district provided in town bus depot.</p> <p>Finally, the State legislature passed the CT Clean Air Act which requires school districts to have clean energy fuel (Electric or Propane) buses by 2035. This is increasing the cost of each bus as we transition by \$112 per day per bus.</p>												
124	6 Year Actuals	1/4/25	Benefits / FICA / Retirement (\$6.4M / 44% increase to \$21M)	<p>This increase is due to the increasing cost of health insurance. The following are the renewal rates each year since FY 20.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>FY20</th> <th>FY21</th> <th>FY22</th> <th>FY23</th> <th>FY24</th> <th>FY25</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>6.0%</td> <td>8.5%</td> <td>7.95%</td> <td>8.75%</td> <td>6.9%</td> <td>13.95%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The district has switched carriers to lower premium shares, joined a consortium of communities to mitigate premium increases, increased employee premium shares and explored different funding models. However, the cost of health insurance has been an area of significant growth not only for Darien but many communities throughout CT.</p> <p>Neighboring communities have seen insurance increases as high as 40% in one year.</p>	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	6.0%	8.5%	7.95%	8.75%	6.9%	13.95%
FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25											
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125	All	1/28/25	Can we have a list of all consultants	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>RC</th> <th>Description</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Teen Talk</td> <td>\$107,950</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	RC	Description	Amount	1	Teen Talk	\$107,950						
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126	All	2/7/25	Why are our guidance counselors spending 1/3 of their time on DEI and SEL?	The Connecticut School Counseling Framework identifies three domains- academic, career and social emotional development. A comprehensive school counseling program is designed to support students' in three areas: academic, career, and personal/social development; hence the approximation of 1/3 of their time devoted to SEL. Otherwise, describing the allocation of their time is very difficult. Specific time is not allotted to DEI; however, counselors inherently provide information, programs and opportunities for all students to succeed.																																				

127	All	2/7/25	How much time is Dr. Dadd spending on SEL? She should spend zero time on this and reallocate her time to mental health	<p>As outlined in the job description, the Director of Mental Health will serve as the instructional leader in the areas of social emotional learning and will serve as the District's Safe School Climate Coordinator, Family Care Coordinator and will support the statutorily-required Mental Health Plan for Student Athlete</p> <p>Social emotional learning is the development of skills that support students' positive mental health. Throughout the course of her daily work Dr. Dadd supports staff and students in fostering social emotional learning competencies including self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision making and self-management.</p>
128	All	2/7/25	How much time are the psychologists spending on DEI and SEL? I would suggest cutting that out of their schedule.	School psychologists do not have dedicated time in their schedules for DEI. They do work with students in small groups and individually to support social emotional learning goals related to self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision making and self-management.
129	All	2/7/25	Suggest making Flex Advisory optional?	This is not a budget consideration; rather, it is a programmatic consideration.
130	All	2/7/25	We should ask for funds for a comprehensive audit of general education curriculum and its impact on Special Education	This needs further Board discussion, clarification and planning. Presently, the administration would not recommend the Board seek an additional appropriation for this purpose.
131	All	2/7/25	List consultants shown in question 70 on the cut list	Some of the items have been added, however, items such as the School Medical Advisor are required by State law and referenced in BOE policy.
132	All	2/7/25	Add items listed on question 112 to the cut list	These are historical expenses, not proposed expenses, and cannot be on the add/cut list.
133	All	2/7/25	Can the Viewsonics be added to the cut list?	Yes, they have been added. These displays are 15 years old, fail often and are not repairable given their age. There is no alternative interactive display available. These displays are the standard across all CT school systems.
134	All	2/10/25	What is the \$10k reduction to SESS Professional Development	PMT Training, CES Conferences, and SASCO River training on assessments.

135	All	2/10/25	Does the 10% athletic fee in the question include voluntary fees, banquet fees and rental fees?	No, it only includes BOE operating expenses from RC11.
136	All	2/10/25	Paraprofessional Schedule	Yes, the District moved away from the range of paras per student, which previously was 1:90. The range was arbitrary in nature and did not factor in that classroom paraprofessionals are not used in upper grades such as 3rd, 4th and 5th. No district in the DRG uses an allocation range of students to provide instructional paras.

RTM Questions are numbers 35 and 103.