

Weston Public Schools
Budget Assumptions
FY 2022

The Administration will develop the Recommended FY 2022 Operating Budget based on a comprehensive set of assumptions.

1. The Administration will recommend a FY 2022 Operating Budget framed by the District’s Five Goals, which are designed to advance the priority outcome of Developing Global Citizens:
 1. Academic Excellence
 2. Healthy Learning Environment
 3. Digital Learning
 4. Gauging District Progress
 5. Resources for Learning
2. The Administration will put forth strategic investments, balanced by opportunities to be more cost-effective, in the Recommended FY 2022 Operating Budget.

A. Strategic investment priorities:

- I. Optimizing digital learning whether students and staff are in-district or in Hybrid or Full-Remote Scenarios.
 - i. Upgrading selected digital resources and tools
 - ii. Increasing professional capacities with digital resource and tools.
- II. Creating and sustaining a more inclusive school climate that values and supports all students and does not tolerate discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or perceived differences.
 - i. Curriculum & Instruction
 - ii. Diversity of Staff
 - iii. Professional Learning
- III. Improving facilities, with attention to:
 - i. Investment in maintaining our facilities and preventative maintenance for all facilities.
 - ii. Prioritizing systematic attention to critical capital needs based on the 10-year Facility Master Plan (Phase 1, November 2017) and subsequent Phase 2 Analysis (Spring 2019). In so doing, coordinate with Town of Weston Facility Feasibility Committee on analysis and planning for long-term decisions regarding optimization of Weston Public Schools campus and facilities.

B. Potential cost containment areas:

I. Staffing:

- i. Review current staffing models for cost efficiencies where possible.

II. Programs:

- i. Continue the “Curricular & Co-Curricular Optimization Analysis,” underway since winter 2019.

III. Operations:

- ii. Review all areas of operations for efficiency and improvements that could yield financial savings.

3. Review current and projected Enrollment Data for impact on staffing levels. Listed below are the FY 2021 actual enrollment numbers as of October 1, 2020, and FY 2022 projected student enrollment figures. The FY 2022 projection is based on the comprehensive enrollment study presented to the BOE in November 2019. An updated projection will be presented in November 2020. Milone & MacBroom (CT) has been the District’s demographer the past three years, forecasting enrollment for kindergarten through grade 12. The firm has been rigorous in its analysis and projections, with a three-year running average differential (actual versus projected enrollment) of 0.50 percent or less. (For FY2021, their projection was off by only two students.) Our Special Education Department forecasts enrollment for all students in our pre-school program and those that are placed in educational facilities outside the Weston Public Schools. Neither the pre-school nor the out-of-district placement students are included in the kindergarten through grade 12 enrollment numbers below.

Grade	Actual Enrollment October 1, 2020	Milone & MacBroom Projected Enrollment 2021-2022	Change
K	122	127	+5
1	142	145	+3
2	131	152	+21
Hurlbutt Elementary School Total	395	424	+29
3	145	150	+5
4	176	155	-21
5	172	181	+9
Intermediate School Total	493	486	-7
6	172	178	+6
7	190	173	-17
8	196	195	-1

Middle School Total	558	546	-12
9	198	197	-1
10	194	197	+3
11	207	193	-14
12	204	207	+3
High School Total	803	794	-9
In-District Total (K-12)	2,249	2,250	+1
Pre-School	24	24	0
Total Enrollment	2,273	2,274	+1

Budget class sizes based on the following Board of Education guidelines: kindergarten and grade 1 class sizes range from 18-20, while grades 2 through 12 typically range from 20-24 per class. However, at the high school level, especially where a class may be a singleton, class sizes may exceed 24 on occasion.

Note: There are 24 students that attend our schools through the Open Choice program. These students are reflected in the enrollment numbers presented above. The decision to accept additional Open Choice students is mission driven and will be made when we make initial class size projections and establish estimated sections. We would add four new Open Choice students across Kindergarten and First Grade. In the past, we have delayed this decision until late August, which is disruptive to school planning and to the needs of Open Choice families. As space permits, additional students might be added in August, which can increase the revenue received through the Open Choice grant. At no point would additional Open Choice students be accepted if additional classroom teachers are required.

4. Include costs associated with employee contracts & health insurance benefits.
 - I. WAA: 2.25% GWI.
 - II. WTA: 0.75% GWI plus step, and a GWI of 1.7% at max step.
 - III. AFSCME: 2.0% GWI plus step.
 - IV. The salaries for employees that are not affiliated with a union would be determined in May-June 2021. Salary increases for the un-affiliated groups typically have been aligned to the parallel bargaining unit. For planning purposes, the Recommended FY 22 Operating Budget would show district-wide administrators with a 2.25 percent GWI (the WAA increase); District-wide support staff would be budgeted with a 2.0 percent GWI (the AFSCME increase).

- V. It is assumed that district will remain on the State Partnership Plan 2.0. The State Comptroller typically sets plan rates in April. For the FY 22 Budget, we will assume an 8% premium increase. It is further assumed that dental claims and administrative fees will be funded by the Operating Budget and not from the Internal Services Fund, as was the case for FY 2021.
5. The cost of consumable goods and services will be based on existing contracts or increase by a projected CPI of 1.6%. (CPI taken from the Bureau of Labor & Statistics and is based on CPI for the Northeast less food and energy, Year over Year for the data published through August of 2020).
 6. Meet all Federal and State mandates that pertain to Connecticut School Districts.
 7. Carefully monitor and examine the immediate and long-term impact to the Weston Public Schools of any State of Connecticut adopted budget.
 8. Continue to maintain and monitor current Pupil Personnel Services and Special Education programs and services for their efficacy, ensuring that all students eligible for special education services receive a free and appropriate public education as mandated through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The district will continue to explore ways to provide a continuum of services and new models of instructional delivery to address the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of students, supporting their individual growth and progress within the district.
 9. Examine areas of the budget that have historically caused financial pressures during the year and identify potential solutions.
 10. In addition to our annual operating budget, we will be preparing two-year pro-forma. The pro-forma will in addition to the annual contractual increases, highlight any recommended future initiatives.
 11. The Administration endorses the plans by the Board of Education to pursue a Tri-Board Meeting (BOE, BOS and BOF) in late-October/early November to gain guidance on budget development for FY 22 and beyond.