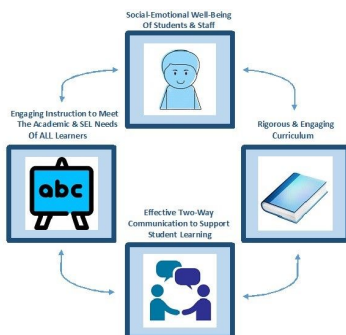


FY20 SCHOOL BUDGET

BY DR. SARA AHERN, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS



The School Committee's FY 20 budget of \$64,600,000 was approved at the May 23, 2019 Town Council meeting, following the budget hearing on May 22. This budget reflects a 2.16% increase, or \$1,365,000, over FY 19.

Between March and May, the School Committee had to reduce its budget by \$2,226,115 in order to reduce a budget gap. An increased allocation of \$1,365,000 from the Town was projected for the schools based on preliminary budget numbers from the state.

Budget reductions included:

- *Reductions within Critical Needs Areas.* The principals and central office administrators proposed additions to the budget, which match the current needs of our students. Many of the items in the Critical Needs budget could not be supported and were removed during the spring budget development process. This amounted to \$590,000 from the School Committee's approved March budget. These additions included 2 kindergarten paraprofessionals, a middle school adjustment counselor, 2 curriculum support positions, additional resources to recruit and retain substitutes, and 4 high school teachers FTEs to reduce class sizes.
- *Reduction of Service.* The district and schools will scale back its professional development expenditures, reduce professional membership fees, and reduce spending on software licenses/materials. \$148,100 was cut in services.
- *Reduction of Positions.* The district reduced 14.9 positions, affecting mostly the middle schools. This amounted to \$746,080 of the reductions and was placed in areas of decreasing enrollment, in order to mitigate the impact.
- *Increase in Revenues/Fees.* Transportation, athletic, and activity fees were increased and a parking fee was added. This is anticipated to generate \$226,530 to offset expenses in these areas.

At this time (mid-June 2019), the state budget is going through "Conference Committee", where the Senate and the House conference to work out the details of the state's budget, based on differing starting points each branch had proposed earlier in the spring. The Senate's budget was more favorable towards Franklin in two primary areas. The Senate budget fully funds the Circuit Breaker reimbursement of high-cost special education services at the statutory 75%. The Senate budget also provides for a more favorable Charter tuition reimbursement. Should more funding become available to the schools following the state budget becoming finalized, I

will be recommending a small list of items to be brought back from the items that were reduced during the spring budget development process. The state budget is often finalized over the summer.

We are already in the planning stages for FY 21, which we anticipate will be a difficult budget to develop given the current state of the fiscal climate. We encourage our families and Franklin community members to stay informed about the state of the school department budget. Information, resources, and updates are regularly posted to the Franklin Public Schools Budget page: <https://www.franklinps.net/district/budget-information/pages/current-budget>