

BOF Questions 2/20/2020

Transportation:

	2016 -17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
District Student Enrollment		4,369	4,268	4,151	4,086
Buses	42.5	46	46	46	46
High School Parking Passes	400	400	400	400	400

What are the number of high school parking passes issued since 2017-18?

There are 400 parking spaces assigned to students. The fee is \$100 per space, so we collect about \$40,000 per year. Increasing the amount given back to the Town as revenue from \$20,000 to \$30,000 would leave a balance of \$10,000 in the account for parking stickers, gate maintenance, cameras and safety devices.

Why haven't we been able to reduce buses with a reduction of 283 students?

Note: In 2016-17 we were running 42.5 busses on a three tier system which required six and one half hours of running time. In 2017-18 we switched to a two tier system which started the day about one hour later and requires five and a half hours of running time. The bus contract was renegotiated with these provisions in mind. The two tier bus cost is \$5,369 less per bus. The compression of time required 3.5 additional busses to cover the geography in the reduced time period.

The additional buses were covered by the daily cost reduction for a "no cost" solution to the transportation arrangement for the school start time and two-tier system. Since we went to the two-tier system with the elementary shuttle arrangement, all buses are running at a greater capacity with significant time constraints between the tiers in order to maintain the prior dismissal time. Routes cannot be consolidated as this would require more time between tiers and would impact numerous routes.

Additionally, Newtown is one of the largest towns in Connecticut, and population density is low. Because of this, bus routes in Newtown are longer on average than many surrounding towns. Reducing the number of buses, even if technically feasible (based on passenger load), would likely increase ride lengths.

What savings would a reduction of one bus and two buses yield?

One bus will cost \$65,629.20 for 2020-21. Two buses would cost \$131,258.40.

Have there been any spending freezes in budget year 2019-2020? If so, for how long and why?

There have not been any spending freezes in 2019-20

Staffing:

The 2019-2020 Budget requested 741.73 FTEs; however, the current 2019-2020 budget reflects an increase of 2.57 FTEs. What was the actual cost of this increase and how was that funded?

The Staffing by Function table in the budget book indicates a net increase of 2.57 staff that actually results from increases in special education and pupil personnel and decreases in all other instructional functions. The changes are a complex and include teachers, specialists, paras, therapists and a job coach. The cost of these changes is covered by the turnover and movement of all staff that has occurred since the beginning of the year. Some of these changes have resulted in savings, such as when a hired staff member replaces a person with less seniority or might begin later in the year than expected. Additionally, non-certified changes (paraprofessionals) may have simply increased hours or when a para is hired due to a new SPED need. The 2.57 is a result of a multitude of changes overall.

Is this the increase in the certified salaries of \$271,860?

The total of budgeted to current certified salaries overall is the same (see pages 23 & 24). All the elementary current is less than budgeted along with Reed, the Middle school and Pupil Personnel. There are slight increases in High, Special Ed, curriculum and General Services. (You can see this by looking at the summary page following each tab.)

It appears you got this number - \$271,860 - by calculating the difference between the 2019-20 budgeted amounts for certified salaries \$989,816 and the current amount anticipated to be spent \$1,261,676 (page 154).

The \$989,816 budgeted includes an allowance for turnover, a negative number that is planned to be covered by replacing personnel at lower rates of pay. Compare the current to 2017-18 and 2018-19 expended to see the pattern and then compare the budgeted to requested.

Elementary School:

Why is there an increase of \$334,252 in certified salaries when the increase of students is only 28? Are we adding classes because of this increase?

The increase in certified salaries is due to two factors: 1) the contractual increase in salaries (page 188) a net increase in staffing at the elementary schools of 0.4 FTE (page 19). The largest part of the increase is due to salary increases/contractual obligations.