

## **The Public Schools of Brookline Superintendent's FY2013 Budget Message**

The Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) continue to be regarded as one of the leading public school systems in Massachusetts. Brookline students and graduates vie favorably with their contemporaries, as determined by placement at and graduation from highly competitive colleges and universities, by grade-level competencies, and by numerous standardized measures of achievement. Moreover, our alumni and staff play an important role in their professional endeavors and society in general.

The Strategic Plan of The Public Schools of Brookline provides a guide for our programmatic endeavors and a framework for documenting the success of our students, programs, schools and system. Detailed goals and approaches are derived from our mission:

“To ensure that every student develops the skills and knowledge to pursue a productive and fulfilling life, to participate thoughtfully in a democracy, and succeed in a diverse and evolving global society.”

Furthermore, our priorities and delineation of success are derived from our four (4) strategic areas of focus:

- Academic Excellence through Content, Pedagogy and Relationships
- Educational Equity
- Thriving in a Complex Global Society
- Continuous Improvement using Data

Beginning in FY2011, we initiated a move toward public reporting on the measurements of our goals, designed to provide the community with specific indicators of our progress on these important characteristics of quality. We are committed to reaching the high standards we have set for ourselves with respect to this variety of measures, as well as to providing a level of service and effectiveness that our residents and families have every right to expect of their public school system.

The Town of Brookline takes pride in a longstanding reputation for the excellence of its public schools, the quality of its teaching and administrative staff, and lofty degree of community support for education. Evidence of the special relationship between our citizens and their schools is revealed in a number of ways, including:

- The support shown for the Runkle School renovation and addition project. This \$29.1m venture will provide the school community with a facility designed to accommodate its student population, to provide appropriate common spaces (cafeteria, library, multi-purpose room and gymnasium), and to meet the educational needs of its staff and students. We are pleased to be planning a September, 2012 re-opening at Runkle.

- The collaborative perspective demonstrated by Town officials on the Heath School addition project will result in this school population having additional classroom space, an enlarged library, appropriate cafeteria seating, and a multi-purpose room. This \$8.3m effort is also projected for completion in September, 2012.
- It is clear that, given our system enrollment concerns, we will continue to investigate other building program and space options during the coming years. To this end, a concept study is currently underway at the Devotion School and a space analysis will be conducted at Brookline High School in late 2012. In addition, the upcoming Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) includes an additional \$1.5m for the creation of classrooms within existing buildings, the maintenance and repair of other facilities (including Lynch Center), and the possibility of space rental and/or acquisition outside our current facilities. This commitment to school projects in a time of unprecedented enrollment, notwithstanding the difficult economic times, is to be lauded.
- The Board of Selectmen, Advisory Committee, Town Meeting membership, and Town administration continue to work cooperatively with us to use the Town-School Partnership as a guiding agreement, while emphasizing the flexibility required to address enrollment concerns, in dealing with revenue opportunities during each of (at least) the past eight (8) years.
- The successful override campaign of May, 2008, permitted an extension of instructional time within the system, along with the design and implementation of an elementary world language program offered in kindergarten through grade six at each of our PK-8 schools.

We sincerely appreciate the level of support provided by the entire Town and accept, as part of this generous backing, our obligation to account for our programs and communicate frankly the successes and the challenges for our system.

Unfortunately, other dynamics affecting the world are not under our control. Due to the current economic climate, as well as a number of other dynamics that influence our bottom line, there is reason to be concerned about continuing our historic success. Specifically, the FY2013 budget development process has been complicated by the following state and local revenue and cost factors.

- Enrollment. We have experienced significant growth in the K-6 cohort, including (using October 1, 2011 enrollments) the present kindergarten class (602 students), grade one (551 students), grade two (658 students), grade three (566 students), grade four (532 students), grade five (538 students), and grade six (517 students), representing a substantial increase compared to historical enrollments in our system. In addition, our projections for the next four years, including the incoming kindergarten class (estimated to be 600 students), would appear to continue this pattern of accelerated growth. In order to sustain reasonable class sizes, within the confines of our available space, these enrollments dictate increased staffing levels, including classroom teachers and specialists, at the K-7 elementary level in FY2013.
- FY2013 House 1 Proposal. Governor Patrick's budget proposal provides a significant increase for Brookline's Chapter 70 Funding based upon the calculation imbedded in the Chapter 70 formula re-set by the legislature in FY2007. The Governor's recommended

increase of \$145.6M to statewide Chapter 70 funding allows for a \$2.0M increase to Brookline. Formula factors which have positively affected Brookline include the increase in Brookline's Foundation budget due to enrollment, inflation and special populations. In addition, Unrestricted General Government Aid is level funded in the Governor's Budget, but State Assessment increases caused a significant jump in Brookline's share of MBTA costs which rose by \$431K.

- Circuit Breaker. The Governor's budget level funds "Circuit Breaker" reimbursement for FY2013. While level funding in this category generally represents a reduction in percentage of costs covered, for FY2013 level funding will mean approximately \$1.9M of Circuit Breaker funding. Since the FY2012 Budget was based upon \$1.68M of Circuit Breaker funding, and FY2012 funding will also be at \$1.9M for actual funding, with projected expenditures at less than full funding, we expect this account to represent an opportunity to grow FY2013 funding by \$75K.
- Local Town Receipts. The Town is projecting a small (4%) increase in Local Receipts for FY2013, as well as an increase in property tax revenue (2.5% on the base plus new growth) in the coming year. Local Receipt increases are due to growth in Local Option Taxes, Motor Vehicle Taxes, Interest Income and an accounting change to Medicare Part D reimbursement.
- Step and Lane Advancement. The substantial number of teacher retirements in the system since 2003 has resulted in a professional staff that is, on average, younger and has less teaching experience. In addition to negotiated salary increases, these newer teachers are more likely to experience additional increases associated with steps (years of experience) and lanes (graduate degrees and credits). As a result, the annual salary costs borne by the district are now significantly more than the published negotiated adjustments. Specifically, this means that we will need to budget \$1.1m for step and lane increases for FY2013.
- Collective Bargaining. We were very pleased to arrive at a three-year collective bargaining agreement with our Brookline Educator Union (BEU) groups for FY2012 through FY2014, allowing for an increase in teacher collaboration time and flexibility in the salary schedule placement of new hires. The total cost of the 2% negotiated salary increases for FY2013 is \$1.3m when applied to all employees.
- Health Insurance. FY2013 will represent the third year of Brookline's participation in the Group Insurance Commission (GIC), the Health Insurance system for state and municipal government employees. All parties to this agreement are to be congratulated for the spirit of cooperation which has resulted in savings to employees, as well as to our general operating budget. Currently, however, we are projecting a 5% increase to the rates for FY2013 as well as an increase to the Town cost share of health insurance, which will rise from 80% to 83%. These two elements increase the school department share of Health Insurance by \$1.2M for FY2013.
- Special Education. The costs associated with private placements of our students remain unpredictable on at least two levels. First, although we do make some contingency plans within our spending plan, we cannot plan at all to accommodate students whose families relocate to or from the system because they are under no obligation to communicate with us prior to their arrival or departure. Therefore, we are subject to potentially volatile

swings in our budget with respect to the numbers of students placed at any given time. Second, the mechanisms for controlling the cost of private placements, designed and implemented by state officials, have not worked and have led to rapidly accelerating costs for certain private schools in which some of our students are placed. However, we are appreciative that our legislative delegation has expressed interest in controlling the restructuring cost requests from private schools.

### **Overall Budget Picture for FY2013**

The proposal shown below is designed to address the needs of our rapidly growing public school system and its students, continue our focus on our strategic plan and improve our educational program, and close the budget gap resulting principally from the factors described above. Paring the budget means that some services must be reduced, eliminated or restructured. We are, therefore, forced to adapt and change in order to provide the best educational program to the Town with the resources available. The proposals outlined here are designed to meet the competing imperatives of enhancing the instructional program in Brookline within the constraints of the current economic climate and our growing student population. Furthermore, we attempted to honor countless significant elements of our strategic plan, as well as to continue our focus on three (3) key overall goals:

- spend our scarce dollars to keep teachers in classrooms with students;
- focus on teaching and learning, program review, professional learning, and data analysis;
- improve student services and special education in order to better serve our students and their families in Brookline, while reducing costs whenever practical.

I have actively consulted with my leadership team, including Senior Staff, Principals, and Coordinators, in formulating these concepts. In addition, the FY2013 Budget Guidelines and Priorities document, adopted by the School Committee on Thursday, December 15, 2011, provided excellent guidance in this work. The following spending plan represents my best judgment of the greatest good in line with our joint obligations both to the current citizens and the taxpayers of the next generation.

This plan description includes a detailed discussion of anticipated revenue growth and challenges, expenditure increases, program improvements, program and staffing reductions, contingencies, use of reserves, and other factors considered in preparing this FY2013 budget.

### REVENUE SUMMARY

#### Revenue Growth

- Town-School Partnership. The partnership, which considers state and local revenue sources, as well as shared expenditures including health insurance and utilities, allocates an increase of \$2.8M to the public schools in the FY2013 plan for growth revenue. This projection assumes a significant increase (\$2M) to Chapter 70, level funded Unrestricted

General Government Aid, a 4% increase to overall local receipts, and a modification to the Town/School Partnership formula for FY2013 to reflect the increase in school enrollments.

- Circuit Breaker. House 1 projects level funding for Brookline in FY2013. With actual spending of Circuit Breaker funds lagging the actual funding by \$75K, we will expect to grow spending in FY2013 to this level and adjust the revenue budget by a corresponding amount. While Circuit Breaker funding can be variable, the base on which FY2013 will be set is expected to yield level funding (\$1.9M) for FY2013.
- Materials Fee. This program, which allows non-resident town and school employees to enroll their children in our school system for \$2k per year, represents a tremendous strategy for attracting and retaining quality people. However, given our current budget shortfall and the increasing number of families applying for the program, we are proposing that the budgeted expenditure from this program be increased by \$57k for FY2013. Details of the proposal, including the per student fee and possible enrollment "caps" in specific grade levels, will be provided to the School Committee on Thursday, March 1, 2012.
- Food Services. This charge includes the second phase in having our food services revolving account pay for health insurance costs of their employees. Specifically, the program was charged \$100k in FY2012, \$150k in FY2013 and will be charged \$200k in FY2014, with a goal of meeting the full health insurance obligation (currently \$225k) for FY2015.
- Adult Education. While this revolving account currently pays the complete health insurance costs of employees (\$49k), as well as some facilities costs (\$60k), this additional charge of \$50k better reflects the total cost of operating facilities associated with these classes.

#### Utilization of Reserves

Our reserves available for FY2013 appropriation will be approximately \$800k as of June 30, 2012. Although the School Committee Budget Guidelines stipulate that we look thoughtfully at phasing out our over-reliance on these monies in the FY2013 budget, we have not been able to do so in this initial spending plan. Specifically, this proposal includes \$750k in reserves dedicated to ongoing operational expenditures. However, we will recommend that any additional funds made available (i.e., additional state or local aid, reduction in Group Insurance Commission rates) be used to reduce the level of reserve funding committed to the FY2013 spending plan.

#### Revenue Challenges

- METCO. Governor Patrick has proposed level funding for METCO in his spending plan, although we are concerned that the Legislature could reduce our anticipated dollars in the next few months. Moreover, our present situation will be complicated by personnel expenses (steps and lanes, as well as negotiated salary increases) and student transportation costs. Although we are not planning for any change to the budget for the program, it is possible that we will experience program reductions for FY2013.
- Federal Grants. We are awaiting decisions at the Federal level regarding reauthorization of the Title grants, which could result in a reduction in current levels of support for these programs.

### Overall Revenue Picture

Based on the figures provided above, the total new revenue available to us in formulating the FY2013 spending plan is \$3.1m.

### SPENDING PRIORITIES AND REDUCTIONS

This section focuses on recommended spending increases and reductions for FY2013. Specifically, discussion centers on program improvements and innovations, enrollment driven priorities, contingencies against expenditure growth, salary increases, general operation expenses, staffing reductions and other factors impacting the FY2013 spending plan.

#### Program Improvements and Innovation

In order to support recommendations from Program Review and innovative projects, the FY2012 budget included \$244k in additional funding over the previous year. Examples of FY2012 expenditures include two elementary schools entering the Literacy Collaborative at Lesley University, training literacy teams at all the elementary schools, and beginning the implementation of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. With the FY2012 funds moving forward into the FY2013 budget, an additional \$43k will fund our priorities, continue projects into their second year and initiate new innovations. These new items are as follows:

- Content Reading Initiative. This proposed Brookline High School project will support three (3) departmental teams of four (4) to six (6) teachers committed to the goal of improving student literacy. For two years, teachers from each of the participating departments will be trained in adolescent literacy with attention to their specific area of content. Each team will have a Team Leader as group facilitator. After the first two years (FY2013 and FY2014), three (3) more departments will participate for another two (2) years. This multi-year project will be supported collaboratively by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fund, the Brookline Education Foundation and The Public Schools of Brookline.
- Literacy Collaborative. We propose to add two (2) additional schools to this initiative, while funding Runkle and Pierce for their second year in the project. The Literacy Collaborative is primarily a professional development initiative. Teacher capacity is built through the Literacy Coach model. In addition to classroom instruction, school-based Literacy Teams help educators become skilled at using assessment data and translating that information into targeted literacy instruction.
- Scheduling Software. This package, which is currently being piloted at Driscoll School, could allow all elementary schools to create a more common scheduling framework.
- Tripod Student Survey. This nationally-recognized survey provides the system and our teachers with valuable feedback from students regarding relationships and teacher expectations.
- Translation Services. We recommend funding to ensure that selected documents are translated to our common languages and that we can provide for translation to other languages, when appropriate.

- Program Review. These funds will allow us to pilot an electronic social studies textbook (grade 7), provide non-fiction books for bookrooms (grades K-5), new curriculum materials to support science instruction, and literacy program professional development and materials (grades 3 and 4 Leveled Literacy Intervention).

Beyond these specific “teaching and learning” requests, additional funding for program improvements and innovation is recommended as follows:

- Mathematics Teacher (Geometry Advanced). We currently have twelve (12) elementary school students across the system who are ready for the Geometry Advanced (high school) class, but are not yet ready to be in a high school environment. This .20 FTE position will allow them to take this class outside of the high school at a cost of \$12k.
- Elementary World Language. We recommend the allocation of \$46k to support the .80 FTE increase in elementary world language. As the middle level model continues to evolve in our elementary schools, grade six world language needs to adapt. The current structure (three times per week for 30 minutes) interrupts the blending of grade six with grades 7/8. Moving the grade six model to three times per week for 45 minutes allows for a unified middle level schedule.
- Ongoing Innovation. We recommend the allocation of \$50k to support the fourth year of our Landmark Partnership and the fourth year of the Calculus Project. With respect to our work with Landmark, Lawrence School will have limited consultation in FY2013, while Driscoll School will enter its second year. The Calculus Project originates with rising eighth graders enrolling in a summer course to preview next year's math. Year to year students in this project receive tutoring after school and continue to take summer preview courses, all in order to enroll and succeed in Calculus Honors during their senior year.
- Wireless Infrastructure (Technology). We now have a robust wireless environment at Brookline High School and will create similar conditions at Runkle and Heath when renovations are complete. This funding will allow us to ensure wireless access in three (3) additional elementary schools during FY2013, with the other sites to be completed in FY2014. The total cost of this project is \$125k, with \$66k being paid from the Town's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).
- Technology Initiatives. We are recommending that \$100k be allotted to accomplish the following: (a) adoption of a Learning Management System for Brookline High School; (b) increase the annual life cycle maintenance funding, thereby allowing us to maintain the five-year replacement cycle; (c) increase audio visuals and peripherals, including projectors, document cameras, printers, scanners, and cameras; and (d) increase district portfolio of online resources.
- Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) Staffing. This proposal entails bringing the supervision of home-based BCBA services in-house through a reduction of contracted services. Specifically, 4.0 FTE BCBA's would monitor, supervise, collaborate and implement home based and parent training instruction as outlined in numerous Individual Education Plans (IEPs) across the system. Brookline will develop an “in house” model for providing specialized consultation to those providing the direct services that supplement and/or train families in acquiring and demonstrating skills as outlined in IEPs. Furthermore, Brookline

will provide the necessary oversight and alignment of home/school collaboration, make appropriate recommendations at Team meetings, and track effectiveness of progress. Close collaboration with families and carryover to school based staff will enhance our ability to transfer skills from school to home. The cost of hiring the BCBA staff is \$337k, while the reduction in contracted services associated with this modified approach is \$363k.

- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Technicians. This proposal includes funding to hire in-house technicians to provide direct home-based services outlined in IEPs across the system. These technicians will be trained and overseen by the newly proposed BCBA positions. In lieu of contracting out for the services, Brookline will hire part-time employees to work flexible hours after school to fulfill our obligation of these services. The number of ABA technicians will be based on the number of hours that the system is committed to fulfill through existing and future IEPs. The anticipated cost of hiring technicians is \$301k and the reduction in contracted services associated with this proposal is \$637k.
- Home Services Clerical Support. Development of an in-house model for providing home services will require clerical support to organize, track, schedule, and coordinate the program. This position will work directly with the BCBA's to develop a calendar for services; track the necessary paperwork, including invoices of staff; and manage schedules. The cost of this proposal is \$20k.
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Teacher. This proposal would create a "continuum of service" for students graduating from the system-wide ASD program located at the Runkle School into the Brookline High School. As the needs of this growing population continue, BHS requires a teacher who specializes in ASD to customize, collaborate, and implement a program for an established cohort of learners. The cost of this proposal is \$58k.
- Office of Student Services Business Analyst. This position will be the financial analyst of all ancillary expenditures, make projections over time based on trends and data, and use data to anticipate special education costs with greater accuracy. This position will specifically negotiate and manage vendor contracts, monitor specialized costs related to IEPs, analyze building expenditures and growth, and identify trends of services in an effort to reduce contracted services and build in district supports. This position will work in tandem with the Deputy Superintendent for Administration and Finance and his staff, along with the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services. The cost of this proposal is \$60k.
- Director of System-wide and Out-of-District Programs. This proposal changes a Unit A position to a Unit B administrative position. It allows for supervision and evaluation of social workers and system wide program staff, as well as enabling us to further develop district programs. This level of administrative oversight is necessary as Brookline establishes model programs aligned to best practice with data driven results. The total cost of the proposal is \$8k.

### Enrollment

- Elementary Classroom Teachers. Given our estimate of 600 kindergarten students for FY2013, we are projecting a need for 4.0 FTE additional elementary classroom teachers at a cost of \$230k. This does not include teaching positions that may be necessary to lessen class sizes in existing building-level cohort groups.

- Elementary Classroom Specialists. The assumption of 600 new kindergarten students will also require an additional 2.50 FTE elementary classroom and subject area specialists, including the following: elementary world language (.30 FTE), middle level world language (.20 FTE), physical education (.60 FTE), performing arts (.70 FTE), visual arts (.10 FTE), social studies (.30 FTE), English (.20 FTE) and health (.10 FTE). The cost of these additional positions is \$145k.
- Elementary Classroom Materials. We have allotted funding for the purchase of classroom materials associated with additional grade level sections for the coming year. These dollars are included in the overall Teaching and Learning budget described earlier in this message.
- Special Education Teachers and Clinicians. This proposal entails a net increase of 6.8 FTE positions in special education across the system, including the following: learning center and intensive learning center (4.70 FTE), psychologists (.40 FTE), speech (1.10 FTE), occupational therapy (.20 FTE), guidance (.20 FTE), and nursing clerical support (.20 FTE). The cost of these proposals is \$392k, which is partially offset by a reduction in contracted speech services of \$55k.
- Brookline High School Nursing Services. This proposal of a .20 FTE increase in nursing services at BHS, at a cost of \$14k, recognizes the increased needs of the high school population, including students who are enrolled in our various special education programs.
- Vice Principals. In FY2012, we moved all elementary vice principals to 1.0 FTE. However, the Runkle position was paid for as part of the building project and, given the completion of that renovation, will now need to be carried on the operating budget (.40 FTE). The total cost of this proposal is \$23k.

#### Contingencies

- Special Education Contingency. We recommend that \$300k in emergency funds be established to deal with unanticipated special education obligations during the FY2013 budget year.
- General Education Contingency. This budget assumes the inclusion of a \$162k regular education contingency to address growth in existing building-level grade level groups, additional material and program needs, and other unanticipated issues.
- Grant Contingency. We recommend that an additional \$25k be set aside to address grant shortfalls that may result from changes in federal and state funding. Examples would include Title I, METCO and Kindergarten grants.

#### Salaries

- Collective Bargaining. As noted earlier in this message, our collective bargaining obligations with BEU groups (teachers, administrators and paraprofessionals) for FY2013 equal \$1.3m. In addition, we know that step and lane increases for BEU units will cost an additional \$1.1m in FY2013. Therefore, the total cost of collective bargaining for FY2013 is approximately \$2.4m, which will be partially offset by \$350k in savings from anticipated retirements and other staff turnover.

### General Operations

- Custodial Services. This increase of \$50k to contracted services will be necessary to address cleaning needs in the additional square footage created as a result of the Runkle and Heath renovations.
- Transportation Services. This increase of \$50k represents additional special education transportation requirements, as well as a 2% increase in our transportation contract for FY2013.
- Substitute Teachers. These additional funds are necessary to address the increase in child-bearing leaves over the past few years. The total proposed increase is \$50k.

### Staffing Reductions

- Elementary Math Specialists. This reduction of \$58k assumes the elimination of 1.0 FTE of our current 13.2 FTE elementary mathematics specialists, along with a reconfiguration of the assignment of staff to better match our student population and demographics.
- High School Teaching Staff. This reduction of \$58k assumes the elimination of 1.0 FTE teaching positions at Brookline High School. Specifically, a configuration of individuals who do not teach five (5) sections (including 4+1) will need to do so to accomplish this plan.

### Other Factors

- African-American Scholars. We appreciate that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fund has supported this program for the past two years. This budget item of \$112k assumes that we will fund 1.45 FTE positions associated with the program for FY2013.
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fund. We have worked with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fund to create a two-year plan to modify position cost assumptions so that their reimbursements will better reflect the true cost of our employees. This impact of \$15k (down from \$30k in FY2012) is the first step in that plan. In addition, the Fund continues to generously support a number of important initiatives within the high school, including the proposed Content Reading Coaching model and Global Leadership program.
- Paraprofessionals and Interns. During the past three (3) budget cycles we have implemented a plan to provide support in kindergarten and first grade, although the original intent was to also assist second grade classrooms. As presently implemented, this program has provided a full-time paraprofessional in every kindergarten, as well as allowing Principals to aid first or second grade classrooms, depending on the needs of their student population, with an intern or paraprofessional. This item assumes that we can add ten (10) interns to this staffing profile, while eliminating an equal number of paraprofessional positions in those grade levels, thereby saving \$100k in the FY2013 spending plan.
- Out-of-District Placement "Allowance". Current estimates show that a substantial number of students in out of district placement are anticipated to either move or "age out" for FY2013, resulting in a total reduction of \$750k to this budget line. Our goal in this spending plan will be to retain \$300k of this figure as a true reduction, meaning that we will project that \$450k of that figure will be expended on other potential placements during FY2013.

- Early Education Tuition. This spending plan includes a 3% increase in tuition rates for all of our early education classes which, among other fiscal and programmatic concerns, will allow us to maintain the number of scholarships necessary to serve those families who most have need of our school-based services.
- Steps to Success. While the FY2013 budget maintains current staffing in the Steps to Success program, it also assumes a fourth year of financial support from the Brookline Housing Authority of \$23k for a .50 FTE of the 4.0 FTE advisor positions. We sincerely appreciate this commitment from Authority leadership, which will enable us to sustain current services within the present model.
- Tutorial (Brookline High School). The Brookline High School Tutorial Program allows teachers in certain academic departments to substitute small group support for their fifth class teaching assignment, while providing approximately 220 students with academic assistance. We currently utilize 15.1 FTE in this program and budget \$992k per year. We recommend that the program undergo a comprehensive evaluation (initial data to be reported to the School Committee in January, 2013) in order to determine if this venture is meeting its stated goals and to examine the sustainability of the model in serving a growing high school population.
- Brookline Education Foundation (BEF) Support. In addition to their generous teacher and collaborative grants, the BEF supports system grants each year. Because of their efforts, we have been able to roll-out Responsive Classroom and Developmental Designs across the elementary schools. We have been able to be aggressive with our K-8 Literacy initiative, thanks to the BEF's support for training. In addition, the BEF supports professional development for the Leadership Team, including our Minority Student Achievement Network involvement.
- Ongoing Initiatives. Although no increases are proposed for a number of important initiatives, it is important to point out that funding levels are maintained for many ongoing efforts, including: (a) social competency and bullying prevention; (b) Virtual High School; (c) library management software; (d) Special Education Team Facilitators; (e) Kindergarten paraprofessionals; (f) Principal (school-based) budgets; (g) Brookline High School Tutorial and "4+1" initiatives; and (h) Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers (TSTT).
- Classroom and Program Relocations. The space challenges for FY2013 and beyond are daunting, given the projected continued accelerated growth in our elementary enrollment. These student numbers could necessitate continuing changes in our program projections at many of our elementary schools, depending on the overall rate of growth and where the concentration of incoming students falls. Moreover, our continued use of Brookline High School as a site for "non-secondary" classes and programs leads to a number of concerns. Specifically, given that our large student cohorts will begin to impact space availability at the high school during the 2015-2016 school year, we are committed to developing a plan to accommodate early education, adult and community education, and (possibly) other functions outside the high school building as soon as possible.

### Efficiencies

Beyond this present town-wide effort to find means of reducing financial costs in a responsible fashion, it is important to note that the School Department has achieved over \$1.2m in efficiencies over the past seven (7) budget cycles, many in partnership with town officials. Each of these changes represents a modification in the way that the schools deliver services. They were not all easy or obvious. All have required the cooperation and ingenuity of our employees, some were enabled by improvements in technology and economies of scale, and some represent sacrifices in service to our clients – the people of the Town. The specific initiatives are as follows:

- Eliminate the System Courier Position (FY2012) \$ 30k
- BHS Guidance Counselor Restructuring (FY2012) \$ 55k
  
- Special Education Clerical Consolidation (FY2011) \$ 47.5k
- High School Clerical (FY2011) \$ 95k
  
- Consolidation of System-wide Technology Support (FY2010) \$ 44.7k
- Central Office Clerical Staff Consolidation (FY2010) \$ 48.8k
- Human Resources Office Reorganization (FY2010) \$ 19.8k
- Consolidation of METCO Counselor Positions (FY2010) \$ 66.4k
- High School Coordinator Position Consolidation (FY2010) \$ 87k  
 (Director of Guidance)
  
- Payroll Office Consolidation (FY2009) \$ 62.5k
  
- Library Assistant Consolidation (FY2008) \$ 18.2k
- Modification of Advertising Strategies (FY2008) \$ 25k
- Teaching & Learning Clerical Consolidation (FY2008) \$ 55.3k
- Transportation/Custodial Clerical Consolidation (FY2008) \$ 47.3k
- Eliminate One (1) School Bus (FY2008) \$ 53.1k
- Eliminate One (1) Bus Monitor Position (FY2008) \$ 17.3k
- Eliminate Practice of Hiring Retirees (FY2008) \$ 101k
- Eliminate Permanent Building Substitute Positions (FY2008) \$ 58.4k
- Replace Three (3) Custodial Positions w/Contract Services (FY2008) \$ 21.9k
  
- Eliminate One (1) School Bus (FY2007) \$ 52.2k
- Eliminate One (1) Bus Monitor Position (FY2007) \$ 16.5k
- Replace Four (4) Custodial Positions w/Contract Service (FY2007) \$ 27.2k
- Coordinator Position(s) Consolidation (FY2007) \$ 81.8k  
 (Educational Technology and Library)
- Reduce Technical Support Staff (FY2007) \$ 117.6k  
 (Applications Manager and Webmaster)

- Eliminate One (1) School Bus (FY2005) \$ 52.6k
- Eliminate One (1) Bus Monitor Position (FY2005) \$ 15.2k

In addition, the School Committee and Administration actively participated in the Town-wide Efficiency Review undertaken on the initiative of the Selectmen.

### **Conclusion**

The final FY2013 spending proposal for The Public Schools of Brookline continues to represent a balance between the progressive educational agenda in our Strategic Plan and the current economic realities. For example, the proposal continues our commitment to spend dollars on teaching positions in order to deal with class size concerns and/or enhance programs, with a concentration on persistent enhancement of the experience that Brookline students receive in the public schools. Moreover, we continue our commitment to Teaching and Learning, the “research and development” division of our business, by funding program review and data management/analysis, as well as by continuing efforts to provide a robust wireless infrastructure in each building. Lastly, this plan demonstrates our commitment to improving student support services and special education, principally through the implementation of an in-house home based BCBA service model, the expansion of our continuum of services for students in PK-12, and improving the fiscal analysis of expenditures in an effort to guarantee that we are providing the best service at fair costs.

More importantly, I believe that this proposal achieves the appropriate balance necessary for furthering the mission of our school system and respecting our commitment to the Town of Brookline. We look forward to the opportunity to provide elected officials, appointed representatives, and the community with further justification for these essential proposals over the coming months.