



## Board of Finance Budget Questions - March 8, 2022

<p>1.</p>	<p><b>ESSER funding:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How much?</li> <li>2. How reflected in current budget numbers? I see application to FTE in slide 6 but it was unclear what the total \$funding is and how applied?</li> <li>3. Is there also a portion being applied to supplies, technology, special education, etc. It might be a good idea to show the total \$ ESSRA funding and how it offset increases across a number of line items (e.g., what portion of incremental FTE on slide 7 is ESSRA funded vs. truly incremental)?</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ESSER I (2020-2021) \$77,995.00</li> <li>● Coronavirus Relief Funds (2020-2021) \$132,149.00</li> <li>● Corona Relief - State FEMA \$97,824.00</li> <li>● ESSER II \$371,193.00</li> <li>● ARP ESSER (American Rescue Plan Act of 20231, Elementary &amp; Secondary School Emergency Relief) \$834,230.00</li> <li>● ARP IDEA ESSER (American Rescue Plan Act IDEA 611 K-12) \$168,390.00</li> <li>● ARP IDEA ESSER (American Rescue Plan Act IDEA 619) \$15,983</li> <li>● ESSER II SPED Recovery - \$80,000</li> <li>● ESSER II Bonus Special Population - \$25,000</li> <li>● ESSER II Bonus Dyslexia Recovery - \$24,700</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Grant Detail</a></p>
<p>2.</p>	<p><b>FTE:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How does slide 6 reconcile to slide 9 for FTE? Slide 6 would seem to indicate that only the FTE in the right column should be incremental to budget; however, slide 9 shows incremental FTE of 5.45 and I would assume the \$87M is including the portion of cost that should be offset by ESSRA grant?</li> </ol>	<p>It would not reconcile slide to slide. You need to account for All Budget Funded Changes to reconcile to the 5.45 difference. These would be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 3.75 Approved addition of SPED Paras put in place this year for students who moved into the district with significant needs (2.75 at MD &amp; 1.0 at CM)</li> <li>● 1.0 Approved addition of a Job Coach in Community Steps put in place this year for a student who was previously out placed and coming back into the district</li> <li>● 1.0 New SPED Para request</li> <li>● .80 Social worker</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• .30 Reading Interventionist moved from IDEA Grant (no longer working solely with SPED students)</li> <li>• - 1.0 Para position at WHS (currently vacant)</li> <li>• -.40 overall teachers at WHS (due to scheduling)</li> </ul>
3.	<b>Presentation Question re: Staffing and Enrollment</b>	<p>Please explain staffing rationale when considering the information in slide 10 compared to slide 9:</p> <p>Based on declining enrollment in HS, it seems that the decline from 1307 to 1217 indicates approximately a decrease in 3.25 classrooms (assuming avg. class size of 28) yet certified teaching staff only declined by 1.5. The projected trend to 2024 indicates HS enrollment could drop by an additional 85 students, or approximately 3 more classrooms. Is our shift of resources appropriate?</p> <p>Same analysis as you evaluate the other schools. Appears the only increasing trend is in Cider Mill the increasing trend of which appears could potentially be offset by shifting of resources for the declining trend in Miller Driscoll and Middlebrook</p> <p>Enrollment projection slide 10 does not appear to directly reconcile back to slide 8, perhaps with a different basis of timing??</p> <p>Similarly slides 12, 13 and 14 do not reconcile back to earlier projections</p>	<p>The numbers on slide 8 under the “Budget 10/1/21” are the numbers that were used when the budget was initially put together. Slides 12, 13 &amp; 14 are based on actuals. The chart on slide 8 would not generally be updated with actuals until after this year.</p> <p>As was discussed during the 2/10/22 meeting in addressing student and programming needs it’s not simply the number of teachers but how they are distributed. Class sizes are in the 18-21 range across the district; we’re experiencing an increase in numbers of students with IEP’s (and consequently an increase in required service hours), and at the high school we are expanding course offerings. The high school has been successful in offering new courses while holding FTEs constant.</p>
4.	<b>Presentation Question re: Special Services/Genesis:</b>	<p>Slide 15 indicates higher rates of enrollment in Genesis and Community Steps; slide 9 indicating only +1 FTE in Genesis on anticipated increase of 7 students. Is there a cost savings offset for no longer paying for outplacement tuition and</p>	<p>The +1.0 FTE at Genesis was realized by moving 1.0 FTE from WHS and therefore cost neutral. Genesis continues to be both an effective educational model and a cost avoidance strategy by preventing outplacement and returning students to the</p>

		<p>transportation?</p> <p>Conversely, with special education outplacements up, it would appear there is a potential decrease in need of special education teachers, yet +3 FTE in proposal? I would expect a decrease of staffing here; however, likely an increase in costs for outplacements and transportation, and appears total special education enrollment is up nearly 6% since 2019/2020 (542 to 575.....IEP programs?)</p>	<p>district. The additional outplacements are coming from the elementary level where we do not have the benefit of an alternative program.</p> <p>The increase in outplacements may result in a movement of FTE. We have a large number of students who have moved into the district who require personal care support (paraprofessionals). These students were not considered in budget development for this year. We continue to see increases in the prevalence rate for students with disabilities. This is consistent with increases at the state level as well. As we emerge from the pandemic phase of COVID, I anticipate that there will be a steady increase in the prevalence rate over the next few years.</p>
5.	<b>General</b>	<p>The budget documents provided are “Budget Summaries”. Where can the detailed budgets be found?</p>	<p>A full budget binder was/is available to each BOE and BOF board member (At BOE District Office). The detail for each individual school budget and district level department budget is broken down behind each tab.</p>
6.	<b>General</b>	<p>Please provide a detailed schedule comparing the three years prior approved budgets and corresponding actual expenditures.</p>	<p>The 2022-2023 Superintendent’s Proposed Budget binder includes:</p> <p>2020 Actuals, 2021 Actuals, 2022 Adopted and 2023 Proposed.</p>
7.	<b>MD, CM &amp; MB: Computers:</b>	<p>What is the cost, per school, of providing students with computers?</p>	<p>2022-23 School Year</p> <p>MD - Approximately \$45,000 or \$54/student / 30 cents a day</p> <p>CM - Approximately \$80,000 or \$96/student / 53 cents a day</p> <p>MB - Approximately \$91,000 or \$100/student / 55 cents a day</p>

<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Phones: Costs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Miller Driscoll-\$22,589 or \$27/Student</li> <li>● Cider Mill - \$ 13,634 or \$17.8/Student</li> <li>● Middlebrook - \$15,634 or \$17/Student</li> <li>● WHS - \$48,268 or \$40/Student</li> </ul> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Subtotal - \$100,125 or \$27/Student</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">District - \$70,201</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Total Phone Cost - \$170,326 or \$46.6/Student</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Why are the High School costs significantly higher?</li> <li>2. Other than the main offices of each building, where are phones deployed?</li> <li>3. Has the district looked at alternate phone systems to Frontier such as VOIP providers?</li> </ol>	<p>There are four components that go into the phone budget</p> <p>ATT – Cell Phones, hot spots</p> <p>Frontier – Main Phone lines &amp; faxes</p> <p>Carousel – Maint. On Avaya Phone System</p> <p>Windstream – Usage</p> <p>The overall increase for the District is 2%</p> <p>The higher amounts at the school levels are from funds being moved from the district level to the actual school site where the the expenses are incurred.</p> <p>Overall agreements for the main phone system are shared between the Town and BOE. I believe our Avaya phone system is a VOIP system.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>Gas:</b></p>	<p>There is a large variation between prior actuals and the current proposed. The current year proposed cost is approximately \$20,000 less than the prior year (during COVID) while costs continue to escalate.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How were these costs determined?</li> <li>2. What accounts for variation in each school projection verse the prior actual?</li> </ol> <p>Miller Driscoll:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2019 – 2020 Actual = \$37,458</li> <li>● 2020 – 2021 Actual = \$61,896</li> <li>● 2021-2022 Proposed = \$116,630, \$54,734 higher that prior actual.</li> </ul>	<p>See Chris Burney’s explanation at the bottom of this document.</p>

		<p>Cider Mill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2019 – 2020 Actual = \$69,898</li> <li>● 2020 – 2021 Actual = \$106,993</li> <li>● 2021-2022 Proposed = \$83,058, \$23,935 higher than prior actual.</li> </ul> <p>Middlebrook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2019 – 2020 Actual = \$63,905</li> <li>● 2020 – 2021 Actual = \$85,499</li> <li>● 2021-2022 Proposed = \$76,191, \$9,308 lower than prior actual</li> </ul> <p>High School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2019 – 2020 Actual = \$143,015</li> <li>● 2020 – 2021 Actual = \$204,368</li> <li>● 2021-2022 Proposed = \$163,500, \$40,868 lower than prior actual</li> </ul>	
10.		<p><b>Gas:</b> With a 2020-2021 actual of cost of \$458,756 and a 2022-2023 proposed budget of \$439,379:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How was an overall reduction achieved during this inflationary period?</li> <li>2. What steps are being taken to reduce these expenditures?</li> </ol>	
11.	<b>Electric:</b>	<p>Like Gas, the projections vary greatly.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How were these costs determined?</li> <li>2. What accounts for variation in each school projection verse the prior actual?</li> </ol> <p>Miller Driscoll:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2020-2021 - \$124,752</li> <li>● Proposed - \$161,353, Increase of 29%</li> </ul> <p>Cider Mill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2020-2021 - \$187,174</li> <li>● Proposed - \$206,812, Increase 10%</li> </ul> <p>Middlebrook:</p>	Attachment provided by C. Burney

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2020-2021 - \$87,368</li> <li>● Proposed - \$124,241, Increase of 42%</li> </ul> High School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2020-2021 - \$400,740</li> <li>● Proposed - \$405,223, Increase of 1%</li> </ul>	
12.	<b>Electric</b>	With a 2020-2021 actual cost of \$800,000 and a 2022-2023 proposed budget of \$897,629 (12% increase) what steps are being taken to reduce these expenditures?	Attachment provided by C. Burney

13.	<b>Custodial Staff:</b>	<p>There are 40 Custodians serving the district.</p> <p>Miller Driscoll - 7 Custodians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Salary - \$427,340 (\$61,050/Custodian)</li> <li>● OT - \$38,262 (.63 FTE)</li> <li>● Benefits - \$205,241</li> <li>● Total Custodial Cost (MD) - \$670,843 or \$95,800/Custodian</li> </ul> <p>Cider Mill - 7 Custodians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Salary - \$427,340 (\$61,050/Custodian)</li> <li>● OT - \$38,000 (.62 FTE)</li> <li>● Benefits - \$205,241</li> <li>● Total Custodial Cost (CM) - \$670,000 or \$95,800/Custodian</li> </ul> <p>Middlebrook - 7 Custodians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Salary - \$422,268 (\$60,324/Custodian)</li> <li>● OT - \$42,657 (.7 FTE)</li> <li>● Benefits - \$168,488</li> <li>● Total Custodial Cost (MB) - \$633,413 or \$95,4900/Custodian</li> </ul> <p>High School - 14 Custodians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Salary - \$850,073 (\$60,700/Custodian)</li> <li>● OT - \$60,846 (1 FTE)</li> <li>● Benefits* - \$3</li> <li>● Total Custodial Cost (HS) - \$633,413 or \$95,49000/Custodian</li> </ul> <p>District - 5 Custodians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Salary - \$489,240 (\$97,848/Custodian)</li> <li>● OT - \$32,663 (.33 FTE)</li> <li>● Benefits - \$144,879</li> <li>● Total Custodial Cost (District) = \$691,782 (\$138,356/Custodian)</li> </ul>	<p>The \$3.00 allocation of WHS Custodian benefits is an error that is being corrected. This will not change the bottom line medical cost for the District. The correct amount that you should see here is \$308,000</p> <p>The 5 District Facilities Staff members are not general custodians and include</p> <p>1.0 HVAC, 1.0 Electrician, 1.0 Supervisor, 2.0 Maintenance and stipend for BOE/Town shared position (CB)</p>
14.		<b>Custodial Staff:</b> What is in the scope of service provided by the custodians?	<a href="#">Custodial Job Description</a>
15.	<b>Custodial Staff:</b>	What is the Temp Custodian? \$15,000?	Temporary Custodians were generally used in the past over the summer to help with projects that could not be done during

			the school year.
16.	<b>Custodial Staff:</b>	What is the Substitute Custodian? \$10,000?	Substitute custodians have been used to cover open positions that have not yet been filled or to cover employees who are out of work due to long term absences. In addition, we have occasionally use substitute custodians to assist with COVID-related custodial work, like additional cleaning and the reconfiguration of work spaces.
17.	<b>Custodial Staff:</b>	Custodial Lunch/Attire - \$10,000. Is this budget line for Lunch or Attire or both?	This is contractually negotiated for both lunch and attire. Attire includes shirts, sweatshirts, and shoes, inclement weather gear.  Custodians on the day shift receive a lunch in the school cafeteria on the days students are served lunch.
18.	<b>Custodial Staff:</b>	Custodial OT costs equate to approximately 3.28 FTE's. What is this OT for?	Custodian overtime will be used to cover vacancies, inclement weather, and other episodic high demand times during the school year (e.g. week prior to school reopening in August).
19.	<b>Custodial Staff:</b>	Why are the district custodians more expensive than the school custodians?	These are not general custodians. The 5 District Facilities Staff members include:  1.0 HVAC, 1.0 Electrician, 1.0 Supervisor, 2.0 Maintenance and stipend for BOE/Town shared position (CB). In most cases, these are highly specialized positions. In the case of the HVAC and electrician positions, having our own in-house experts manage needs in these areas reflects a considerable cost savings compared to what we would pay to hire outside contractors to do this work.
20.	<b>Custodial Staff:</b>	Has an analysis of competitively bidding/contracting this work ever been done? If so, what were the findings?	No. Our custodians are represented by AFSCME.
21.	<b>Custodial</b>	Considering the consistency with which the schools are staffed	The schools are well kept by our custodial staff. If there have



	<b>Staff:</b>	by custodians, please explain the inconsistency in the upkeep of the schools?	been inconsistencies recently, it is most likely due to the labor shortage and the challenge of finding substitute custodians.
22.	<b>Carting:</b>	<p>Miller Driscoll - \$24,223 (\$29/Student)  Cider Mill – \$23,572 (\$31/Student)  Middlebrook - \$28,052 (\$32/Student)  High School - \$23,021(\$19/Student)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. With almost 400 more students than the other schools, is it correct that the High School carting costs are the least expensive?</li> <li>2. Are there different containers at each location to pre-sort waste?</li> <li>3. What is the cost of each type of container and what is the container (changed out) count per school?</li> </ol>	Attachment provided by C. Burney
23.	<b>Non-Teacher Staff:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Please define the role and responsibilities of each; Coach, Interventionist and Paraprofessional.</li> <li>2. Are all the above classified under the WEA with pension?</li> </ol>	<p>Coaches and Interventionists are under the WEA contract. If they are .50 FTE or greater they are eligible for TRB.</p> <p>Paraprofessionals are under the UPSEU contract. If they are .60 FTE or greater they are eligible for retirement benefits.</p> <p>Please see <a href="#">Job Description for Instructional Coach</a>.  Please see <a href="#">Job Description for Academic Interventionist</a>  Please see <a href="#">Job Description for Paraprofessional (GenEd)</a>  <a href="#">Job Description for Paraprofessional (Sped)</a></p>
24.	<b>General</b>	Please provide an organization chart for each school and the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Class Size Report</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Org Chart</a></li> </ul>
25.	<b>Curriculum &amp; Instruction</b>	<p>Miller Driscoll:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coaches- \$448,660</li> <li>● Interventionists-\$463,699</li> <li>● Para’s-\$546,759</li> <li>● Subtotal - \$1,495,118 or \$1,755/student</li> </ul>	The roles and responsibilities of instructional coaches, academic interventionists, and paraprofessionals are completely different from classroom teachers (see job descriptions above). Classroom teachers would not have the expertise or the time to assume these essential roles and

		<p>Note: All classroom teachers = \$3,288,433 so these services are 45% of the classroom teacher budget.</p> <p>Cider Mill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coaches - \$329,741</li> <li>● Interventionists - \$507,023</li> <li>● Para's - \$194,317</li> <li>● Subtotal - \$1,031,081 or \$1,344/student</li> </ul> <p>Middlebrook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coaches - \$224,329</li> <li>● Interventionists - \$447,812</li> <li>● Para's - \$156,705</li> <li>● Subtotal -\$828,846 or \$937,608</li> </ul> <p>High School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coaches - \$136,899</li> <li>● Interventionists - \$324,634</li> <li>● Para's – \$323,682</li> <li>● Subtotal – \$785,215 or \$650/student</li> </ul> <p>Coaches, Interventionist and Para total: \$4,140,260  This is greater than the total cost of the classroom teachers in both Miller Driscoll or Cider Mill.</p> <p>1. Has an evaluation of the cost of these additional resources' vs smaller classes and more teachers been done?</p>	<p>responsibilities even with smaller classes.</p>
<p>26.</p>	<p><b>Transportation</b></p>	<p>What staff are owed Attire?</p>	<p>The only attire account should be under the custodian accounts \$10,000</p>

27.	<b>Transportation Costs:</b>	<p>Special Education Transportation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Special Education 8910, 49630 - SPED in District - \$794,416</li> <li>● Special Education 8902, 49631 - SPED out of District - \$535,703</li> <li>● SPED Cost \$1,330,000</li> </ul> <p>The above Special Education Transportation costs are carried in the Summary under both SPED, pg 14 and Transportation, pg 22. Confirm that these costs aren't be carried in the budget twice.</p>	<p>They are not duplicated.</p> <p>The Transportation page under District is meant to reflect an overall Transportation cost including both SPED and Non SPED needs for the district.</p>
28.	<b>Transportation Costs:</b>	<p>Magnet School - \$19,000  Private School -\$20,241  Overall District Transportation - \$4,621,647  Cost Minus SPED - \$3,291,528  Cost Minus SPED, Magnet &amp; Private - \$3,252,287  Cost Per Student - \$3,252,287/3,656 = \$890/Student</p>	
29.	<b>Transportation</b>	<p>The drop-off and pick up lines at each of the schools are large. At What capacity do the buses operate broken down by school?</p>	<p>CT General Statute 10-186 requires local boards of education to provide school transportation services for children ages 5-21 who have not yet graduated high school, regardless of whether those students regularly ride the school bus.</p> <p>Pre-COVID ridership percentages are as follows:</p> <p>MD - 83%  CM - 87%  MB/WHS - 54%</p> <p>The past two years, percentages have been lower due to COVID and more students being driven back and forth to school by their parents.</p>

30.	<b>Transportation</b>	How often are the bids for these services open to competitors?	The current contract was for 5 years.
31.	<b>WHS Athletics:</b>	What is the Cost of the WHS Athletics programs, broken down by sport?	Total cost of Athletics - \$1,581,363  **Breakdown by sport is in the budget book under the high school section.
32.	<b>WHS Athletics:</b>	Athletic Trainers: What are the qualifications of our trainers and where are they budgeted?	Our trainers have completed a university program and are Certified Athletic Trainers. They are budgeted under account 001-85-8421-1210.40305 in the WHS budget page 258 total proposed salary is \$111,055
33.	<b>WHS:</b>	There are \$190,000 in Stipends budgeted. What costs do this cover?	Instructional Leaders for English, Math Science, Social Studies, World Language, Applied Arts, Guidance, Civic & Social Expectations, Senior Internship Coordinator, SSD/ SAT Coordinator, AV Stipend, Teacher in Charge & NEASC
34.	<b>WHS:</b>	What stipends including dollar value are not mandated by the WEA and which are provided by discretion?	A/V Stipend.
35.	<b>WHS:</b>	Co-Curriculars: Faculty advisors: Are these positions required to be paid according to the WEA or is funding at the BOE discretion?	Club stipends are paid according to the WEA Contract.
36.	<b>WHS:</b>	With 77 clubs offered, what is the participation level required to maintain a club?	Clubs are generally open-enrollment and serve to connect students with peers who share similar interests and passions, as well as offer opportunities to serve the school and local communities.  There are 5 Faculty advisors for groups which require students to be nominated or invited, including National Honor Society, 3 world language honor societies (French, German, and Spanish), and Peervention.

			<p>There are 4 Faculty advisors for grade-level elected class officers (1 advisor role for each grade)</p> <p>There is 1 Faculty advisor role for the Student Government Executive Board.</p> <p>There are 12 positions for theater productions throughout the year including the Fall show, the Senior show, the Underclassmen play (Freeplay Improv for the past several years), and the Spring musical. Positions include: Director, Music Director, Light/Sound, Set Director</p>
37.	<b>WHS/ Curriculum &amp; Instruction:</b>	WHS: Why are there STEM Coaches with Humanities backgrounds rather than <u>Science, Technology, Engineering or Math</u> ?	WHS has been unable to find qualified instructional coaching candidates with a STEM background. Both current coaches are, however, coaching teachers in math and science. They are master teachers whose skills transcend content/subject areas.
38.	<b>Special Ed</b>	Are the 575 Special Education students identified exclusively participating in Special Education classrooms or are they included in regular classroom activity and provided partial additional resources?	All students with disabilities served under the IDEA are served in the least restrictive environment as required by federal law. Each has an individual program that includes participation in the general education setting to the maximum extent appropriate.
39.	<b>General : Revenue -</b>	How much revenue does the school bring in from parking lot, school store, etc?	Revenue for BOE is from Participation fees (Activity & Sports), tuition fees (Pre-K (x2), Out of Town, Genesis), WHS Parking Permits, and Use of Building. Total estimate to be between \$520,000 - \$580,000
40.	<b>Headcount / Staffing</b>	<p>Special ed employee headcount is going from 137 to 143. Can you walk us through the thinking for hiring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1 Paraprofessional (job coach for community steps)</li> <li>● 0.8 social workers</li> </ul>	This is pertaining to staffing and is budget to budget - FY 2022 Budget was 137.38 (includes 4.0 for Genesis) Proposed FY 2023 is currently 143.33 (includes 5.0 for Genesis) 3.75 SPED Paras were approved and added this year for students who

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ~5 paraprofessionals</li> </ul>	<p>moved into the District with significant needs (2.75 at MD &amp; 1.0 at CM)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.0 Job Coach was approved and added to Community Steps for a student who was previously out placed and coming back into the district</li> <li>• 1.0 Is a new requested Para</li> <li>• .80 Is a new request for additional Social Worker</li> <li>• .60 Clerical Support was moved this year from District SPED to Middlebrook (eliminating the position from SPED &amp; filling a position for an employee who resigned at MB)</li> </ul>
41.	<b>Headcount / Staffing</b>	What is the rationale for hiring an additional math teacher in Middlebrook? Which team is this for?	This is in response to a district-wide focus on improving math performance for all students, particularly our neediest learners. A part-time math position will “sunset” at the end of 2021-2022. This requested 1.0 FTE will be used to support the goal to improve math performance as well as support new scheduling recommendations. Our AIM (Additional Instruction in Math) and intervention programs have demonstrated impressive student growth and supporting these programs with the additional FTE this past year has even further supported some of our neediest learners.
42.	<b>High School</b>	What is the rationale for hiring 0.7 business ed teachers in the high school?	We currently have 1.9 business FTE. We experienced unexpected increased student registration in Business Education, which is a good thing. This is a result of having hired two very skilled business teachers. This has not caused us to increase overall FTE as there are shifts in student elective enrollment each year.
43.	<b>SPED</b>	What is the rationale for hiring an additional Genesis classroom teacher? What is the student: teacher ratio in Genesis in 2020,2021,2022, and 2023B?	In the spring of 2021 we moved a special education from WHS to Genesis to address the needs of the students. We continued this FTE for the 21-22 school year. This increase in staffing was budget neutral. We reduced 1.0 teacher at WHS and moved that FTE to Genesis.

44.	<b>General/HR</b>	How were the 2023 salaries determined? Are these all driven by union contracts or are there other determinants?	<p>The majority of salaries are driven by contracts that determine increases.</p> <p>We have four bargaining units:</p> <p><b>WEA</b> – Teachers (Increase follows step and degree level) not based on flat % increase For vacancies, a position filled at MA 14 would be \$104,643 for 22-23</p> <p><b>WASA</b> – Administrators general increase 2.6%</p> <p><b>UPSEU</b> –Secretaries &amp; Aides – the last increase was 2.1% generally is between 2.0-2.3%</p> <p><b>Custodians</b> – generally around 2.0%</p> <p>Discretionary employees – general increase between 2.0-2.75%</p>
45.	<b>Technology</b>	Total Technology is growing 32%, driven by contract services (\$281k growth), doc digitization (\$75k), and new equipment (\$487k). Can you walk us through these major items?	<p>The majority of the increase under Technology Contract Services account 001-86-8370-9999.49627 is due to the Printer &amp; Copier contract for \$260,000 being moved from the Finance Dept to Technology. It is not a true increase but a shift.</p> <p>The equipment line increased mostly due to the decision not to lease these items but to bring them into the general operating budget.</p>
46.	<b>Line items</b>	What is Account 40311 – BOE Stipend and why is it growing 10%?	<p>Most of these positions are set per the WEA Teachers Contract and include Team Leaders, Instructional Leaders, Webmasters, Teacher in Charge, etc.</p> <p>The main increases are due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● New Equity and Inclusion stipend added</li> <li>● Increased .50 Specials IL at MD</li> <li>● 2 Curriculum Coordinator stipends were added (offset by a reduction in additional time)</li> <li>● Mentor Stipends were previously being paid under additional time this was moved to the stipend account (similar to above)</li> </ul>

47.	<b>Line items</b>	Account 41210 – Sewer Usage. Why is this growing by 9%?	<p>This was based on our actuals coming in higher than anticipated this year. Actual to budget there is only a minimal increase. Budget to budget it appears higher.</p> <p>Includes general sewer fees and FOG Testing (Fats, Oils and Grease) The FOG testing was an additional \$2,750 this year. To date we have paid \$40,570.</p>																
48.	<b>Line items</b>	Account 41236 Natural gas. Why is it growing 9%	Gas & Electric estimates are based on C. Burney’s analysis and recommendations.																
49.	<b>Line items</b>	Account 41505 – why is mileage reimbursement growing 99%?	<p>The account is not growing by 99%. There are currently 2 mileage reimbursement accounts</p> <p>41505 – Mileage Reimb. (Used for Admin auto allowance)</p> <p>46942 – Staff Travel</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1241 727 1997 867"> <thead> <tr> <th>Account</th> <th>Current budget</th> <th>Proposed budget</th> <th>Difference</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>41505</td> <td>\$14,395.00</td> <td>\$28,585.00</td> <td>\$14,190.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>46942</td> <td><u>\$12,385.00</u></td> <td><u>\$13,835.00</u></td> <td><u>\$ 1,450.00</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>\$26,780.00</td> <td>\$42,420.00</td> <td>\$15,640.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>\$15,000 of this increase reflects the auto allowance that is given to some administrators and is paid through payroll. This amount was not previously budgeted for on a separate line. (We currently have 5 Admins who receive \$3,000 a year).</p>	Account	Current budget	Proposed budget	Difference	41505	\$14,395.00	\$28,585.00	\$14,190.00	46942	<u>\$12,385.00</u>	<u>\$13,835.00</u>	<u>\$ 1,450.00</u>		\$26,780.00	\$42,420.00	\$15,640.00
Account	Current budget	Proposed budget	Difference																
41505	\$14,395.00	\$28,585.00	\$14,190.00																
46942	<u>\$12,385.00</u>	<u>\$13,835.00</u>	<u>\$ 1,450.00</u>																
	\$26,780.00	\$42,420.00	\$15,640.00																
50.	<b>Line items</b>	Account 43005 – what office furniture are we adding?	We are working through a long-term furniture replacement plan to update classroom and staff furniture. This is an account area that is cut regularly. Replacement items can include student desks and chairs, teacher desks or chairs, shelving replacements, etc.																
51.	<b>Line items</b>	Account 44237 Digital resources – why is this growing 38%? Is there an offset in non-digital resources?	The past two years have seen many changes including drastic shifts to our use of digital resources budget needs. Digital resources and tools are used more frequently and more deeply for teaching, learning and operations. There was an increase in all the school budgets for digital resources - this was a direct																



			<p>result of a shift from supplies and textbook lines (non-digital instructional resources) to digital resources. As an example, intervention programs for math and language arts are provided through school budgets to personalize and adapt to individual needs and provide immediate feedback to students and inform teachers of best ways to target instruction. Additionally, some textbooks are now only available online.</p> <p>The largest increase is seen in the Middlebrook digital resources line. There is a one-time cost for much-needed replacement of the LEGO systems used as part of the iSTEM course taken by our middle schoolers. The systems are breaking down after many years of use and are no longer supported due to their age.</p> <p>Finally, the increase of 4% at the district level for digital resources is an indication of our changing landscape resulting from the two years of online learning. We incorporated tools such as Zoom video conferencing which proved a necessity for remote/hybrid learning and is now very popular for parent meetings, professional learning for teachers and many other uses. We also adopted Schoology as a learning management system for students, parents and teachers to be able to access materials, homework, grades and collaborative tools through one system. Tools such as Zoom and Schoology have become part of our operations.</p>
52.	<b>Line items</b>	Account 44241 Equipment. What are we investing in for ~\$700k?	<p>\$513,250 is under District Technology (Budget to budget there is a \$487k increase here) Their main driver is not having a renewed lease for Technology items. The plan is to purchase items such as Chromebooks, laptops, presentation spaces, flat panels, server storage etc.</p> <p>The remaining amount is made up of various dept requests that include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Music Instruments and stands,</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Art equipment (cameras, kiln items, ceramic class items, sewing machine etc)</li> <li>● Family &amp; Consumer – small ware items</li> <li>● Science – microscopes and balances, replacement ice machine in lab at WHS</li> <li>● LLC/Medical Centers – replace light board in Little Theater</li> <li>● Front Office – replace fax machines, calculators etc</li> <li>● Facilities – Building System upgrade (WHS) necessary prior to the roof top unit upgrades</li> <li>● Exterior Basketball hoops (CM) 2 set</li> <li>● Basketball hoops (Driscoll Large Gym)</li> </ul>
53.	<b>Line items</b>	Account 47230 Renovation. What are we renovating for \$84k?	<p>MD – Replacement of porcelain water fountains with water fill Stations, walkway from main building to playground area</p> <p>CM - 2 sets of restroom partitions, replace carpet in 3 entrance ways, replacement of porcelain water fountains with water fill stations</p> <p>MB – 1 set of restroom partitions, replacement of porcelain water fountains with water fill stations</p> <p>WHS – trading on stairs, asbestos abatement</p>
54.	<b>Line items</b>	Account 48705. Dues & Memberships. Why is this growing 7%?	There are a couple of new memberships including one to the National Business Education Association and the Connecticut Center for School Change that are driving the increase.
55.	<b>Line items</b>	Account 49630. Why is transportation services growing 46%?	<p>Account 49630 includes our SPED In District Transportation - this includes transportation for Pre-K , ESY (extended school year), Community Steps, Genesis, and special arrangements due to medical or other needs (currently we have 2).</p> <p>Both Genesis and Community Steps had increased transportation needs this year. Some of these were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community Steps started using 2 vans vs. 1 (2 van requires a monitor)</li> <li>● A new mid day run was added</li> <li>● Genesis added an additional Mid day and PM run</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genesis runs an 11 month program</li> <li>Although In district transportation has gone up \$249k Out of District SPED transportation has gone down by \$118k.</li> </ul>
56.	<b>Line items</b>	What contract services are done for Genesis? Why is growing 18.75%?	The change reflects an increase in programming for art instruction.
57.	<b>Presentation Question</b>	<p>Based on the BOE Ops deck</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employee Benefits are growing at a faster rate (2.7%) vs salaries (2.4%) or headcount (1%). I assume this is based on the 5% medical increase. Is that increase per contracts, our own forecast of medical expenditures, or something else?</li> <li>5% increase to liability insurance: is this per contracted rate increase, or something else?</li> <li>Supplies are growing 6.4%, despite declining enrollment. Why is that?</li> <li>Equipment is growing 220% vs last year. Can you provide a breakdown for what exactly we're buying for \$532k?</li> <li>Why are property services growing 5.7%?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forecast is based on historical data, number of stop loss cases and the future costs of medical services.</li> <li>This was also compared to the state plan which is projected to go up 6-8% not final yet. Last comparison to state plan did not show a savings for BOE. We'll have updated information mid-March.</li> <li>Liability Ins - one of the main drivers has been in our umbrella policies. Insurance has been going up mainly for municipalities due to the increase in cyber fraud.</li> </ul> <p>The Property Service category includes the following accounts- (Acnts in red have increases)</p> <p>45105 Rent Building &amp; Land (increase \$6,691) Includes Rental of ice rinks, New Canaan Y (Diving pool), Mountain time for ski teams, rental portable toilets for fields</p> <p>45106 Rental of Facilities (increase \$2,936) Genesis lease</p> <p>45115 Rent Operating Equipment</p> <p>45405 Refuse Disposal</p> <p>47205 Maint - Grounds</p> <p>47215 Building Repairs</p> <p>47225 Boiler &amp; AC Repairs</p> <p>47230 Building Improvement/Renovation (new request are \$84k)</p> <p>48105 Maint Agreements</p> <p>48110 Equipment Repair &amp; Maint</p> <p>48115 Vehicle Repairs</p>

58.	<b>Mental Health</b>	Based on conversations in BOE Ops and BOE board meetings, resources are being applied to mental health. Quantitatively, how many students required mental health support in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 YTD and expected, and 2023B?	We are researching this question.
59.	<b>Presentation Question</b>	As noted in the BOE Ops presentation, the 3.71% growth in budget is more than the last 5 years combined. Why does this year require such significant growth, despite continuing enrollment decreases?	<p>The budget adopted by the Board of Education reflects: 2.72% increase in board of education operating. .54% Board of Education operating capital.</p> <p>The operating capital proposal reflects new spending.</p> <p>The board of education operating proposal increase is driven largely by contracted salary increases.</p> <p>As we described, segments of our staffing pool are not tied tightly to enrollment changes. Where we could reduce based on enrollment decline, we have. In other areas, e.g. special education, we've needed to hire additional support staff based on the particular needs of individual children.</p>
60.	<b>Capital Exp.</b>	Capital Expenditure Budget: what is the rationale for these expenditures?	<p>The projects we've proposed include elevator replacement and phased projects at Middlebrook and WHS. The intent of these projects is to update and improve these facilities. The flooring in much of MB and WHS is well past its life expectancy. The flooring, lighting, ceiling tile and painting projects will do much to improve the interiors of these school buildings.</p>
61.	<b>Follow up BOE</b>	<p><i>Follow up questions from BoE Question list</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>#11: how many more students are expected to go into</i></li> </ul>	(#11) Twelve students are projected to participate in Community Steps.

		<p><b><i>Genesis and Community Steps? How is this determined? What is the cost and enrollment of Genesis and Community Steps for the last 3Y?</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b><i>Based on the BOE ops presentation, community steps looks like it's expected to hold flat at 12</i></b></li> <li>● <b><i>#25: given that census is down, I'm curious what assumptions go into the analysis that forecast high single digits growth. Has pricing gone up? What are the other drivers?</i></b></li> <li>● <b><i>#30: how old is the outdated furniture that needs to be replaced?</i></b></li> <li>● <b><i>#32: Going forward, once the money from the covid grants dries up, will the town need to cover these costs from our budget?</i></b></li> <li>● <b><i>#32: what are the stipends used for?</i></b></li> <li>● <b><i>#58: are these costs bonded?</i></b></li> </ul>	<p>We continue to look at the increase in in-district transportation costs.</p> <p>Twenty-four students are anticipated to participate in Genesis. The estimated PPE for Genesis is \$30,125 (excluding transportation).</p> <p>(#25) From a utility systems perspective, the first impact of COVID was that the schools went completely remote. Our use went down. All of our carefully curated tracking programs and expense reports started to look quite strange. In the summer of 2020, the state published guidelines that materially impacted our utility use. Ventilation systems could no longer modulate. As much fresh air as possible was required to be introduced to the buildings at all times. Running fans 24 hours a day is an obvious increase in power consumption. Not so obvious cost increases were incurred because cooling the air constantly during the summer means running expensive chillers constantly. Bringing in the maximum amount of fresh air further increased the load on our systems and increased power bills even more.</p> <p>During winter months instead of being able to blend preheated air and outside air, as much as we were able, we were bringing in outside air. That air had to be heated constantly and the natural gas bills have increased dramatically, not so much because of rate increases, but because of major increases in consumption.</p> <p>#30 Some of the furniture we are replacing is more than 15 years old.</p> <p>#32 That depends. Currently, the ARP funds cover the cost of a math interventionist at CM, two classroom teachers at M-D</p>
--	--	---	---

			<p>and a.5 social worker at WHS. We'll be better positioned to make determinations when we have a clearer picture of what enrollment and staffing will look like for FY24.</p> <p>(#32) Stipends include: TEAM program coordinator, district webmaster, building webmasters, senior internship coordinator, services for Students with Disability (SSD) coordinator, WHS subject area instructional leaders, special education and technology instructional leaders, and elementary grade level instructional leaders.</p> <p>(#58) No.</p>
62.	<b>General</b>	<p>In considering a budget increase of 3.71% in the coming year, was there consideration as to how much of an overall increase would be considered appropriate for the Wilton taxpayers?</p>	<p>We work very diligently each year to present budgets that address both the needs of the school district and what would be considered affordable to the town. I think the overall budget proposals for the last 7 years reflect attempts to strike that balance.</p>
63.	<b>Enrollment/ Staffing/Per Pupil</b>	<p>The overall trend for total student population has continued to move downward for some time now, since it peaked at 4344 in 2008 for K through 12. This year's actual population of K through 12 as of October 2021 was 3669, a 15.3% decrease.... Over 1% per year on average, but actually the decrease in recent "normal" years have accelerated.</p> <p>This year's approved total cost per student is \$84,804,215 over 3758 students (total district) or \$22,566 per student. Proposed is \$87,949,864 (+3.71%) over 3726 students or \$23,604 per student (including pre-K) for an increase of 4.6% per student, and that is assuming that student population falls 0.85% or only 32 students from October 2021, which, given recent past annual reductions, appears unlikely, although there is some chance that COVID might shift that.</p> <p>This year's spend per student appears to be in the middle of the pack vs. the DRG and appears to be more per student than</p>	<p>Looking solely at per pupil expenditures masks the complexity of the operation of a school district and differences in how dollars are allocated within a given district. For example it does not take into account the differences in incidence rates and spending in special education which can drive budget (and per pupil) increases. For example, data from the 2018-2019 school year (Edsight School Profile and Performance Reports published in 19-20) reveal the following:</p> <p>The percentage of total operating budgets dedicated to special education expenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilton 25.2%</li> <li>Westport 18.7%</li> <li>Weston 24.6%</li> <li>Ridgefield 20%</li> <li>New Canaan 19.7%</li> <li>Darien 30.2%</li> </ul>

		<p>Ridgefield, Darien and potentially New Canaan.</p> <p>That increase per student seems very high, and the expected drop in enrollment seems v low by historical standards.</p> <p>An increase of 3.1% per student would appear to be more reasonable as it would include 100% of existing employee raises plus some amounts for next year’s inflationary items, primarily commodity related. At that level the overall budget for next year would be \$86,687,424...an increase of \$1.9 mm vs the 3.1 mm proposed.</p> <p>The top down approach appears to be more reasonable given the continued decrease in student enrollment, juxtaposed with the continued proposals to increase headcount, particularly, non student facing headcount. That result would be an overall increase of 2.2%, not 3.7%.</p> <p>Even an increase of 2.5% in total BOE spend would increase next year to \$86,924,320, which would be an increase per student od \$23,329, or a 3.38% increase.</p> <p>Why is that not a reasonable increase particularly considering that we are spending more per student than some other higher rated school districts? Should taxpayers expect that if we spend more per student than Darien, then our schools will be higher rated? Is there truly any value in spending incrementally more than surrounding towns, or are comparisons of spending to other towns not really indicative of performance potential?</p>	<p>The distribution of disabilities can also impact individual costs that are masked by an average per pupil expenditure. For example, Wilton and Weston have the highest percentage of students on the autism spectrum (2.3%) compared to:</p> <p>Westport 1.4%  Ridgefield 2.1%  New Canaan 1.5%  Darien 1%</p>
64. .	<b>Class Size</b>	<p>The bottoms up approach to compare next year to this year was employed to calculate next year’s budget, and explain variances year to year, but that approach has some fundamental flaws in this environment. First is that last year was not a “normal” year, and the approved budget increase of 2.99%, which represented a very significant per pupil increase was intended to cover unusual and likely non recurring expenses such as a significant increases in extraordinary measures and added cost related to</p>	<p>When this current year’s budget was developed, we did so with the assumption that it would not include extraordinary covid costs. The primary driver of the current budget was contracted salary increases. To mitigate against the significant increase we utilized ESSR funds to address certain needs.</p> <p>Current class sizes are on the low end of our historic averages. By reducing two classroom teachers at Cider Mill and holding</p>

		<p>covid. Secondly, going into covid, there was a belief that costs per student would rise precipitously temporarily, and that the student to teacher/education employment ratios would drop temporarily until students returned from private schools and other arrangements to make the smaller class sizes a temporary issue. Now that it appears that student population will not return to pre covid levels, there is implicitly a fundamental shift to keep class sizes smaller, thus incurring the added costs... is that intentional? Is there a plan to keep class sizes smaller and possibly continue the trend in future years?</p>	<p>classroom staffing flat at M-D, we are slightly increasing class sizes in several grade levels K-5.</p> <p>Our class sizes are consistent with our DRG A counterparts.</p>
65.	<b>Insurance</b>	<p>Group insurance increases represent a significant year on year increase.</p> <p>Could you provide detail as to why there is such a significant increase in group insurance costs, and whether these are already highly probable, or subject to change in estimates?</p> <p>I was also under the impression that, similar to the board of selectmen insurance picture, there are significant reserves for insurance which likely will not be needed... which can be used to defray the full impact of the insurance cost assumptions impact. Can you please elaborate?</p>	<p>Forecast is based on historical data, number of stop loss cases and the future costs of medical services.</p> <p>This was also compared to the State plan which is projected to go up 6-8% not final yet. Last comparison to the state plan did not show a savings for BOE.</p>
66.	<b>Staffing</b>	<p>When looking at last year's budget increase and this year's proposal, as referred to above, there are significant increases in gross percentages and even higher on a per student basis. When looking forward to next year and perhaps the year after, it seems that inflationary pressures will potentially drive higher increases In future years, arguing for fiscal conservatism this year and not only with consideration of no new net headcount additions, but headcount reductions, particularly in non student facing roles, so that taxpayers are not overwhelmed with significant cost increases. That might be the "expected" route due to expected continued student population reductions going forward. What are your views on achievability of reducing headcount proactively to manage overall costs, and what</p>	<p>We look at our entire staffing picture annually. The areas where we have added staff include special education (additional staff requirements are driven by student IEP service hour requirements), intervention (we have added interventionists to address unfinished learning resulting from the pandemic. We are tracking the use of these additional staff carefully and monitoring student gains on standardized tests.), and mental health. As we've reported, we are witnessing a surge in demand for mental health support from our student population.</p> <p>We continually explore opportunities to create new efficiencies, or economize in order keep costs and cost</p>



		actions would you take now if the direction of the town is to curb tax Increases over time in light of these significant cost/inflation pressures by sizing overall staffing, particularly non student facing staffing to calibrate to student population declines ?	<p>increases as low as possible. There is a very good multi-year story to tell on this front.</p> <p>As was shared during the joint BOE/BOF meeting, one area that may yield staff reductions in the future is Middlebrook School. The school staff has been engaged for several years in an exploration of new schedule models. If a schedule model appeared that integrated the language arts into a single class period we would have the opportunity to reduce certified staffing in that department.</p>
67.	<b>Custodial</b>	Janitorial staff is flat at 40 in presentations, yet when we reviewed the budget in the past, we were told that significant covid cleaning needs required six more janitors. Why aren't those changes reflected in the reports?	Additional custodial staff were utilized during the 2020-2021 school year. The additional custodians were recorded as temporary and the costs were reimbursed through federal and state Covid relief grants.
68.	<b>Transportation</b>	Isn't there a more cost effective way to manage student busing costs using technology? Why can't we roll out a network response system which captures data each morning as to parents who will not be requiring busing?	<p>This is an interesting question that we will pursue further.</p> <p>CT General Statute 10-186 requires local boards of education to provide school transportation services for children ages 5-21 who have not yet graduated high school, regardless of whether those students regularly ride the school bus.</p> <p>Pre-COVID ridership percentages are as follows:</p> <p>MD - 83%  CM - 87%  MB/WHS - 54%</p> <p>The past two years, percentages have been lower due to COVID and more students being driven back and forth to school by their parents.</p>
69.	<b>Staffing SPED</b>	The increases in overall social worker headcount and costs over the past few years have been a "new normal" in expected staffing. Are these required by any law? Does the town have any potential future legal liability if a social worker starts	We do not have any liability concerns as our school social workers are all certified.

		“treating” a child’s psychological issues? Are we insured for that type of possible event?	
70.	<b>Facilities</b>	Overall management effectiveness in facilities maintenance costs... has thought been given to increasing the maintenance workload of existing maintenance and janitorial staff with coordinated programs to use internal vs outsourced services? Has there ever been a metrics driven evaluation of utilization of internal resources?	We employ four staff who are responsible for the general maintenance of our schools. One of them is a certified HVAC specialist and another is a licensed electrician.
71.	<b>Technology</b>	Regarding chrome book purchases, there is a comment regarding the significant increase being attributable to the need to buy more chrome books because we no longer lease them. At the time of the shift from lease to purchase, it was described as a significant annual cost savings. What has changed? Do you now believe that we should return to leasing? If in fact the overall cost is less for purchasing vs. leasing, there must be savings in the leasing line which is not captured.	The leasing line was budgeted to increase \$250,000 a year for 5 years to allow the district to purchase, replace, and maintain all IT hardware and systems. (Smartboard, sound field, cameras, firewalls, servers, computers, switches, cabling, etc)  The district has taken a blended funding approach over the past 5 budget cycles leaving a funding gap. The estimated funding needs are outlined for years 2023 and 2024.
72.	<b>Formatting/ Comment</b>	It was more difficult to review this year’s data and presentations due to the split of the overall operating capital items. I don’t see the benefit of describing and comparing only part of the budget to full prior year’s and to other towns’ full expenditures. Is the amount being presented for approval a total 2.99% increase or a 3.71% increase? Based on the presentation and what’s been shown in the local press, it appears to have become very confusing. Even some of the questions by Board of Education members suggest confusion on this new form of comparisons even though nothing has actually changed.	The operating capital proposal is new spending. We broke it out so we could better compare year over year spending differences.

## Utilities:

There is some good news on the cost of electricity. A few years ago, working with the Connecticut Green Bank, we were able to install solar panels on the roofs at Miller Driscoll and Middlebrook. We also planned an installation on the field house roof but had to cancel that when a structural review revealed that the roof could not support the weight of the panels and ballast.

The systems at Miller Driscoll and Middlebrook are both about 300 kw capacity. As of about noon today, the combined electrical output of these two systems is almost 2 ½ million kWhrs. At an average cost to the schools of 16 cents/kWhr, that is a savings since installation of \$400,000.

A couple of years ago, in coordination with the town of Weston, Wilton entered into an agreement to participate in an agreement for the purchase of electricity through a virtual net metering program from a 1-megawatt solar field in Middletown. (Virtual Net Metering is a process whereby one party produces power from a renewable resource. They sell that power to the utility company for a discount. The utility company then sells the Town power at a discount, and the town reimburses the original party a portion of the savings to pay for the costs of the system) The beneficiary of this agreement was the Wilton High School. Before the first solar field was completed we were fortunate enough to be able to participate in a second solar field at the same location and the rest of the Wilton schools, along with the Comstock Community Center and Town Hall were the designated beneficiaries of this program. In 2021 the BOE and the Town saved a total of \$180,000 with this program.

While we have been working to reduce the cost of purchasing electricity, we have also been working on reducing the use in all of buildings. As the head of Facilities for the Town and the BOE, I have overseen global lamp replacements in every building that we operate. Incandescent lamps were already well on their way out when I started working for Wilton in 2015, but since then 1 ½” fluorescent lamps have been replaced with 1” tube fluorescents, which have since been replaced by Compact Fluorescent bulbs, and we now use LED light sources for all of our re-lamping projects.

The history of heating and cooling costs is a little more convoluted. About 8 years ago, all of the schools were converted from heating oil to natural gas. This provided an immediate reduction in heating costs as well as the long term benefit from the removal of the oil storage tanks with their associated risk of leaking. (Miller Driscoll was converted during the renovation and construction project)

To provide adequate comfort and ventilation a couple of process were used. When the schools were not in use, the systems would throttle back and go into a “night set-back” mode. Using a simple form of Artificial Intelligence, the control network learned when to start the systems to bring the buildings back to design temperature by recognizing that with certain outdoor conditions, the heating or cooling needed to start at varying times.

Another way that the amount of ventilation was controlled was by measuring the Carbon Dioxide levels in the schools. If the levels were low, then the ventilations systems could be adjusted to operate more efficiently. If the levels started to rise, which would mean that people were occupying the building, the ventilation systems would modulate to provide more fresh air. Obviously a gym full of exercising children would require more ventilation than a library that was perhaps unoccupied. By using multiple measuring points our systems were able to achieve that.

And then COVID

From a utility systems perspective, the first impact of COVID was that the schools went completely remote. Our use went down. All of our carefully curated tracking programs and expense reports started to look quite strange. In the summer of 2020, the state published guidelines that materially impacted or utility use. Ventilation systems could no longer modulate. As much fresh air as possible was required to be introduced to the buildings at all times. Running fans 24

hours a day is an obvious increase in power consumption. Not so obvious cost increases were incurred because cooling the air constantly during the summer means running expensive chillers constantly. Bringing in the maximum amount of fresh air further increased the load on our systems and increased power bills even more.

During winter months instead of being able to blend preheated air and outside air, as much as we were able, we were bringing in outside air. That air had to be heated constantly and the natural gas bills have increased dramatically, not so much because of rate increases, but because of major increases in consumption.

### **Trash Disposal:**

The BOE uses one vendor for all of the schools. The trash containers are typically 8-yard containers that are emptied into the truck. The advantage to this is that one truck can service all of the schools on any given day with minimal transportation cost or time. In a time of an acute shortage of drivers this is a good thing.

The disadvantage is that because the containers are emptied on a set schedule, sometimes they may not be full and ideally should not be emptied. Also, using an 8 yard container instead of a 12 or 20 yard container necessitates more frequent collections, which increases the unit cost of disposal.

Since the trucks that collect the trash do not have the ability to weigh the trash, the schools do not have a record of how much trash they are producing. The trucks collecting the trash may also be going to other accounts outside the BOE so we are unable to obtain the annual trash load generated by the schools.

Historically trash is collected from the schools on a daily basis. The conventional wisdom is that allowing trash bags with food waste to stay on the property any length of time risks the infestation of flies. The school district has worked hard over the last few years to reduce the amount of food waste generated. I am working on the concept that if we can use larger containers, then we can reduce the number of collections. That will result in a savings for the BOE. Note that not all of the schools can accommodate larger containers. Because of the limited access at Cider Mill, using a larger container is probably not an option.

Our efficiency in the disposal of recyclable material is better, but unfortunately in the last few years the disposing of recyclable materials has moved from a revenue line of about \$20/ton to the expense side at about \$80/Ton.

The Town of Wilton recently joined about a dozen other towns in the Housatonic Resource Recovery Authority. Going into the next budget year I will be having discussions with the Authority and their contracted hauler to see how we can provide a more efficient process for the schools and reduce the overall cost.