

2018-19 PRELIMINARY BUDGET
BUDGET OVERVIEW – Narrative
ROB CHLEBICKI
February 8, 2018

Curriculum and Instruction

The work of the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction is to ensure that the curriculum and instruction of the district's academic program is the strongest it can be. Together with the district's curriculum leaders, the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction monitors, assesses, and plans for the continuous improvement of teaching and learning. These symbiotic aspects of education are intricately interwoven and depend upon three specific variables: what is taught, how well it is taught, and how well students are learning. A challenging, engaging curriculum rooted in standards needs to be developed by teachers and reviewed on a regular basis. Those who teach that curriculum must be knowledgeable not only about the pedagogy specific to the content but pedagogy in general. They need to be well versed and practiced in how students learn best, drawing upon and studying ever-growing research. As part of that pedagogy, educators need to be knowledgeable about best practices in assessment. They need to know what those assessments reveal about student learning and how to use the data from the assessments to plan for ensuring the growth trajectory of each individual student.

The budget requests I submitted will be used to ensure that the curriculum we teach our students is continually updated and that the professional development we provide our teachers supports their continuous learning and keeps them current in their pedagogical practices. This money will also be used to sustain the work necessary in achieving district goals and short/long term initiatives. The budget codes supervised by the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction support, maintain, and strengthen the backbone of the district's academic program and, as such, the funding in these codes speaks volumes about what the district values in the education of its students.

The 2010.400.99 and 2110.130.90.2134 codes work in tandem with one another. The first pays for whatever contracted services are needed to support the second which is used for professional development and curriculum work necessary to achieve the district's goals and initiatives. Over the last few years - this coming year being no exception - these codes have enabled us to ensure our district curriculum is aligned with the curriculum standards being approved and released by the State Education Department – specifically the changing NYS Learning Standards (i.e. the revised Common Core Learning Standards) for early literacy, ELA and math, the NYS Science Learning Standards (i.e. NYS iteration of the Next Generation Science Standards), and the Social Studies Framework and Standards. Once new standards are released, the district engages in a multi-year process of adopting those standards. One of the first stages of that process is to align the district curriculum and local assessments with the revised standards. The next stage, which is operationalized concurrently with the first, is to provide teachers with the professional development necessary to make sense of those standards and the pedagogical practices required to enact them. The State projects an implementation guideline for these standards and we adjust our curriculum work and professional development accordingly. As a result, we are able to gradually transition to the new standards and responsibly spread the cost of the curriculum writing and professional development over the course of several years.

Besides funding the work necessary toward the implementation of State standards, these budget codes support the programmatic changes the district administration deems necessary to align with its philosophical beliefs regarding student learning. For example, the money in these codes has supported

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and will continue to support the curriculum work and professional development necessary in our transition to Singapore math, the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, FLES education, and the International Baccalaureate. The money in these codes is also used to support refinement and changes in curriculum in all subject areas K-12 not only in those subjects whose standards are being revised.

A major source for funding over the years has been devoted to three areas of focus for the district: the development of an interdisciplinary curriculum in humanities at the elementary level; the promotion of performance-based assessments K-12; and the incorporation of the Shared Valued Outcomes in the teaching and learning process. In previous years, a large portion of these budget codes was devoted to the professional development required to achieve the goals emanating from the district philosophy of teaching and learning. We contracted services with professionals whose expertise would guide us in achieving our goals. The professional development provided by consultants such as Giselle Martin-Kniep, Dr. Yeap Ban-Har, and Nancy Letts, and through organizations such as Teachers College, Marshall Cavendish, and Houghton-Mifflin/Harcourt has assisted us in getting to where we are today in the implementation of curriculum, assessment, and instruction. As the years proceed, and our expertise in these areas grow as a result of the professional development in which we have engaged, the reliance on consultants and outside organizations for support will diminish.

In the budget codes for 2018-2019, you will notice continued support for professional development in math as we extend our philosophy for the teaching of math into next year's seventh grade. We hope to have Dr. Yeap Ban Har continue his work with our teachers complemented by professional development from Greg Tang and Hoover Herrera, consultants whose work is specific to supporting secondary school educators. With the advent of the NYS Science Learning Standards on the horizon, we are also seeking professional development from consultants whose work is targeted to the teaching and learning of science. Paul Anderson is one of the consultants. One of our district goals focuses on the health and wellness of our students. This work began last summer through our affiliation with LICADD by offering workshops to district faculty on the topics of student stress, anxiety, and the positive and negative impact social media can have on students. These workshops also educated teachers and teaching assistants about the new trends in substance use. Under the leadership of our Director of Counseling, these efforts will continue in the year ahead as we work with consultants in the field of mental health.

Since 2015, the district embarked on identifying important and valued outcomes of a North Shore education. These became known as the district Shared Valued Outcomes (SVOs). Over the years, we have worked to define those outcomes, discuss what they mean, and embed them in the teaching and learning of each and every classroom. Evidence of those efforts are notable in teacher instruction and in the work they design for students to do. While continuing efforts in cultivating all six SVOs this year, there is a heightened awareness to two of them in particular – Communication and Thinking. Our focus has been on identifying the skills and dispositions of both SVOs and then generating learning progressions for both. These learning progressions will identify the stages of development in a particular SVO and will be used to assist teachers and students in assessing student growth in each SVO. The work of identifying the skills, dispositions, and learning progressions for each SVO will continue over the ensuing years.

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During this school year, we are hosting a Tri-State review to assist us in assessing the work we have been doing in the area of our Shared Valued Outcomes. Since we have devoted several years in the efforts of developing the essential skills and dispositions of these values in our students, we believe now is a great time to have critical friends who can help us take a very close look at that work and provide us with feedback about where additional next steps should focus in continuing to make the Shared Valued Outcomes part of the fiber in the fabric of our district. Those ‘next steps’ will inevitably require more professional development and curriculum work. There is money earmarked in these budget codes to support this important work.

The advent of new (and revised) discipline standards and the professional development and curriculum work associated with their implementation is beginning to come to a close. During these many years of shifting standards, our curriculum renewal process has been largely reactive. Though renewal in all curricular areas has been ongoing, much less time and money has been devoted to those efforts as they were overshadowed by the immediate need to adjust to new State/National standards. Now that the standards movement is settling in, Dr. Giarrizzo and I have begun discussions about a more proactive curriculum renewal timeline for each department. In so doing, the teachers and administrators in each department will have equal opportunity to do an in-depth analysis of the K-12 articulation of teaching and learning. Included in that analysis will be a focus on the continued incorporation of the Shared Valued Outcomes as they relate to each discipline. The end result of that analysis will enable us to further determine the curriculum work and professional development needed to ensure the curriculum, instruction, and assessments of each subject area are current. We will also be reviewing our enrichment and STEM programs throughout the district and plan on devoting the money in these budget codes to foster growth in those areas as well. The framework we will use to engage in this important work is a cyclical one of three phases (study/plan, implement, and assess) that will be accomplished over three years for each discipline. An anticipated review cycle follows:

Sci/STEM Study/Plan	Sci/STEM Implement	Sci/STEM Assess							
	Fine & Perf. Arts Study/Plan	Fine & Perf. Arts Implement	Fine & Perf. Arts Assess						
		Lang/ENL Study/Plan	Lang/ENL Implement	Lang/ENL Assess					
			PE/Health Study/Plan	PE/Health Implement	PE/Health Assess				
				Math Study/Plan	Math Implement	Math Assess			
					English Study/Plan	English Implement	English Assess		
						Soc. Stud. Study/Plan	Soc. Stud. Implement	Soc. Stud. Assess	
							Guidance Study/Plan	Guidance Implement	Guidance Assess

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Because this work has a direct impact on all students, collaboration with the special education department is essential. That department will be included in the review of each curricular program. Though this revision cycle emphasizes an in-depth analysis of teaching and learning in one curricular area, attention to and minor adjustments in the other curricular areas will be ongoing. Finally, future Tri-State evaluations will align with the curriculum revision cycle so that feedback from critical friends will help us evaluate the work accomplished at the conclusion of the three-stage revision process.

There will always be a need for ongoing professional development support in current programs as new district faculty are added to our staff. This need will be filled by our administrators and these budget codes will support teacher participation in that professional development. There will also be ongoing costs associated with Teachers College for onsite coaching as this is a requirement for maintaining affiliation with the Teachers College Reading and Writing Program.

A final note needs to be made. The budget code 2110.130.90.2134 is essentially a payroll code and is used for paying teachers for additional work outside their contract. As such, the money in this code, though largely consumed by costs associated with curriculum work and professional development, is used to support building principals' initiatives, mentoring costs, co-planning, etc. Our grant monies help to re-establish funding purely for curriculum work and professional development.

Though the funding in these codes, especially the 2110.130.90.2134 code has been reduced over the years, we are fortunate to work in a district that funds these codes as well as it does in support of our teachers' work with students. The district administration and Board of Education demonstrate, with the creation of each year's budget, their understanding that the greatest impact on student learning and achievement is in the person who teaches them. The interplay between teaching and learning is necessary to promote strong student outcomes for achievement. We are grateful that the Board supports the professional development of its faculty and their efforts at engaging their students in the most rigorous and current courses of study.