

Franklin Public Schools

FY 20 Critical Needs Presentation

Franklin Public Schools Administrators

January 8, 2019



Core Values

- Social-Emotional Development
- High Expectations for Student Success
- Safe and Inclusive School Culture
- Collaborative Community

Theory of Action

If we nurture a safe, supportive, inclusive, and collaborative learning environment; provide children with an engaging and rigorous curriculum with exemplary instructional practices that support and challenge students to reach their full potential through personalized learning opportunities; and engage the community in effective two-way communication in order to support student learning, then each Franklin student will develop the necessary social-emotional, academic, and career skills to be a productive citizen in an ever-changing world.



Strategic Objectives

Social-Emotional Well-being of Students and Staff

Engaging and Rigorous Curriculum

High-Quality Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of Each Learner

Effective Two-Way Communication to Support Student Learning

December 26, 2018

Dear Franklin School Committee,

The building principals and central office administrators have been busy preparing a list of essential and critical resources deemed necessary for the district and its schools to meet the diverse and growing needs of the over 5,200 students served by the 11 schools comprising the Franklin Public Schools.

The four Strategic Objectives contained within the District's Strategy for Improvement 2018-2021 anchor the administrators' requests:

- Social-emotional Well-Being of Students and Staff
- Rigorous and Engaging Curriculum
- Engaging Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of All Learners
- Effective Two-Way Communication to Support Student Learning

The administrators have supplied descriptions and rationales for their requests using reliable sources of information including multiple measures of student learning; indicators of social and emotional well-being; discussions with faculty, staff, and parents including School Councils; objective standards and benchmarking within the educational field; and observations of practice. Through collaborative dialogue, the most essential needs have been identified and are being presented across each developmental level and from the district office.

We look forward to the remainder of the FY 20 budget development according to the timeline established by the School Committee's Budget Subcommittee. Following the presentation of Critical Needs, I will present the "Superintendent's Recommended FY20 Budget" on January 22, 2019, at the regular School Committee meeting.

Lastly, we want to be sure to thank the Town of Franklin; we value the contribution the Franklin community makes to support each child enrolled in the Franklin Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Sara E. Ahern, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Budget Development Timeline

November 13, 2018 -- School Committee Budget Workshop

November, December 2018 -- School Committee Budget Subcommittee Meetings

December 2018 -- Central Office & Principal Budget Development Meetings

January 8, 2019 -- "Critical Needs" Presented to School Committee

January 22, 2019 -- Superintendent's Recommended FY20 Budget Presented to School Committee

January & February 2019 -- School Committee Budget Subcommittee Meetings

February 5, 2019 -- School Committee's *Second Annual Legislative Forum*

February 12, 2019 -- School Committee Budget Discussion

February 26, 2019 -- School Committee Budget [Public Hearing](#)

March 12, 2019 -- School Committee Vote on FY20 Budget

April -- May 2019 -- Finance Committee and Town Council Budget Meetings

Franklin Public Schools: Early Childhood

Francis X. O'Regan Early Childhood Center

PreK Curriculum Specialist (.2)

Alignment to DIP

- Rigorous and Engaging Curriculum (Strategic Objective #2)
- Engaging Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of All Learners (Strategic Objective #3)

Description and Rationale

In order to help ensure that all our students are “kinder-ready”, this school year ECDC has adopted a new comprehensive curriculum, Big Day for PreK, which provides intentional instruction in all learning domains: Social-Emotional Development, Oral Language and Vocabulary, Emergent Reading, Emergent Writing, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Physical Development and Technology.

Although ECDC teachers are working diligently to implement this new curriculum, it is without the help of a true curriculum specialist to guide their work. We are seeking a .2 Curriculum Specialist to help ensure:

- Curriculum alignment to Massachusetts Frameworks
- Ongoing collaboration with and alignment to FPS kindergarten expectations so students at ECDC continue to be “kinder-ready”
- Accommodations so each of our diverse learners are able to succeed, including English Language Learners and children with Special Education needs such as Autism.

Franklin Public Schools: Elementary Schools

Davis Thayer Elementary School

Jefferson Elementary School

Keller Elementary School

Kennedy Elementary School

Oak St. Elementary School

Parmenter Elementary School

Adjustment Counselors

Alignment to DIP

- Social-Emotional Well-being of Students and Staff (Strategic Objective #1)

Description and Rationale

In evaluating our existing continuum of services, we lack the personnel to meet the social and emotional (SEL) needs of each learner. Currently, the job responsibilities of our school psychologists exceed the time available during the school day.

There has been a significant increase of students demonstrating dysregulated behavior in the school setting due to mental health diagnoses, history of trauma, and lack of appropriate coping skills. Currently school psychologists are responsible for providing services to students on IEPs, testing students through the special education process, writing reports, consulting with staff members, and attending to student crisis situations. The addition of school adjustment counselors would provide a specific counseling skill-set as well as the flexibility to meet the needs of our current population of students. Additional school adjustment counselors would specifically provide the following necessary supports, which are currently not attainable to the extent needed:

- Proactively support students' SEL needs with Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 interventions as part of the Response to Intervention (RtI) process prior to special education referrals and/or student crises,
- Identify, monitor, and support students' social-emotional needs through the SEL support team process,
- Support students who are in crisis during the school day and beyond,
- Partner with community agencies to provide supports for students and families (i.e. YOU Inc., Department of Children and Families, Riverside Community Care, Franklin Food Pantry),
- Engage in two-way communication with medical providers and outside counselors to create consistent treatment plans between home and school,
- Coach and consult with teachers and staff around the implementation of SEL strategies,
- Co-teach SEL curriculum lessons in classrooms,
- Support students on 504 Plans,
- Attend and contribute to IEP meetings,
- Deliver IEP services (counseling, social skills groups, social pragmatic groups),
- Support students and families through crisis situations (death, divorce, abuse/neglect, etc.)

Instructional Interventionists

Alignment to DIP

- High-Quality Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of Each Learner (Strategic Objective #3)
 - Develop and implement a continuum of services for enrichment and interventions (Strategic Initiative)
 - Tiered system of instruction for academics: e.g. iReady; specialized reading instruction

Description and Rationale

An instructional interventionist would provide individual or small group support to students performing below expected benchmarks on district and state assessments in ELA and Math.

Presently, each elementary school has one full-time math specialist and one literacy specialist whose responsibilities include: supporting students who need intervention and enrichment; coaching teachers who are new or have changed grade levels with curriculum and instructional support; model instructional practices for new and veteran teachers; assessment of students; collection and analysis of assessment data for the whole school; attending weekly Instructional Support Team meetings; planning and facilitating Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)/Common Planning Times (CPTs); planning and providing professional development; and attending meetings with other math or literacy specialists at least twice each month.

Through the Instructional Support Team process and the analysis of data at PLCs/CPTs, an increased number of students are being identified as needing intervention each year in ELA and Math. The goal of intervention is to provide timely, focused support so as to prevent learning gaps from widening as the student moves up through the grades and to eventually reduce the number of students referred for special education evaluations. Three of the six elementary schools have designated some of their site-based budget funds this year for part-time intervention support. In doing so, this has resulted in reductions in other critical curriculum needs such as reading, math, science, social studies, technology, unified arts, and professional development.

Kindergarten Educational Support Professionals (ESPs)

Alignment to DIP

- High-Quality Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of Each Learner. Initiatives (Strategic Objective #3)
 - Evaluate the existing continuum of services for enrichment and interventions
 - Strengthen co-teaching partnerships (Strategic Initiative)

Description and Rationale

The elementary schools are proposing two ESPs for each elementary school across the district assigned to Kindergarten classrooms, specifically.

Currently, the majority of kindergarten classrooms house approximately 22 students and employ one full-time teacher. School readiness varies in classrooms across the district. Some students come prepared to engage with kindergarten grade-level content and beyond, while others have never been in a structured school setting and do not possess the early childhood skills to access kindergarten content. Early literacy and numeracy development hinges on the implementation of differentiated instruction to meet varied student needs. Lower staff-student ratios would provide the environment necessary for a high-functioning workshop model in literacy and math to meet the diverse needs of all students.

Similar to the academic readiness, students' social-emotional needs vary significantly in kindergarten. The current model places a large burden on the classroom teacher to provide support for the students in the most need, and this provides a disproportionate ratio of instruction to students. An ESP in these classrooms during core content would support more students to receive the instruction they need in literacy, math and with their social-emotional development.

An added ESP in the kindergarten classrooms is a means to address student needs when they first arise in our youngest students. High-quality instruction and more opportunities for differentiation beginning in Kindergarten will result in more students meeting grade-level benchmarks, less need for intervention, and fewer referrals in the future grades.

Franklin Public Schools: Middle Schools

Annie Sullivan Middle School

Horace Mann Middle School

Remington Middle School

Adjustment Counselors

Alignment to DIP

- Social-Emotional Well-being of Students and Staff (Strategic Objective #1)

Description and Rationale

Given the focus of both district and school improvement plans, it is a goal of all middle schools to provide more classroom-based, age-appropriate topic interventions.

Current counselor staffing in the Franklin middle schools is below the recommended American School Counselor Association (ASCA) recommendation of 250 students to 1 counselor. Although this ratio is a suggested guideline it would support the goal of Safe and Supportive school focus in Franklin.

The addition of an adjustment counselor at each school would support the ability of our counselors to implement supportive classroom based interventions for all students. This focus would support Tier I interventions for the entire population of students.

We see the addition of adjustment counselors as one step to address the social and emotional needs of our students. A focus on comprehensive health and wellness education continues to be a critical need at the middle level.

Franklin Public Schools: High School

Franklin High School

Classroom Teaching Positions

Alignment to DIP

- High-Quality Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of Each Learner (lower class sizes in core academic subjects required for high school diploma) (Strategic Objective #3)
- Engaging and Rigorous Curriculum - (i.e. course offerings, etc.) (Strategic Objective #2)
- Social-Emotional Well-being of Student and Staff (health instruction time would increase) (Strategic Objective #1)

Description and Rationale

Franklin High School was designed and built to meet the needs of a projected enrollment of 1650 students. For the past few years, and projected for years to come, FHS operates with an enrollment of approximately 1800 students since the new building has opened. This has resulted in the continuing increase of class size in core academic areas. This trend was noted during the NEASC accreditation visit of March, 2017. Some of the NEASC recommendations included:

- Develop and implement a plan to ensure that student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students
- Develop and implement a plan to ensure that the community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for sufficient professional and support staff
- Develop and implement a plan to ensure that the community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, and capital improvements

Based on class size data, the high school is seeking 4.0 full time equivalent teaching positions in the content areas of English, mathematics, physical education, and Spanish.

Franklin Public Schools: District Office

Curriculum Leadership

Alignment to DIP

- Rigorous and Engaging Curriculum (Strategic Objective #2)
- Engaging Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of All Learners (Strategic Objective #3)

Description and Rationale

Franklin is severely lacking in curriculum leadership positions, particularly at the preschool, elementary and middle school levels. The high school has a Department Head structure and we have district Directors for Art, Health/PE, and Music. Additional curriculum leadership would afford the district the opportunity to further develop curriculum alignment to the MA frameworks and ensure consistency across multiple schools at each level. We would also then be able to more effectively plan for the transition of students between levels so that all students arrive at middle school or high school with comparable knowledge and skills in each area.

This recommendation is for 4 full-time positions: PS-5 Humanities, PS-5 STEM, Grades 6-8 Humanities, and Grades 6-8 STEM. These four positions would create a greater depth of the work that is currently being done at a surface level as a result of the current lack of capacity. We would be able to eliminate the current middle school subject coordinator positions, representing a savings of roughly \$20,000.

Digital Integration Specialists

Alignment to DIP

- Rigorous and Engaging Curriculum (Strategic Objective #2)
- High-Quality Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of Each Learner (Strategic Objective #3)

Description and Rationale

The district office proposes five (5) full time equivalent Digital Integration Specialists to be deployed across the district to support the transformative integration of instructional technology into curriculum, assessment, and instruction.

In 2016, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released the Massachusetts Digital Literacy and Computer Science (DLCS) Curriculum Framework that address core concepts in four key domains. The domains represent the core elements of digital literacy and computer science and

are intended to drive coherent, rigorous instruction which results in the mastery and application of digital literacy and computer science knowledge, reasoning, and skills.

School districts across the state have been charged with integrating digital learning practices from grades K to 12. As an initial step, FPS established a Digital Learning Committee (DLC), comprised of representative staff from across the district. The DLC work included analyzing the frameworks and developing a coherent progression of core concepts and practices from grades K to 12, which also complement other Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in content areas.

The next stage of this work needs to focus on integrating digital literacy more deeply into our instructional practices and supporting our teachers with implementation within this dynamic and rapidly changing field. The Digital Integration Specialist positions are critical in supporting this work across all classrooms by ensuring Franklin remains current with the latest advances in instructional technology.

IDEAS Teacher for Remington Middle School

Alignment to DIP

- Social-Emotional Well-being of Students and Staff (Strategic Objective #1)
- Engaging Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of All Learners (strategic Objective #3)

Description and Rationale

The Student Services Office is requesting one additional teacher in the IDEAS program at Remington Middle School. We currently have two teachers for sixteen students across three grade levels. We are projecting that the number of students will increase to nineteen across three grade levels in the 2019-2020 school year, five students in Grade 6, seven students in Grade 7, and seven students in Grade 8. The model for the 2019-2020 school year would be one teacher per grade with one ESP for each grade to support students in the general education setting.

Students in the IDEAS program require a low student to teacher ratio. They are provided a curriculum at their instructional level and pace so that they develop and gain independence and increase self-esteem. The teachers continually assess students' academic and social-emotional readiness to maximize meaningful inclusion opportunities in the general education classroom. Students are supported to build independence with self-advocacy, transitional skills, stamina, and ability to generalize learned strategies.

STRIVE Teacher for Annie Sullivan Middle School

Alignment to DIP

- Social-Emotional Well-being of Students and Staff (Strategic Objective #1)

- Engaging Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of All Learners (Strategic Objective #3)

Description and Rationale

The Student Services Office proposes an additional teacher in the STRIVE program at Annie Sullivan Middle School. We currently have five students across three grade levels with one teacher. The projected program enrollment for the 2019-2020 school year is ten students across three grade levels.

Due to the complex learning profiles of the students in this program, a low student to teacher ratio is needed to ensure each student's academic, social and emotional success. Students are provided with access to modified curriculum in order to allow each student to develop to their maximum potential at their own pace. Skill development in this program focuses on communication, functional academics, social pragmatics, activities of daily living, motor skills, sensory processing, and vocational skills for the purpose of working toward independence and success with school, home and the community at large.

Expansion of New England Center for Children (NECC) Partner Program

Alignment to DIP

- Social-Emotional Well-being of Students and Staff (Strategic Objective #1)
- Engaging Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of All Learners (Strategic Objective #3)

Description and Rationale

The Student Services Office is recommending to increase the NECC Partner Program model at Parmenter School from a four-student model to a seven-student model. The program currently has three students. Next year we are projecting that two kindergarten students will be entering the program from ECDC. Our current contract with NECC can serve up to four students. With five students projected, we would need to move to a model that could serve up to seven students. With the seven student model, we would still have one lead teacher and we would increase clinical supervision from a BCBA from a half-day to a full-day to accommodate/plan for the additional students. We would also need to hire a 1:1 ABA technician to support each additional student.

The NECC Partner Program is a flexible education model designed to teach children with autism to reach their full potential. NECC and Franklin Public School professionals collaborate to provide a comprehensive ABA classroom that integrates the best clinical practices and mirrors the structure and support often found only in private school settings. If we did not have this program in district these students would most likely be attending an out-of-district program.

Van Driver

Alignment to DIP

- Social-Emotional Well-being of Students and Staff (Strategic Objective #1)
- Engaging Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of All Learners (Strategic Objective #3)

Description and Rationale

Over the last four years we have had an increase in the number of students attending our in-district specialized programs. We are required to transport students by law if the program that they attend is located in a school that is not within their neighborhood. In addition, the district is obligated to provide specialized transportation for any student who is unable to access regular transportation as a result of their disability. There are currently 106 students who require in-district specialized transportation due to their disability. Next year we project that 112 students will require in-district specialized transportation. An additional van driver will ensure that we have the capacity to transport our students with special needs to and from school in an efficient and timely manner.

Technology Replenishment

Alignment to DIP

- Engaging Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of All Learners (Strategic Objective #3)

Description and Rationale

In 2014 Franklin opened a state of the art High School outfitted with millions of dollars of technology. \$2.7 million was used to purchase classroom technology consisting of Laptops, Desktops, Printers, Tablets Scanners, 10 large, touchscreen wall displays – AND 1,750 Chromebooks to begin our 1-to-1 student initiative. All of these items have specific lifespans and will require replacement at some future date. The High School is now 4 years old, and, for many of these items, that date has arrived. Of course, similar aging technology exists throughout the other 10 schools in the district and must also be replaced at regular, predictable intervals most notably, laptops for every teacher and administrator and roughly 6,000 chromebooks. Current projections place the district at an unsustainable \$1 – \$1.5 million annual expense over the next 5 years.

Substitute Recruitment Strategies

Alignment to DIP

- Engaging Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of All Learners (Strategic Objective #3)

Description and Rationale

Substitutes play a critical role in the safety of our students and the continuity of instruction. With an improved economy and a decrease in the unemployment rate, the availability of quality day-to-day substitute teachers has substantially decreased. In order to be more competitive with districts which compete and draw from the same substitute candidate pool, we are seeking to purchase and implement an online absence management program to enable teachers to input their absences and allow substitutes to choose and schedule their own assignments. We are currently competing with local districts which are already utilizing an online scheduling system. Additionally, with the increase in the Massachusetts minimum wage to \$12 per hour, we find that although our substitute rates are competitive as compared to other districts, there are better opportunities for work in the private sector.

Since the nature of substitute work is mostly transient in nature, many of our on-call substitutes do not commit to working 5 days per week. We are reviewing our wage rates for both on- call and long-term substitutes to incentivize our substitute workforce.

Summary of Critical Needs

Critical Need	Level	Estimated Cost
PreK Curriculum (0.2 FTE)	PreSchool	\$17,000
Adjustment Counselors	Elementary	TBD \$75, 000 per FTE
Instructional Interventionists	Elementary	\$105,000
Kindergarten Educational Support Professionals (ESPs)	Elementary	\$300,000
Adjustment Counselors	Middle School	TBD \$75, 000 per FTE
Classroom Teaching Positions	High School	\$240,000
Curriculum Leadership	District	\$320,000
Digital Integration Specialists	District	\$325,000
IDEAS Teacher for Remington Middle School	Middle School/District	\$75,000
STRIVE Teacher for Annie Sullivan Middle School	Middle School/District	\$75,000
Expansion of NECC Partner Program (Parmenter)	Elementary School/District	\$125,000
Van Driver	District	\$25,000
Technology Replenishment	District	\$250,000
Substitute Recruitment Strategies	District	\$120,000
	Estimated Total	\$2,427,000