

The Public Schools of Brookline Superintendent's FY2014 Budget Message

Evidence continues to indicate that The Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) rank as one of the leading public school systems in Massachusetts. Significant numbers of Brookline alumni and staff are leaders in their professional efforts and their communities. Moreover, reports show that Brookline students and graduates excel at highly competitive colleges and universities, in the work environment, and on countless standardized measures of achievement. Brookline is a very good place to live and go to school.

The Strategic Plan of The Public Schools of Brookline provides a direction for our work 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.”

Additionally, our priorities and definition of success originate with 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 enjoys an established reputation for the excellence of its public schools, the quality of its teaching and administrative staff, and high degree of community support for education. While the special relationship between our citizens and their schools is obvious to anyone spending time in this Town, tangible examples include the following:

- The \$29.1m Runkle School addition and renovation now provides 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 that this facility was re-opened to the community in October, 2012.
- The Heath School addition and renovation project, which resulted in additional classroom space, an enlarged library, appropriate cafeteria seating, and a multi-purpose room, opened in September, 2012. This \$8.5m effort signified the Town's continued commitment to addressing our enrollment concerns.
- 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 nine (9) 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.
- 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:
 - We have completed a concept study at the Devotion School and have successfully worked with the Town and the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to have this project "invited" to Feasibility Study. This action will ultimately allow this project to qualify for state funding.
 - The FY2014 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) includes an additional \$1.75m for the creation of classrooms within existing buildings, allowing us the option to review the feasibility of installing Modular Classrooms at certain schools and the continued initiative to lease/rent space outside our current facilities.
 - The FY2014 CIP also includes \$3M to fund the upgrade and repair of the Old Lincoln School (OLS) to ensure the future availability of that space. The School Committee has authorized the Brookline Committee on School Population and Capital Exploration (B-SPACE) study group to consider options for the appropriate "concept" to reside at OLS in order to relieve overcrowding.
 - An architect has been hired to conduct a space study at Brookline High School this spring to allow us to consider the long-term effects of our current elementary enrollment growth on BHS.

This commitment to school projects and funding the operating budget in a time of unprecedented enrollment, notwithstanding the difficult economic times, is extraordinary. 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, 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 success at serving students and families. Specifically, the FY2014 budget development process has been complicated by the threat of the Federal "sequester" and the following state and local revenue and cost factors:

- Enrollment. We continue to experience significant growth in the K-6 cohort, including (using October 1, 2012 enrollments) the present kindergarten class (666 students), grade one (633 students), grade two (539 students), grade three (651 students), grade four (574 students), grade five (517 students), and grade six (549 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-8 elementary level in FY2014.

- FY2014 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 \$224M to statewide Chapter 70 funding allows for a \$2.8M increase to Brookline and would raise Brookline to 17.5% of Foundation. Formula factors that have positively impacted Brookline include the increase in Brookline's Foundation budget due to enrollment, inflation and special populations. The Governor's recommendation is, however, dependent upon new state revenue that may not be sustained by the legislature. As a result the Town/School Partnership formula is based on a more conservative estimate of \$1.7M in Chapter 70 growth in FY2014. In addition, Unrestricted General Government Aid is level funded in the Governor's Budget, with State Assessments increased by \$135K.
- Circuit Breaker. The Governor's budget funds "Circuit Breaker" reimbursement for FY2014 at a level consistent with the mid-year FY2013 9(c) cuts, or a reduction of \$11.5M below the original FY2013 appropriation. Brookline's funding level for FY2013 is expected to be \$1.9M. As a result it is reasonable to expect this same level of funding in FY2014. Level funding in this category generally represents a reduction in the percentage of costs covered.
- Local Town Receipts. The Town is projecting a small increase in Local Receipts for FY2014, 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 primarily due to growth in Local Option Taxes and Motor Vehicle Taxes.
- 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 increases and \$100K for lane increases in FY2014.
- Collective Bargaining. FY2014 is the final year of a three-year collective bargaining agreement with our Brookline Educators 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 negotiated salary increases for FY2014 is \$2.3m when applied to all employees.
- Health Insurance. FY2014 will represent the fourth 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 that has resulted in savings to employees, as well as to our general operating budget. The current projection is a 5% increase to rates for FY2014. This projection, which could be adjusted when the GIC certifies their rates for the coming year in March, increases the school department share of Health Insurance by \$956K for FY2014.

Overall Budget Picture for FY2014

The following proposal is tailored 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 in a cost effective manner.

I have actively consulted with my leadership team, including Senior Staff, Principals, and Coordinators, in formulating these concepts. In addition, the FY2014 Budget Guidelines and Priorities document, adopted by the School Committee on Tuesday, December 18, 2012, provided excellent guidance in this work. The following spending plan represents my best judgment of the greatest good in line with our obligations to both 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 FY2014 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 \$3.47M to the public schools in the FY2014 plan for growth revenue. This projection assumes a significant increase (\$1.7M) to Chapter 70, level funded Unrestricted General Government Aid, a 4.3% increase to overall local receipts, and a shared funding formula within the Town/School Partnership to reflect increased costs for both Special Education services and school enrollment growth.
- Circuit Breaker. The Governor's budget funds "Circuit Breaker" reimbursement for FY2014 at a level consistent with the mid-year FY13 9(c) cuts, or a reduction of \$11.5M below the original FY13 appropriation. Brookline's funding level for FY13 is expected to be \$1.9M. As a result it is reasonable to expect this same level of funding in FY2014. Level funding in this category generally represents a reduction in the percentage of costs covered.
- Materials Fee. This program, which allows non-resident town and school employees to enroll their children in our school system for \$2.5k per year, represents a tremendous

strategy for attracting and retaining quality people. Given our current budget shortfall and the increasing number of families applying for the program, we are proposing that the additional revenue be recognized in FY2014 to increase our budget by \$50K. This projection is based on an assumption of an additional twenty (20) student enrollees for the coming year.

- Food Services. This charge includes the third 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 \$237k) for FY2015. We will also change our method of accounting for this cost recovery and recognize the FY2013 revenue through the Town-School Partnership revenue formula. As a result, the Revolving Fund reimbursement budget will be reduced by \$100k.
- Athletic Fees. Our current fees of \$200 per sport are among the lowest in the Bay State Conference. We are proposing that our per sport fee be increased to \$300, resulting in the availability of an additional \$100k for spending in the FY2014 spending plan.
- Fee Processing. This modification to the manner in which we collect athletic fees and early education tuition will result in a more standardized approach to scholarships and program eligibility. We anticipate that this plan will result in more transparent service to parents and students, as well as an increase of \$50k in available funds.
- Reserves Dedicated to Student Technology. We propose that an additional \$50k of reserves, above that proposed in the following section, be dedicated to providing one-to-one access to technology for high school students, particularly those who can least afford it. Details of this proposal will be presented in March.

Utilization of Reserves

Our reserves available for FY2013 appropriation will be approximately \$750k as of June 30, 2013. This proposal seeks to utilize \$350k of reserves (the same level as was committed in FY2013) in support of ongoing operational expenditures. In addition, as noted later in this message, we propose to earmark the remaining \$400k as a special education contingency fund, designed to offset potential cost increases in out-of-district placements and program development.

Revenue Challenges

- METCO. Governor Patrick has proposed level funding for METCO in his spending plan, although our personnel expenses (steps and lanes, as well as negotiated salary increases) and student transportation costs continue to increase. Although we are not planning for any change to the budget for the program, it is possible that we will experience program reductions for FY2014.
- Federal and State 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 given the uncertainty created by the potential "sequester." At the present time it is unclear what the impact will be from actions to resolve Federal Budget issues relative to the threatened "sequester." Within competitive grants, the current Teen Advantage grant is expiring, although we will be applying for reauthorization.

Overall Revenue Picture

Based on the figures provided above, the total new revenue available to us in formulating the FY2014 spending plan is \$3.62m.

SPENDING PRIORITIES AND REDUCTIONS

This section focuses on recommended spending increases and reductions for FY2014. Specifically, discussion centers on: (1) program improvements and innovation; (2) enrollment driven priorities; (3) supplies, materials and consultants; (4) contingencies against expenditure growth; (5) general operating expenses; (6) staffing reductions; (7) other budgetary reductions; and (8) other factors impacting the FY2014 spending plan.

Program Improvements and Innovation

We have made a sizable commitment over the past two years to support improvements and innovation funding. Examples include having elementary schools entering the Literacy Collaborative at Lesley University, training literacy teams at all the elementary schools, partnering with the Brookline Education Foundation and 21st Century Fund to support the Content Reading Initiative (CRI) at Brookline High School, and beginning the implementation of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. While these concepts will be continued in FY2014, the following new ideas are included in this spending plan:

- Literacy. 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. We propose the expenditure of \$95k for continued implementation of the Literacy Collaborative work at our elementary schools. Specifically, we will add 1.30 FTE literacy specialist positions across Lincoln, Pierce and Runkle Schools, in addition to funding training for an additional grade span (grades 3-5 at Runkle) and the first year of a middle level model in the system. The \$95k expenditure is comprised of \$74k in staffing and \$21k for the Literacy Collaborative.
- Language Based Learning Disabilities (LLD) Instructional Model. Currently, given a critical mass of students entering 9th grade over the next two years, there is a need to enlarge and enhance our language based instructional model at Brookline High School. This model must be designed as follows:
 - To provide specially designed instruction in a multi-modal language-based approach;
 - To provide individualized language-based and reading instruction on a daily basis (4 times per week to meet the high school schedule);
 - To weave language processing and linguistics into the fabric of the school day through instruction, coaching and appropriate materials; and
 - To provide a routinized structure and system of support for enhanced organizational and executive functioning to support students' academic success.Specifically, the core cost of this program is targeted at \$165k to support teachers (2.0 FTE), a paraprofessional (.85 FTE), and speech/language (.40 FTE). The cost of technology and consultant support for this program is described in other sections of this narrative.
- Advisory. With the support of the 21st Century Fund, we have used this year to evaluate and review the Brookline High School Advisory program. The emerging plan for

Advisory in FY2014 and beyond will better meet the goals of providing all students with an adult in the building who knows them well, as well as providing a structure that brings a diverse group of students together to build a strong community. The cost of this program is \$60k and is utilized primarily for stipends for advisory staff and summer professional development.

- High School Student Technology Access. As described earlier in this proposal, this initiative is designed to guarantee one-to-one technology access for students at Brookline High School at a proposed cost of \$50k. Again, specifics of the proposal will be provided in March.
- Fee Processing. As noted in the “revenue” section of this proposal, we will hire a 1.0 FTE clerk to bring a more standardized approach to the collection of fees, as well as determining scholarships and program eligibility. The cost of this position (\$50k) is at least offset by an increase in fee collection.
- Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers (TSTT). Brookline was one of the first systems in Massachusetts to initiate this program, which is designed to incent students of color to look at teaching professions and, more importantly, to consider returning to a position in education in their home community. We presently support one (1) cohort of five (5) students in this effort. This proposed expenditure of \$30k would add a second cohort of students in FY2014.
- Technical Assistant. This .85 FTE paraprofessional role would work with the current Brookline High School technical director on stage crew, building sets, maintenance of sound and light systems, and daily/evening event coverage of performance spaces. In addition, this role would create a stable event staff to be present and support many events (drama, dance and music) during the school year. The cost of this enhancement is \$20k.
- Inclusion Facilitator. This .50 FTE position supports students school-wide, by working with learning centers, the LLD program and classroom teachers to provide seamless instructional and organizational support and access to the general education curriculum and classroom for students on IEP's. The cost of this position is \$43k.
- Transition and Inclusion Support. This .85 FTE position supports the growing needs of our transition-age students (18-22 year olds). This individual provides on-site job coaching and mentoring for successful entry and integration into the workplace and other community-based environments. In addition, the individual provides enhanced opportunities for students with disabilities to access the broad array of educational, vocational, and elective offerings at Brookline High School. The cost of this position is \$20k.
- Special Education Program Support. These positions provide enhanced opportunities for students in our Comprehensive Learning Centers to access and be successful in their regular education classrooms. This is consistent with the system's commitment to support all students in their neighborhood schools and in the least restrictive environment. We propose a 1.69 FTE increase at a cost of \$40k.
- Human Resources. We are very pleased that the Town and Schools will be implementing a Human Resources Information System (HRIS) through MUNIS, which will provide us with an increased flexibility in utilizing employee information for licensure and other important aspects of our operation. In order to implement the system, we will add a 1.0 FTE position, effective on January 1, 2014, at a cost of \$30k to the FY2014 spending plan.

Enrollment

- Elementary Classroom Teachers. Given our estimate of 600 kindergarten students for FY2014, we are projecting a need for 8.2 FTE additional elementary (K-8) classroom teachers at a cost of \$470k. We anticipate that these positions will be needed at Runkle (.80 FTE), Pierce (1.0 FTE), Lincoln (1.2 FTE), Devotion (2.2 FTE), Lawrence (1.0 FTE) and Baker (2.0 FTE), although this could certainly change, depending on enrollment shifts. Additionally, this does not include teaching positions that may be necessary to lessen class sizes in existing building-level cohort groups.
- Elementary Paraprofessionals. Our projections would require the addition of first grade paraprofessionals at Devotion and Lincoln schools. This increase of 1.69 FTE would cost \$40k.
- Elementary Classroom Specialists. Our assumptions will also require an additional 3.0 FTE elementary classroom and subject area specialists, including the following: physical education (.80 FTE), performing arts (.30 FTE), visual arts (.50 FTE), English Language Learners (ELL) (.80 FTE), elementary world language (.20 FTE), and health (.40 FTE). This proposed increase would cost \$172k.
- Nursing. In order to provide additional coverage during peak times and at larger schools, as well as for coverage during nurse absences from schools, we propose the addition of a system-wide nurse substitute. Given that we already provide some funding in this area, the net cost of this proposal is \$33k.
- Team Facilitation. In order to meet the needs of the high school population, we propose the addition of a third special education team facilitator, as well as corresponding clerical support. The cost of this proposal is \$126k.
- Enrollment Adjustment. Given that our present (FY2013) kindergarten enrollment is 660 students and that our FY2014 assumption is now set at 600 students, we anticipate the reduction of 3.0 FTE teaching positions and a corresponding number of paraprofessionals. This will result in a savings of \$233k. However, as noted later in this message, we will be establishing a \$200k regular education contingency to guard against increases in our projections as we proceed through the spring.
- Classroom Consolidation. This spending plan assumes that we will identify one (1) elementary section for merging in a grade level at a school. This will be accomplished through careful analysis of current and projected enrollments throughout the spring, particularly in sections that are marginal and, therefore, potential candidates for unification. This consolidation results in a savings of \$57k.

Supplies, Materials and Consultants

- Teaching and Learning. The total increase of \$140k (which includes the \$21k for the Literacy Collaborative) to this budget, which represents the majority of the research and development aspects of our business, are detailed below.
 - Minority Student Achievement Network. These funds (\$14k) cover expenses previously covered by the Brookline Education Foundation and other grants for administrators and teachers to participate in Network events, including mini-conferences and the annual Institute.
 - Professional Development and Mentoring. This \$10k increase in funding supports new Brookline teachers, primarily in the middle grades, by providing a second mentor for content and curriculum support when necessary. In addition, we need to create and

- purchase more high quality individual and small group professional development materials. Examples from this year's trials include DVD sets for Responsive Classroom and study guides for the Continuum of Literacy Learning. We are also seeking to video exemplary Brookline teachers to show particular instructional practices in action.
- **Materials and Supplies.** The increase in materials and supplies for the elementary schools (\$78k) is due to multiple factors including: enrollment, increased costs, and new curricula. This figure was originally \$98k, however, we are reducing the annual reallocation of \$70k for Program Review items to \$50k.
 - **Textbooks and Equipment.** This \$38k in funding will provide grade 8 social studies texts (hardcopy and some electronic subscriptions) that are needed to support the curricular shifts in the middle grades, as well as French textbooks for grades 7 and 8. Also in the middle grades, the large chorus classes in some schools need risers to properly arrange students for a productive class.
 - **Program Review and Innovation.** The funds annually allocated will support the further development of our K-8 book rooms and materials for new curriculum in science, social studies and physical education. This spending allocation is \$50k and represents a decrease of \$20k from FY2013.
 - **Student Services.** This \$75k increase will fund psychological testing materials (\$8k), instructional materials (\$7k), language based learning disability model materials (\$30k), and additional consultation with Landmark School (\$30k). The Landmark work, which will now be budgeted at \$127k, will include the high school instructional model, the second year of implementation at Baker School, and the third year of the Driscoll School efforts.

Contingencies against Expenditure Growth

- **Contingencies for Special Education and General Education.** As described later in this message, the spending plan includes \$250k for unanticipated special education obligations during the FY2014 budget year. We further recommend that the \$400k remaining in our reserves be designated to deal with unanticipated special education and general education costs during the coming budget year.
- **Grant Contingency.** Although we are cognizant of potential reductions in valuable grant funds (including Title I, IDEA and METCO), we cannot recommend any offsets at this time to address shortfalls that may result from changes in state and federal funding levels. Therefore, these possible future reductions would need to be addressed through further program cuts to our FY2014 spending plan.

General Operating Expenses

- **Collective Bargaining.** As noted earlier in this message, our collective bargaining obligations with BEU groups (teachers, administrators and paraprofessionals) for FY2014 equal \$2.3m. In addition, we know that step and lane increases for BEU units will cost an additional \$1.2m in the coming year. Therefore, the total cost of collective bargaining for FY2014 is approximately \$3.5m, which will be partially offset by \$450k in savings from anticipated retirements and other staff turnover.
- **Transportation.** We anticipate an increased cost of \$70k to cover a 2% increase to our vendor contracts, along with the \$40k shortfall absorbed in our FY2013 spending freeze.
- **Custodial.** A 2% increase to our outside vendor contract will result in a \$20k increase to this budget line for FY2014.

- FY2013 Budget Freeze Restorations. The total cost of the restorations in the FY2014 spending plan, as delineated below, is \$103k. Although we do not recommend the restoration of all reductions taken to meet the \$500k shortfall in our FY2013 budget year, the following items will be included in this plan:
 - Elementary World Language/Science Clerical Position (1.00 FTE)
 - 1st Grade Paraprofessionals at Baker and Lawrence (1.69 FTE)
 - Associate Dean at Brookline High School (.40 FTE)
 - Teaching and Learning Budget (\$69k) for professional development (Responsive Classroom and Developmental Design courses) and new curriculum materials for science and social studies

It should be noted here that the Director of Data Management position, which was unfilled and, therefore, cut as a result of the FY2013 spending freeze, is not recommended for inclusion in the FY2014 budget. We are fortunate that the Special Education Budget Analyst, which is a position created in the FY2013 budget process, has picked up certain aspects of the Director position's work.

Staffing Reductions

- Enrichment and Challenge Support (ECS). This reduction of \$264k assumes the elimination of this program, including the coordinator (.60 FTE), teaching staff (3.65 FTE), and clerical roles (.20 FTE). This proposal assumes a greater degree of differentiation on the part of classroom teachers, with the support of the school-based Education Technology Specialists and K-8 curriculum coordinators.
 - Performing Arts. Currently, all K-3 students have music twice a week, physical education twice per week and visual arts once per week. This proposal would reduce music to once weekly for all K-3 students. In addition, while our current model for music in grades 7 and 8 is conservatory once per week, there are three schools that have an additional general music class. This proposal also eliminates that extra music class in those schools. These proposals would reduce our performing arts staff by 4.6 FTEs and save \$264k.
 - Coordinators.
 - Performing Arts. We propose the creation of a K-12 Performing Arts Coordinator position, replacing the current K-8 and 9-12 positions. In addition, this proposal assumes the creation of a teacher-leader role in performing arts at Brookline High School. This modified structure would allow for better coordination across our schools, while allowing us to maintain and coordinate the use of multiple performance spaces and develop the BHS performing arts program. This action reduces the Performing Arts coordination allocation by .60 FTE.
 - Alternative Programs. We also propose the creation of a Coordinator of Alternative Programs (Unit B) position, replacing the current Winthrop House and Opportunity for Change (OFC) roles. This individual would also work with the Excel program. Furthermore, we would create teacher-leader roles at OFC and Winthrop House (one already exists in Excel). This new organization is part of the Headmaster's vision to create more unity and transparency among the alternative programs at BHS.
- These proposals, in total, represent a savings of \$107k in the FY2014 spending plan.
- Elementary Math Specialists. This reduction of \$57k assumes the elimination of 1.0 FTE of our current 12.2 FTE elementary math specialists, along with an examination of our current configuration of the assignment of staff to better match our student population and demographics.

- Low-Enrolled Sections at Brookline High School. This reduction assumes the elimination of six (6) course sections at Brookline High School, to be determined by course enrollments. The Superintendent, Headmaster and Assistant Headmaster will work closely together, with input from appropriate Coordinators, to make these determinations. The savings from this proposal is \$61k.
- Tutoring and Support Services. The elimination of these tutoring roles, which constitute a total of .49 FTE, would save \$22k. These positions exist at Devotion and Brookline High School.
- Tutorial Teacher-Leader. Currently, a .80 FTE is devoted to leading the BHS Tutorial Program. This proposal would reduce that support to .40 FTE, representing a savings of \$20k in the FY2014 spending plan.

Other Budgetary Reductions

- Wireless Initiative. We will complete our work to provide a robust wireless environment at every Brookline school in FY2014. The funding for this final phase of the project will come from the CIP, allowing us to remove the \$95k that we spent in FY2013 from this spending plan.
- Grant Savings. This spending plan assumes that we will save \$98k by shifting teachers presently included on federal grants to our operating budget, thereby eliminating the requirement that we pay 9% of their salaries to the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System (MTRS). These teachers will be replaced on the grants by non-salary items (professional development, materials, etc.).

Other Factors

- Parent Center. This proposal is part of our larger vision of providing parents with a one-stop shopping experience for registration, accessing important information regarding our schools and community, and accessing supports (parent courses and training). We anticipate using current staffing, as well as the fee-processing role described earlier in this proposal, to establish this important resource for our families. We will provide a more specific proposal, including how existing resources will be brought to bear in service of our families through this effort, in March.
- Outside Placements. The FY2014 spending plan assumes savings from a significant number of students who will “age out” of outside placements in the coming months. This factor allows us to level-fund our outside placement budget, while assuming a \$250k contingency within the current spending figure.
- Paraprofessionals and Interns. I am very pleased that this budget proposal maintains our commitment to providing paraprofessional and/or intern support to each of our kindergarten and grade one teachers. We believe that our students and teachers have benefited greatly from this strategy, while the system has seen a more focused allocation of paraprofessionals at later grades as a result of employing this strategy with our youngest students.
- Technology and the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The appropriation of \$175k will allow the School department to move forward in three (3) key areas:
 - Complete the Wireless Infrastructure Project. We will utilize \$95k to complete the purchase of wireless access points, wiring and switches at the remaining elementary schools (Driscoll, Lawrence and Devotion) for enterprise wireless implementation.

- **Outfit Special Education LLD Classrooms.** This budget of \$40k will allow the new Language Based Learning Disabilities (LLD) instructional model classrooms at Brookline High School to be outfitted with the classroom technology (Smartboards, laptops and applications) to meet the needs of these students.
- **Educator Evaluation System.** The appropriation of \$40k will allow us to implement the educator evaluation program, including the use of TeachPoint throughout the system. Specifically, we will use this application on iPads and laptops to allow for on-line classroom observations, timely feedback and document sharing between evaluators and educators being evaluated.
- **Early Education Tuition.** This spending plan includes a 3% increase in tuition rates for all of our early education classes that will allow us to cover the increasing costs of these important programs. Furthermore, my hope is that, in the very near future, we can provide the School Committee with recommendations for ensuring that every student can benefit from a PSB early education experience without having to worry about not being able to pay for the program.
- **Design Team for Inclusion in Brookline.** We have included an additional .50 FTE inclusion specialist in the FY2014 spending plan, meaning that we now have three (3) elementary schools with this important position. As part of our planning efforts, I have charged the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning with designing a comprehensive plan for inclusion across our schools. This plan will be submitted on or before September 30, 2013, and will be utilized in creating our FY2015 budget proposal and action plan.
- **Steps to Success.** While the FY2014 budget maintains current staffing in the Steps to Success program, it also assumes a fifth consecutive year of financial support from the Brookline Housing Authority (BHA). Specifically, the BHA has committed \$10k toward 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.
- **"4+1" at Brookline High School.** We currently utilize 16.2 FTE in this High School program at a cost of over \$1m per year. The program is comprised of two (2) major components:
 - **Brookline High School Tutorial Program.** Tutorial 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.
 - **World Language.** This component provides two (2) language teachers with first level courses, which are designed for students who have not had a previous world language experience.

We will be working closely with the Headmaster to determine if this venture is meeting its stated goals and to examine the sustainability of the "4+1" model in serving a growing high school population. Our plan is to incorporate any recommendations of this effort in our FY2015 spending plan.

- **21st Century Fund.** The Fund continues to generously support a number of important initiatives within the high school, including the Content Reading Initiative, the Global Leadership Academy, BHS Writes, and Medical Interpretation/Translation. We sincerely appreciate the efforts of Fund members in supporting innovation at Brookline High School.
- **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 rollout 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. Finally, the BEF has partnered with the system and the 21st Century Fund to support the Content Reading Initiative at Brookline High School.

- 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) curriculum revision in K-8 science and social studies; (d) Special Education Team Facilitators; (e) African American Scholars Program; (f) Brookline High School Tutorial and "4+1" initiatives; (g) Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers (TSTT); and (h) Calculus Project.
- Classroom and Program Relocations. The space challenges for FY2014 and beyond are daunting, given the projected continued growth in our elementary enrollment. These student enrollment increases have necessitated continuing changes to program/classroom spaces within school buildings, have forced us to give serious consideration to the feasibility of portable classrooms at Lawrence and Baker Schools and will result in the relocation of additional pre-K classrooms to leased sites, outside of the K-8 buildings, once again in FY2014. Moreover, our continued use of Brookline High School as a site for "non-secondary" classes and programs is of concern because BHS enrollment will begin to grow in FY2015. Specifically, given that our large student cohorts will begin to impact space availability at the high school over the next few years, we are committed to developing a plan to accommodate the needs of the high school and the needs of programs currently located within the high school such as early education, adult and community education, etc. as soon as possible.

IMPROVEMENTS AND RESTORATIONS

I believe the FY2014 budget proposal described above represents a realistic scenario for the fiscal year. However, there is some possibility that Brookline may receive additional revenues that would permit us to enhance this budget plan. For example, our assumption of a 5% increase to health insurance premiums is likely to be revised in a manner that would allocate additional dollars for Brookline. Although final recommendations will be formulated when and if these funds become available, and in accordance with any restrictions imposed by the eventual funding program, our priorities for additional improvements and restorations would include the following program and staffing issues.

- General Education Contingency. This budget assumes the inclusion of a \$250k special education contingency, as well as designating our \$400k in reserves as a further buffer against unforeseen issues during the coming budget year. In addition, we recommend that the first \$200k of additional revenues and/or reduced expenditures be designated as a regular education contingency to address growth in existing building-level grade level groups, additional material and program needs, and other unanticipated issues.
- Technology. While we have made a significant commitment to the teaching/learning and infrastructure components of technology over the past few years, much remains to be done. The FY2014 spending plan and CIP includes steps to:
 - complete our commitment to a robust wireless environment in each building;
 - meet the technology requirements for our special education initiatives;

- provide administrators with appropriate tools to complete educator evaluation requirements; and
- begin our work to close the access gap for Brookline High School students by providing some 1to1 access to laptops.

Additionally, our rapid growth over the past few years means that we must take additional steps to replace our aging classroom computers, provide appropriate computers to teachers, equip our new classrooms, provide basic projection capability in K-12 classrooms, and appropriately outfit our special education learning centers. We propose that \$500k available through additional revenues be committed to this initiative, with details to be presented to the School Committee in March.

- ECS. As part of a potential restoration package, I have directed the Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning to work with the current ECS Program Review Committee to deliver a recommendation for a new district-wide ECS program model on or before Friday, May 31, 2013. The recommended model is to be built within the following framework:
 - Staffing not to exceed 2.0 FTE teachers (Unit A), 1.0 FTE coordinator (Unit B), and .2 FTE clerical staff;
 - To include strategies for collaboration with the parents and members of the community as volunteers offering enrichment opportunities for students outside the school day;
 - To include continuation of Virtual High School (VHS);
 - To include continuation of a sound process for grade and subject acceleration;
 - To include strategies for maximizing the potential of technology;
 - To ensure that opportunities are available to all students;
 - To ensure that students own their own learning and develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning; and
 - To include adequate funding for professional development.

The cost of a 2.2 FTE package is \$140k, while the full 3.2 FTE model would add \$201k to the FY2014 budget.

- Vice Principals. In FY2012, we moved all elementary vice principals to 1.0 FTE. In FY2013 we added a second position at Devotion School due to the extraordinary size and growth of that school. This proposed enhancement includes an additional .50 FTE position at Pierce and at Baker. The cost of this enrollment-driven proposal is \$98k.

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 \$1.5m in efficiencies over the past decade, 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:

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| • Freeze the Director of Data Management Position (FY2014) | \$ 100k |
| • Consolidate Curriculum Coordinator Roles (FY2014) | \$ 165k |
| • Eliminate the System Courier Position (FY2012) | \$ 30k |

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| • 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) (Director of Guidance) | \$ 87k |
| • 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) (Educational Technology and Library) | \$ 81.8k |
| • Reduce Technical Support Staff (FY2007) (Applications Manager and Webmaster) | \$ 117.6k |
| • 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 FY2014 spending proposal for The Public Schools of Brookline represents our effort to continue a strong educational agenda during a period of extreme enrollment growth and difficult economic realities at the local, state and national levels. Our proposal commits to spend dollars on classroom teaching positions in order to maintain reasonable class size. In addition, our system-level planning sustains our pledge to professional learning for teachers around system priorities, to enhancing our teacher mentoring program, and to utilizing the recommendations developed through Program Review in system-level planning. Moreover,

this plan demonstrates our commitment to improving special education, principally through the implementation of a language-based instructional model at Brookline High School, the enhancement of services and programs throughout the system, and the improvement of alternative programs at Brookline High School. Finally, the plan validates our assurance to enhancing our technology infrastructure with an eye toward providing our teachers and students with the tools that they need for today's learning environment(s).

However, this spending plan is not ideal. It does not currently contain sufficient contingency funds and we have proposed program reductions, which will require considerable effort to implement in a way that is beneficial to our students. It does, however, demonstrate the commitment of this school system to innovation, to the classroom, and to meeting the needs of all students.

Furthermore, I believe that this proposal furthers the mission of our school system and respects our commitment to the Town of Brookline during a very difficult budget year. We look forward to the opportunity to provide elected officials, appointed representatives, and the community with further explanation of these important proposals over the coming months.