

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

JOINT BUDGET MEETING

PROGRAM & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES REPORT

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2015

Programs & Services Committee Present: Ald. Sangiolo (Chairman), Leary, Norton, Rice, Blazar, and Baker,

Programs & Services Committee Absent: Ald. Hess-Mahan and Kalis

Finance Committee Present: Ald. Norton, Brousal-Glaser, Rice, Blazar, Fuller, and Lappin

Finance Committee Absent: Ald. Ciccone; and Gentile

Also present: Ald. Albright, Crossley, Johnson, and Lennon

City officials present: Maureen Lemieux (Chief of Staff/Chief Finance Officer), David Fleishman (Superintendent of Schools), Sandra Guryan (Deputy Superintendent / Chief Administrative Officer of Schools), Sue Dzikowski (Director of Finance; School Department), Steve Siegel (School Committee Member), Diana Fisher Gomberg (School Committee Member), Matt Hills (School Committee Member), Margie Ross Decter (School Committee Member), Angela Pitter Wright (School Committee Member), Margaret Albright (School Committee Member), and Ellen Gibson (School Committee Member)

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT'S BUDGET

Superintendent of Schools David Fleishman provided the attached presentation on the budget. The presentation began with an overview of the School Department's pillars of the school budget, the budget process, key challenges and system wide goals for the School Department as provided in the presentation. The focus of this year's budget is to improve on the existing initiatives and programs within the schools. The proposed budget also supports improving student achievement and social and emotional development.

Dr. Fleishman reviewed the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 budget priorities with the Committees. The school population is projected to grow by 180 students next year. The School Department's priorities include providing suitable resources for the increases in student population by adding staffing at the high school and middle school levels. In addition, the plan is to add additional literacy support to the larger elementary schools. The School administration will continue to develop and expand initiatives related to both education and social and emotional learning programs like the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) Program, the Calculus Project, literacy intervention, and additional computer programming opportunities. Professional development programs will continue with a focus on expanding the English Language Arts Coaching Program and enhancement of Social and Emotional Learning professional development.

The Superintendent informed the Committees that the proposed budget would fund progress toward meeting technology standards in all of the schools within the district. Technology in the schools is being used well and in a thoughtful way. The School Administration is implementing a new student information system and it continues to expand digital curriculum resources. The School Administration is also expanding the successful in-district special education programs. Other special education services programs will be restructured to provide the best possible services and support in-district learning.

The Charter Maintenance funds have increased due to the allocation of additional Fiscal Year 2015 Chapter 70 funds. In addition, there is an expansion of the preventative maintenance program for the upcoming fiscal year. There is also an increase in the number of custodial staff to serve some of the large school buildings.

The School Department will also be continuing partnerships with Riverside Community Care and Newton Wellesley Hospital to assess mental health and well-being of all students. An additional social worker position was added to this budget for out of district students.

There will be an addition of 21.3 full-time positions within the School Department, which correlate with the enrollment increases. The elementary schools are expected to add twenty-six new students with one new teacher and one new reserve teacher position. There will also be an addition of 2.5 full-time literacy specialists to increase staff for the English Language Learning Program in the elementary schools to address an increase in the number students requiring this program. The average class size at the elementary school level will be 20.8 students. The School Department is planning to hire two additional full-time teachers and a reserve teacher at the middle school level. The average team size at the middle schools for Fiscal Year 2016 is 88 students. The high schools will increase by five full-time teachers and one reserve teacher. There is an increase in the high school athletics subsidy for buses, equipment and league dues at the high school level.

The presentation continued with a review of student services highlights, which include adding a Grade 8 integrated classroom at Day Middle School, extending the middle school SPARK program to Grade 9 at Newton South High School, and adding a full time Inclusion Facilitator position to support children transitioning from preschool to kindergarten.

The Superintendent concluded his presentation with information on building operations. There was an increase of one full-time employee in Custodial Support as of January 2015 to address elementary school needs. There is a small reduction in Charter Maintenance to counterbalance the new custodian position. There is a reduction in districtwide equipment and furniture, as the Carr School Project is complete.

The proposed School Department budget for Fiscal Year 2016 is \$203,710,912. Salaries and benefits for School Department employees total 85% of the budget and the other 15% of the budget is dedicated to expenses. There is an increase of \$7.9 million, which is a 4% increase over the Fiscal Year 2016 budget.

Capital Improvement Plan

Progress continues on the ongoing school building projects at Angier, Zervas, and Cabot Elementary Schools. A preschool working group was formed to develop the best options for preschool classroom relocation and improvements to the program. The School Administration will be reviewing and implementing recommendations developed by the working group.

Questions and Comments

The School Department is asking for a 4% increase in the upcoming budget and revenues are only going up approximately 2.5%. How is the Administration funding the School budget increase? Chief Financial Officer Maureen Lemieux responded that there are no cuts in either the municipal or the school budgets. Some of the City and School expenditures go up, others go down, and some stay the same. All of the departments within the City including the School Department build their budgets up from zero to understand what the needs are in the department. Ms. Lemieux and Deputy Superintendent of Schools Sandy Guryan work together on the School Department's budget. They look at all of the cost drivers including growth in enrollment, out of district placement, transportation costs and growing other post-employment benefits.

The City had a very successful bond sale that included advanced refunding, which saved the City approximately \$2 million in interest. There have also been tremendous amounts of energy efficiency projects that have generated significant savings. The City also recently entered into a very favorable natural gas contract. The savings from these things and other projects have allowed the City to fund increases in the upcoming budget without making cuts.

The special education costs in Newton have gone up significantly and the percentage increases seem to be higher than other communities; why is that? The Superintendent responded that he is not surprised that Newton spends more than other communities do. Newton offers excellent regular educational programs and it follows that it would provide excellent special education programs. There is a cost to providing excellent services. The School Department looks at how it can be as efficient and cost effective as possible. In addition, by bringing more special education students in district, the needs have become more intensive. The School Department has also seen an increase in the number of special need students at the preschool level. The School Department continues to look at how to best use resources. As the elementary schools are replaced or renovated, additional space will be incorporated for special education.

It seems like there are a disproportionate amount of low-income and minority students on Individual Education Plans (IEP). Could it be possible that historically over placement of some populations has occurred and that some of these students only need educational support? The Superintendent responded that Newton is not like some districts that have a higher proportion of students in those demographics that you refer to on IEPs. Some of those students have learning disabilities that do not require intensive support and in some cases, the students have emotional challenges. There is a team looking at why there is a disproportion of students in certain demographics on IEPs. The School Department hopes to make progress in this area.

Why is the School Department not offering full day kindergarten? The School Administration would love to offer full day kindergarten but the kindergarten classes are large enough to require additional support for teachers, if they went to a full day. With the resources that the School Department has, having the intensive intervention in literacy for students who need it is what the School Department would like to focus on; however, the School Administration will continue to look at the possibility of going to a full day kindergarten.

How accurate have enrollment numbers been when you look at forecast to actual numbers? Sandy Guryan stated that there is a section related to that in the enrollment analysis portion of the school budget book. Two years ago, the projections were very accurate. Projections are never perfectly accurate but the forecast numbers and the actual numbers have continued to be close. Last year the School Department projected higher than the actual, which had not been the case for several years. The numbers were adjusted but the School Department still comes up with growth numbers for the next fiscal year. The projections are generally within .5 to 1% of accuracy on the districtwide enrollment.

What planning is needed for additional School Department projects and what is being considered for pre-school facilities? It is time that the City has a dedicated pre-school space. It is a high priority and the School Department will be working with the City Administration to find space.

Starting last summer, as the School Department worked on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) update, they looked at the long-range timeline and made changes. The preschool space needs were incorporated into the CIP, as a capital need. The School Administration is investigating opportunities to lease space in the City for preschool and shifting space at schools. There is a lot of benefit of locating the preschool program in one location. The Capital Improvement Plan includes prioritization for the preschool program and some funding for at least the studying options.

The Capital Improvement Plan reflects the recognition that Lincoln-Eliot Elementary School is likely to be the next large school project due to the age and the condition of the building and enrollment pressures. Ward Elementary School is expected to be the next project after the Lincoln-Eliot project; however, that may change due to ever changing needs, enrollment projections and projects that qualify for Massachusetts School Building Authority funding.

What do projections look like in terms of the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB)? The City and School Department are partners in working to fund OPEB liabilities. The School Department has been taking 2.5% of the compensation costs of newly hired employees that take health insurance. It is the third year that the School Department has been doing this and the budget line item continues to grow. The School Department increased the percentage to 3.25% in the upcoming budget.

The funding for Charter Maintenance is going down and it should be increasing, which is concerning. What is being deferred because of the decreases in Charter Maintenance? What are

the operation plans going forward for the school buildings? Ms. Guryan feels that the funding actually went up this year. The City received additional Chapter 70 aid that was allocated to the schools, which resulted in an increase to the Fiscal Year 2015 Charter Maintenance Account. Therefore, the original dollar amount in Fiscal Year 2015 is less than the proposed Fiscal Year 2016 funding of \$3 million. As a result of CIP funding, the City has done a number of projects to improve the school buildings allowing Charter Maintenance funds to be used for preventative maintenance, summer projects, and smaller repairs.

What are the guidelines the School Department uses for building maintenance? The School Department had to submit maintenance plans to the MSBA in order to qualify for funding for the Angier School. The School Department upgraded their maintenance documentation for that purpose. The School Department also provides monthly reports on the maintenance work that goes on in all of the school buildings on the School Committee web page.

Has the School Department done any fee related surveys? The School Administration provided a full update to the School Committee last May or June on the fee surveys. There are no changes to the fees in the upcoming budget. The Administration will provide a report to the School Committee in the fall on the fees with the final Fiscal Year 2015 report. There was request that the School Department provide the report of that meeting to the Board of Aldermen.

How is the City going to fund the Lincoln-Eliot School Project? Will it require another override? In addition, the School Department needs to look holistically at the transportation needs for the north sides. The questions regarding Lincoln-Eliot School and transportation on the north side will be discussed later.

Are there any plans to expand the science labs at Newton South High School? It is something that the School Department would like to but there are higher priority needs in other schools. The Superintendent believes that there is enough high school space and that high school students are well served.

Is the School Department pursuing implementing the One to One Technology Program? The School Department is not doing the One to One Technology Program but utilizing technology carts in individual classrooms. Many students bring technology to school but there is concern regarding equity.

Does the budget include potential for the need for additional buses? The School Department has developed a criterial matrix that includes transportation. There is no need for additional funding this upcoming year as the buses for the Angier relocation to the Carr School are already funded and the Zervas relocation will not occur in the upcoming fiscal year.

Several Aldermen asked that the Board be regularly updated on future building plans and redistricting plans.

Members of both Committees thanked the members of the School Administration and School Committee for joining the Committees for discussion of the school budget.

Committee Actions

Ald. Rice moved approval of the School Department's budget and Capital Improvement Plan in Programs and Services Committee, which was approved unanimously. Ald. Brousal-Glaser moved approval of the School Budget in the Finance Committee, which carried unanimously.

The Committees adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruthanne Fuller, Acting Chairman
Finance Committee

Amy Sangiolo, Chairman
Programs & Services Committee

Newton Public Schools

Newton, MA

Fiscal 2016 Budget

Board of Aldermen
April 15, 2015

Pillars of a School Budget

1. Class Size
2. Breadth of Program – electives, Fine Arts Programs, Extra Curricular Activities, etc.
3. Student Services – Special Education, Mental Health Services
4. Operational Infrastructure – Custodial, Clerical, Maintenance, Utilities, Technology, Transportation
5. Educational Infrastructure – Professional Development, Curriculum and Technology Support, School Administration

Budget Process

- Adhere to School Committee Guidelines
- Review system goals and student performance data
- Collaborate with building and program leaders to assess resource needs
- Review staffing and structures needed for growing district
- Communication between school and city administrations

Key Challenges

NPS continues to contend with four significant issues:

- ✓ overall enrollment growth and the increasing diversity of the student body;
- ✓ implementation of federal and state requirements and accountability measures;
- ✓ meeting the diverse educational, social and emotional needs of all students; and
- ✓ the development of new buildings and maintaining aging facilities.

At the same time, we must strive to reach important systemwide goals for all students K-12, such as:

- ✓ narrowing the achievement gap;
- ✓ promoting critical thinking skills;
- ✓ providing effective social and emotional learning and mental health supports; and
- ✓ sustaining and improving professional learning and collaboration at all levels.

School Committee Budget Priorities

Enrollment

Provide appropriate resources to accommodate changes in student population...

- Add additional staffing at both high schools and the middle schools
- Provide additional literacy support to larger elementary schools

School Committee Budget Priorities, continued

Professional Development

Provide strong professional development programs that both improve teacher quality and strengthen the curriculum.

- Expand ELA coaching at the elementary level
- Continue training for instructional coaches
- Enhance Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) professional development

School Committee Budget Priorities, continued

Sustainable Pilots and Initiatives

Continue to pilot new initiatives and target longer term investments in academic and SEL interventions...

- Development of the STEAM Program at Newton South
- Enhance afterschool programs at the middle schools
- Expand the Calculus Project to all middle school grades
- Expand literacy intervention pilot to additional schools
- Offer additional opportunities in computer programming in response to high school student interest

School Committee Budget Priorities, *continued*

Facilities Mid- and Long-Range

Ensure appropriate support for mid- and long-range facilities planning...

- Review and implement the best option(s) from the preschool working group for classroom relocation and improvements
- Continue progress of the three current school building projects (Angier, Zervas, Cabot)

School Committee Budget Priorities, continued

Technology

Ensure our district has the technology, training and infrastructure necessary for effective teaching, learning and administration.

- Make progress towards meeting ambitious technology standard
- Implement the new Student Information System

School Committee Budget Priorities, continued

Charter Maintenance

Provide sufficient support to maintain our buildings appropriately and increase their energy efficiency.

- Add custodial staff to serve larger school buildings
- Allocate additional FY15 Chapter 70 funds to charter maintenance
- Expand the preventive maintenance program

School Committee Budget Priorities, continued

Special Education Services

Continue to explore ways to deliver special education services effectively and efficiently.

- Successful in-district programs will be expanded where there is demand (SPARK, Integrated)
- Programs will be restructured to assure effectiveness and efficiencies

School Committee Budget Priorities, continued

Student Services

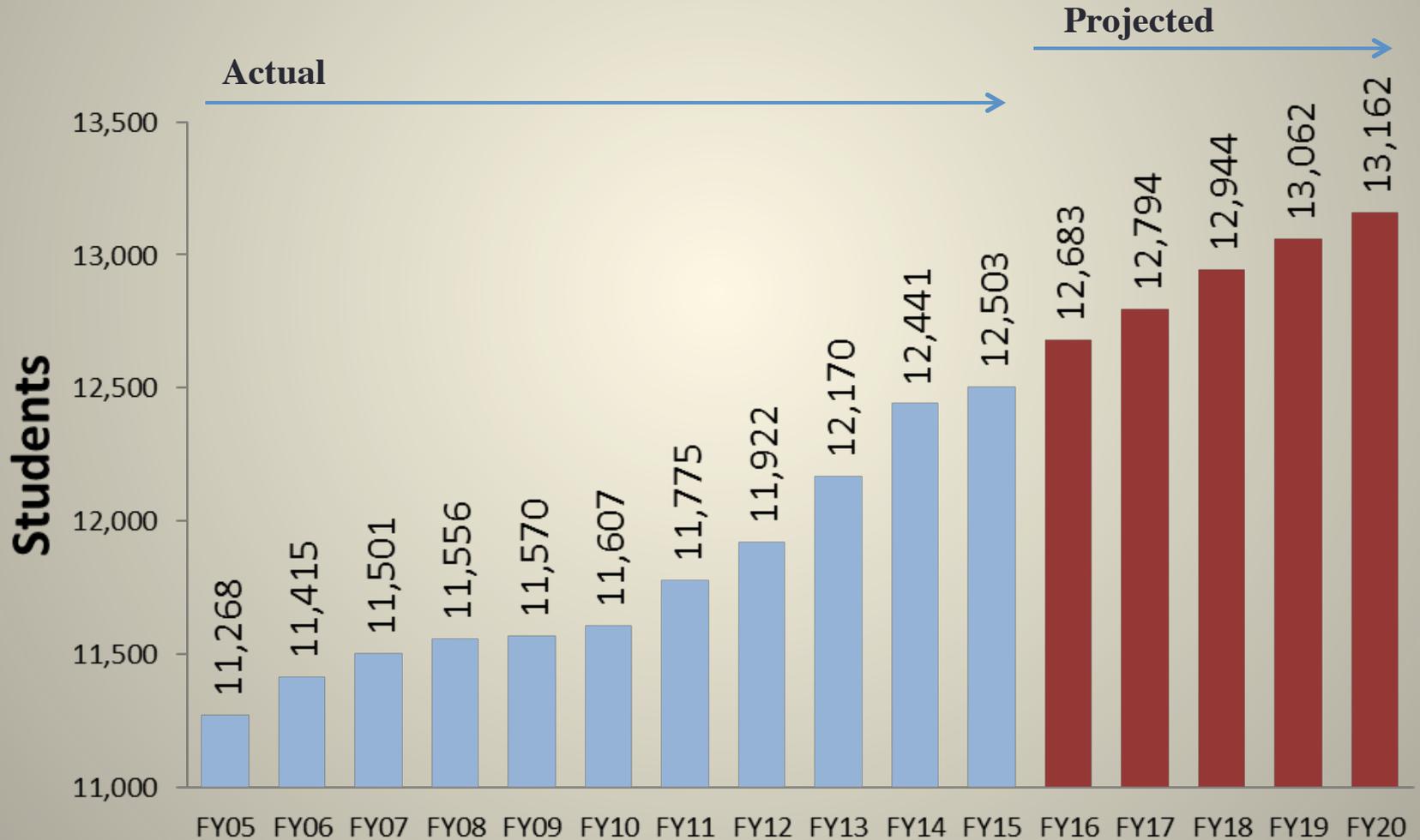
Ensure there is support to effectively assess and address the mental health and well-being of all students K-12...

- Continue partnerships with Riverside Community Care and Newton Wellesley Hospital
- Expand the mobile elementary stabilization program
- Add social worker support for students placed out-of-district
- Coordinate professional development for social emotional learning

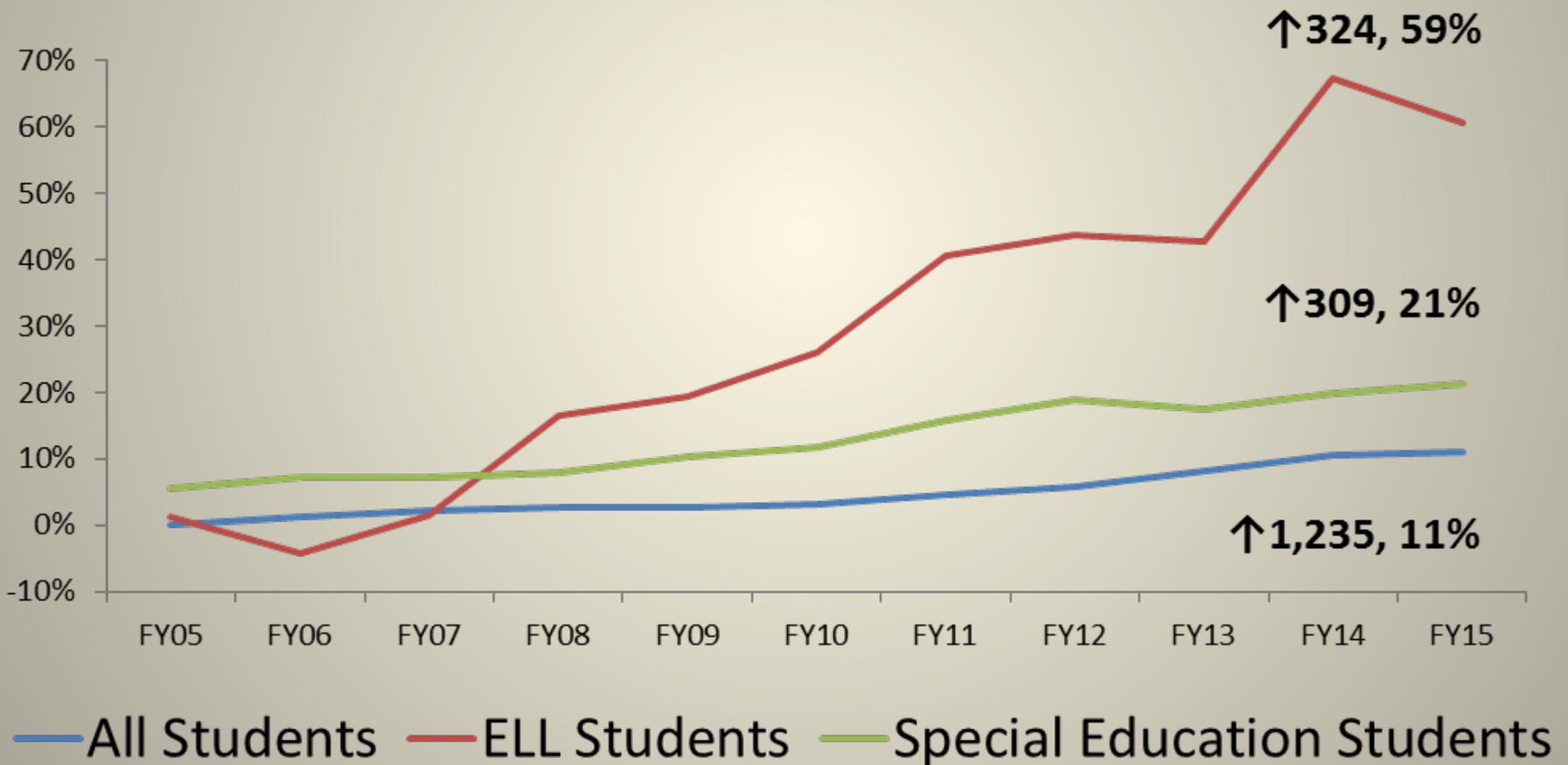
FY16 Budget Proposal

Salaries and Benefits	\$173,945,882	85%
Expenses	\$29,765,030	15%
TOTAL REQUEST	\$203,710,912	100%
FY16 Increase	\$7,879,748	
	% INCREASE	4.0%

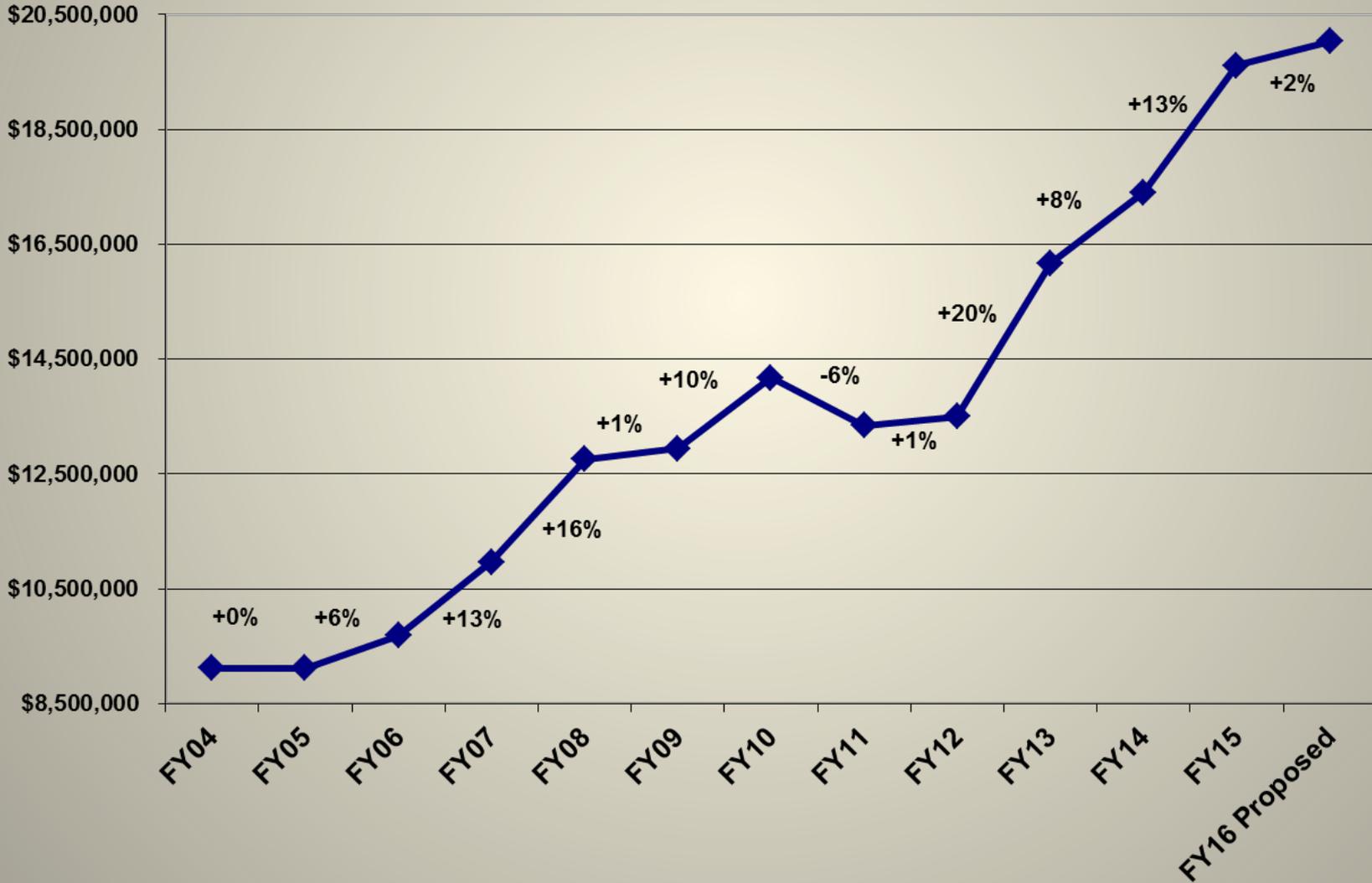
Enrollment Trends



Ten Year Growth of Special Populations



MA Chapter 70 Education Aid in Newton



FY16 Enrollment Related Cost Increases

Middle Schools (+46 Students)	+3.0 FTEs	\$175,200
High Schools (+108 Students)	+6.0 FTEs	\$350,400
English Language Learners	+1.0 FTE	\$58,400
Student Services <i>(+7.5 aides, 2.5 teachers, 1 inclusion facilitator, 0.3 speech & language)</i>	+11.3 FTEs	\$522,541
Per Pupil Allocation		\$50,000
Benefits		\$193,980
TOTAL ENROLLMENT	+21.3 FTEs	\$1.35M

Elementary School Highlights

Projected increase of 26 students

- -1.0 teacher
(Elementary school classrooms to 282, average class size of 20.8 students)
- +1.0 FTE reserve teacher
- +2.5 FTE literacy specialists for enrollment (shifting resources)
- Add teacher stipends for Angier/Zervas moves

Middle School Highlights

Projected increase of 46 students

- Maintain 2014-15 average team size of 88 students
- +2.0 FTE team teachers
- +1.0 FTE reserve teacher

High School Highlights

Projected increase of 108 students

- +5.0 FTE teachers/enrollment growth
- +1.0 reserve teachers
- Increase high school athletics subsidy for buses, equipment, league dues

Teaching & Learning Highlights

- Continue curriculum realignment in English/ Language Arts and Math
- Add intensive literacy intervention
- Expand the Calculus Project summer program to all middle school grades
- Provide targeted afterschool support for middle schools
- Increase literacy coaching in the elementary schools
- Use School Climate Transformation and Project Aware grants for strong SEL program

Information Technology Highlights

- Implementation of the new Student Information System
- Continue to expand digital curriculum resources
- Restructure secondary school instructional technology specialists

Student Services Highlights

- Add Grade 8 integrated classroom at Day
- Extend citywide middle school SPARK program to Grade 9 at South
- Add 1.0 FTE inclusion facilitator to support students transitioning from preschool to kindergarten
- Restructure Community Connections at North
- Add 0.5 BCBA and 0.5 social worker at Oak Hill

English Language Learners Highlights

- +0.7 FTE reserve
- +0.3 FTE for previously funded grant position

Highlights of Other Areas

Operations

- +1.0 FTE Custodial Support effective January 2015 (1.0 FTE Angier, 0.5 FTE Zervas at Carr, 0.5 FTE Williams, each averaged for one half of the year)
- Small reduction in Charter Maintenance to offset additional custodial support

Systemwide

- Reduce districtwide equipment and furniture after completion of one-time needs for Carr