

Topsfield Elementary Schools

Proposed Budget for School Year 2012 - 2013

Table of Contents

Message from the Superintendent of Schools	5
Topsfield School Committee Goals	6
Understanding the Operating Budget.....	7
Enrollment and Staffing	7
Major Considerations which will impact the FY 2013 Budget and Future years	10
What is achieved for FY 2013 in the Draft #1 Proposed Budget	11
What reductions may be considered for FY 2013?.....	11
Superintendent’s Acknowledgement	11
Message from the Director of Finance & Human Resources.....	12
Operating Budget Revenue.....	12
Proposed Budget Expenditure Scenarios for FY2012-2013	16
Central Office Operation.....	17
Central Office Proposals for FY2013	19
Superintendent’s Office	19
Business Office	19
Director of Facilities – Facilities Staffing Proposal	20
Tri-Town - Technology Staffing Proposal	20
Message from the Director of Special Education	23
Steward School	23
Proctor School.....	23
District – wide staff	24
Program Background/ Updates	27
Overview of Out-of-District Program Needs/ Tuitions/Transportation.....	27
Overview of Contractual Services	27
Overview of Psychological Services	28
Summer Programs	28
Message from the Director of Curriculum	30
Topsfield Elementary Schools - Steward School & Proctor School.....	32
School Improvement Plan.....	32
Tier 1: Within Budget Guidelines	33
Technology.....	33
Curriculum and Instruction Initiatives	34
Tier 2: Essential	36
Technology	36

Program - Alternative Kindergarten Model	37
Tier 3: Vision for Moving Forward	38
Curriculum Specialists	38
Technology	38
Extended Studies.....	38
Acknowledgements.....	38
Program Narratives.....	39
Art	39
Custodial Staff/Facilities.....	39
Front Office Operation.....	40
Instrumental Music Education	41
Kindergarten Program.....	43
Library Program	44
Math Support Specialists	45
Physical Education Program.....	48
Preschool.....	50
Reading Support Program.....	51
Response to Intervention.....	52
Stipend Positions.....	53
Nurse (Health/Wellness).....	55

Message from the Superintendent of Schools

Submitted by Bernard Creeden, Ed. D

The Topsfield Elementary Schools pursue educational excellence by providing the opportunity for every individual in its community of learners to reach his or her full intellectual, social, moral, creative, and physical potential.

In cooperation with family and community, our mission is to guide students in becoming personally responsible, self-motivated, disciplined, respectful, competent, and contributing members of society.

The elementary school budget is the financial plan designed to achieve the core educational mission of the School Committee. It is further designed to be responsive to the financial condition of the Town. The Elementary School Committee budget presents the annual financial plan to meet educational goals approved by the School Committee. At its best, our budget reflects the values, goals, and aspirations of our students, teachers, leadership team and the community at large.

The intent of the narrative discussion is to make the document and its presentation as clear and understandable as it can possibly be for all stakeholder audiences.

This year, as in preceding years, requirements, needs, and priorities were examined. Our goal setting and budget development processes centered on trying to maintain high quality educational, co-curricular, and support programs for our students in the worst financial climate most of us have ever faced. We want our children to complete their primary elementary school years with access to the opportunities for success in secondary schools that their neighbors and older siblings have had in recent years and previous generations.

The Finance Committee has communicated a 2% increase budget guideline for all Town departments for FY 2013.

We will have to examine critically every requested increase at the district and building level for additional faculty and staffing to meet the learning needs of children. We will have to prioritize requests for new and replacement instructional technology, instructional materials, equipment and facilities needs.

Topsfield School Committee Goals

The proposed FY 2013 Elementary School Budget is designed to advance the achievement of twelve goals established by the School Committee:

Goal #1: Student Achievement / Learning Needs of Children

We will meet the needs of all of our learners including those who are academically able and academically challenged. Our children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our instructional program offerings should reflect this continuum. Our children will achieve at levels that exceed state and federal requirements during the next three years as measured by the MCAS and/or local assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics in all grades tested in the aggregate and for all sub groups.

Goal #2: Staff Recruitment, Retention and Succession planning for Management Staff

We will develop and execute a plan to address current and future needs regarding the recruitment, professional development and retention of a “highly qualified” faculty and staff. We will also develop a long term plan to deal with a successful transition to new management upon the retirement of current management.

Goal #3: Technology

We will develop a Strategic Technology Plan to ensure Topsfield Schools are leading the way in Technology Implementation and Instruction.

Goal #4: Everyday Skills & Responsibilities:

We will begin to teach our children skills that will allow them to successfully function in today’s society and to make their world a better place.

Goal #5: Tri-Town Union Shared Priorities:

Continue to work in a collaborative manner with Masconomet, Boxford and Middleton School Committees to maximize the effective delivery of agreed upon services to member towns.

We are continuing our efforts to address not only students’ academic needs but also their social and emotional well-being. We maintain our commitment to fulfill the school committee’s mission and responsibility while recognizing that as a Town department we are a vital part of the fabric of community services.

Understanding the Operating Budget

Over what parts of the budget does the School Committee not have much if any discretion?

- Income from State and Federal Entitlement Grants including Circuit Breaker and Chapter 70
- Special Education Tuition and Transportation
- Special Education Services in IEPs and English Language Learner services
- Regular Day Transportation
- Utility rates for natural gas and electricity once we lock in with our regional purchasing consortium
- Existing Contractual Agreements with personnel and vendors
- Health Insurance costs which are determined at the Town level for all departments

Over what parts of the budget does the School Committee have discretion?

- Class Size (number of teaching positions)
- Core Curriculum Programs
- Professional Development (beyond contractual agreements)
- Technology upgrades and replacement
- Certain physical plant improvements and preventative maintenance programs
- Supplies, Materials, Textbooks, Equipment
- Compensation for non-represented personnel and negotiations with represented personnel
- Number of Buses

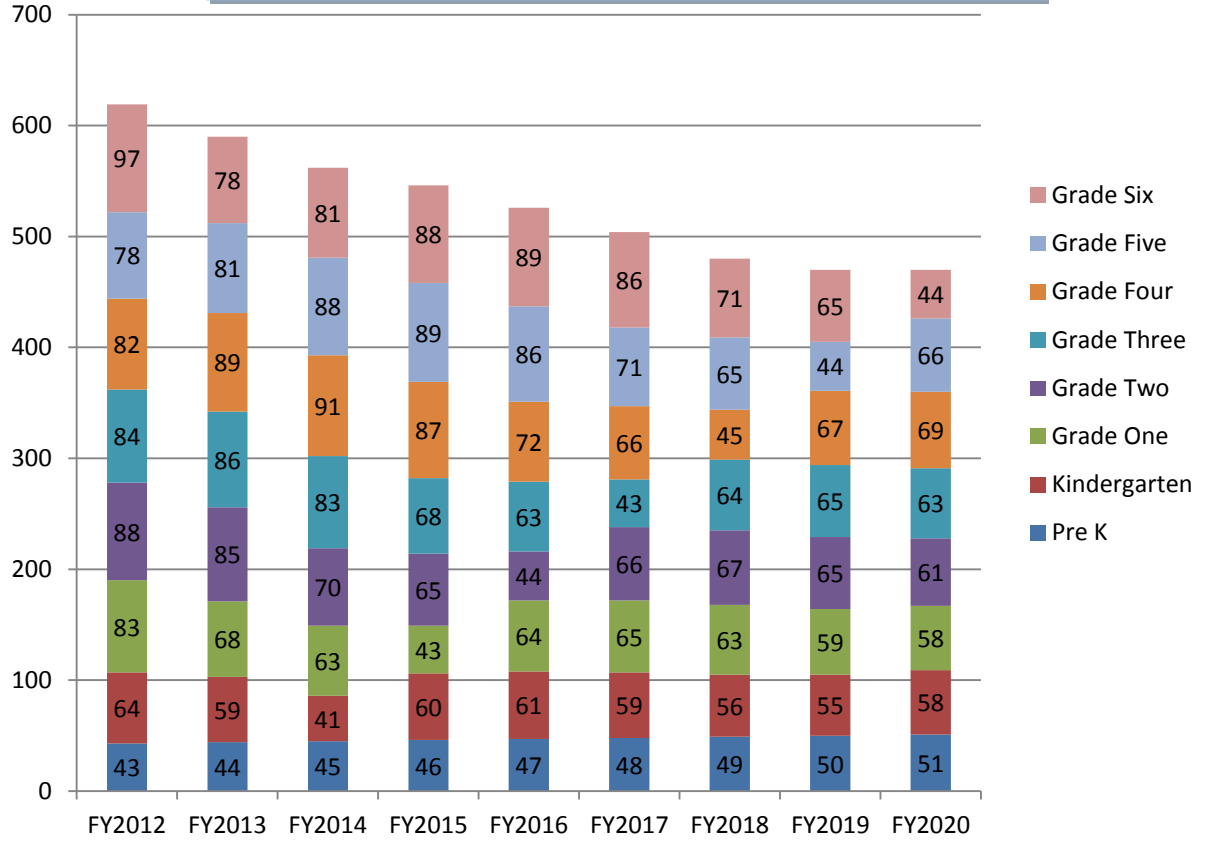
Enrollment and Staffing

Student enrollment for the 2012-2013 school year is projected to be 546 students in grades K-6, reflecting a 5.21% decrease from FY 2012. The Steward School is expected to enroll 298 students in Grades K-3 with 16 classrooms, and the Proctor enrollment will be 248 students in 12 classrooms. We expect to also have 43 preschool students at the Steward School.

Our projected enrollment will result in one less Grade One Section and one less Grade Six Section or a decrease of 2.00 FTE classroom teaching positions.

The illustrations, which follow, detail our projected enrollment as well as historical enrollment and staffing patterns for our schools.

Pre K – Grade 6 Projected Enrollment (2012 – 2020)



Summary Enrollment Projections

FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020
619	590	562	546	526	504	480	470	470

Student Enrollment Comparison

	10/1/2011 Official Enrollment	Number of Classes for 2011-2012	Class Size for 2010-2011	2012-2013		
				NESDEC Enrollment Projection	Number of Classes for 2012-2013	Class Size Range for 2012-2013
Kindergarten	64	4	16	59	4	14-15
Grade One	83	5	16-17	68	4	17
Grade Two	88	4	22	85	4	21-22
Grade Three	84	4	21	86	4	21-22
Steward Total	319	17		298	16	
Grade Four	82	4	20-21	89	4	22-23
Grade Five	78	4	19-20	81	4	20-21
Grade Six	97	5	19-20	78	4	19-20
Proctor Total	<u>257</u>	<u>13</u>		<u>248</u>	<u>12</u>	
Grand Total	576	30		546	28	

Building Leadership Profile

	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13
Building Principals	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Special Education Coordinator	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Pre School Coordinator	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
* Staff Reconfiguration - Technology Coordinator to Director of Technology	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.28
Technology Network Specialist					0.28
PC Technician					0.28
English Language Learners	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.20	0.20
Total FTE Staff	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.30	4.14

Home Room/Class Section History

	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13
Kindergarten	3.40	3.40	3.40	2.80	2.80
Grade 1	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00
Grade 2	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Grade 3	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Grade 4	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Grade 5	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00
Grade 6	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00
Total FTE Teachers	30.40	30.40	29.40	28.80	26.80

Special Subject Staff Comparison					
	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13
Art	1.20	1.20	1.00	1.00	1.00
Music	1.20	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Physical Education	1.80	1.70	1.60	1.60	1.60
Reading	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40
Library Media	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90
Instrumental Music	1.20	1.10	1.00	1.00	1.00
Technology Specialist - Reconfiguration Tech Instruction					1.00
Total Specialists	9.70	9.30	8.90	8.90	9.90

Special Education Staff Comparison					
	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13
Pre-School Teachers	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Moderate Special Needs	10.50	9.50	9.50	9.50	9.60
Speech Language Pathologist	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Speech Language Assistant	0.50	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40
Psychologist/Adjustment Counselor	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.20	2.20
Behavior Specialist	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00
Total	19.10	18.00	18.10	18.10	19.20

Major Considerations which will impact the FY 2013 Budget and Future years

- Year Three of negotiated agreement with the Topsfield Teachers' Association
- Math Curriculum Implementation
- Technology Management and Integration
- Other Contractual Agreements for personnel, goods and services
- Special Education Tuition and Services
- Utility Rates and Consumption for Natural Gas and Electricity
- Implementation of State and Federal Mandates under Educational Reform and No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

What is achieved for FY 2013 in the Draft #1 Proposed Budget

- Implementation of new math curriculum
- Reconfiguration of Technology Staff
- Class size remains consistent within the 15 year average range.
- Core programs are retained consistent with previous years.
- Special subject (art, music, physical education) time for children remains consistent within the 15 year average range.
- Instructional Support Specialists in English Language Arts and Mathematics are retained.
- Regular Day Transportation increases by one bus. (7 buses)

What reductions may be considered for FY 2013?

- 1.00 FTE Grade One Section
- 1.00 FTE Grade Six Section

Superintendent's Acknowledgement

Our FY2013 budget presentation is a collaborative effort of our teaching and support staff, leadership team and central office staff. I would like to commend the significant contributors to the creation of the narrative statements who include: Director of Finance; Steve Greenberg; Principals Michelle Costa and Sarah O'Leary; Director of Special Education; Sharon Lyons; Director of Facilities Steve Clifford, Technology Specialist Jan Peetz; Math Specialists Donna Sewall, Kathleen Cronin and Jen Steinberg; Reading Specialists Nancy Swan, Mary Ellen Dunsmore, Marianne Monbleau and Kathleen Cronin; Library Media Specialist Kathy Curran; Art Specialist Anne Lang; Music Specialists Kristen Galardi, Kevin Zajas; Physical Educators Jeanne Meehan and Ron Dienstmann; and Nurses Carol Cheever, Melissa West and Karen Hoyt .

Message from the Director of Finance & Human Resources Submitted by Steven Greenberg

This year our budget presentation will discuss the proposed operating budget on three levels: the recommended the 2.00% Guideline Budget; an Essential Services Budget; and a Visionary Budget (this budget is designed to move the educational programs of the District in a progressive manner). In addition, this proposed budget narrative will provide information about our school district and the programs that we are providing to our students.

I believe fiscal year 2012-2013 will demonstrate that our economy is still fragile but starting to show signs of recovery. While we are starting to see an economic recovery, the impact is delayed and will not be realized by the school system for quite some time. We are going to be faced with the challenge of continuing to provide a high quality educational program with essentially less enablement.

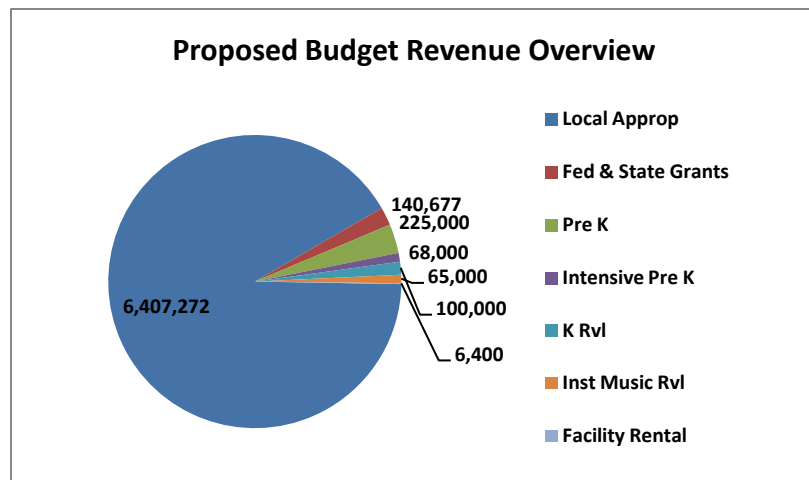
One of the challenges we face is the loss of revenue from Federal Funds (ARRA Grant, Education Jobs Bill Grant and 94-142 Special Education Grant). Federal and state mandates remain in effect while funding has been diminished.

The administration, faculty and staff are dedicated to implementing programs to improve efficiency and delivery of services to students and staff. The staff continues to improve our educational programs by working in collaboration within and outside of the school district for best practices. The administration has been working with each of the school committees, town officials and members of the TTU communities to strengthen the existing school union and enhance its ability to support education of our students in Boxford, Middleton, and Topsfield.

For FY2013 we are excited about updating the math curriculum across the district (K – 6), the potential for an enhanced yet cost effective reconfiguration of the current technology staffing model and the consideration for facility staffing initiative. Each of these proposals is addressed in greater detail throughout the budget narrative.

Operating Budget Revenue

Budget revenues consist of multiple sources from Federal and State Grants, Local Appropriation and local receipts. The Local Appropriation is the largest contributor to the operating budget. The Local Appropriation makes up over 91% of the budgeted revenues. Included is a



graphic of the revenue sources that support the elementary school operating budget.

Special Education IDEA Grant: The IDEA Grant is a federally funded grant distributed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The funds from this grant are used to support various special education programs within our district.

Early Childhood Grant: The Early Childhood Grant is a federally funded grant distributed by the Department of Early Education and Care. This grant has been diminished over the years and is a minor portion of our revenue stream. The funds are used to support our integrated special preschool programs and must support the integration of special education students.

Education Jobs Bill Funds: On August 10, 2010 President Obama signed the Education Jobs Fund into law, providing \$26 billion nationwide to preserve jobs for teachers and other school-based employees.

The Commonwealth's \$204 million appropriation is to be directly distributed to school districts through the state's education funding formula and combined with state and federal funds to ensure that every school district across the state meets its foundation level budget for the 2010-2011 school year. Topsfield has received a total grant of \$72,000. We are applying the funds from the EJ Grant to offset personnel costs in FY 2012. We will not have this fund source available for FY2013.

Circuit Breaker: Circuit Breaker is a reimbursement program enacted through legislative action earlier this decade and is implemented by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. It was specifically designed to assist cities/towns with offsetting the high costs associated with the special education needs of a small number of students. This program provides state reimbursement to cities/towns for eligible special education expenses that exceed four times the state foundation budget; this reimbursement threshold is approximately \$40,000. Any eligible special education expense that exceeds \$40,000 is eligible for reimbursement from the DESE at a percentage that is subject to appropriation. The legislation calls for a reimbursement rate of 75% of those expenses in excess of four times the state foundation, but due to financial constraints, the current reimbursement rate is well below 75%, (40% is our current estimate for FY 2013).

Preschool Revolving Account: The Preschool Revolving Account receives funds from local parents that enroll their children in the Cole School Program. Revenue is used to pay for expenses associated with the program that consist of staffing, supplies, utilities, and administrative expenses.

Tuition Revolving Account: The Tuition Revolving Account receives revenue from non-resident Special Education Students that participate in unique special education programs. Funds are used to cover costs associated with the program that consist of staffing, supplies, utilities, and administrative expenses.

Food Service Revolving Account: The Food Service Program receives revenue from the sale of school lunch on a daily basis as well as some reimbursement from the federal and state government. Funds are used to cover expenses associated with the program.

We have realized that our percentage of participation has adjusted downward but is still above the state average. Part of this change is due to the impact of a current economy. In addition, our revenues are lower because of a shrinking student population.

The Food Service Program has implemented efficiencies in FY2010 to help maintain the integrity of the program and delay the potential of general fund subsidization. The program purchased the NutriKids Propay System and implemented it for use in September 2010. The NutriKids system uses hardware, software and online services to record and track purchases of school lunch for each participating student on a daily basis. The system allows parents to monitor student menu purchases as well as pay and replenish individual accounts online.

Staffing has been adjusted to reflect changes in delivery of service without compromising customer service. In addition, we are engaged in training to provide healthier alternatives that are made fresh on the campuses versus prepackaged/frozen menu options.

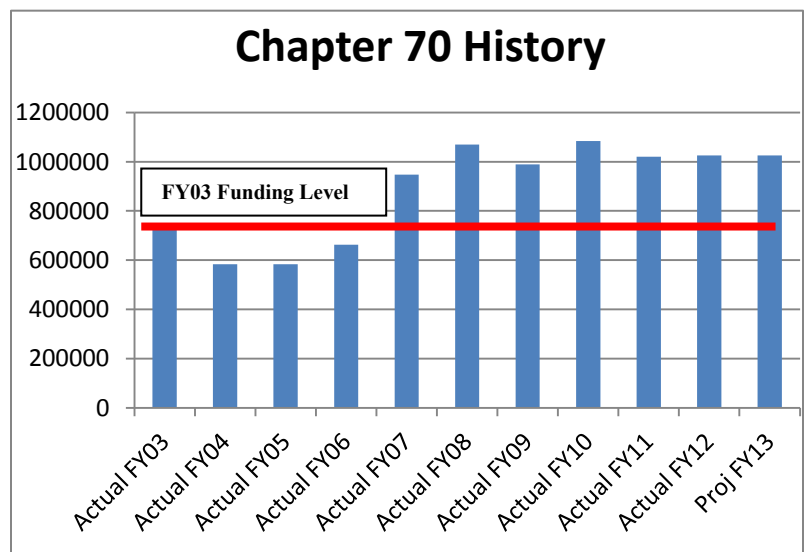
Facility Rental Revolving Account: The Facility Rental Account receives funds for the rental of various areas of the school buildings. The revenue is used to partially pay for custodial salaries, utilities, and building maintenance.

Chapter 70: When we build our proposed budget for the next fiscal year we do not factor in Chapter 70 directly as a revenue source. In fact, Chapter 70 Revenue is part of the town’s overall revenue model and indirectly impacts the schools’ operating budget.

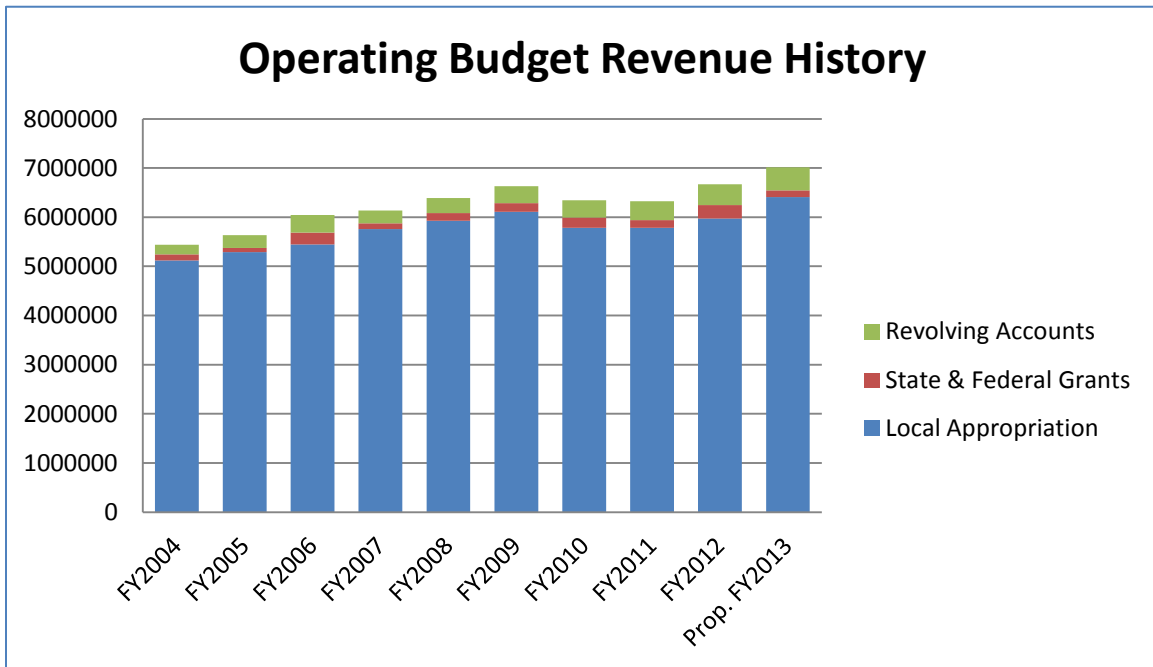
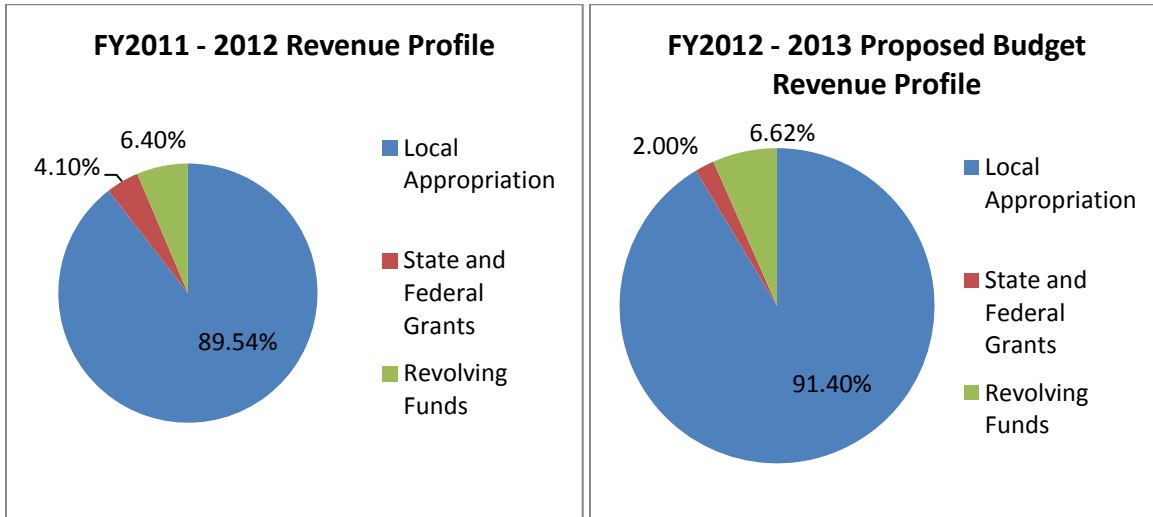
Due to the economic crisis, Chapter 70 was reduced in the fourth quarter of FY09, FY11 and in FY12.

School Choice Income: The Topsfield Elementary Schools have never participated in school choice. We, as have all Town Departments, have been

charged with looking for ways to generate revenue to support the operational costs of the services we provide to the community. School Choice is one avenue that is open to the School Committee. Each participating school choice district in Massachusetts receives \$5,000 of additional aid from the State for direct use by the School Committee for each student enrolled in our schools under the plan. Additional funding may be available for students with disabilities whose IEPs require significant additional services. Each school district must hold a public hearing on an annual basis prior to May 15th to opt in or out of School Choice. This year we may continue the discussion about the potential income and other impacts of becoming a School Choice District. Income from school choice students may offer us an opportunity to address items in the Vision Moving Forward (VMF) budget.



The following illustrations demonstrate the shift in funding for the elementary schools operating budget.



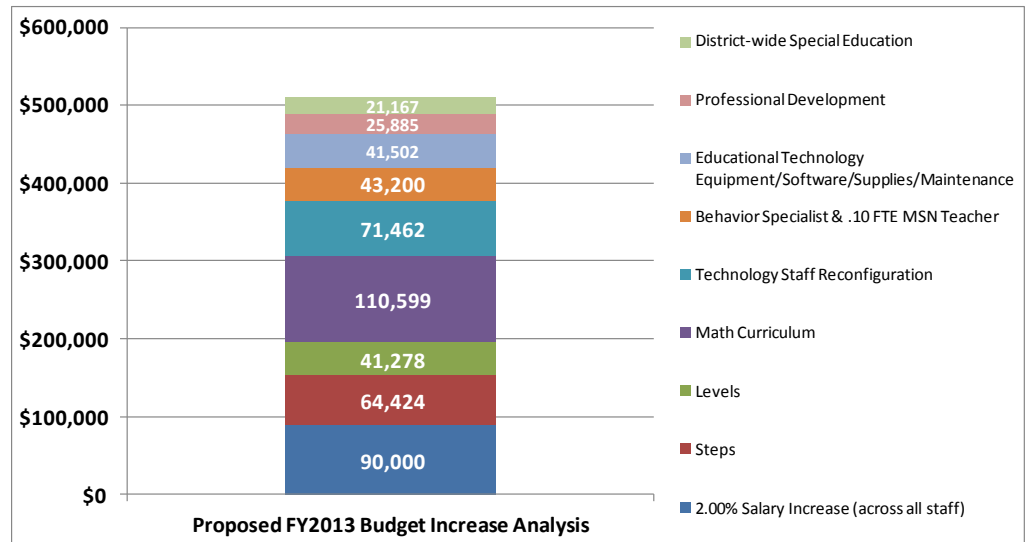
Proposed Budget Expenditure Scenarios for FY2012-2013

The first scenario will be the **2.00% increase** over the approved FY2011-2012 Budget. This scenario assumes no relief for contractual obligations, special education obligations and/or utilities. A 2.00% increase on the approved FY2011-2012 Budget is \$119,490. The funds provided by guideline would not be enough to cover the increased cost associated with contractual obligations (projected at \$195,702). The current guideline does not give consideration for the loss of revenue from grants and revolving accounts. The projected amount of decreased revenue from grants for FY13 is \$131,091 (1.86% of the total operating budget).

Our current proposed budget is \$6,407,272 which is \$432,790 above the prior year local appropriation approved budget or a percentage increase of 7.24%.

In order to meet the guideline, the District would have to reduce the proposed operating budget by \$313,300

(or 5.24%). To meet this objective, we would have to redefine our expectations for class size, programs and services within the District. Due to the fact that the majority of the budget (over 80%) is made up of personnel and personnel related costs, we would have to make reductions in staffing to meet the current guideline.



The following areas would be considered when making adjustments to the operating budget:

- Regular Day Transportation: Reduction of the number of buses, decreases availability of bus stops, longer bus rides, possible consideration of bus fees.
- Staffing: Adjustments in class-size, reduced or eliminated exposure to special subjects (Library, Music, Art, Foreign Language and Physical Education).
- Elimination of educational/curriculum support and professional development components.
- Reductions in facility maintenance and custodial support.

The second scenario, the **Essential Services Budget** is a proposed budget to deliver the minimum services to maintain the existing level of services within the current structure. The cost of delivering the essential services budget includes obligations associated with current contractual obligations as well as funding for steps and levels and a potential modest compensation increase for all union and non-union staff. Currently the Essential Services Budget is proposed at \$6,183,709.

Finally, the third scenario is a **Vision Moving Forward Budget** that considers enhancements to move the District forward with the educational programs that strive to maintain educational excellence and meet the increasing needs of the individual schools on a day to day basis. The VMF Budget also is designed to achieve the highest common denominator of program offerings within each of the member towns of the Tri-Town School Union.

The following programs are being recommended for discussion in the **Vision Moving Forward Budget**:

1. Purchase of a new district wide math curriculum (K – 6) to bring us in-line with the curriculum frameworks. Estimated cost: \$110,599.
2. Reconfiguration of the profile and deployment of Technology Staff. Estimated at \$71,462.
3. Implementation of a District-wide facilities specialist for in-house facilities maintenance and repairs. Estimated cost – Topsfield’s share \$19,982 (operating budget would be reduced to make the implementation cost neutral)

Central Office Operation

The Central Office serves the three school districts by providing administrative leadership, management, clerical and logistical support, and facilities management. The offices that function out of the Central Office are:

- Office of the Superintendent
- Business Office
- Director of Special Education
- Director of Curriculum
- Director of Facilities

Each department provides service and leadership that directly and indirectly supports the delivery of education to our students and professional support to our faculty and staff. The dedication of the Central Office staff is demonstrated by the amount of time each employee has serviced the communities of Boxford, Middleton and Topsfield. Of the twelve employees, nine have been in service in excess of ten years, and four in excess of twenty years.

The stability, dedication, teamwork, and sense of service that exists in the Central Office allow us to provide good customer service in an efficient manner. Our reward is the continued success of all students and the professional enhancement of our faculty and staff in exceptional facilities.

The service provided by a professional administrative and support staff to the school districts and the communities fulfills an invaluable and critical roll to administering the details involved with the many areas of a school district’s day to day operations. Without a stable central office staff, the responsibilities of fulfilling the required internal and external tasks would fall within the individual schools and town halls. This would translate into less direct service to students and staff.

The costs associated with the Central Office are apportioned based on four formulas. The formulas allow a reasonable allocation of budgeted costs associated with the individual departments. The allocation for each segment is as follows:

Superintendent's Office: 50% of the formula is allocated 1/3 to each member town and 50% based on the 10/1 student population of the present fiscal year.

Business Office & Director of Curriculum: The formula/allocation is based on the 10/1 student population of the present fiscal year.

Director of Special Education: The formula/allocation is based on the 12/1 special education student population of the present fiscal year.

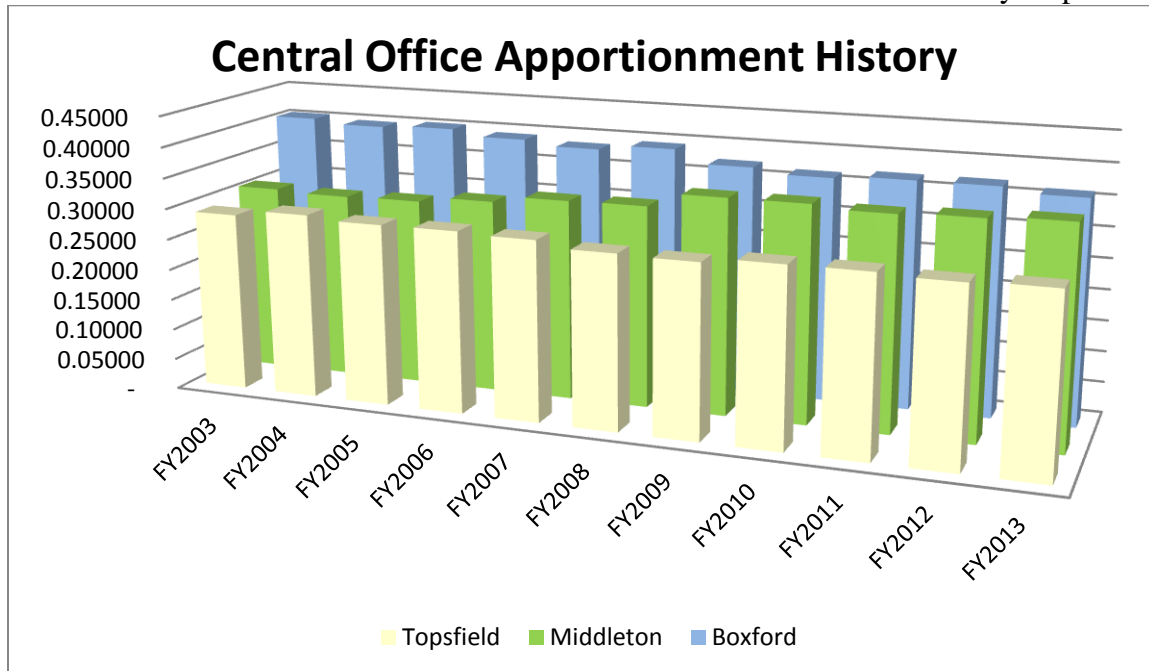
Director of Facilities: The formula/allocation is based on the square footage of the campuses in each school district.

FY13 Apportionment Schedule	Boxford	Middleton	Topsfield	Check
Superintendent	0.34942	0.34630	0.30428	1.00000
Business Office	0.36550	0.35927	0.27523	1.00000
Director of Curriculum	0.36550	0.35927	0.27523	1.00000
SPED	0.35749	0.34783	0.29469	1.00000
Facilities Director	0.37069	0.34787	0.28144	1.00000
Total	0.36088	0.35226	0.28686	1.00000

* Note: the total apportionment is calculated by the sum of the four formulas and is "weighted" by the budgeted cost of each segment.

For FY2013 the apportionment for each district is illustrated below:

Over the years we have seen shifts in the apportioned costs associated with the Central Office. When we realize shifts in student population or adjustments in the total square footage in the individual school districts the apportionment changes as well. The following illustration demonstrates the shift in costs between the three communities over an eleven year period.



Central Office Proposals for FY2013

For FY2013 we are introducing several requests in order to address the increase in activity in the Central Office. Over the years mandates and external requests for data over the course of the year is straining the ability of the Central Office to fulfill such requests and maintain the service needed for each district. In the following paragraphs we will communicate the specific requests and the areas we are looking to address.

Superintendent's Office

The Superintendent's Office is proposing a return to a 1.00 FTE Administrative Assistant from .93 FTE. Years ago this position was a 1.00 FTE and we are looking to return its original status. The purpose of this request is to meet the increasing requirements of external mandates. A specific example would be the creation, assembly, management, submission and cross-validation of the EPIMS data base. EPIMS is the Employee Personnel Information Management System. EPIMS is made up of two separate databases (the Staff Roster and Work Assignment). This submission must be done twice per year and requires multiple weeks' worth of work to complete. The objective of this submitted information is to be able to correlate the data associated with Student Course Schedules and the Student Information Management System. The ultimate goal will be to track a student (or students) performance against a specific teacher.

The returned additional time also supports the current needs associated with human resource activity, contract administration, correspondence, and assistance to the Superintendent.

Business Office

For FY2013 we are proposing two independent requests. One request is for an increase in personnel support and the second is associated with the Central Office phone system.

The Business Office is recommending the increase of one of the accounting office staff members from a .60 FTE to a 1.00 FTE for FY2013. The purpose of this request is to meet the increasing needs being realized in the Business Office. This position is responsible for directly managing the payroll and account payable for the assigned town. In addition, the person provides clerical support to the Director of Facilities. Under its current design, there is not enough time to complete all assigned tasks between the two offices. Due to the increased needs, this position has become a responsive roll as opposed to a proactive efficient position. The partnership with the town hall would be greatly improved by having five day representation and communication, especially around payroll and accounts payable. The Business Office would be able to complete scheduled tasks associated with financial reporting and bookkeeping postings. By increasing the FTE we would be able to provide more critical clerical support for the Director of Facilities. Specifically, we would continue with the implementation of the School Dude Maintenance software and the online custodial supply bidding and management as well as fulfilling the increased need for additional clerical support.

The second request is for a replacement phone system. The phone system in the Central Office is sixteen years old. Parts for this system are no longer available. The system is functioning at this time but we are starting to see component issues that we can no longer replace. If the main system realizes a catastrophic failure, we will be without LAN communication.

We are proposing the replacement of the phone system for FY2013 with a system that is suitable for daily use with reasonable functionality.

Director of Facilities – Facilities Staffing Proposal

The first draft of the proposed budget includes the resubmission of a request for increased facility staff across the three school districts. This 1.0 FTE shared position would be responsible for hands-on work in the areas of facility repair and preventive maintenance. The proposed cost would be budget neutral as we would reduce the amount requested for outside contractors to perform similar tasks. The potential for this position would allow the district to take a proactive stance on facilities care while engaging in shared resource strategies on a school and town level.

Tri-Town - Technology Staffing Proposal

The purpose of this proposal is to communicate and discuss the need for a restructuring of technology staffing across the three districts. Over the years we have been very fortunate to have the support of the communities for the purchase and deployment of technology in the individual schools. With all of the equipment, software, and peripherals we are at a point where we need to evaluate the delivery of technology support to staff and students.

For School Year 2012-2013, we are proposing the restructuring the deployment of technology staff across the three districts. The staffing model that we are recommending would be less expensive in Boxford and Middleton and more expensive in Topsfield. The staff would be shared across the three districts, similar to the central office staff. The staffing model would consist of the following personnel:

- a. 1.0 FTE District-wide Technology Coordinator
- b. 1.0 FTE District-wide Technology Network Specialist
- c. 1.0 FTE PC/Desktop Technician
- d. 3.0 FTEs Instructional Technology Specialists
- e. 3.0 FTEs Technology Aides

This model would increase the total technology staffing from 6.25 FTEs to 9.00 FTEs across the three districts.

Proposed Summary Staff Descriptions

1.0 FTE District-wide Technology Coordinator:

The Technology Coordinator would be the administrator for technology across all three districts. The apportionment would be based on student population. The responsibilities would include, but not be limited to the following:

- 1. Overall leader and manager for technology in the TTU.
- 2. Manage all technology systems and platforms.
- 3. Work with Principals for future planning and continued integration with curriculum and curriculum standards.
- 4. Work with Director of Curriculum for curriculum integration and professional development for all staff.
- 5. Provide vision for future technology platforms and equipment.

6. Part of the Leadership Team.
7. Reports to the Superintendent of Schools.

1.0 FTE District-wide Technology Network Specialist

The Technology Network Specialist would manage the networks for all six schools. This position would be responsible for maintaining the operation of the networks to ensure optimal operation and minimal down time. This position would assist the Tech Coordinator in planning network upgrades and/or reconfigurations.

1.0 FTE PC/Desktop Technician

The Desktop Technician would provide immediate support to faculty and staff experiencing hardware issues. Responsibilities include repair of hardware, follow up and execution of warranty work and direct customer service to staff having problems with the use of technology equipment and peripherals.

3.0 FTEs Instructional Technology Specialists

The instructional Technology Specialists would be teaching positions that provide direct instruction (or instructional support) to students as part of the continued integration of technology with curriculum. In addition, the instructional Technology Specialists would be responsible for the direct delivery of professional development to faculty and staff.

3.0 FTEs Technology Aides

The Technology Aides would be responsible for providing teaching and hardware support to the districts as directed by the Director of Technology. The position acts as a technology teaching substitute as needed and provides customer support for technology questions and troubleshooting.

Current District Wide Technology Staffing Profile					
Position	FTE	Total	Boxford	Middleton	Topsfield
Technology Coordinator	2.00	166,534	79,534	87,000	
Technology Network Specialist	1.00	51,320	51,320		
Technology Specialist	2.00	101,463		49,328	52,135
Technology Aides	1.25	21,520	16,000	5,520	
Totals	6.25	340,837	146,854	141,848	52,135
Proposed Technology Staffing Scenario					
(Business Office Apportionment – based on Student Population)			Boxford 0.36550	Middleton 0.35927	Topsfield 0.27523
District-wide Technology Coordinator	1.00	87,000	31,798	31,257	23,945
Technology Network Specialist	1.00	70,000	25,585	25,149	19,266
PC Technician	1.00	45,000	16,447	16,167	12,386
Instructional Technology Specialists	3.00	159,000	53,000	53,000	53,000
Technology Aides	3.00	45,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Totals	9.00	406,000	141,830	140,573	123,597
Cost Differential		65,163	(5,024)	(1,275)	71,462

Message from the Director of Special Education
Submitted by Sharon D. Lyons, Director of Special Education

Steward School

Special Education Teachers (K-3):

Increase the current level of 4.5 to 4.6 FTE

Special Education Aides (K-3):

Maintain the current level of 6.8 FTE plus 1.0 Intensive Needs Aide

Special Education Teachers (Preschool):

Maintain the current level of 3.0; with continued capacity to charge tuition for non-Topsfield resident students into the Intensive Preschool Program

Special Education Aides (Preschool):

Maintain the 4.1 FTE with the flexibility to use preschool aides in other grades as may be needed and increase the aide FTE to accommodate additional students enrolled in the Intensive Pre-School Program

Speech Assistant:

Maintain the 2 staff at a combined FTE of 0.8

Speech Therapist:

Maintain the 0.8 (also works 0.2 at Proctor)

School Psychologist:

Maintain the 1.0 FTE

Behavior Specialist:

Add a 1.0 FTE at Steward School as the increased needs of the students at both Steward and Proctor warrant a Behavior Specialist at each school rather than one shared between the schools

Proctor School

Special Education Teachers:

Maintain the current level of 5.0 teachers

Special Education Aides:

Maintain the current level of 7.7 aides plus 1.0 Intensive Needs Aide

Behavior Specialist:

Restore this position to a 1.0 FTE at Proctor, role was shared between the 2 schools this year and with the movement of some students between schools 1.0 is needed at each school

Speech/Language Pathologist:

Maintain at 0.2 (also works 0.8 at Steward)

Speech Assistant:
Maintain 1 staff at an FTE of 0.4

School Psychologist:
Maintain the 1.0 FTE

NOTE: For all of our special education aides, we have offered stipends for the completion of various select training programs, largely outside of our district. As more aides have expressed interest in participating and as we expand our training program offerings, we are adding in a stipend line item to compensate aides for completing these in-district, rigorous training programs, on their own time, i.e.: after the school day. We view this as a true ‘win-win’ as the aides will gain valuable knowledge directly related to their work which positively impacts the students and the aides receive compensation for completing these programs.

District – wide staff

Special Education Services Coordinator

(Please note: Topsfield is the only 1 of the 3 Tri-Town communities that continues to employ only 1 Coordinator for the district instead of 1 per school, therefore this role is responsible for 115+ students rather than 50-90 as in the other 2 towns.)

The Special Education Services Coordinator has several key role responsibilities:

1. Oversees the evaluation process for all Topsfield students referred for an Initial or Re-Evaluation;
2. **Key** communicator with Parents and all evaluators prior to and during the Evaluation process;
3. Chairperson/Authority to commit district resources for the various types of Special Education TEAM Meetings (about 180-200/year);
4. Assists staff (20) with the writing of IEPs and/or progress reports;
5. Oversees and plans for the delivery of special education programs services in conjunction with Principals and Director; will assist Principals with Staff Evaluations beginning in the 2011-2012 SY.

The Special Education Services Coordinator role is one that is crucial to the functioning of the department. The impact of the various responsibilities may not be as ‘visible’ as that of a direct line teacher, however, the absence of this position would certainly increase costs in other areas; such as Special Education Administrator time apportionment, increased Principals’ time devoted to the planning/management, more legal fees to offset procedural and technical errors, non-compliance, and to combat increased litigation, increased out-of-district tuition and related transportation fees, etc. Metaphorically, this position is like an iceberg, only about 10% of the work is visible and it is the 90% below the surface that can damage the district if left unattended it is certain the district will inadvertently ‘strike’ the danger zones beneath the surface without skilled navigation.

The most ‘visible’ actions of the Special Education Coordinator is the coordination and facilitation of the Special Education evaluation and IEP development processes. What is not so ‘visible’ are all the planning and follow through activities related to evaluation and IEP

development; the critically important steps involved in communication with parents so that they understand the process and related documents; the importance of reading, interpreting and synthesizing all the evaluation data; collaboration with professionals/ evaluators and parents; communication with all involved; interpreting the federal and state regulations in a consistent and accurate manner to help staff and the district remain compliant; these are just the highlights of this position.

Intensive Needs Educational/ Autism Specialist (INEAS)

Topsfield will maintain its apportionment of .30. Given the nature of the needs of about 25 students, the INEAS will need to consult with several teams of teachers/aides/therapists to provide ongoing support and oversight of the IEPs for those students. The INEAS also provides consultation, training and support to parents. The level of support varies by child, so the amount of time needed over the course of the school year is not necessarily constant throughout the school year, the same between students, nor completely predictable.

The INEAS provides documentation that identifies those students for whom she is currently providing support as well as projected time estimates for each student using a 'weighted scale'. This scale is from 0 to 3, with 0 representing a one-time observation or consult with no ongoing need projected and 3 being the highest level of support required. Topsfield does have one student whose needs require so much of the INEAS time that we calculate that student's need at a level 6 and at a headcount of 2. We have calculated ½ the INEAS salary using the 'weighted scale' and ½ the salary using a pure headcount; we did not count any of the students with a '0' ranking in the headcount for any town.

An area of student need that has increased in demand is that of home-based services. The home-program design, recruitment of staff, and supervision is an expansion of the INEAS role, and a recommended alternative to contracting with private providers as this is extremely costly, i.e.: \$100-\$150/hr for the supervision of staff (usually about 2-4 hrs/month) and then paying \$40-\$65/hr for the direct service time, plus 'travel time', (usually 2-10 hrs/ week). The National Research Panel on Autism recommends students with an autism diagnosis receive between 30 and 40 hours of services each week and for those students that are impacted in a moderate to significant degree, the panel also recommends 48 weeks of services; meaning that summer services often need to span 8 weeks of support, not the 6 we typically offer. The 2-12 hours beyond the school week often take the form of home-based education services, typically focusing upon teaching language, skills and routines within the home and community settings, as well as teaching/ coaching parents and siblings in specific prevention/intervention methods and specific strategies to assist the family member with Autism. The home-based education services and oversight is becoming more essential to our service delivery model for a small number of students.

As this position has become more involved in the program design/oversight (of both school-based and home-based programs) the skills of the INEAS have required an additional endorsement/training/ licensure, and therefore this position currently requires not only a DESE license as a Special Education Teacher or Psychologist, but also a State Board Certification as a Behavior Analyst, a BCBA.

The INEAS has also become trained as a trainer for the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) and Safety Care and provides in-depth training to staff throughout the year in crisis prevention and intervention strategies and techniques. We are required (by DESE) to provide this in-depth training each year so that we have a number of staff trained in crisis prevention and intervention, including physical restraint techniques. By having an in-district trainer, we save hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars each year.

BEHAVIOR SPECIALIST

Increase to 2.0 FTE so that there is one Behavior Specialist full time in each school. This role is one that is a crucial support to an increasing number of students with disabilities impacting their behavioral-social-emotional health needs. The Behavior Specialist works closely with the School Psychologists and INEAS/BCBA to provide technical assistance to teams, works directly with students, develops and modifies Behavior Support Plans, and collects/analyzes data on many programs and plans; this data analysis is provided to the psychologists, INEAS, special education teachers, and parents on a very regular basis so that changes and adjustments can be made to Behavior Support Plans. Because the students requiring this type of support span the grades from Pre-School to grade 6 next year, and their behavioral health needs fluctuate throughout the year, this position has proved very valuable in meeting the needs of students who can present with intense and acute behavioral needs that require immediate skilled attention. We would also add a stipend for any individual in this position that has a BCBA endorsement because although not a requirement of the position, it would add value to the work of these individuals.

OTR and COTA

Maintain the OTR FTE at .33 and maintain the COTA time at .5 FTE. Occupational Therapy is a required related service of many students' IEPs, particularly at the primary level.

RPT and PTA

Remain at current level of .07 and .35 respectively. Physical Therapy is a required related service of several students' IEPs, particularly at the primary level. The FTEs requested is directly connected to IEPs and PT evaluation history.

Special Education Clerical Aide

Remain at current level of 10 hours/ week. Special education is the most tightly regulated (and litigated) aspect of education, therefore, there is a tremendous amount of paperwork required in order to record and track certain 'events' and to remain in compliance. The special education clerical aide has provided an invaluable service to the special education coordinator and teachers, especially with a coordinator split between two buildings. The timeliness of paperwork is a major compliance requirement (and DESE-CPR monitoring focus), therefore, these few hours a week saves us thousands in non-compliance technical fault rulings at hearings.

Program Background/ Updates

It is crucial that we maintain our current program options and continue to explore regional (Tri-Town) ways to enhance and build our capacity to serve the needs of special education students.

We have added several new programs to our continuum of service options over the past 10 years, both in Topsfield and the Tri-Town as a whole. This capacity building has translated to well over \$1 million dollars saved in out-of-district tuition and transportation expenses. Our Intensive Preschool Program has not only saved the town of Topsfield money, but has also generated revenue to offset the operating expenses.

Language-based Learning Center Programs (LLC)

There are currently 2 Language-based Learning Center programs (LLC) at each school and are either for those students with learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, or for students with more complex neuro-developmental disabilities, such as autism; these programs continue to save the district money annually as well as provide students with an outstanding learning environment in their home community, a much desired option for parents. The LLC staff in these programs work with students whose disabilities have a significant impact upon their ability to process, understand and use language effectively and efficiently, as well as help students develop strategies to compensate for their serious processing speed deficits. The combination of these disabilities makes it difficult for these particular students to learn in a traditional classroom setting for extended periods of time.

Intensive Preschool

This year the Topsfield Intensive Preschool has 7 special education students and 3 peer models. The 6 special education students are from Topsfield (4), Middleton (1), Boxford (1), and Manchester-Essex Regional School District (1). We project all but one of these students will continue in this program for next school year; we anticipate that 1 of the Topsfield students will be able to join the Integrated Preschool Program instead of the Intensive Program next year.

Overview of Out-of-District Program Needs/ Tuitions/Transportation

The FY 2013 budget line item request for Out-of-District Tuitions is **\$ 295,502**, which is **\$34,636 MORE** than the approved FY 2012 budget line item (\$ 260,866). This increase is due to one student's program requiring an increase in intensity of services (i.e.: 1: 1 aide) and due to ongoing planning for other students whose needs are not yet clarified for next school year.

The FY 2013 budget line item request for Special Education Transportation is **\$110,792**, which is **\$ 6528 LESS** than the approved FY 2012 budget line item (\$ 117,320).

Overview of Contractual Services

The FY 2013 budget line item request for Contractual Services is **\$ 50,870**, which is **\$6060 LESS** than the approved FY 2012 budget line item (\$ 56,930).

We had to increase the contractual services last/this year related to a very small number of students' needs, mostly in the area of Home Education Programs, some year-round, in order to meet IEP obligations and the level of services needed is projected to decrease slightly next year.

Overview of Psychological Services

The FY 2012 budget line item request for Psychological Services is \$13,500, which is \$996 LESS than the approved FY 2012 budget line item (\$14,496).

This line item is used for three areas:

1. Outside/ Independent evaluations; parents are able to request publicly funded independent evaluations of their child's needs when they disagree with our findings/ determinations.
2. Purchase of special education evaluation instruments as well as replacement of the special education evaluation protocols. We are required to use the publisher's actual protocol, no photocopies, for every evaluation conducted. An industry standard/ practice is to use any new/revised evaluation instruments within one year of publication, therefore, whenever an evaluation tool is revised and updated, we need to purchase it. As we deferred the purchase of several updated batteries in FY 2011 and 3 of our major instruments are due to release revised versions in the fall, we will be considered non-compliant with this important industry standard, therefore the increase is due largely to the need to purchase updated evaluation instruments.
3. Special Education Legal representation; we have an ongoing and long-term relationship with a law firm that specializes in representing school districts in matters related to special education. As with most legal representation, we pay by the hour for all consultation. Our budgeted amount reflects the average used over the past few years; it does not reflect what would be necessary to defend the district should a Hearing (trial) be necessary. (The estimate for the legal representation costs to defend a public school program(s) is \$21,500 per BSEA hearing/litigation.)

Summer Programs

The FY 2013 budget line item request for Summer Programs is \$ 51,801, which is \$9680 LESS than the approved FY 2012 budget line item (\$61,481).

Our summer programs have consistently grown in both scope of offerings and in the numbers of students served, meaning the number of staff needed has also increased over time but we feel we are at a fairly stable level for next year.

We will continue to need many teachers and aides to work in our various summer programs. We are projecting 75-80 Topsfield students will require some level of summer services, with some students requiring as little as a half-hour/week (for example of speech therapy) and others requiring as much as 25 hours/week of multiple types of services.

In the summer of 2009 we began a partnership with the Topsfield Recreation Department summer camp program, which was very successful and improved upon even further during the summer of 2010. Many Topsfield students attended our instructional skills 2 mornings/ week and 3 4-hour days for 6 weeks as members of the Topsfield Recreation Department program; we also provided additional staff support for the students during their time in the recreation portion

of the program in order to make the program more specialized with staff targeting their unique needs (social, emotional, behavioral, and language related) throughout their day at the camp. This new model has been effective in addressing the students' needs in a more comprehensive way and will continue for summer 2012.

SUMMARY

Overall, the budget requests for Out-of-District Tuitions, Special Education Transportation, Contracted Services, Psychological Services, and Summer Programs total **\$ 523,461** which is **\$12,368 more** than the approved budget for FY 2012, a very modest increase.

The budget offsets related to special education include:

Tuitions for non-Topsfield residents enrolled in our K-6 programs:	\$	0
Circuit Breaker Reimbursement:	\$	43,177
IDEA grant/ fund code #240:	\$	80,000
EEC grant/ fund code #262:	\$	2,500

These budget offsets/ revenues represent a reduction over the current year's budget and a significant reduction in the grant money received in FY 10 and FY 11 due to the loss of ARRA grant money.

***NOTE:** The tuitions received for the student attending the Language-based Learning Center at the Steward School has been applied against the current school year's budget and will not be recurring next year; this student will return to the home district.

Message from the Director of Curriculum

Submitted by Christine Elliott

Professional Development is the investment the school system makes in its' staff in order to continuously improve the ability and expertise of our professional staff. Professional Development is needed to assist staff in maintaining the educational licensure that is required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Typically professional development is funded through local funds or state entitlement grants. Teachers are offered opportunities to learn together during the school year, in summer courses, workshops and "Teacher to Teacher" projects, or in professional development of their own choosing. Budget constraints have diminished both revenue streams. In the past we have been able to rely on funding for professional development through No Child Left Behind, (NCLB) grants, such as:

- Title II, Part A: Improving Educator Quality
- Title II, Part D: Enhancing Education Through Technology
- Title IV: Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities

The entitlement monies we receive to support many of our professional development initiatives have diminished over time. Currently we can only draw from the Title II, Part A: Improving Educator Quality grant, which decreases each year. The Title II and Title IV grants are no longer entitlement grants but are competitive with very stringent guidelines for the use of any monies awarded. It remains questionable whether these grants will even be available from year to year so they are not a reliable funding source even if awarded. In the past, these grants were critical in supporting initiatives such as the Health and Wellness Committees and Technology Committees in each of the three towns. We have had to absorb these expenses in the local budgets.

In addition to professional development opportunities such as graduate level courses, workshops and "Teacher to Teacher" projects, the professional development budget supports the committee work that takes place throughout the school year. This work is critical to the success of our district. The Tri-Town administration believes that a critical component of continuous improvement is building capacity through promoting teacher leadership. For new initiatives and ideas to become ingrained in the culture of our schools, teachers must be an integral part of the process. We know that making structural and procedural change is relatively easy, but making cultural change is much more difficult and only possible when teachers are a part of the process. The development and implementation of the Tri-Town Writing program is an excellent example of the impact committee work can have. Teachers work collaboratively with the administration throughout the school year on committees such as the Tri-Town Writing Curriculum Committee, the Tri-Town Professional Development Council, the Tri-Town Math Pilot Committee, The Educator Evaluation Committee, the Health and Wellness Committees in each town, the Technology Committees in each town, the RTI Committee in Middleton, the Data Team Committees in Boxford and Topsfield, the Professional Learning Community Committee in Middleton and the Olweus Bullying Prevention Committees in each of the three towns. Some of these committees are contractual while others have generated out of need and circumstance. For instance, the adoption of the Common Core Standards has required and will continue to require an increase in curriculum committee work going forward as we continue to re-write our

curriculum maps to align with the national standards and select a Math program that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards.

Maintaining our ability to implement a consistent core curriculum is predicated on our ability to give teachers the necessary knowledge, support, and ability to measure the impact of teaching on student learning and achievement. It is also imperative that professional development opportunities are consistently offered for new staff joining our district. We need to be vigilant about supporting new staff members through our mentor program and by providing training around our core curriculum and initiatives every year so all teachers are equipped to provide the best possible education for our students.

Not only must we provide training around our core curriculum, we must continuously reflect and assess our professional development needs as a district looking to the future in a proactive manner. Our professional development needs change regularly. For example, the need for professional development has increased in the area of E.S.L. The population of English Language Learners within the Tri-Town has increased substantially over the past several years. We need to continue to provide the necessary training for staff each year. We also strive to stay current, if not progressive, in the area of technology. This is a challenging task knowing that technology changes at an exponential rate. However, it is essential for staff to have the necessary skills to support and challenge our 21st century learners.

Professional development is the cornerstone of a district committed to continuous improvement. It is no longer a luxury. It is essential to our existence and significantly impacts the level of our success.

Topsfield Elementary Schools - Steward School & Proctor School

Submitted by Michelle Costa & Sarah O'Leary

In cooperation with family and community, our mission is to guide students in becoming personally responsible, self-motivated, disciplined, respectful, competent, and contributing members of society.

It is the belief of the Topsfield School District that all children can learn and be successful. Effective education requires a committed partnership among the schools, home, and community.

Student achievement results from high expectations within an environment that is stimulating and challenging, yet safe and nurturing.

A sense of respect for oneself and others promotes belonging and is essential to learning.

School Improvement Plan

In order to understand and support the items budgeted and staffing presented in the FY12 budget it is essential to keep the School Improvement Plan goals in the forefront of our mind throughout the budget process.

Steward and Proctor Schools:

The Steward School consists of 363 students in grades PreK-3.

The Proctor School consists of 245 students in grades 4-6.

- The Topsfield Public Schools will meet the unique needs of each learner through continuous assessment and differentiation of instruction.
- The Topsfield Public Schools will prepare its 21st century learners to think critically, problem solve, apply learned skills and strategies to novel situations, collaborate, be agile and adaptive, take initiative, communicate effectively both orally and in writing, access and analyze information and promote curiosity and imagination.
- The Topsfield Public Schools will provide a safe facility and a positive school environment.

Process

While building the budget for the Topsfield Schools, we remained focused on what we value about children, teaching and learning. It is important during a fiscally challenging structure that the students' needs remain the priority and that any considered decreases do not negatively impact the fabric of the Topsfield Schools.

Once again the staff worked diligently, providing us with the items necessary to support the current programs and positions. Before making recommendations, an inventory was taken of all remaining supplies and materials. Beginning with the current inventory, staff members built a “needs-based” budget by reflecting on what they would need to enhance or continue existing services to students. In addition, many staff members took part in writing the program descriptions and submitting the narratives, which provide evidence to support necessary programming and materials for the 2012-2013 school year.

After receiving the budget appendices, administrators met with staff members to be certain that the budget remained consistent with the one from FY12. After much discussion, some groups were able to revise below a level funded budget to allow for vital replacement or necessary items to be ordered that have been postponed due to budget restraints over the past few years. By working closely with the school secretaries, the budget has been carefully crafted and updated throughout the process.

Tier 1: Within Budget Guidelines

Technology

Accessibility of Technology

Infrastructure

After an audit conducted in the spring and summer of 2011, it was determined that the current infrastructure at both the Steward and Proctor Schools could not support the technology needs of students and educators of the 21st century. Therefore, through this process, the increase in band width through Comcast was deemed an essential component in strengthening our current infrastructure. Also, adding one Gigabit switch to the main closets of each school which will enable faster access to documents and the internet.

Laptops

The precedent for replacing computers has been every seven years, which is below the state recommended five year or less cycle of replacement. Currently, according to this guideline, Steward School would need to replace 41 computers (16 not replaced last year and 25 this year) and Proctor would need to replace 24 (16 from last year and 8 this year) for FY13. We are proposing the purchase of 8 laptop computers at Proctor and 6 laptop computers at Steward. The role of an educator is enhanced through technology in the forms of research, organization, administrative tasks, communication and collaboration. Technology improves student learning of the curriculum daily. Students engage in research, multi-media, simulations, data analysis, communication and collaboration. By integrating technologies, student interest, inquiry, analysis, collaboration and creativity are enhanced. State guidelines suggest that by 2014-2015, the district should have an average ratio of one high capacity Internet-connected computer for each student. A one-to-one learning environment is our vision for our students in the future. We will continue to work with the technology committee to create a technology plan that embraces this vision.

Printers

Printing continues to remain a concern of the Proctor staff of the Topsfield Schools. The printing of documents at Proctor had led to issues of confidentiality and frustration for staff members who are often unable to locate printed materials and have quality issues with the current donated and reused printers. The budget calls for two new color printers at Proctor and one new LaserWriter for the Special Education Department. A majority of our printers are outdated and the cost to repair the printer is greater than the cost to replace. Overall, these new printers will lead to a more efficient system that makes staff feel more secure printing documents that are of a confidential nature and more confident that they will not have to spend invaluable preparation time searching for an effective and useable printer.

Server

The current Steward File Server was purchased in the spring of 2008 and is almost 4 yrs. old. All staff now save files to the current file server. When the server gets overloaded with log-in requests it times out especially when logging into the internet. The sharing of files, Read Naturally and Reading Counts databases, and the amount of files to back up has all increased over the years and has been demanding on the old server. The purchase of a new file server for Steward is highly recommended for the successful use of our network. The current Steward server will then be used as a hygiene server with its only job to house the antivirus software.

Library Automation

The conversion of our present library automation system to an updated and web based program is an essential component for the success of our library/media program in FY13. Our present system is eleven years old, no longer being maintained by contract, and failing. We are able to do the kind of patchwork fixes that are needed to keep the system functional but it is a very time consuming venture and can only be done when we do not need to access the system for regular daily use. Our present system is also the only major MAC user in either building, which can create further technical problems. This project would cost about \$6,000, which includes a web-based system as well as the necessary training for staff.

Curriculum and Instruction Initiatives

Foundations

The first implementation phase of Foundations is currently in effect. Next year the second grade team will implement the program as well. The second grade team will participate in professional development during the 2011-2012 school year to prepare for the Foundations program in the fall. The kindergarten and first grade teams will need to purchase the Foundations consumables for their grade levels. However, second grade materials, including consumables, were purchased in FY12.

Mathematics Implementation

The Tri-Town Math Curriculum Review Committee continues their work to evaluate our needs and explore the adoption of either *Math In Focus* or *Math Expressions*. This group will continue to explore these two program options through the pilot program and educator collaboration, with an anticipated implementation date of September 2012.

Reading Curriculum Maps

Curriculum maps are the vehicle to ensure that a cohesive curriculum exists. With the adoption of the Common Core Standards, it is necessary to revisit and revise our existing reading curriculum to identify the areas in need of change and improvement. Teacher collaboration is essential for the success of this process. Therefore, teacher stipends will be necessary to support this endeavor.

Curriculum Support Specialists

With the implementation of several new curriculum initiatives, the Common Core Standards and the collection of data to inform instruction, the need for curriculum support has increased.

Therefore, the role of Curriculum Support Specialist has become essential in supporting teaching and learning. This role has been and should be continued through a teacher stipend.

Responsibilities would include:

- a. Support the implementation of curriculum initiatives
- b. Serve as a member or facilitator of curriculum/data study groups or committees to keep current with district wide initiatives
- c. Oversee assessment and data collection (universal screenings, interim assessments and progress monitoring PreK-6)
- d. Support the implementation of RTI
- e. Additional related responsibilities as determined by the building principals and/or Director of Curriculum

Tier 2: Essential

Technology

Accessibility of Technology

Tablets

The precedent for replacing computers has been every seven years, which is below the state recommended five year or less cycle of replacement. Currently, according to this guideline, Steward School would need to replace 41 computers and Proctor would need to replace 24 for FY13. The essential budget would include the replacement of all computers older than seven years with a tablet. Technology improves student learning of the curriculum daily. Students engage in research, multi-media, simulations, data analysis, communication and collaboration. By integrating technologies, student interest, inquiry, analysis, collaboration and creativity are enhanced. State guidelines suggest that by 2014-2015, the district should have an average ratio of one high capacity Internet-connected computer for each student.

Laptops

In addition, in order to enhance the accessibility of technology, each educator should receive a laptop. The role of an educator is enhanced through technology in the forms of research, organization, administrative tasks, communication and collaboration.

Wireless Connectivity

To aid in multiple users accessing the Internet as we move towards a more comprehensive and current technology program, wireless connectivity is essential. New technologies are dependent upon wireless access to be most effective.

Interactive Technology

Currently several Topsfield educators are using either document cameras and/or interactive whiteboards technologies to support and enrich the education of our 21st century learners. These resources allow students to access the curriculum in a more visual and interactive manner. Currently not all classrooms are equipped with these technologies, creating an inequity in student exposure to these teaching resources. It is our intention that each classroom, including special education, specialists and general education classrooms will be outfitted with these technologies and installation hardware. As technology moves forward, investigating the use of tablets in place of or in addition to interactive whiteboards and document cameras will be examined.

Installation of Equipment

For ease of use, safety of students and equipment as well as the ability to conduct lessons with the least number of technology interruptions, Interactive whiteboards, projectors, speakers and other technologies are best utilized when installed adequately and correctly. This could include hanging projectors from ceilings and mounting interactive whiteboards to walls.

Personnel

Technology Support Specialist

The role of our technology support specialist has evolved along with the need for a more pervasive approach to technology access. In order to support the integration of technology into the curriculum, professional development in the form of coaching, modeling best practices, district based mentoring, study groups and online opportunities are essential to the improvement and sustainability of our program. The Topsfield Schools are in need of another support specialist whose focus is building teachers' capacity to utilize various forms of technology. State guidelines suggest a district level technology director/coordinator and one instructional technology specialist per 60-120 instructional staff to coach and model, as well as a staff member dedicated to data management and assessment.

Program - Alternative Kindergarten Model

The early childhood education years are critical foundational years for our students and our programs contribute to the overall success of our district as measured in multiple ways (MCAS, formative assessments, parent and staff satisfaction surveys and success of Masconomet students). We currently have two kindergarten models: one five day tuition-based program and three classes that run three full days. Every child is able to access the standards-based curriculum in its entirety, despite the number of days they attend Steward School for kindergarten. However, the time that the students in the current five-day program have to expand upon and practice their skills allows them an advantage over their same age peers. In the future, an increase in hours spent in the kindergarten program for all Topsfield kindergarten students needs to be considered.

Tier 3: Vision for Moving Forward

Curriculum Specialists

The goal of creating the Curriculum Specialist position would be to support the implementation of consistent delivery of the curriculum, the differentiation of instructional strategies, the integration of curriculum across disciplines and the collection of classroom, district and state data to support student progress. In working to achieve these goals, the curriculum specialists would provide modeling and peer coaching, analyze classroom, district and state data, design professional development to meet the needs of staff, consult with curriculum support specialists, grade level teams and administrators and work with the Director of Curriculum and Curriculum Specialists in Boxford and Middleton. Creating this position would allow the Reading and Math RTI Interventionists to devote all of their time to direct service to students.

Technology

As students prepare to compete in the 21st century and acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in a technology-based world, it is vital that we enhance our current technology program. Our current budget reflects what we need to maintain our technology access, support and integration with the understanding that this is not the economic climate to upgrade our systems and equipment. However, it is important for the community and the School Committee to be aware of the urgency of upgrading and obtaining the most current technology and providing professional development to staff members so our students can use technology to enrich, reinforce and extend the curriculum. Therefore, Jan Peetz has prepared three levels of technology that illustrate our priorities in terms of building a technology infrastructure which will enable students to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in the 21st century.

Extended Studies

The Topsfield Public Schools will concentrate their efforts on identifying the unique needs of each student and tailoring instruction to enhance academic skills, support social development, while monitoring individual growth. Therefore, a program which emphasizes mathematics and science, reading and writing, interpersonal/leadership and inventive/creative thinking will be investigated.

Acknowledgements

The educators at both Steward and Proctor Schools have been instrumental in creating a budget that articulates the needs of our students and district. Embracing the philosophy of continuous improvement and growth, they continue to focus on what is necessary and essential to the success of our students, despite the economic challenges we may face through the budget process. These reflections have been communicated through a multi-tiered budget. We would like to thank the staff for their efforts and dedication to our children.

In addition, we would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Topsfield School Committee as well as the Central Office administration for their continued support throughout the budget process. We all have the same goals and vision for our students as we continue to work together to ensure the success of all Topsfield children.

Program Narratives

Art

Submitted by Anne Lang

Program Description

Art is a vital component of the educational process. It fulfills the innate desire to imagine and create something with your own hands. The art program introduces students to new mediums, techniques and materials. They encounter problems and discover solutions in regard to composition, color, design, etc. Students are encouraged to explore their own visual language as well as gain an appreciation for the creative process of other students through class critiques. These critiques create a dialogue about art; the process, the product and the choices. They are introduced to diverse cultures and artists through art history references and lessons. This allows them to begin to recognize the power and universality of art throughout history. In addition to weekly classroom art instruction, the art program has adapted its role to include 1:1 instruction and small specialized groups when possible. The goals of the art program are as diverse as the students; to build confidence in decision making and problem solving, to improve observation skills and focusing, to increase self-esteem, to improve fine motor skills, to interpret and express, to create, to learn new skills and, to recognize the value of their visual language. Art is Life.

Connection to School Improvement Plan/District Goals

District Goal #1: Student Achievement/Learning Needs of Children: We will meet the needs of all our learners including those who are academically able and academically challenged. Our children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our instructional program offering should reflect this continuum. Our children will achieve at levels that exceed state and federal requirements during the next three years as measured by the MCAS and/or local assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics in all grades tested in the aggregate and for all subgroups.

District Goal #4: Everyday Skills & Responsibilities: We will begin to teach our children skills that will allow them to successfully function in today's society and to make their world a better place.

District Goal 6: Health and Wellness: We will develop and implement a holistic wellness policy that promotes good nutrition, encourages physical activity, and supports the healthy emotional and social development of our children.

Custodial Staff/Facilities

Program Description

There are many facets of the facilities budget, recognizing how complex and challenging it is to be maintain safe and clean school buildings that contain over 600 students collectively. Each month, the Director of Facilities, Head Custodian and Building Principals meet to discuss logistics and concerns pertaining to the two school buildings as well as the current staffing structure. Three years ago, the decision was made not to replace a custodian during challenging economic times. As we confront the ever-changing economic situation, it is vital that we continuously analyze the current structure/situation. When needing to replace the equivalent of one full time custodian, we analyzed our current structure of two full time custodians (one day shift and one night shift) and one "flex" custodian who alternated between buildings. After

much discussion and consideration, we decided that employing two part time custodians for a total of 19.75 hours/week in each building would be the most efficient use of time and resources. Now, there is another night custodian to assist the full time second shift custodian five times a week. We must be certain the buildings we invest so much time and money to preserve remain productive and healthy learning spaces for our students.

Connection to School Improvement Plan/District Goals:

District Goal 6: Health and Wellness: We will develop and implement a holistic wellness policy that promotes good nutrition, encourages physical activity, and supports the healthy emotional and social development of our children.

Custodial Staff

It is important to recognize that although the new configuration allows for more consistency at both Steward and Proctor Schools, the decrease of one full time custodian three years ago has led to a dramatic increase in the work load of the remaining custodians. The 5.0 FTE we are now working with has its challenges. However, we must commend the remaining staff on their continuing work ethic and dedication to remaining focused on the job and the importance of their contributions.

Front Office Operation

Program and Position Description

All members of the Topsfield community who have direct contact with Steward and Proctor Schools are dependent upon the front office staff. Parents and students rely on the school secretaries for a myriad of tasks and the knowledge they have of school routines and the student population. They are responsible for maintaining student records, assisting the principals as unexpected situations and tasks arise throughout the day, maintaining open lines of communication with families through Constant Contact and phone discussions, and many other responsibilities as noted below. Since the state of Massachusetts has implemented the SCS system, the work secretaries are required to do has grown exponentially. This is time consuming and tedious work that has been added to their existing responsibilities.

Steward/Proctor Secretary

Budget development, principal's schedule, kindergarten registration and 5-Day payment, typing kindergarten records (Steward), registration of new students and typing of records, maintaining student files, maintaining student database, inputting of all Blackboard connect phone numbers (over 400), SIMS reporting, SCS reporting, SASID numbers, purchase orders, tracking accounts, ordering all school supplies, unpacking and distributing materials when delivered, tracking and recording of facilities use requests, communicate with TESPTO and Tri-Town Council, scheduling and communicating with picture companies, working with bus company and communicating bus routes to Central Office, coordinating between schools regarding SIMS and event planning, producing monthly enrollment reports, giving food service account of absences, maintaining photocopy machines and working with service company, coordinating all materials for start of the school year, letters for kindergarten placement, principal letters, labels for summer letters, working with custodians regarding facility use, creating attendance reports for report cards, assisting with arrival and dismissal procedures, fulfilling responsibilities designated by safety committee, problem solving and assisting principal if unexpected situations arise

throughout the day, CORI authorization, transfer of records to Masconomet, addressing family questions/concerns, responding to door buzzer, scheduling noon supervisors, collecting payment for instrumental music (Proctor).

Steward Office Assistant/Proctor Secretary

Assisting with opening of school (answering phones, tardy slips, greeting parents/students, bus note processing and monitoring (bus changes, pick-ups, dismissal notes), keeping track of sick, vacation, jury duty, bereavement, etc..., Personnel/Attendance Report, substitute procurement (procurement of substitutes for all other reasons than sick days), updating and maintain email addresses, processing all preschool registration (Steward - maintain documents, family information, payment), compile and distribute the newsletter electronically every week, timesheets (custodians, lunch supervisors, instructional assistants, substitutes and fax to Central Office with Personnel Report bi-weekly

Connection to School Improvement Plan/District Goals

District Goal #2 Staff Recruitment, Retention and Succession planning for Management Staff:

We will develop and execute a plan to address current and future needs regarding the recruitment, professional development and retention of a “highly qualified” faculty and staff. We will also develop a long term plan to deal with a successful transition to new management upon the retirement of current management.

District Goal #5- Tri-Town Union Shared Priorities: Continue to work in a collaborative manner with Masconomet, Boxford and Middleton School Committees to maximize the effective delivery of agreed upon services to member towns.

With the increased documentation and procedures that go along with housing a preschool and kindergarten program, it is essential to maintain an office assistant at Steward School. In addition, the increase in demands set forth by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in regards to SIMS, EPIMS and SCS has most recently increased the work of the office secretary. Please refer to the tasks as described in the above narrative.

Instrumental Music Education

Program Description

The goal of the instrumental music program is to empower children to be able to read and perform music on their chosen instrument and to perform as part of an ensemble. Students can choose to study a woodwind instrument (flute, clarinet, or saxophone), a brass instrument (trumpet or trombone) or percussion (drums, orchestra bells, and accessory percussion instruments).

Students take a thirty-minute lesson every week. Through the use of a sequential lesson book and supplementary materials, students develop their music reading skills and learn the proper techniques for producing a pleasant tone. In the two weekly band rehearsals, students learn to be independent as not to get distracted by the parts that the other instruments play. After achieving independence, students learn to use the other instruments’ parts to help them play correctly and also to adjust to what they are hearing at times when other performers make a mistake.

This cooperative effort culminates with a performance at the end of the year for beginning band, and several performances throughout the community for members of the advanced band and jazz band. Students bring enjoyment to the community through their performances at events like the Topsfield Fair Parade, the Holiday Walk, the Senior Citizen Luncheon, the Topsfield Memorial Day Parade, the Strawberry Festival, and the Library's Summer Reading Kickoff. The advanced band also represents Proctor School by playing the national anthem at the Manchester Fisher Cats game in Manchester, NH.

One important aspect of teaching band is seeing children excel in music while they may not always achieve the same success in other areas. Instrumental music is another area where students can set and achieve goals. Music is an important part of developing the whole child.

Connection to School Improvement Plan/District Goals

District Goal #1: Student Achievement/Learning Needs of Children: We will meet the needs of all our learners including those who are academically able and academically challenged. Our children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our instructional program offering should reflect this continuum. Our children will achieve at levels that exceed state and federal requirements during the next three years as measured by the MCAS and/or local assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics in all grades tested in the aggregate and for all subgroups.

Connection: There have been many studies linking achievement in music and achievement in academic areas like math and reading. Both areas support each other.

District Goal #4: Every Day Skills and Responsibilities: We will begin to teach our children skills that allow them to successfully function in today's society and to make their world a better place.

Connection: An important part of success in music is based on practice. Whether practicing with the teacher or independently, students learn important life skills including accepting imperfection, overcoming frustration, persevering, and working hard to achieve a goal. Some students will go on to choose music or music education as a career as well.

District Goal #6: Health and Wellness: We will develop and implement a holistic wellness policy that promotes good nutrition, encourages physical activity, and supports the healthy emotional and social development of our children.

Connection: Through the study of an instrument, fine motor skills are developed. Also, the use of diaphragmatic breathing, as used to play all wind instruments, has been shown to increase lifespan.

Kindergarten Program

Program Description

The early childhood education years are critical foundational years for our students and our programs contribute to the overall success of our district as measured in multiple ways (MCAS, formative assessments, parent and staff satisfaction surveys and success of Masconomet students). We currently have two kindergarten models: one five day tuition-based program and three classes that run three full days. This year there is another information session in January regarding the five-day kindergarten to potentially encourage greater interest in this program. In addition, a survey was sent to families in an effort to evaluate whether there was a need to revisit our current model. This survey revealed that the large majority of families in Topsfield that have children entering between the years 2012-2016, would prefer their children attend more than three days of kindergarten. Moving towards a five day program for all Steward School kindergarten students is part of a future vision, due to the fact that 80% of Kindergarten students in the state of Massachusetts attend school for five full days.

Connection to School Improvement Plan/District Goals:

District Goal #1: Student Achievement/Learning Needs of Children: We will meet the needs of all our learners including those who are academically able and academically challenged. Our children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our instructional program offering should reflect this continuum. Our children will achieve at levels that exceed state and federal requirements during the next three years as measured by the MCAS and/or local assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics in all grades tested in the aggregate and for all subgroups.

District Goal #2 Staff Recruitment, Retention and Succession planning for Management Staff: We will develop and execute a plan to address current and future needs regarding the recruitment, professional development and retention of a “highly qualified” faculty and staff. We will also develop a long term plan to deal with a successful transition to new management upon the retirement of current management.

District Goal #4: Everyday Skills & Responsibilities: We will begin to teach our children skills that will allow them to successfully function in today’s society and to make their world a better place.

In addition, there is current consideration to adding another 5-Day program if there is enough interest from the community. According to the census for the 2012-2013 school year there are 60 children of kindergarten age. In a recent survey, when asked which program each family would prefer for a child entering for the 2012-2013 school year, 60 families responded. This number matches the census number for this coming school year. Fifty-nine percent of families preferred the 5-day program either regardless of tuition or without tuition. Twenty-percent preferred a 4-day option and 15% preferred the 3-day option.

Library Program

Submitted by Kathy Curran

Program Description

The library staff is responsible for instructing students in grades K-6 on library skills such as choosing appropriate books, reading independently, using reference materials, how to return books to the appropriate location, being an active listener and recognizing the components of a story and characteristics of genre through read-alouds. Increasingly, instruction in the critical use of websites and databases as sources for information is part of the research unit. The librarian also has the responsibility of maintaining and updating the fiction and nonfiction collection with titles appropriate to the grade and reading level of the students. All books purchased for, or donated to, the library are processed within house.

In addition to regular library duties, the staff has also been responsible for the preparation of, and assistance with, the WSPS and WPRO presentations, lamination for the staff at both schools, poster making and the assisting with two annual book fairs. Lastly, when a new unit begins, the library staff frequently compiles a collection of books that pertain to the unit of study so the children can easily access material and information when conducting research.

Connection to School Improvement Plan/District Goals

District Goal #1: Student Achievement/Learning Needs of Children: We will meet the needs of all our learners including those who are academically able and academically challenged. Our children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our instructional program offering should reflect this continuum. Our children will achieve at levels that exceed state and federal requirements during the next three years as measured by the MCAS and/or local assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics in all grades tested in the aggregate and for all subgroups.

District Goal #4: Every Day Skills and Responsibilities: We will begin to teach our children skills that allow them to successfully function in today's society and to make their world a better place.

Library Instruction: The current level of staffing in the library allows for one professional librarian, a .5 library associate position and a .4 library aide position. In order to fully serve classes, assist teachers with material deposits, lamination requests and book requests and process and maintain the library collection we have barely managed with this configuration.

Library Books: Book requests are solely in the nonfiction area with the emphasis at Proctor to strengthen our World Cultures offerings for the sixth grade social studies curriculum and at Steward to expand our collection of books dealing with math, colonial history and science to ensure that the reading level needs of all our learners are met. We have also included some nonfiction crafts and sports books at Steward for reading across grade levels. A minimal amount of library supplies have been requested in each building to be certain that new books are properly prepared and older titles maintained for extended use.

AV Supplies/Equipment: Laminating film and poster paper rolls are the only two AV supplies requested this year. After doing an inventory of film that could be used with both the newer and older laminators in each building, we have reduced this request as far as we think possible. Each year Steward uses approximately 8 – 10 setups on the laminator (16-20 rolls of film) and Proctor about 6-7 setups (12-14 rolls of film). We share supplies between buildings when necessary. Poster paper to be used on the ProImage Plus 3000 is becoming increasingly expensive. We do alternate the cost between buildings. Proctor will be absorbing the item this year.

Library Automation: The conversion of our present library automation system to an updated and web based program is a request that I feel should be put in the pipeline as part of our Technology Plan and an item to be considered in the Capital Plan. Our present system is eleven years old, no longer being maintained by contract, and failing. We are able to do the kind of patchwork fixes that are needed to keep the system functional but it is a very time consuming venture and can only be done when we do not need to access the system for regular daily use. Our present system is also the only major MAC user in either building which can create further technical problems. An expanded explanation of the proposed ATRIUM system was submitted as part of the library budget packet.

Math Support Specialists

Submitted by: Donna Sewall, Molly Dunn and Jennifer Steinberg

Program Description

The Math Support Specialists are responsible for providing math support to struggling students through the Response to Intervention Program (RTI). The Math Specialists assess student skills and establish goals for all RTI Tier II and Tier III students. The Math Specialists evaluate each student and create individualized improvement plans. The Specialists provide; quality instructional support using research-based interventions and assessment tools, continually monitor student progress, maintain data-based documentation on each student in the RTI program, complete RTI support plans with progress notes and updated goals, participate in team decision-making to review data and information to ensure comprehensive evaluations, consult with classroom teachers to discuss student progress, discuss progress with parents, participate in weekly grade level Instructional Team or Job Alike Meetings and periodically meet to discuss RTI implementation. In addition to collecting, entering and managing RTI data in excel spreadsheets, and AIMSweb, the math support specialists are responsible for the administration of district wide assessments and MCAS. Math Support Specialists are also responsible for data analysis and informing administration and teachers of trends, and make recommendations accordingly. The Math Support Specialists generate reports, share data and provide necessary staff development for programs and assessments needed for each of the 5 - 6 building based Data Days and Progress Meetings.

The Proctor Support Specialist prepares students for the Math Olympiad contests by running lunch sessions for all grades, and administers, scores and reports all contests. This program had approximately 45 students attempting the contests in 2007-2008. During the year of 2008-2009, the program grew to include 75 students, and in 2009-2010 over 100 students participated with the 6th grade team receiving Highest Team Achievement status. Thus far, the program has had

over 70 students attempting the contests. In addition to Math Olympiad, the Proctor Support Specialist offers morning help to all grades before school begins. This program has also grown in participation. By continuously touching base with teachers, the Math Support Specialist has ensured that skills needed for student success in the classroom are being reinforced.

The Steward Support Specialist manages and organizes the Online Math League for students in grades 2 and 3. This before school program has encouraged 60 participants to practice and advance their mathematical thinking beyond the school day. There is an online component that allows parents to participate and monitor their child's progress as well.

Online Math League and Math Olympiad enrich all levels of math, and promote problem solving and creative thinking. All children are encouraged to participate in these programs. Teachers have commented on how the enrichment element of these programs help all students feel confident about problem solving in their math classes.

Lastly, the Support Specialists work directly with teachers in planning and instruction. Staff development by the Support Specialist enhances the math instruction for teachers and students. The Math Support Specialists model lessons to reinforce teaching strategies like differentiation and cooperative learning. Their combined experience teaching elementary and middle school math gives them an in-depth understanding of the direction of specific skills. They assist teachers in building the student's solid basic skills that will support later development. A benefit of this planning and modeling is improved math instruction with common language throughout the buildings.

Connection to School Improvement Plan/District Goals

District Goal #1: Student Achievement/Learning Needs of Children: We will meet the needs of all our learners including those who are academically able and academically challenged. Our children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our instructional program offering should reflect this continuum. Our children will achieve at levels that exceed state and federal requirements during the next three years as measured by the MCAS and/or local assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics in all grades tested in the aggregate and for all subgroups.

District Goal #3: We will develop a Strategic Technology Plan to ensure Topsfield Schools are leading the way in Technology Implementation and Instruction.

The total cost of both the Online Math League and Math Olympiad is less than \$800.

The Math Support Specialists are integral to the success of RTI and our students' mathematical growth and development. The support specialists are direct service providers and complete their administrative responsibilities within and beyond the school day.

Music Education

Program or Position Description

General Music (K-2):

The most important function of music for children in Kindergarten through Second Grade is to instill a genuine desire to be musical that will carry through adulthood. Steward School's general music curriculum is structured to develop the seven multiple intelligences through quality literature and performance in the classroom. The study of music is beneficial for its many outcomes, some of which include the development of social behaviors, such as cooperation and multicultural sensitivity; personal behaviors, such as self-discipline and self-esteem; and educational behaviors, such as integrated and "whole-brain" learning. Most important among these is music's potential for letting human beings share and communicate thoughts and feelings that transcend the written or spoken word. While music has as its basis a complex body of knowledge, making it worthy to be called an academic subject, the study of music also enhances all areas of the school curriculum, making music central to the core of all education.

General Music (3):

Above all else, the goal of the program is to empower children to feel that they can successfully sing and play instruments both alone and in a group. By learning a varied repertoire, students will learn the fundamentals of music and will be able to apply their knowledge to the singing voice, a woodwind instrument, a brass instrument, and a percussion instrument.

General Music (4-6):

The Proctor School music program includes the following: singing a variety of songs using proper technique, practicing proper technique on Orff instruments and other percussion instruments, learning a variety of folk dances from around the world, actively listening to and describing music, thinking about and discussing musical elements and vocabulary; composing and arranging, reading and writing music using standard music notation, and applying musical concepts to the core subjects (math, science, social studies, language arts, etc.) The ultimate goal of the music program is that students would become independent musical thinkers who can hear, understand, read, write, compose and improvise.

Instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of all learners through a highly varied combination of activities. Musical concepts are taught through/by singing, playing, dancing, composing, watching, listening, assessing, and more.

Why Music?

Music For All: Every individual has the potential to learn and appreciate the beauty of music. This gift should not be taken away from anyone.

Historical/Cultural Significance: Music always was, is, and will remain a fundamental element of society. An essential part of history, it is prevalent in our country's culture and traditions today and should be studied by all.

Self-discipline: Because music requires a special kind of focus, practice, and preparation, it helps to develop a strong work ethic in children at a young age.

Teamwork: Music offers a great opportunity for collaborative learning and teaches children to share, respect, and listen.

Communication Skills: Music is a language of its own and it allows children to convey a complexity of emotions. As an abstract art form, children learn to describe intangible ideas using concrete language.

Creativity: As a non-verbal language, music offers an outlet for each child's sense of creativity.

Beauty: Music, as with all the arts, is special in and of itself. Its intrinsic value cannot be overlooked.

Physical Education Program

Submitted by Ron Dienstmann and Jeannie Meehan

Program Description:

The Topsfield Physical Education Program provides students in Kindergarten with 30 minutes a week, in Grades 1-3 with 60 minutes a week, in Grades 4 & 5 with 75 minutes a week; and in Grade 6 with a total of 90 minutes a week of instruction within the Phys. Ed. setting. We focus on increasing overall self-confidence, teamwork, gross motor skill development, increasing fitness levels, resolving conflicts, good decision-making, socialization, risk taking and having fun. Physical Education is also a great venue to further promote the social and emotional development of children. Teamwork and cooperation are stressed daily as are concepts of fairness, honesty, tolerance, empathy, communication and respect. The children are encouraged to try their best, demonstrate positive words and actions, play safely, take risks, include all and problem solve. Other areas targeted during physical education also include maintaining self-control, fostering independence, following directions, having appropriate peer interactions, demonstrating proper transitions, managing time and fostering effective leadership.

In the early grades at Steward, a concentration on motor skill development develops well-rounded physical capabilities, given that motor skills do not develop on their own. The fundamental movement abilities of walking, running and jumping, catching, throwing and kicking are explored through a high variability of practice experiences, then properly taught, and finally refined. This is done through a combination of cooperative activities and games and according to scientific research on how our brains best learn and memorize content.

Every month, the children are engaged in one week of locomotion skills and games, one week of balance skills and games, one week of manipulative skills and games, and the fourth one, being dedicated to cooperative games. One of the program's main focuses also on independent play, organizing and managing their own games. The month of January is dedicated to developing their own games in small groups, and subsequently teaching them to the class, as a way of fostering creative thinking and leadership skills.

Unique among physical education classes almost anywhere, is the practical application of differentiated instruction (DI) during the teaching of any particular motor skill at Steward School. By developing lesson plans where every child is allowed to learn those motor skills according to his/her current level of readiness, the program has reached the least and most physically able children, in every single class session. Children that would otherwise feel uncomfortable or unsure of their abilities to learn and succeed in PE, are given various individual

strategies and opportunities to reach their current potential. Not found in any books, these pragmatic DI strategies developed here for PE, have contributed to even more inclusive and enjoyable experiences in the gym.

The Physical Education Program for Proctor School includes warm-ups, group activities, teamwork and wrap-ups/summarizers. The students play in such a way to enhance their personal growth and positive learning in an active environment. Time is spent on units pertaining to a specific sport or activity in which classes work on for one to several physical education periods. By increasing skill progression, practice times and providing positive opportunities, students can better understand rules and strategies necessary for successful learning & health related fitness. All students fully participate to the best of their individual ability and potential, hopefully discovering activities they continue to enjoy for lifelong pleasure. Winning, losing and scoring are not the focuses, but rather promoting skill development, a healthy lifestyle, a lifelong interest in activities and confidence. We value the whole process of applying skills & concepts in the PE setting rather than just the end product. Some of our units include: cooperative games, team building activities, volleyball, soccer, basketball, musical activities, Pillo Polo hockey, Badminton, Frisbee games, softball, create-a-game, modified dodge ball, and annual fitness challenge.

The dual role of guidance counselor/PE teacher at Proctor School is a unique opportunity to further integrate positive social skills with appropriate game play on a daily basis. Students are encouraged to consistently demonstrate safe, responsible behavior and a respect for themselves & others. We practice & acknowledge positive conflict resolution, consideration for others & accepting decisions. By utilizing humor, creativity, firm and gentle guidelines with specific instructions, coming to physical education class is hopefully viewed as a highlight of a child's educational experience. Our main goal of the PE program is for students to increase their overall levels of fitness, while at the same time, promoting positive feelings associated with participating in physical activities. Hopefully, all that is learned as children in elementary PE class, will continue throughout their adult lives.

Connection to School Improvement Plan/District Goals

District Goal #1: Student Achievement/Learning Needs of Children: We will meet the needs of all our learners including those who are academically able and academically challenged. Our children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our instructional program offering should reflect this continuum. Our children will achieve at levels that exceed state and federal requirements during the next three years as measured by the MCAS and/or local assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics in all grades tested in the aggregate and for all subgroups.

District Goal #4: Everyday Skills & Responsibilities: We will begin to teach our children skills that will allow them to successfully function in today's society and to make their world a better place.

District Goal #6: Health and Wellness: We will develop and implement a holistic wellness policy that promotes good nutrition, encourages physical activity, and supports the healthy emotional and social development of our children.

Since FY05, the physical education teachers have remained frugal in their efforts when purchasing new materials for their programs and have either remained stagnant or decreased in the physical education supplies line item. The PE position at Steward was reduced from 1.0 to .8. Based on the current schedule, no further reductions should be considered.

Preschool

Program Description

The Steward Preschool is comprised of 3 programs. The integrated preschool program is designed to serve both children with disabilities, and 2.9-4 year olds from the general population within Topsfield, in a developmentally appropriate setting. Children with special education needs can comprise up to 49% of the classes. The intensive preschool program is designed to serve both children with disabilities, and 2.9-3 year olds from the general population within the Tri-Town, in a developmentally appropriate setting. The percentage of children with special education needs in this class exceeds 49%. Support services in both programs which can be integrated into the curriculum include speech and language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and guidance. These services are provided within the context of the school day, based upon the needs of the individual children. Classes for three year olds are offered on a 2 or 3 day schedule (3 hour sessions). Classes for four year old students are offered on a 3 or 5 day schedule (four hour sessions). The extended day/lunch bunch program is offered to all members of the preschool to provide quality before and after school care for preschool students. We currently offer a variety of extended day options as of the 2011-2012 school year. Children can be dropped off as early as 7:00 am and picked up as late as 4:30 pm. These options have allowed us to remain competitive in the preschool market, allowing children to attend school in the school they will most likely attend for their primary years.

Connection to School Improvement Plan/District Goals

District Goal #1: Student Achievement / Learning Needs of Children: We will meet the needs of all of our learners including those who are academically able and academically challenged. Our children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our instructional program offerings should reflect this continuum. Our children will achieve at levels that exceed state and federal requirements during the next three years as measured by the MCAS and/or local assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics in all grades tested in the aggregate and for all sub groups.

District Goal #2 Staff Recruitment, Retention and Succession planning for Management Staff: We will develop and execute a plan to address current and future needs regarding the recruitment, professional development and retention of a “highly qualified” faculty and staff. We will also develop a long term plan to deal with a successful transition to new management upon the retirement of current management.

District Goal #4: Everyday Skills & Responsibilities: We will begin to teach our children skills that will allow them to successfully function in today’s society and to make their world a better place.

Manipulatives/Toys/Books:

- 40% of budget used towards continuing to provide appropriate materials to intensive preschool classroom
- Replacement of worn-out curriculum materials such as dolls, feltboards, and blocks

Enrichment:

- Provides 2-3 enrichment opportunities (storyteller, music appreciation concert, traveling museums) for preschoolers throughout the school year. Enrichment at the preschool level is not currently supported by TESPTO.

Reading Support Program

Submitted by: Nancy Swan, Marianne Monbleau and Jessica Minnaar

Program Description:

The Reading Support specialists are responsible for providing reading support to struggling readers through the Response to Intervention program, as well as performing the many administrative functions involved with providing that support. Using the DRA, QRI, A-Z, Fountas & Pinnell, and MCAS scores, the specialists determine which students are in need of support and provide direct instruction using research based interventions. Weekly and sometimes daily assessment of students’ written work is also necessary to provide feedback to the students and to inform instruction. Effective prescriptive instruction is critical to students who are lagging behind their peers academically, since they have to make more growth in order to close the gap, while their peers continue to make growth as well.

Student progress is continually monitored, data based documentation on each student in the RTI program is maintained, and RTI support plans with progress notes and updated goals are written. Assessment data is collected, analyzed, and entered on excel spreadsheets to be shared with staff at grade level data meetings periodically throughout the school year. The reading specialists consult with classroom teachers to discuss student progress and plan lessons, consult with and attend parent conferences, participate in grade level instructional team meetings, and participate in RTI specialist team meetings. Reading support specialists are responsible for researching current best practices, as well as instructional and assessment tools to be used as interventions, and are continually modeling best practice for their colleagues. Reading specialists have also provided professional development to teachers in the form of training in new programs that support interventions.

Students can receive reading support in multiple types of instructional settings. Depending on the needs of the children, reading support specialists may provide service to small groups or one on one within the regular classroom, or to small groups or one on one outside of the regular classroom.

At Steward, the reading support specialists typically service about 30 students. Interventionists work either in the classroom or in pull-out sessions depending on the level of intervention necessary for each student. Tier II students receive 2-3 thirty-minute sessions, whereas those students in Tier III can receive up to five thirty-minute 1:1 sessions per week. The focus of these

sessions is to improve comprehension, phonemic awareness, fluency, writing and decoding skills.

At Proctor, the reading support specialist typically co-teaches in two fourth grade classrooms, one or two fifth grade classrooms, and one sixth grade classroom. This two teacher model allows the teachers to meet with small guided reading groups more often and for longer periods of time, which ensures that those students, who have been targeted for support, receive the intensity and duration of direct instruction necessary for them to close the gap as they move along the developmental continuum. This model also provides the opportunity for children to be engaged in rich literature discussions with their peers, which facilitates their growth in both oral and written comprehension. The reading support specialist, along with the help of paraprofessionals, provides fluency support three times a week in the morning to fifth and sixth graders, and during the scheduled intervention block to fourth graders. The fifth grade intervention block is used to support students who may need a small pull out group or one to one intervention in a specific skill area. The reading specialist at Proctor also maintains and updates the materials and resources in the Guided Reading Library.

Connection to School Improvement Plan/District Goals

District Goal #1: Student Achievement/Learning Needs of Children: We will meet the needs of all our learners including those who are academically able and academically challenged. Our children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our instructional program offering should reflect this continuum. Our children will achieve at levels that exceed state and federal requirements during the next three years as measured by the MCAS and/or local assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics in all grades tested in the aggregate and for all subgroups.

Response to Intervention

Submitted by: Jennifer Steinberg and Donna Sewall (RTI Coordinators)

Program Description

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tiered system that identifies students who experience difficulty learning. This is a data-based process that requires frequent progress monitoring at three different levels of intervention. This early intervention system is a structured framework by which educators support students having difficulty learning. The goal of this program is to strengthen student skills and close the gap as they move along the developmental continuum. The hope is to reduce the number of students that may eventually need specially designed instruction delivered by special educators. Interventions administered through this process are research-based and students are monitored closely in order to identify *specific* areas of concern or gaps in learning, as well as providing a framework by which educators consider the efficacy of intervention methods, strategies or instructional programs. This individualized instruction and assessment system assists educators in determining intervention intensity and the instructional needs of students who may be struggling, either academically and/or behaviorally or socially.

The RTI Interventionists meet with teachers to discuss upcoming math and reading lessons, answer questions and teach model lessons in order to reinforce best practices and differentiated instruction. The RTI Interventionists attend RTI meetings, type RTI plans, and meet with parents when needed.

The RTI Coordinators manage RTI binder/online files and update and coordinate RTI spreadsheets. The Coordinators are responsible for data analysis that informs administration and teachers of trends and recommendations are made accordingly. Additional responsibilities for the RTI Coordinators also include; creating assessment calendar, coordinating, copying, distributing and analyzing all math and reading assessments for Grades K-6, managing AIMSweb Pro Complete for all students, managing Reading A-Z, Writing A-Z (Steward), writing and researching grants, meeting with Curriculum Specialist from the Tri-Town School Union and nearby communities to discuss RTI, MCAS, and other related curriculum and RTI topics.

Connection to School Improvement Plan/District Goals

District Goal #1: Student Achievement / Learning Needs of Children: We will meet the needs of all of our learners including those who are academically able and academically challenged. Our children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our instructional program offerings should reflect this continuum. Our children will achieve at levels that exceed state and federal requirements during the next three years as measured by the MCAS and/or local assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics in all grades tested in the aggregate and for all sub groups.

District Goal #3: We will develop a Strategic Technology Plan to ensure Topsfield Schools are leading the way in Technology Implementation and Instruction.

AIMSweb Pro is an online progress monitoring program. AIMSweb can be used to assess students in reading, written language and math. In addition, Reading A-Z and Writing A-Z (Steward) are in the software budget for this year and may appear to be additions to the current budget. However, understanding the necessity of this software to support our assessment system, we respectfully request that these programs no longer be supported through grants and parent organizations, but rather be supported through the budget.

Due to the increased administrative responsibilities of RTI Coordinators as mentioned above, it is imperative that we support the time beyond the school day by looking at these positions and how these staff members can be compensated, or more time can be allocated to these roles within the school day, without compromising the time allotted for direct student instruction that is so necessary in a response to intervention program.

Stipend Positions

Position Description

Teacher in Charge

Stipend: 900

Teachers at both Steward and Proctor Schools assume some of the responsibilities of the Building Principal on a short-term basis whenever the Principal is away from the school building. Part-day substitute coverage may be utilized for the TIC as requested by the building principal with the approval of the Superintendent.

Grade Level Liaisons

Stipend: 300

The Grade Level Liaisons will work collaboratively with grade level teams and principals to enhance communication and support teaching and learning. The responsibility of the Grade Level Liaison is focused in the following areas:

- Coordinates, inventories and organizes the collection and dissemination of grade level materials.
- Communicates with grade level staff about teaching and learning at grade level meeting or staff meetings to provide consistency and continuity about important ideas and key initiatives.
- Promotes on-going collegial dialogue and advise principal about progress, success and next steps.
- Electronically submits a brief, grade level overview to newsletter.
- Makes recommendations to principal about needed materials, supplies or field trips.

Level I Mentor

Stipend: 1200

The goal of the Topsfield Mentor Program is to provide encouragement and support to new staff, while simultaneously allowing experienced faculty to continually share information and expertise with fellow colleagues. This program ensures that new staff members feel welcomed to the Topsfield school system. In addition, the program offers the materials, advice and information necessary to feel prepared and excited about their first experience in this system. The Mentor Program also allows experienced staff an opportunity to take on a leadership role. We believe that a quality mentoring program will further ensure the retention of well-qualified teachers in our school system.

Mentor Coordinator

Stipend: 1500

Mentor Coordinators will work with staff, principals and the Director of Curriculum

- Plan and conduct new teacher orientation prior to the start of the school year
- Conduct monthly meetings with new teachers on a variety of topics
- Update mentor program manuals before the August orientation
- Work with the Superintendent and principals to maximize effective mentee/ mentor relationships
- Keep a log of activities and necessary documentation as required by the MA Department of Education

This staff member(s) will also work with the Director of Curriculum and the Administrator of Student Services to refine, review and update the program.

Committee Work

Stipend: Based on Committee Assignment

This year we have had several committees that were formed in an effort to strengthen the curriculum and cultural structures within our schools. These were essential in maintaining current programs and to enhance and build upon newly developed initiatives. The committees will need further support next year as we recognize that the strongest form of professional development we can provide is collaboration between colleagues. This is vital work as we move towards the implementation of the Common Core Standards for the 2013-2014 school year.

Connection to School Improvement Plan/District Goals

District Goal #1: Student Achievement / Learning Needs of Children: We will meet the needs of all of our learners including those who are academically able and academically challenged. Our

children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our instructional program offerings should reflect this continuum. Our children will achieve at levels that exceed state and federal requirements during the next three years as measured by the MCAS and/or local assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics in all grades tested in the aggregate and for all sub groups.

District Goal #2 Staff Recruitment, Retention and Succession Planning for Management Staff:

We will develop and execute a plan to address current and future needs regarding the recruitment, professional development and retention of a “highly qualified” faculty and staff. We will also develop a long term plan to deal with a successful transition to new management upon the retirement of current management.

District Goal #3: We will develop a Strategic Technology Plan to ensure Topsfield Schools are leading the way in Technology Implementation and Instruction.

Some stipend positions exist, such as the Professional Development Committee and the Wellness Committee based on contractual and state requirements. However, the positions highlighted above have been essential in strengthening the communication and staffing structure at Steward and Proctor Schools. These additional responsibilities allocated to qualified and chosen staff members allow for the completion of tasks and communication to occur beyond the school day that cannot be completed while staff is directly servicing students.

Nurse (Health/Wellness)

Submitted by Melissa West, Karen Hoyt and Carol Cheever

Program Description

The School Nurse provides illness and injury assessment for all students and staff as well as medication administration. Beyond Band-Aids and ice packs, she develops and implements individualized care plans for students with Health Needs so they can access the curriculum and feel safe while in school. To prevent illness and injury, the Nurse continuously educates parents, students and staff about a wide variety of health issues and potential safety hazards. The nurse monitors immunizations and physicals for students and does a report for the state annually. Vision, Hearing and Postural screening and subsequent referrals are done annually as well as BMI for required grade levels. The School Nurse is part of the Special Education evaluation team, interviewing parents in regards to their child's development from birth to present and recommends health interventions as needed. The school nurse monitors absences for illness trends and reports to the Local Board of Health agent and parents as needed. The School Nurse is a resource for students, parents and staff.

Connection to District Goals

District Goal #4: Every Day Skills and Responsibilities: We will begin to teach our children skills that allow them to successfully function in today’s society and to make their world a better place.

District Goal #6: Health and Wellness: We will develop and implement a holistic wellness policy that promotes good nutrition, encourages physical activity, and supports the healthy emotional and social development of our children.

Tasks throughout the Year

- Medical Concerns PowerPoint presentations for staff, lunchroom aids, Steward Station staff, bus drivers
- Meet with staff regarding student health needs
- Update sub folders and nurse sub folder & sub nurse letter
- Evaluate incoming preschool, kindergarten, fourth grade and transfer students' medical records for immunizations, physicals, TB and lead levels.
- Create Individualized Health care plans as needed
- Medical forms for all employees, Varicella for new staff, MMR for new preschool staff
- Compile and distribute Severe Health Needs List to bus drivers, teachers, ancillary staff, fire department
- Update budget and order supplies
- Send out IHP letters to asthma, seizure, allergy, diabetes, etc. parents permission for medication administration
- Gather information for outgoing grade: emergency cards, health care plans any computer records
- Copy transferring students records and transfer out of computer
- End of the year report
- Developmental histories and health assessment
- Work with Emergency Team
- Monitor daily attendance
- Weekly reports ILI and other illnesses to the Superintendent and the local board of health as needed
- Work with all staff to prevent illness transmission
- Collect and organize emergency cards, checking for health history.
- Put all new students in computer and review records for immunizations, physicals and past medical history
- Incoming kindergarten power point presentation
- Update Emergency Response Book check supplies in bag add care plans, severe health needs and health needs list, ABC list, Bus list, alphabetical list
- Vision, hearing, postural screening and height and weight documentation. Send letters to all first and fourth grade parents about BMI, letters to parents of all students who fail the recheck of vision, hearing postural screening.
- Intake of medication, collect parent and physician authorizations,
- Playground evaluation for safety: mulch depth, broken or missing parts, hazards etc.
- Renew delegation & standing orders
- State reports for kindergarten, preschool and preschool teachers and BMI and Asthma report
- Inventory of health room and create health budget
- Teach CPR, Epi Pen, anaphylaxis, first aid, hand washing, cough etiquette, Tick/Lyme prevention, nutrition and scoliosis with appropriate grade level
- Screen all emergency cards for doctor , dentist and insurance
- Prepare preschool and kindergarten registration forms
- Screen for scoliosis for 5th and 6th graders

We would like to thank the Topsfield School Committee for continuing to support the education of our students and for taking the time to consider the Principals' input in the budget process.