

**FY15-16
Ashford School
Superintendent's
Budget Presentation**

**A Narrative introduction and primer for the 2015-2016 budget development process
With three budget proposal options for consideration**

REVISED

For

Board of Education Meeting

January 22, 2015

Dr. James P. Longo, Superintendent of Schools

Superintendent's Budget Presentation

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Introduction to This Presentation

This presentation is designed to assist those who wish to participate in the Ashford School budget process. A new version of this document will be created to reflect decisions made at each Board of Education budget meeting until a final Board of Education budget is voted upon for submission to the Board of Finance on March 5th.

The first section of this document is a budget process primer for those who are new to the creation of an Ashford School budget. (If you have been attending budget meetings, or following the process, you may wish to skip the “Process Narrative,” and move right into the numbers.)

Hopefully this document contains everything that you need to feel informed and capable of engaging in our budget development dialogue. If not, and you require any further information, please first look on the Ashford School website (ashfordct.org) and if you do not find what you need there, give my office a call (860-429-1927, ext. 365), or send me an email (jplongo@ashfordct.org). I will be sure that you receive whatever information you need to understand and participate in our budget development process.

We look forward to your participation. Your opinions are valuable and will be included in the dialogue that ultimately results in a Board of Education proposal for the fiscal year 2015-2016 Ashford School Budget.

A Narrative Describing THE BUDGET PROCESS

Step One: The Initial Draft of the “Superintendent’s Budget”

This year’s budget is developed through the collation of proposals from the department heads, faculty, and administration of Ashford School as well as the residents of Ashford who participated in the process. This multi-step process has been intricately designed to include every Ashford constituency as well as to support the overall mission and vision of the Ashford Board of Education.

Initially I ask every administrator and teacher to submit a wish list of budgetary items that they believe would benefit their program and/or students, and formulate a first draft of the budget utilizing those wish list items. I then include in the initial “Superintendent’s Budget Proposal” input of Ashford residents. In order to gain this public opinion, I conducted forums to accept suggestions and concerns from the public on these dates:

- September 29, 2014 - Devoted of general concerns with a focus on staffing
- October 8, 2014 - General concerns and discussion of curriculum
- October 9, 2014 - General concerns and discussion of facility, building and grounds

The public input that resulted from these meetings includes requests for:

- Writing teacher to focus and increase the school’s overall writing scores
- Foreign language teacher to create and provide diversity in foreign language offered to students
- Social Workers to make available for families and students who may need outreach attention
- Library/Media Specialist to fill the vacant position from a staff member’s retirement
- Paraprofessionals to continue to assist students and teachers
- Curriculum changes such as upgrading the writing program and purchasing literature to replace the outdated writing program
- Technology support such as in-class computers, smart boards, iPads and improved infrastructure
- Support for special programs associated with Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) and the new Robotics program implement in FY13-14
- Increase efficiency with assessments and application of its results

In addition to the public feedback, I met with each individual department head to understand their proposals and collect their justification for their requests. I also encouraged all staff to submit concerns, requests and innovative ideas for the upcoming school year. Each administrator presented their proposed budget for their

respective departments, which includes a listing of priority levels. Proposed budgets were received from the following departments:

- Regular Education to address curriculum and staffing
- Special Education to prepare for anticipated needs
- Technology to adhere to current schedule of upgrades
- Maintenance to schedule necessary projects for safety and security
- General supply and equipment requests
- Curriculum development timelines and requests (including professional development and support materials)

These proposed budgets had many similarities with the items that were proposed during the public sessions, which include staffing, curriculum changes, STEAM program and technology.

Although, we may not be able to accommodate every single item on the proposed budgets from each department, we strive to satisfy the necessities and direct the education program of Ashford School in a continuous innovative direction.

The budget process includes many other components such as staff salaries and benefits which are non-negotiable due to compliance with multiple year collective bargaining agreements, and items such as utilities and fuel, which are subject to market fluctuations. These mediated or market based items contribute to a large percentage of the total budget.

The Role of Grants Funding

The history of educational grants has shown a decline in awarded amounts for several consecutive years. . This is also an important factor to consider during the budget process because many essential grant expenses will be absorbed by the school's budget. If we cannot find budgetary support for those expenses previously supported by grant funds we may not be able to continue to provide the programs or continue staffing the position. It is imperative that we prepare for declines in the our grant funds to include such expenses in the proposed budget so we may prevent a sudden loss of a program or staffing position due to lack of funding.

With all these considered, we have itemized and prioritized all suggestions and feedback to what we currently have as the Superintendent's FY15-16 Proposed Budget.

A Three-Year BUDGET HISTORY SUMMARY

Budget Year	Budget Amount	% Change Inc/(Dec)
FY13-14	\$ 7,035,706	(0.74%)
FY14-15	\$ 7,288,036	3.59%
<i>FY15-16 Initial Proposal</i>	<i>\$ 7,666,946</i>	<i>5.20%</i>

1.

INITIAL SUPERINTENDENTS BUDGET PROPOSAL 5.20%

Proposed Budget at 5.20% increase over FY14-15

Source of 5.20% increase

*(**Note that there are other objects that experience an increase that equal decreases in budget**)*

1. 2.88% (\$ 209,891) Total Increase in Salaries for all faculty, staff and administration
2. 0.53% (\$ 38,394) Total Increase in Employer Liability for Insurance and Taxes
3. 1.55% (\$ 112,998) Total Increase in Equipment which includes Technology Budget of \$90,000
4. 0.21% (\$ 15,035) Total Increase in Textbooks for Curriculum Upgrades in Social Studies & Writing

Ashford School Improvements funded through the 5.20% Budget Proposal

Summary of Expenses included in this (5.20%) budget proposal

- One Writing Coach/Teacher (we have a staff member returning from leave. If we do not add this position we will have to lay off a teacher, likely resulting in unemployment expenses.)
- One Track & Field Coach and an Assistant Coach for Basketball
- One Special Education paraprofessional (based on needs associated with a specific student)
- Provide more funding for After School Clubs/Activities & After School Director
- Two part-time custodians, (added this year bud not budget for)
- Accommodate salary/rate increases per AEA and MEUI collective bargaining agreements
- Health/Dental Insurance anticipated premium increase of 12.5%, provided by Ovation Benefit Advisors
- Employer contributions for H.S.A (dependent on results of negotiations for MEUI)
- Retirement cost for one additional teacher's healthcare (a contract item)
- The last phase for remote boiler access through computers with installation of cameras
- Installation of door magnets as part of School Security Improvement Plan
- Tile and grout restoration, beginning in the primary wing of the school
- Liability insurance, through CIRMA, rate increase 3%
- Curriculum Upgrades for elementary & middle school textbooks - Social Studies & Writing Materials
- Upgrade Elementary School furniture
- MIDI Keyboard Recording Lab
- Replacement of all Gym Mats, and upgrade sports safety equipment
- About \$90,000 budget for technology equipment and maintenance

Ashford Board of Education
 Superintendent's Proposed Budget
 5.20% Budget Increase for FY15-16

Account

Account Number	Account Description	Original Budget FY12-13	Original Budget FY13-14	Original Budget FY14-15	Superintendent's Proposed Budget FY15-16	FY14-15 v. FY15-16 Budget \$ Inc/Dec	% of Budget Increase
General Fund (01)							
111	Certified Staff	2,898,344.00	2,893,253.00	2,939,556.60	3,008,857.00	69,300.40	0.95%
112	Non-Certified Staff	1,383,846.00	1,370,477.00	1,392,724.78	1,533,316.27	140,591.49	1.93%
200	Insurance	1,099,111.00	1,069,736.00	1,209,190.57	1,157,836.81	(51,353.76)	-0.70%
205	Other Insurances	269,592.00	284,575.00	332,631.28	422,378.97	89,747.69	1.23%
312	Instructional Improvement	27,350.00	50,750.00	36,750.00	37,750.00	1,000.00	0.01%
319	Professional Services	240,700.00	279,100.00	256,100.00	240,400.00	(15,700.00)	-0.22%
321	Utilities	85,000.00	85,000.00	78,000.00	72,000.00	(6,000.00)	-0.08%
322	Maintenance	77,150.00	98,450.00	91,760.00	112,668.00	20,908.00	0.29%
323	Equipment Maintenance	4,450.00	4,450.00	3,600.00	3,600.00	0.00	
324	Liability Insurance	44,103.00	34,805.00	35,390.00	46,798.91	11,408.91	0.16%
331	Transportation	77,010.00	97,420.00	69,907.90	60,271.25	(9,636.65)	-0.13%
340	Communication	13,850.00	11,200.00	11,500.00	12,000.00	500.00	0.01%
370	Outside Services	355,980.00	272,100.00	350,700.00	358,500.00	7,800.00	0.11%
390	Purchased Services	75,500.00	50,172.00	50,672.00	51,172.00	500.00	0.01%
410	Supplies	116,788.00	133,213.00	133,984.00	153,237.00	19,253.00	0.26%
411	Fuel	107,693.00	109,798.00	106,651.00	105,000.00	(1,651.00)	-0.02%
412	Fuel	106,346.00	67,770.00	53,500.00	50,500.00	(3,000.00)	-0.04%
420	Textbooks	10,409.00	16,116.00	11,965.00	27,000.00	15,035.00	0.21%
430	Library Books	4,567.00	3,566.00	3,566.00	3,400.00	(166.00)	0.00%
540	Equipment	77,410.00	79,528.00	66,263.00	179,261.00	112,998.00	1.55%
640	Dues & Fees	13,050.00	24,225.00	22,624.00	30,499.00	7,875.00	0.11%
700	Audit Adjustments	0.00	2.00	30,999.75	500.00	(30,499.75)	(0.00)
General Fund (01) Totals		7,088,249.00	7,035,706.00	7,288,035.88	7,666,946.21	378,910.33	5.20%

OTHER BUDGET OPTIONS

Budget Year	Budget Amount	% Change Inc/(Dec)
FY13-14	\$ 7,035,706	(0.74%)
FY14-15	\$ 7,288,036	3.59%
<i>FY15-16</i>	<i>\$ 7,569,170</i>	<i>3.86%</i>

2.

Option #2 - Proposed Budget at 3.86% increase over FY14-15

Source of 3.86% increase

*(**Note that there are other objects that experience an increase that equal decreases in budget**)*

1. 2.49% (\$ 181,391) Total Increase in Salaries for all faculty, staff and administration
2. 0.53% (\$ 38,394) Total Increase in Employer Liability for Insurance and Taxes
3. 0.80% (\$ 58,048) Total Increase in Equipment which includes Technology Budget of \$46,800

Ashford School Improvements Funded Through the 3.86% Budget Increase

Summary of Expenses added in this budget proposal

- One Writing Coach/Teacher
- One Track & Field Coach and Assistant Coach for Basketball
- One Special Education paraprofessional (based on needs)
- Two part-time custodians
- Accommodate salary/rate increases per AEA and MEUI collective bargaining agreements
- Health/Dental Insurance anticipated premium increase of 12.5%, provided by Ovation Benefit Advisors
- Employer contributions for H.S.A (dependent on results of negotiations for MEUI)
- Retirement cost for one additional teacher's healthcare
- The last phase for remote boiler access through computers with installation of cameras
- Installation of door magnets as part of School Security Improvement Plan
- Tile and grout restoration, beginning in the primary wing of the school
- Liability insurance, through CIRMA, rate increase 3%
- Curriculum Upgrades for elementary & middle school textbooks - Social Studies & Writing Materials
- MIDI Keyboard Recording Lab
- Replacement of all Gym Mats, and upgrade sports safety equipment
- About **\$46,800** budget for technology equipment and maintenance

- ***Removed After School Clubs & Director funding, and Upgrades to Elementary School furniture***

OTHER BUDGET PROPOSED OPTIONS

Budget Year	Budget Amount	% Change Inc/(Dec)
FY13-14	\$ 7,035,706	(0.74%)
FY14-15	\$ 7,288,036	3.59%
<i>FY15-16</i>	<i>\$ 7,502,650</i>	<i>2.94%</i>

3.

Option #3 - Proposed Budget at 2.94% increase over FY14-15

Source of 2.94% increase

*(**Note that there are other objects that experience an increase that equal decreases in budget**)*

1. 1.87% (\$ 135,999) Total Increase in Salaries for all faculty, staff and administration
2. 0.39% (\$ 28,440) Total Increase in Employer Liability for Insurance and Taxes
3. 0.64% (\$ 46,548) Total Increase in Equipment which includes Technology Budget of \$35,300

Ashford School Improvements Funded Through the 2.94% Budget Increase

Summary of Expenses added in this budget proposal

- One Track & Field Coach and Assistant Coach for Basketball
- One Special Education paraprofessional (based on needs)
- Two part-time custodians
- Accommodate salary/rate increases per AEA and MEUI collective bargaining agreements
- Health/Dental Insurance anticipated premium increase of 12.5%, provided by Ovation Benefit Advisors
- Employer contributions for H.S.A (dependent on results of negotiations for MEUI)
- Retirement cost for one additional teacher's healthcare
- The last phase for remote boiler access through computers with installation of cameras
- Installation of door magnets as part of School Security Improvement Plan
- Tile and grout restoration, beginning in the primary wing of the school
- Liability insurance, through CIRMA, rate increase 3%
- MIDI Keyboard Recording Lab
- Replacement of all Gym Mats, and upgrade sports safety equipment
- About **\$35,300** budget for technology equipment and maintenance

- **Removed After School Clubs & Director funding, and Upgrades to Elementary School furniture**
- **Removed Writing Coach/Teacher and Curriculum Upgrades for Social Studies & Writing Materials**

4.

How Various Staffing Proposals Would Impact Budget Totals

a.) Add Writing Teacher

Total Cost (Salary, Benefits & Employer Liability) **\$ 55,305 = 0.75% of Proposed Budget**

b.) Add Foreign Language:

- 01-1104-111-00004 World Language Cert Staff \$72,079 (salary step MA-13)
- 01-2200-205-01220 Social Security/Medicare Costs \$ 1,045.15
- 01-2200-200-01230 Group Life Insurance \$ 131.04
- 01-2200-200-02220 Workers Compensation Insurance \$ 458.82
- 01-2200-200-01220 Medical/Dental Insurance \$22,178.90 (HDHP - Family Coverage)
- 01-2200-205-04230 Certified Other Benefits \$ 2,000 (Employer H.S.A Contribution)
- Total Cost (Salary, Benefits & Employer Liability) **\$97,892.91 = 1.34% Increase**

c.) Add Social Worker:

- 01-1200-111-03120 Psychologist Certified Staff \$75,267 (salary step 6th-13)
- 01-2200-205-01220 Social Security/Medicare Costs \$ 1,091.37
- 01-2200-200-01230 Group Life Insurance \$ 131.04
- 01-2200-200-02220 Workers Compensation Insurance \$ 474.18
- 01-2200-200-01220 Medical/Dental Insurance \$22,178.90 (HDHP - Family Coverage)
- 01-2200-205-04230 Certified Other Benefits \$ 2,000 (Employer H.S.A Contribution)
- Total Cost (Salary, Benefits & Employer Liability) **\$101,142.49 = 1.39% Increase**

d.) Add Library/Media Specialist:

• 01-1107-112-02007 Library Consultant	\$40,000 (Administrative Position)
• 01-2200-205-01220 Social Security/Medicare Costs	\$ 3,060
• 01-2200-200-01230 Group Life Insurance	\$ 66.24
• 01-2200-200-02220 Workers Compensation Insurance	\$ 252
• 01-2200-200-01220 Medical/Dental Insurance	\$24,218.34 (HDHP - Family Coverage)
• <u>01-2200-205-04230 Certified Other Benefits</u>	<u>\$2,000 (Employer H.S.A Contribution)</u>
Total Cost (Salary, Benefits & Employer Liability)	\$ 69,596.58 = 0.95% Increase

e.) Add 0.5FTE Art Teacher:

• 01-1103-111-01003 Art Certified Staff (MA-5 salary/step)	\$25,101
• 01-2200-205-01220 Social Security/Medicare Costs	\$ 364
• 01-2200-200-01230 Group Life Insurance	\$ 131.04
• 01-2200-200-02220 Workers Compensation Insurance	\$ 158.14
• 01-2200-200-01220 Medical/Dental Insurance	\$24,218.34 (HDHP - Family Coverage)
• <u>01-2200-205-04230 Certified Other Benefits</u>	<u>\$2,000 (Employer H.S.A Contribution)</u>
• Total Cost (Salary, Benefits & Employer Liability)	\$ 51,972.52 = 0.71% Increase

f.) Remove one paraprofessional:

Total Cost (Salary, Benefits & Employer Liability) **\$ 28,747 = 0.39% of Proposed Budget**

NEXT STEPS

The previous pages have described the budget process to date. I have submitted my first draft of the budget, subjected in to public dialogue, and I am now putting it before the Board of Education with several options for determining the next form that this draft will take.

This budget was publicized with all of the proposed options at the December 18, 2014 BOE meeting and was discussed in detail during the January 8th BOE Budget Work Session. All of these sessions have opportunities for public input.

This revised budget presentation includes suggestions from the Board of Education's January 8th Work Session, such as the expansion of the Writing Teacher position to Writing Coach/Teacher position.

I will continue to add to this document as the process continues.

The Board of Finance

The Board of Education will discuss and act upon the proposals on the previous pages and develop a Board of Education budget that will be submitted to the Board of Finance for discussion and public input on March 5th.

Questions and Concerns

If you have any questions or concerns you have several paths to answers.

- You may go to our web site
- You can attend a Board of Education Meeting (1st and 3rd Thursday of every month)
- You can call my office 860-429-1927, ext. 365
- You can come in for a meeting

IN CONCLUSION

As we prepare our budget for FY 15-16, we have invited the community to participate at every step of the process. We've advertised BOE budget meetings on-line, in written communications, and on the Ashford School website. As a result of the transparency of the budget process and its inclusive approach, we were successful in acquiring perspectives and ideas from many residents, representing a wide variety of points of view.

There are still several meetings yet to be held where the budget will continue to be discussed. The Board of Education is still open to suggestions, and willing to consider ideas from the community. Please feel free to contact us and/or join us at our meetings.

We believe that this transparent and all-inclusive process will ultimately result in a budget that is widely supported and understood.

Thank you for your involvement. Together, we can ensure that the students of Ashford are well served.