

**EAST LYME BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
BUDGET REVIEWS – FY 2018-2019
Monday, MARCH 19th, 2018**

Members in Attendance: William Weber, Chairman
Lisa Picarazzi, Vice Chairperson
Camille Alberti
John Birmingham
Anne Santoro

FILED

Mar 27 2018 AT 10:05 AM/PM

EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Also In Attendance: Anna Johnson, Finance Director
Jeffrey Newton, Superintendent of Schools
Tim Hagen, BOE Chairman
Maryanna Stevens, School Finance Director

Absent: Jason Pazzaglia

A. Call Special Meeting to Order

Chairman Weber called this Special Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance to order at 7 PM.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was observed.

C. Delegations

Mr. Weber called for Delegations.

Kate Caristo-Scalora, 3 Lantern Lane said that she is the president of the LBH PTA and has two children in the school system and moved here because of the school reputation. She is surprised that they only have one social worker for two hours per week at LBH. She does not find that to be the standard of an exceptional school so she came with others this evening to speak about this. Also, the PT psychologist cannot meet all of the needs of the children. If there was a crisis how would they accommodate that? She hopes that the Board of Finance will support funding for the social workers.

Liz Dumond, 10 Acorn Drive said that she is the parent of LBH and Middle School students. She is also an educator in a local Town that does have social workers. She is concerned that they have the resource available. She also moved here for the schools.

Paul Dagle, 5 Riverhead Lane said that he is representing and is the Co-founder of the Brian Dagle Association and shared some information with them regarding children with mood disorders, mental disorders and anxiety disorders. The addition of two social workers and a FT psychologist is necessary. The need is there and he urged them to support this.

Almary Chacon, 17 So. Beechwood Road said that she has children in the school system and feels that SPED and other programs take up the time of the social worker now and that there is a need for more.

D. New Business

a. Budget Reviews

▪ **Board of Education - #999**

Tim Hagen, BOE Chairman noted that other members of the BOE were also present this evening as well as the Administrative team. He said that tomorrow at 2 PM in the High School there will be opening the bid packages for LBH and Niantic Center and they are hoping for some good numbers. He added that the Town

Building Committee has been doing a great job. He said that he is bringing this up as the community is making such an investment in the schools and it shows the support they have for the educational system. Their budget is based on zero-based budgeting practice. The BOE unanimously adopted the budget that came from the Superintendent. He said that they appreciate what the Board of Finance does and hopes that they will support this budget.

Jeffrey Newton, Superintendent of Schools said that a lot of effort and hard work went into this budget; a zero-based budget. He presented the PowerPoint presentation on the budget (Copy Attached). He said that they are requesting a 2.59% increase (+\$1,208,334) and that the drivers of some 80% of this were the salary and fixed expenses. He noted that their long term goal is for student centered learning. The Food Service Program is now in the black; the High Deductible Health Plan is holding it's own at this time. They are looking for future cost savings with student transportation, supply purchases, curriculum development, Coastal Connections and potentially some other areas under discussion. While enrollment has declined they anticipate that by 2027 it will be over 3,000. Security has been ramped up and is the most comprehensive of any district in the area. He noted the rationale for the social workers and school psychologist and said that they would answer any questions that they have.

Mr. Weber asked if crisis and major crisis are considered the same.
Mr. Newton said yes.

Ms. Alberti asked about the HSA and if they are really saving anything.
Mr. Newton said that it is at this time more of an avoidance of even higher costs if they were not with this program.
Ms. Alberti asked about the Food Service revenue and the intended use of it.
Mr. Newton and Ms. Stevens said that it cannot be used for anything other than items for the food service program, such as a new stove.
Ms. Alberti asked about the anticipated natural gas savings.
Mr. Newton said that this is very new – the BOE main balding is the only one currently on it and the rest are in the process of being changed.
Ms. Alberti asked about the social workers and what they currently have.
Mr. Newton said that they have three guidance counselors at the middle schools and six at the high school; they do not have them at the elementary level.
Ms. Alberti asked when comparing our guidance counselors to other school districts, if they have as many as we do.
Mr. Newton said that they have more and that we are deficient in terms of social workers and a psychologist.

Ms. Picarazzi asked the current student enrollment number.
Mr. Newton said that it is around 2700 this year and it would be around 50 less for next year. There is one more year of decline and then the numbers will climb back up.
Ms. Picarazzi asked if there was any change in the administrator positions this year and next.
Mr. Newton said that nothing would change – they will keep the current structure.
Ms. Picarazzi asked if they are down two teachers next year.
Mr. Newton said yes, one elementary teacher and one high school teacher.

Ms. Santoro asked about the Coastal Connections program tuition.
Mr. Newton said that it is about \$18,000 - \$19,000 per student.
Ms. Santoro asked the number of students in the program.
Mr. Newton said around 22-24. He added that the problem right now is that their location is space compromised. They also pay \$30,000 in rental on the space and would like to bring the program in-house at some point.

Ms. Alberti asked if the budget booklet that they received from them has the correct figures in it.
Mr. Newton said yes, it should have.
Ms. Alberti said that there is supposed to be a reduction of 1.5 personnel but in the booklet it reports that last year there were 520 people and this year they have 528 – so they are up by 6.5.
Mr. Newton said that they are up due to contracted services – such as the food service and three others who are sub-contractors.
Ms. Alberti asked if it is a wash in the budget.

Ms. Stevens said that the individuals have waived benefits.

Mr. Birmingham asked about the school buses and the number of people on them as some have been seen with only a few students.

Mr. Newton said that they are mandated to provide transportation to every student even if many parents drive their kids to school. Further, the same bus is also being used for the elementary and middle school runs so they would still have to pay for them. They are in the last year of the contract and are hoping for some good bids for the new contract.

Ms. Picarazzi asked the cost of one bus per year.

Ms. Stevens said that it is around \$52,000/year plus the fuel (\$285.15/day plus fuel). She added that the SPED students bus cost is \$271.42/day plus fuel.

Ms. Picarazzi said that she is not sure what the answer is in trying to reduce this cost.

Mr. Newton said that the re-districting process could help this although he thinks that sharing on the SPED transportation costs is the easier process to undertake.

Ms. Picarazzi asked about LEARN.

Mr. Newton said that they get \$63,000 for nine classrooms and LEARN is in the process of opening up a new site in New London. They will definitely be there by January of next year.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if that space could be used for Coastal Connections.

Mr. Newton said that needs to be explored – as there are options.

Ms. Picarazzi asked about the current reduced revenue projections from the State.

Ms. Johnson said another one-half million. The projected gap is around \$1.5M. ECS was \$6.9M and they are looking at \$5.8M now.

Ms. Santoro said that they are all aware that there are probably even more cuts on the way and asked if there are any federal grants that could be directed to help cover the reductions.

Mr. Newton said that they have not looked at them at this time as the issue with those grants are that when you do get them and then the grant is eliminated you now have to fund the program and positions.

Mr. Birmingham asked about the budget by location.

Mr. Newton said that they are still in the process of putting the items in with the correct line items.

Mr. Weber said that in looking this over that it sometimes seems that both areas have grown rather than to have one reduced.

Ms. Stevens said that some of the social worker services are contracted services.

Mr. Birmingham asked if there is any federal money for the social workers or psychologist.

Ms. Stevens said – not at this time.

Ms. Picarazzi asked about preventive maintenance showing a 38% increase.

Ms. Stevens said that it is district-wide and includes the alarms, etc.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if they ask the families to pay for the field trips.

Mr. Newton said for some, yes.

Mr. Weber asked if there were more trips due to the increase.

Mr. Newton said it is the expense of the special needs trips.

Ms. Picarazzi asked how much was being spent on sporting equipment.

Ms. Stevens said \$54,000.

Mr. Susi, HS Principal said that they moved it out of instructional supplies and that uniforms are expensive. They have around 826 students who participate in sports.

Ms. Picarazzi asked where they were to look to try to help with the taxpayer burden – have they looked at the frequency of replacing the uniforms.

Mr. Newton said that some replacements are at six to seven years and that is stretching it already.

Mr. Susi said that they look at transportation also and try to save some dollars there.

Ms. Santoro asked why advertising went up.

Mr. Newton and Ms. Stevens said that it was for publication of bus route schedules and job postings for substitutes, etc.

Ms. Santoro asked about employee travel and the increase in that line item.

Mr. Newton said that they have a number of employees who travel from one building to another and that this is that mileage reimbursement.

Ms. Santoro asked about the water & sewer increase.

Ms. Stevens said that not all of the meters were working or recording properly and these figures are now based on real time usage.

Ms. Alberti asked about school safety and if there is a committee in place to address it.

Mr. Newton said that there is a district-wide safety committee that meets.

Ms. Alberti asked if there were plans for any metal detectors or other items that would be funded as capital items for safety and what is being done going forward.

Mr. Newton said that there was nothing at this point in time for such items and that going forward that is where the social workers and psychologist come into play as they will be meeting the mental health needs of the students.

Ms. Alberti said that she would like to make some general comments. She feels that the BOE does a wonderful job and as with last year, she is not looking at line items as she has to trust them to do that. She is looking at the big picture and the declining revenue picture and this still represents a serious mil rate increase. While it may bring more people into Town, she personally knows of people who have left Town who had no kids in the school system and the new people coming in bring in three kids so that is not working to find a balance. They are looking at a gap with that and the cost per pupil has gone up over 15% over the past three years.

Mr. Newton said that perhaps the mil rate increase has been too low and that as a parent he feels that people moving in are willing to pay the extra.

Mr. Weber asked what the cost per pupil was.

Mr. Newton said around \$15,500/student.

Mr. Weber said that bringing people with kids into Town for the school system does not work for him – for example – he said that he figured that he would have to live here for 82 years to pay back for his kids education and those that move here for the school system also move back out as soon as the kids are done. He continued that they had said that the need for a social worker is at age 14. He asked if putting them at the lower levels is to make it more preventative.

Mr. Newton said yes.

Mr. Weber asked how many computer consultants they have for \$327,000.

Ms. Stevens said that they currently have contracted service for IT and they want to bring it in-house. The \$52,725 is for some PT help desk people. There are no additional funds so it is level funding.

Mr. Weber asked why electricity went up.

Ms. Stevens said that it is based on what was actually spent.

Mr. Newton said that they had not budgeted enough. He added that there are evening activities at the schools which require the lights to also be on at that time. They do have sensors so they go off when the rooms are not in use.

Mr. Weber said that there is almost a 10% increase at the middle school which seems significant.

Ms. Picarazzi said that it went up by \$60,000.

Ms. Stevens said that it was underfunded in the previous year.

Ms. Picarazzi said that regarding the water & sewer figures that they are inconsistent between the schools.

Mr. Newton said that some had issues with their meters and some did not.

Ms. Picarazzi asked about the independent contractors who opted out of benefits and what says that they won't change their mind.

Ms. Stevens said that they did not have any choice in the matter.

Mr. Weber thanked Mr. Newton and his staff for the presentation and information.

E. Public Discussion

Mr. Weber called for any comments from the Public.
There were none.

F. Board Comments

Mr. Weber asked if there were any comments from the Board noting that it was reserved for agenda items.
There were none.

G. Adjournment

Mr. Weber called for a motion to adjourn.

****MOTION (1)**

Ms. Alberti moved to adjourn this Special Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance at 9:24 PM.
Mr. Birmingham seconded the motion.
Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,
Recording Secretary

East Lyme Board of Education

Adopted Budget

FY 2018 - 2019

1/29/18

Presented to the EL BOE on 3/19/18
by BOE Chair Tim Hagen and
Superintendent Jeffrey Newton

Attachment

BOE

3/19/2018

Presentation Purpose:

- *Clearly communicate* the budget process while *gaining support and commitment*
- Maintain a budget focus that continues *zero-based budgeting practices, transparency and fiscal responsibility*
- Focus efforts to align with the *Long-Range Plan and District Mission Statement*

ELPS District Mission:

“East Lyme Public Schools will inspire, engage and educate each student to become a contributing citizen and a responsible, independent, and critical thinker.”

ELPS Long Range Goals:

- Goal 1 → Focus Decisions & System Operations on Student Success
- Goal 2 → Collaborative Culture
- Goal 3 → Student Centered Learning

EL BOE Adopted Budget for FY 2018-2019

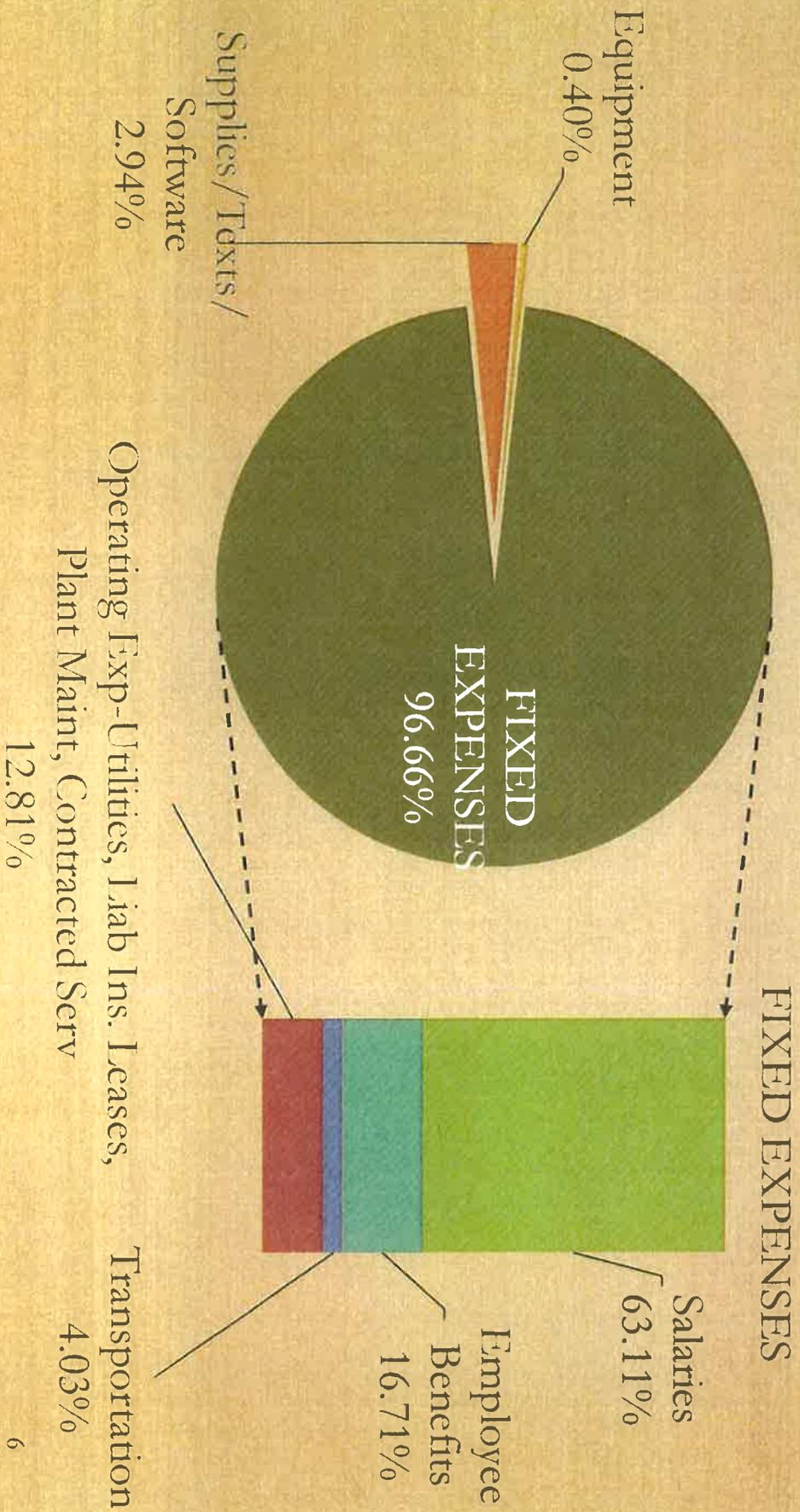
	Amount	Percent Increase Over P/Y
2018-2019 EL BOE Adopted Budget	\$47,776,943	2.59%

District Budget History

	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
Supt's Budget	4.68%	4.56%	2.88%	2.59%
BOE Budget	3.95%	3.56%	2.88%	2.59%
Adopted Budget	2.90%	3.30%	2.38%	TBD

Key Budget Drivers

ELPS Fixed Costs for 2018-2019



Cost Saving/Avoidance Measures (Present)

- Zero-based budget across district
- Food service program change *now on the block*
- High Deductible Health Plan
- Ongoing software and curriculum contract consolidation
- Switch from oil/propane to natural gas
- District-wide professional development *(m-house)*
- District/Town collaboration *ie: 10 yr. replacement/retirement plan*
- Medicaid reimbursement *contract on*

Cost Saving Measures

(Regional)

(Future Areas Under Discussion)

- Health Insurance
 - Food services
 - Contracts
 - Professional Development
 - Marketing
 - Student transportation
 - Staffing
 - Supply purchases
 - Special Education
 - Curriculum Development
 - Coastal Connections
 - Software consolidation
- Perennial
Fiction
Buying
Students?

New Student Registration Process

What brings your family to East Lyme?

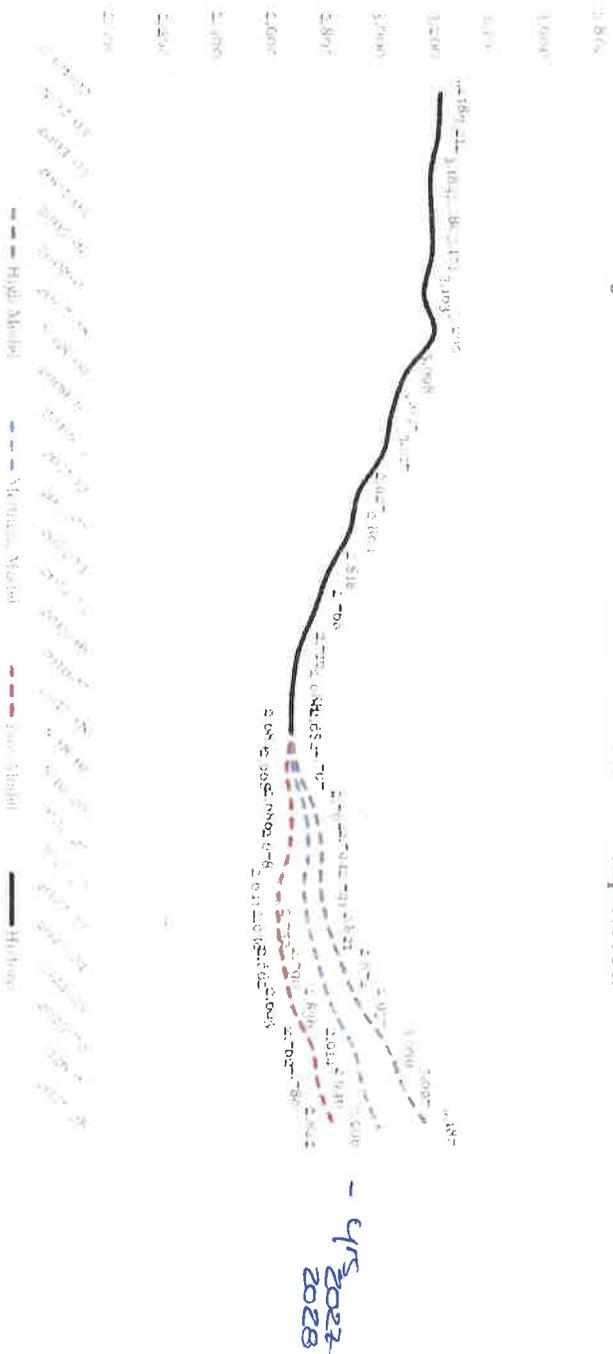
#1 Most Common Parent Response:

**The school district's reputation
for quality education
and academic excellence**

ELPS Districtwide Enrollment Projections

by Milone & MacBroom 12/18/17

Projected Pre-K-12 Enrollment: Scenario Comparison



- Low, medium, and high projection scenarios show growth over ten-year horizon of 5.7% (low) to 18.3% (high), with the bulk of enrollment growth concentrated at the K-4 level in all scenarios
- **Medium scenario depicts most probable scenario for future enrollments in ELPS schools**

ELPS Districtwide Enrollment Projections

by Milone & MacBroom 12/18/17

Medium Scenario

School Year	PK-12 Student Enrollment
2017-2018	2,751
2018-2019	2,758
2019-2020	2,802
2020-2021	2,815
2021-2022	2,799
2022-2023	2,752
2023-2024	2,790
2024-2025	2,836
2025-2026	2,914
2026-2027	2,946
2027-2028	3,006



Student Services: Special Education



Based on Recommendations of the 2017 CREC Audit

*District-Wide Initiatives
and Identified Need for the
Future of our Schools*

Current Year Security Measures Addressed in Last Budget

Repurposed Elementary and Middle School Greeters with **School Security Staff** at a cost of \$9,100

Qualifications Include:

-Prior law enforcement or corrections experience

→ *Most comprehensive school security for any District in the area.

Rationale for Social Workers and School Psychologist

District Improvement Goal 3: Student Centered Learning



Measurable Outcome:

- Identify the social and emotional needs of our students and determine supports needed to develop the social and emotional well-being of all children.

Our Promise To Students:

- Increase positive perception about individual role as a learner
- Increase attendance and achievement
- Positive home to school/school to home communication

What is a Crisis and How Do We Respond?

Suicidal thoughts or plans

Escalated behavior for a prolonged period of time

Depression

Suspected Abuse or Neglect

How Do We Respond:

Counselor Intervention

Calls to 211 Hotline, Police, or Medical

MS & HS

Mental Health/Crisis Intervention Data

- In 16'-17' ELHS had **33** major crisis interventions. As of December 17' a record **29** have occurred. On pace for **58**
- In 16'-17' ELMHS had **26** major crisis interventions. As of December 17' a record **27** have occurred. On pace for **54**

Mental Health Service Trends at the Elementary Level

- Students with the highest need are seen individually, so little to no small group intervention is available.
- When crisis support is needed, staff may need to travel, thus leaving the current location without coverage.
- Limited amounts of available mental health support lead to school psychologists providing support & services that would typically be provided by a social worker.

1.5 FTE Social Worker Current Availability

(Identified in GREY below)

	0-3 hrs. per week	4-6 hrs. per week	7-10 hrs. per week	11-14 hrs. per week	15-18 hrs. per week	*19-21 hrs. per week
ELHS +1.0						
HS Therapeutic Program						
ELMS +.5						
FL +.4						
LBH +.4						
NC +.4						

DRG Social Worker Comparison

Full-Time Equivalency (FTE)

DRG D	# Students	Social Workers
Berlin	2781	4.0
Bethel	3083	4.4
East Hampton	1974	3.0
East Lyme	2781	1.5
Milford	5758	13.0
Southington	6500	8.0
Wallingford	5874	13.0
Waterford	2611	5.0

DRG Social Worker Comparison

(Student to Professional Ratio)

DRG District

Social Workers

Berlin	695:1
Bethel	701:1
East Hampton	658:1
East Lyme	1854:1
Milford	443:1
Southington	812.5
Wallingford	452:1
Waterford	522:1

Moving from Reactive to Proactive Model

Role of a Social Worker:

- Implement prevention programs to support growth and development and home to school connection
- Provide early intervention services for students at risk
- Identify nonacademic barriers to a student's educational success
- Develop intervention/treatment plans that contribute to students' success

Role of a School Psychologist:

- Conduct comprehensive psychological evaluations
- Counseling to individual and student groups
- Provides crisis intervention to individual student
- Participates in the development of comprehensive student individualized plans

2018-2019 District-Wide Staffing Initiatives

Request	FTE	Increase
Social Workers (DW)	+2.7 FTE	\$161,733
School Psychologist (Elem)	+0.5 FTE	\$46,951
Total New Initiatives		\$208,684
Staffing Cost Reduction	2.0 FTE Certified Teachers	(\$152,320)
Total Impact		\$56,364

Final Thoughts

Focused on a zero based budget that is clearly communicated, transparent and fiscally responsible; gain support and commitment from all stakeholders

We believe this budget is fiscally responsible and respectful to our district, Board of Education, town, and community at large.

