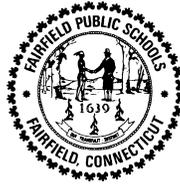


FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS MEMORANDUM

David G. Title, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



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Office of the Superintendent

TO: Tom Flynn
FROM: David G. Title
DATE: March 27, 2013
SUBJECT: Response to March 25, 2013 Email

Please note the following responses to your email dated March 25, 2013:

1. Over the last few years the Town of Fairfield has worked to increase safety on school routes by adding new signage, crosswalks, traffic lights, sidewalks and a police safety unit. In addition the Town and schools are now more focused on “green initiatives” and promoting healthy habits. The Board of Finance received a copy of the BOE Transportation policy that was last approved in August 2004. What would be involved to request that the policy be updated to include the Connecticut Department of Education guidelines for safe walking distances as follows:
 - a. K-5 increase from $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to 1 mile
 - b. 6-8 increase from 1 mile to 1.5 miles
 - c. 9-12 increase from 1.5 miles to 2 miles
 - d. How many buses could be reduced?
 - e. What would be the savings for both buses and fuel?

Answer:

We are not able to determine with any degree of accuracy what the cost savings would be for these changes. The work involved in coming to an accurate estimate involves identifying every family who lives within the new, longer walk zones and then re-routing all of the buses for the elementary, middle and high schools. In addition, safety plays a major factor in determining bus stops and this takes time to investigate. As soon as we are able to estimate an accurate figure for these savings, we will do so.

In addition, there are some adverse consequences to this action. The introductory paragraph refers to “green initiatives.” Given that it is highly likely that walkers will in fact be driven to school by their parents, this action would likely increase air pollution. In addition, more parents

driving children to school will result in increased traffic in and around schools, many of which do not have adequate drop off and pick up zones for the existing flow of traffic.

- f. Does the town of Fairfield have the authority to request that private schools work with the public schools to reduce the budget by adjusting their school start and dismissal times? Per Mr. Ficke, Fairfield Prep cannot share buses because of overlaps with their start and dismissal times. What type of change would be needed and what is the potential savings?

Answer:

Yes, the First Selectman has the authority to request that private schools adjust start and dismissal times. In order to determine budget savings, the Transportation Supervisor would need to research each private school bus route and each bus stop.

2. Preschool expansion

- a. What preschool programs are run by the BOE? I think there is the ECC for both special needs students and role models, each high school has a child care program with a preschool program, Burr, and a plan to add one at Dwight.

Answer:

The Fairfield Public Schools preschool program is located at three sites: Burr, Dwight and the Early Childhood Center (ECC), located at FWHS. The child care at the two high schools is part of the Family/Consumer Sciences program where students interested in pursuing careers involving children can take this course and under the supervision of a classroom teacher work with children in a child care setting.

- b. What are our Federal and state mandates to offer these?

Answer:

IDEA Part B requires that we provide special services to students with disabilities starting at the age of 3. The Burr and Dwight preschools came from Fairfield being identified as 'in racial imbalance' by the State of Connecticut. The preschools at Burr and Dwight are part of the Fairfield BOE and Connecticut State Board of Education approved plan to reduce racial imbalance and comply with the law.

- c. How many children attend each program and what is the revenue and cost related to each specific program? Please break down the cost by transportation cost and # of buses, staff including the number of positions, description and related cost, supplies and other expenses.

Answer:

Burr = 36 students

Dwight = 36 students (starting in 2013-2014)

ECC = 139 students

Anticipated Revenue that helps to offset costs - \$195,000

Costs

Staffing:

Burr and Dwight – two teachers and two paraprofessionals = \$175,770

Transportation:

Burr – 3 buses, \$151,140 (plus fuel)

Dwight – 2 buses, \$100,760 (plus fuel)

Supplies & Other Expenses:

Supplies - Burr and Dwight - \$8,856

One time start-up costs for Dwight:

Furniture - \$8,297

Technology - \$11,268

Curriculum - \$4,000

- d. If we decide to cut the funding for Burr or Dwight what would be the cost savings?

Answer:

Loss of revenue - (\$195,000)

Savings of staff – \$175,770

Savings of Transportation – \$251,900 (plus fuel)

Savings of Supplies & Other expenses - \$32,421

**** Implication: Need to develop a new plan to reduce racial imbalance to be approved by BOE and Connecticut State BOE, which is likely to be more expensive and disruptive than the cost of a preschool.*

3. We increased Non Certified staff by 6.95 FTE's in this budget. Why are these positions needed and what is the cost of each?

Answer:

The increase in non-certified staff is directly related to the intensive special needs of individual students across the district. The cost of each para included salary and benefits. The total cost of 6.95 positions, salary and benefits, is \$230,303 as follows:

- \$33,141 for salary and benefits for the full time paraprofessional positions (averaged)*
- \$31,457 for salary and benefits for the .95 paraprofessional position (averaged)*

4. What is the anticipated enrollment at each of the 3 middles schools as compared to the current year?

Answer:

(Comparing October 1, 2012 count to the projected # of students in 13-14)

FWMS +87 students

RLMS -60 students

TMS -62 students

- a. Could we get away with not adding a 0.4 Dean, 0.3 Guidance Counselor, and a 0.2 Psychologist at Fairfield Woods Middle School? Why do they need more than the other two Middle schools? Both High schools have the same number even though they have different enrollments.

Answer:

These positions weren't added; they are transfers of FTE from a school going down in student enrollment to a school going up in student enrollment:

Dean: moved 0.4 FTE from RLMS to FWMS

Guidance Counselor: moved 0.3 FTE from RLMS to FWMS

School Psychologist: moved 0.2 FTE from RLMS to FWMS

5. Please explain why we are increasing social workers from 9.9 FTE's to 11.20 in this budget.

Answer:

The social worker change is a consolidation from other accounts, not an increase. There is a decrease at Jennings .2, Holland Hill .2, ECC .2, and Alternative High School .6. This change consolidates all social workers into one BOE account.

6. Please provide an update on the medical claims if new information is received or if there are potential savings from a new plan.

Answer:

This information can be provided by Town Hall.