

Additional Budget Reductions for Consideration by the Board

The superintendent's budget provided a "tightened" budget that continues to maintain all the educational programs and services that the Town of West Hartford has come to expect. While the superintendent included \$2.1 million in reductions in his budget proposal, those reductions do not impact the core instructional services and programs.

However, as a consequence of higher health care costs and the impact of the governor's proposed state budget, the superintendent's budget increase for 2017-18 is \$12.94 million. In addition, the changes to the Educational Cost Sharing grant (ECS) in the governor's budget have lowered town revenue by \$5.93 million from the 2016-17 Town adopted budget. In total, the net impact to the taxpayers of West Hartford of the superintendent's budget and the governor's budget is an increased burden of \$18.87 million – which is a very heavy burden on the taxpayers of West Hartford.

Clearly the best hope is that, as the governor's budget advances through the legislative process, there will be substantial changes that lessen the various impacts on West Hartford. However, the state faces some of the most challenging fiscal issues in a generation and without a large state-wide tax increase, it is likely that the final state budget will have a significant impact on the more well-off cities and towns of Connecticut through reduced state aid.

This document presents a series of additional budget reductions for the Board of Education to consider as it goes through the budget adoption process. These reductions will significantly impact the programs and services that are currently provided by the Board of Education. These reductions are presented, with a serious intent, recognizing that barring additional state aid, all the deliberative democratic institutions in the Town of West Hartford will have to engage in a difficult discussion about what services to offer and what taxes to raise.

The Board of Education's purview is limited to the amount and nature of education expenditures. The Town Council is the body in West Hartford that will decide the balance of spending reductions and tax increases.

The attached reduction items are not presented with any preference for one over the other. All of them will significantly impact the students, parents and staff in West Hartford Public Schools. The reduction options are presented in budget book order and each section references the pages in the budget where the reductions come from.

The financial impacts of each reduction are based on the typical cost of a new teacher. The savings include the salaries and benefits of that teacher and are offset by costs for unemployment compensation as most of the reductions will likely result in layoffs of the affected staff.

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Elementary Reductions – Page D-4 to D-19

Item	Description	FTE's	Savings
E-1	<p>Magnet Teachers: Each magnet school has from 2.0 to 2.6 additional teachers to support the magnet theme at that school.</p> <p>This reduction would reduce the number of additional staff related to the magnet theme to 1.0 at each school</p>	2.6	\$169,000
E-2	<p>Early Intervention/Reading Specialists Each elementary school has two of these staff to support reading instruction at the school.</p> <p>This reduction would leave each school with a reading specialist and the 5 Title I schools would share 2.5 Early Intervention teachers.</p>	7.5	\$487,500
E-3	<p>Librarians – replace with paraprofessionals: Each elementary school currently has a 1.0 Library Media Specialist who collaborates with classroom teachers to ensure that appropriate materials are available for students and to integrate the library media curriculum with the classroom curriculum</p> <p>This reduction would replace the library media specialist with a paraprofessional whose role would be limited to managing the school library collection.</p>	11	\$495,000
E-4	<p>Suzuki Programming: A 1.0 instrumental music teacher is shared by Smith and Charter Oak to provide Suzuki music instruction from PK-3 to a subset of the school's population.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate that program.</p>	1.0	\$65,000
E-5	<p>World Language: World Language instruction at the elementary school is provided in grade 3 through 5 in Spanish (French at Norfeldt) at all elementary schools. At Charter Oak World Language instruction is provided from PK through grade 5 in both Spanish and Chinese.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate World Language instruction in all elementary schools except at Charter Oak.</p>	4.8	\$312,000
E-6	<p>Increase Class Size guidelines to 25/29 Current class size guidelines are 23 in grades K through 3 and 27 in grades 4 and 5.</p> <p>This reduction would increase those class size guidelines to 25 in grade K-3 and 29 in grade 4 and 5.</p>	9.0	\$585,000

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Item	Description	FTE's	Savings
E-7	Half-day Kindergarten in six non-Title I schools Currently West Hartford provides full day Kindergarten at all 11 elementary schools. This reduction would limit full-day K to Charter Oak, Smith, Webster Hill, Whiting Lane, and Wolcott. The other schools would have half-day K.	12.0	\$560,000

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Middle School Reductions – Page D-20 to D-39

Item	Description	FTE's	Savings
M-1	<p>Reduce Reading Teachers The superintendent's budget provides funding for 6 reading specialists at the middle school. These professionals provide diagnostic services and direct support to students with reading difficulties.</p> <p>This reduction would reduce the middle school reading staff to 4.0 from 6.0</p>	2.0	\$130,000
M-2	<p>Unified Arts – drop to 1 class per day Currently students at the middle school leave their academic team for instruction in art, music, PE, health, and tech ed twice a day. In total students at each grade level in the middle schools get a total of 360 periods of instruction across the five subject areas each year.</p> <p>This reduction would reduce that amount to 180 periods of instruction across four areas. There would be no music instruction beyond participation in band, choir, and orchestra. The schedule at the middle school would be changed to accommodate this. The length of each period would increase by about 5 minutes, resulting in increased instructional time in the academic subjects.</p>	18.0	\$1,059,000
M-3	<p>Convert Grade 7 and 8 to a High School schedule model/increase class size Currently all academic instruction at the middle school occurs on teams at all three grade levels. There are teams of four teachers – Math, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies that share a group of 100 – 125 students. All four teachers teach the same group of students.</p> <p>This reduction would keep the team structure at Grade 6, but students at Grade 7 and 8 would be taken off teams and enrolled directly in the courses they need. With students off team, class sizes can be increased from an average to 20 to an average of 23 resulting in the projected savings.</p>	8.0	\$520,000

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High School Reductions – Page D-40 to D-73

Item	Description	FTE's	Savings
H-1	<p>Increase High School Class Size: This reduction increases the average high school class size by about 2.2 from 20.1 to 22.4</p>	17.2	\$1,118,000
H-2	<p>Eliminate High School Reading teachers The high school reading teachers provide diagnostic assessment and small group instruction to students not meeting grade level reading requirements</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate this program</p>	2.0	\$130,000
H-3	<p>Eliminate ASK The ASK (Alternate Search for Knowledge) is an alternative program operating within Hall High School. About 20-25 students access the English and Social Studies curriculum in a smaller team-taught classroom environment. They access their other courses through normal enrollment in Hall classes.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate the instructional components of this program. The Social Work component would not be affected.</p>	0.8	\$52,000
H-4	<p>Eliminate 1.0 High School Library Media Specialist Each high school has 2.0 Library Media Specialists who collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure appropriate materials are available for students.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate one of the four positions.</p>	1.0	\$65,000
H-5	<p>Reduce PE credit requirements from 1.25 to 1.0 Currently the PE requirements for graduation from WHPS are 1.25 credits. State law only mandates a 1.0 credit requirement.</p> <p>This reduction would lower the WHPS requirement to be in line with the state. Health instruction would not be impacted.</p>	1.7	\$110,500

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Systemwide Reductions – Page D-74 to D-80

Item	Description	FTE's	Savings
Sys-1	<p>Eliminate Middle School QuEST: The QuEST program has been an integral part of WHPS since 1994. In 2016-17 Quest supports 471 students in addition to providing enrichment cluster/outreach with schools.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate the program at the Middle School level.</p>	3.0	\$195,000
Sys-2	<p>Eliminate Elementary Quest If additional savings are needed beyond the middle school QuEST program, this option would eliminate the rest of the QuEST program. A 1.0 FTE would be left at Charter Oak to support students at the magnet school.</p>	7.0	\$525,000
Sys-3	<p>Trim ESOL Staffing The ESOL program provides students, whose primary language is not English, with instruction in the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. A total of 16.6 FTE's plus tutors provide these services in WHPS.</p> <p>This reduction would reduce staffing by 2.0.</p>	2.0	\$130,00

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Supervision of Instruction Reductions – Page D-81 to D-97

Item	Description	FTE's	Savings
Supv-1	<p>Reduce Department Supervisory staff: There are a total of 22.8 Department Supervisors across the district that evaluate teachers, provide school/district leadership for their departments and are an important part of the schools' leadership teams.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate about 30% of the department supervisors with three different changes</p> <p>Currently we have two department supervisors in each of the five academic areas. This reduction would lower that to one per subject area. The job requirement would move from a school-based focus to a district-based 6-12 focus.</p> <p>We have a total of 1.6 department supervisors providing leadership in the school counseling area. This reduction would return to our historical norm of 1.0 department supervisor in this area.</p> <p>And finally, this reduction would include the elimination of the department supervisor for Library Media Services. Evaluation and supervision of the library media specialists would return to the schools.</p>	6.6	\$429,000
Supv-2	<p>Elementary Instructional Support- reduce 2.0 Currently there are six positions providing support for the elementary schools – there are four specialists leading Math/Science and Language Arts/Social studies support and two instructional coaches.</p> <p>This reduction would reduce the total elementary support to 4.0 positions.</p>	2.0	\$130,000
Supv-3	<p>Secondary Office Staff There are a total of 23 school based office support staff at the secondary level.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate 1.0 position at each large secondary school.</p>	4.0	\$140,000
Supv-4	<p>Eliminate one para from each building</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate one paraprofessional from each building.</p>	16.0	\$480,000
Supv-5	<p>Eliminate Regular Ed Summer programs The district provides free regular education summer school for ESOL students and for students at Smith and Charter Oak.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate these programs.</p>		\$120,000

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Pupil Services Reductions – Page E-1 to E-36

Item	Description	FTE's	Savings
PS-1	<p>Reduce Resource Program Staff by 2.0: Special Education Resource teachers offer mandated direct and collaborative instruction to students, consultative services to classroom teachers, and diagnostic services for students.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate 2.0 positions. Caseloads for teachers would increase.</p>	2.0	\$135,000
PS-2	<p>Reduce Early Learning Center staff by 1.0 The ELC serves preschool children who exhibit significant delays in cognitive, behavioral, language or adaptive development.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate 1.0 position.</p>	1.0	\$65,000
PS-3	<p>Reduce number of Summer School Days Currently the special education summer school runs for 30 days, 6 weeks at 5 days per week. The total cost is in excess of \$1.0 million</p> <p>This reduction would limit summer school to 4 days a week for 5 weeks – a total of 20 days.</p>		\$357,000
PS-4	<p>Reduce Counselors by 4.0 This reduction would eliminate 2.0 counselors at the middle school and 2.0 counselors at the high school. Caseloads would increase.</p>	4.0	\$260,000
PS-5	<p>Reduce Nurses by 1.0 This reduction would eliminate 1.0 of the 21.9 nurses in the district.</p>	1.0	\$45,000
PS-6	<p>Eliminate the Bridge contract The Bridge provides valuable counseling and support services primarily at the high school level.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate this contract.</p>		\$54,000

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General Support Services Reductions – Page F-1 to F-35

Item	Description	FTE's	Savings
GSS-1	<p>Central Office Support Staff – reduce by 5.0 positions: Currently there are 27 support staff positions at Central Office.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate 5.0 positions.</p>	5.0	\$175,000
GSS-2	<p>Reduce part-time custodial staff by 15% Custodial services at the schools are provided by 80 full time custodians and 34 part time custodians. Full-time custodial staffing is at contracted minimums.</p> <p>This reduction would eliminate 15% of part-time custodial staffing</p>		\$60,000
GSS-3	<p>Reduce 1.0 Maintenance Positions Currently we have 13 maintenance positions budgeted.</p> <p>This reduction would lower that to 12 positions. Maintenance work orders would take longer to complete.</p>	1.0	\$60,000