

Responses to RTM Member Jacob

Note: All page numbers referenced are from BOE Budget Book FY 2014-15

Q 1. Pg. 55: Are all Teaching Staff listed on Pgs. 53-55 (total number - 869.70) certified? If not, please provide breakdown: number certified, number not certified.

Include interns and student teachers if they are counted as part of the 869.70.

Yes, all 869.70 teaching staff shown on pages 53 – 55 are certified. Student teachers and interns are not included in these numbers.

Q 2. Is there a minimum class size (student enrollment number) below which an elective class is not offered? If yes, what is the number? Is there a downside to combining some elective class levels (e.g., Intro to Pottery and Intermediate Pottery; or advanced Chinese 4 and Advanced Chinese; Wood Construction Tech classes; and Graphic Com Tech classes)? Are teachers hired just to teach these elective classes, or are they already in the school teaching other classes? Can some elective classes which have low attendance but are arts or media-oriented be held instead/referred to our Regional Center for the Arts in Trumbull (if there still is bus transportation provided)?

Classes with less than 15 students are reviewed by high school administrators to determine if they must be held and some classes are canceled. Some classes are combined as described above. See page 132 of the budget manual for a description of the number of classes currently being offered with less than 15 students and for a further explanation of the reasons for holding such classes. The RCA is available to students by application and a review of their portfolio; it is not a school to which individual students can be sent for a specific class. Bus transportation is provided to RCA for students attending that program.

Q 3. Please Explain "Capital Outlay" Expenses, P. 109-121? Specifically, what projects is the money being used for? Some are very large - Business Services, and Pupil Personnel Services (highest); both high schools (moderate), 3 middle schools in even amounts (moderate); and most elementary schools in small, even amounts.

Each of the schools are allocated a budget for capital outlay, as described below:

The eleven elementary schools are budgeted at \$ 2,928 each

The three middle schools are budgeted at \$ 12,764 each

The two high schools are budgeted at \$ 31,916 each

- The "Budget by Summary Object" for the elementary, middle, and high school capital outlay accounts on pages 109 -121 are detailed out on page 48 of the proposed 2014-2015 budget book.
- The two special purpose schools are budgeted at:
 - Walter Fitzgerald Campus alternative high school is budgeted at \$ 863. These funds are used for the replacement of furniture that has outlived its useful life.
 - The Early Childhood Center/Pre-school is budgeted at \$ 5,067. These funds are used for the replacement of furniture and equipment that has outlived its useful life.

- Instructional services are budgeted at \$ 5,000. These funds are used for music equipment across the district (instruments).
- Pupil Personnel Services is budgeted at \$ 54,500. These funds are used for assistive technology devices to students with significant special needs, for example augmentative communication devices for students who are unable to speak.
- Business Services is budgeted at \$ 85,700. The 'Budget by Summary Object' for the Business Services account is found on Page 105. The detail of how these funds are used and broken down is shown on page 48 of the proposed 2014-2015 budget book.

Q 4a. P. 151: Out of District Student Tuition. Why the sudden increase and expected future increase?

Fairfield has always has a small number of students that require services beyond what can be done in the public school environment. Most recently there has been, and continues to be a significant increase in the number of students who require intensive services for psychiatric and behavioral reasons in order to receive a free and appropriate public education under state and federal law (IDEA).

Q 4b. Are these students new to our school district?

A very small percentage of students in this category are students who move in to Fairfield during their school years. The vast majority are students who enter the Fairfield Public Schools in Kindergarten and remain with us through their graduation from High School.

Q 4c. Which schools would they attend if they were not outplaced? The students currently outplaced would attend the following schools if not outplaced:

| | | |
|------------------|------|------|
| Dwight | FWMS | FLHS |
| Holland Hill | RLMS | FWHS |
| Jennings | TMS | |
| McKinley | | |
| North Stratfield | | |
| Sherman | | |
| Stratfield | | |

This is a variable list as ALL schools have had students on this list from time to time depending on individual student need.

Q 4d. In general, what is the nature of their "psychiatric and behavioral issues?"

Psychiatric issues include, but are not limited to: Obsessive/Compulsive Disorders, schizoaffective disorders (with and without psychotic features), anxiety disorders, major depressive disorders, suicidal ideation, bipolar disorders, personality disorders, etc.

Behaviors include, but are not limited to: multiple attempts at suicide, non-suicidal self-injurious behaviors (cutting, self-mutilation), major aggression toward others, bolting, school refusal, major disruptions to the student's own education and the education of others.

Q 4e. Specifically, what are their ages and grade levels?

Students range from age 9-20 and from grade 3-12.

Q 5. Currently how many students in our school system are on medications which are administered by our school nursing staff? What was it last FY? Which schools have the highest numbers of medicated students?

2013-2014 - Please note that these figures are through March 2014

| School | Total # of Students with Medication Orders | Total # of Medications | Total number of Dosages Administered by School Nurse |
|------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| ECC | 15 | 33 | 10 |
| Burr | 50 | 104 | 964 |
| Dwight | 41 | 67 | 477 |
| Holland Hill | 35 | 66 | 148 |
| Jennings | 51 | 92 | 341 |
| McKinley | 44 | 65 | 347 |
| Mill Hill | 48 | 92 | 125 |
| North Stratfield | 44 | 83 | 441 |
| Osborn Hill | 60 | 119 | 752 |
| Riverfield | 36 | 54 | 246 |
| Sherman | 51 | 94 | 240 |
| Stratfield | 55 | 103 | 396 |
| FWMS | 122 | 245 | 1417 |
| RLMS | 92 | 155 | 490 |
| TMS | 77 | 140 | 772 |
| FLHS | 136 | 284 | 442 |
| FWHS | 103 | 211 | 134 |

2012-2013 Please note that due to the changeover in computer systems the Nursing Supervisor was unable to provide the total number of students with medication orders for 12/13 without doing a hand tally.

| School | Total # of Medications | Total Number of Dosages Administered by School Nurse |
|--------------|------------------------|--|
| ECC | 21 | 469 |
| Burr | 35 | 1063 |
| Dwight | 56 | 455 |
| Holland Hill | 27 | 1060 |
| Jennings | 74 | 789 |
| McKinley | 31 | 682 |
| Mill Hill | 79 | 440 |

| | | |
|------------------|-----|------|
| North Stratfield | 70 | 451 |
| Osborn Hill | 90 | 1310 |
| Riverfield | 40 | 386 |
| Sherman | 65 | 503 |
| Stratfield | 47 | 459 |
| FWMS | 299 | 1375 |
| RLMS | 296 | 567 |
| TMS | 152 | 646 |
| FLHS | 160 | 960 |
| FWHS | 253 | 305 |

Q 6. Currently how many homebound students received temporary or permanent assistance from our district this year? Last year? Which schools have the most homebound students?

There are currently 27 students receiving homebound instruction. State statute obligates districts to provide homebound instruction to any student who has missed 10 consecutive days of school and is expected to miss a minimum of an additional 5 days for medical reasons. Students are required to provide written documentation that they are medically unable to attend school. Students who are hospitalized for any reason are also eligible for this provision. The length of absence is determined by medical professionals and can extend for many months in some cases. This is a highly variable list that fluctuates based on student need.

Q 7. In general, who tracks grant payments by the state or fed gov't for the BOE? In the current FY (2013-14) to date has grant money been paid on time and in the full amount expected? What about previous FY?

The Finance Department of the School District tracks payments by the state or federal government for the BoE. Grant money is received at regular intervals, depending on the granting agency. The rate of payment and collection is consistent with prior year's payment schedule. The 2013 IDEA was negatively impacted by 'the sequester.' As a result the district did not receive approximately \$150,000 that was expected.

Q 8a. P. 162-163: Fairfield Woods Middle School Maintenance Projects: HVAC Sound Screen. Why wasn't this addressed when system was installed, and shouldn't the manufacturer/contractor correct or pay for some of this? Which company did this? Why is this particular fix needed this year? Can we live without it?

The HVAC unit in question was manufactured and installed in accordance with its specifications and is functioning correctly. The unit was installed by Ferguson Mechanical, a subcontractor to Malkin Construction, the construction manager for the FWMS Addition/Renovation Project.

The sound screen installation listed in the budget is being proposed to alleviate nuisance noise being experienced by neighbors on Fairland Drive. By the time noise complaints started to be received (late in the project) the building committee did not have funds available to remedy the condition.

The HVAC unit is functioning properly for the school's needs. Deferring this work would not affect the operation of the school but would continue the nuisance noise experience by the neighbors on Fairland Drive.

Q 8b. Bradley Wing Locker Replacement? How many students don't have lockers? How many repairs were needed in this current fiscal year?

This project has been deferred two budget years in a row and with the increased enrollment at FWMS the lockers are very important. The main reason for this locker replacement project is to deal with the damaged lockers from the 1970 era. They are in very bad shape. Repairs are made on a regular basis for lockers that are not staying in place and/or staying on their original base system, have broken latches and hardware, are unable to open, etc. Deferring this project will have an impact on the students next school year and could be a safety issue as the lockers can pull away from the wall in groups.

Q 9a. P. 166: Warde High School Maintenance Projects:

Fitness Weight Room Carpet -- Why is this a carpet? Sweat and dirt clean up on simple linoleum or rubber flooring, cheaper and more practical.

The appropriate floor covering for this application is a special carpet and/or rubber flooring specifically manufactured for this type of application (weight rooms). The use of VCT (vinyl composite tile) or Linoleum flooring would present a slipping hazard to the users of the room in the event of a spill (room users tend to keep water bottles with them when using the equipment) or simply dripping sweat from the users. A slip would be extremely dangerous because of the multiple pieces of weight equipment in the room.

The carpet specified in this funding proposal, which is specifically designed for weight rooms, is the more economical of the two options available for this application and the Physical Education Curriculum Coordinator worked closely with us to specify the appropriate material.

Q 9b. Library Media Center Carpet -- Who chose this carpet in the first place? Also seems impractical. When was it installed? Warranty? In a tight fiscal year, why is this essential maintenance?

The carpet presently installed at FWHS Media Center was selected by Perkins Eastman Architects. Carpet is typically used for this type of application because of its acoustical qualities that are so important for library settings. This carpet was installed in 2004 as part of the last addition/alteration project done by the High School Building Committee.

The warranty on the present carpet has expired. The new carpet will have at least a 10 year warranty against backing delamination, abrasive wear and edge ravel. This is essential maintenance because the present carpet is well beyond its useful life. We expect to get 7 years out of carpeting in high traffic, high use areas. We expect to get 10 years out of carpeting in office areas.