

January 18, 2023

Dear Families:

On January 6 the administrative team and I presented the [2024 budget](#) request of \$58,305,290 to the Board of Education. This represents an increase of 3.39% or \$1,914,106. As we begin the budget process, the big questions for families are:

- *How does [this budget](#) impact my child?*
- *What will it do for my child's growth both academically and social-emotionally?*
- *How will it prepare my child for the next grade, the next school, and life after Weston?*

Whether your child is at HES, WIS, WMS, or WHS, budget monies directly impact the classroom supporting Weston's children in whatever school they attend. It guarantees that, as they travel down School Road, they will continue to grow and learn. I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you some examples.

At [HES](#), the teachers will give your child a beautiful gift; the ability to read and write. We are excited about the new research based reading program that explicitly intertwines reading comprehension, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary and text comprehension for all students in grades K-2 next year.

Beginning in kindergarten, students develop a conceptual understanding of numbers and mathematical concepts through hands-on experiences. They begin to understand and speak Spanish taking the initial steps to earn a seal of biliteracy by the end of senior year at WHS. They express their creativity in art, listen and recognize musical melodies, participate in [green initiatives](#), and learn about self-care in health and physical education. Every child will have access to updated iPad and Chromebook allowing teachers to purposefully weave [technology](#) into their classes, and the final 6 smart displays will be replaced next year. This budget supports these programs.

From Preschool to grade two, our youngest learners develop a sense of belonging as they experience kindness and care from the entire staff on a daily basis. They interact with administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, a social worker and a school psychologist to learn what it means to be part of a community. Their excitement as they fill the honey hive with honeycombs is contagious. This budget gives them this wonderful experience.

At [WIS](#), your son or daughter will transition from learning to read to reading to learn. WIS students continue to develop critical and creative problem solving skills with the support of this budget's resources. In order to maintain BOE class size guidelines of 20-24 students, we need support for two more class sections; one in third grade and one in fourth grade. Additional smart displays and appropriate educational software will enhance the academic and co-curricular programs. At WIS students begin to make choices, deciding to play a musical instrument, participate in theater, or join the robotics team. All of these resources are funded through this budget. We have added a second security specialist, shared between our elementary schools, because we are committed to the wellbeing and safety of our HES and WIS students.

At [WMS](#), [grade level academic teams](#) that include math, science, social studies and language arts teachers, will support your child's academic growth in class and [Academic Workshop](#). School counselors and pupil personnel services (PPS) staff are integral members of these teams as the faculty strives to provide a caring and nurturing environment for our young adolescents during these years known for physical and social emotional changes. This team structure is critical to your middle school child.

Middle School is a time when students are encouraged to explore different interests. They study pre-engineering through our Project Lead the Way Program. They elect to perform with the band, orchestra, choir and winter musical. Some students switch from Spanish to French. WMS teachers design engaging lessons with software to complement your child's learning. Eight additional classrooms will be equipped with new smart displays. All of these programs, supported in this budget, are for your child.

It is important to note that for your children at HES, WIS, and WMS this budget supports 2 Assistant Directors of PPS and Special Education who will serve grades pre K-3 and 4-8. This new configuration will ensure a smooth, more personalized transition between the three schools that Weston families expect. These Assistant Directors will work closely with the schools' administrative teams to better meet our students' needs.

At [WHS](#), your son or daughter will choose from a rich array of academic courses in our [Program of Studies](#). The school counseling department supports our students' academic pathways and social emotional journey through high school. There is a certified college and career counselor to help you and your student through the college process. In addition, we are committed to funding an Assistant Director of PPS and Special Education solely for WHS filling a much needed level of support. This Assistant Director will collaborate with the high school administrative team, evaluate our counseling department, and oversee our Pathways Academy for non-traditional students.

The budget makes available an extensive co-curricular program of [clubs](#), [theater](#) and [athletics](#) for your high school student. Our administrators are enthusiastic about [Link Crew](#), a new mentor/advisory program specifically designed to support your ninth grader. Two additional coaches for golf and track are requested for your student athlete. Finally, the capital budget upgrades the lighting and sound of our auditorium, from which all students and community members benefit.

You may be aware of BOE discussions about our proposal to increase the [Curriculum Instructional Leaders](#) (CILs) for language arts and math from part time to full time across the district. This benefits every child in every grade because it ensures a consistency of instruction at scale and builds the professional capacity of all teachers through continual support both in and out of the classroom. Full time status affords the CILs with the needed flexibility that a part time teaching assignment does not allow. I like to draw the analogy between the CILs, who are content area experts, and a team of doctors collaborating together. If you want the best for your child in either arena, you seek out the smartest trained team of professionals who are committed to analyzing data, designing a plan of action rooted in research and implementing that plan using the best possible strategies and tools at their disposal. Full time CILs in math and language arts will be the leaders of these collaborative teacher teams working to give your child the very best for your children.

Finally, this budget is designed so that your child will thrive in our schools. We are committed to providing all students with excellent instruction for learning across grade levels and schools. I encourage you to read our [district](#) and [school](#) improvement plans and review the answers to the [BOE questions](#) about the budget as they speak to our accountability to you. There is a great deal of information on our [district website](#).

I am proud to serve as your Superintendent of Schools.