

Questions from School Committee member Dawn Byers:

Question 1: What is the FY25 budget increase \$ amount and % for all salary and contractual (bus, SJ Services, etc.) obligations?

Answer 1: Please see the attached documents DBFY25Q1 and DBFY25Q1A for a side by side comparison of FY24 and FY25's salaries and expenses amounts. There is also one budgeted line item in capital that was budgeted for \$40,000 in FY24 and \$0 in FY25 that is not in these comparisons. These comparison amounts are on FY24's Budget Presentation Document 1 and FY25's Budget Presentation Document 1. The FY24 budgeting placement was used for both FY24 and FY25's budgeting to allow for an "apples to apples" comparison.

Question 2: Are there budget requests the Administration received from Principals and Dept heads that are not included in the FY25 proposed budget?

Answer 2: No, we didn't ask the administrators for budget requests fully understanding we would be bringing to the FY 25 budget all of the staff members that were funded by ESSER III.

Question 3: FY25 Preschool enrollment is reported at 117. What was the FY23 and FY24 enrollment?

Answer 3: SY 22/23 was 101 and SY 23/24 was 114 now is 117.

Question 4: What is the enrollment / space capacity at the PreSchool Academy?

Answer 4: We are currently full to capacity and had to create an additional space for extremely high needs students.

Question 5: The FY25 budget "maintains services currently in place". What positions were staffed and funded in FY23 that were not staffed in FY24?

Answer 5- Director of Facilities, groundskeeper and 3 paraprofessionals.

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Question 6: *How many staff members are retiring and not returning for FY25? What positions are they currently in, and do you intend to post to fill the position(s)?*

Answer 6: Prior to 2/7 the district had two retirements in counseling and one in social studies at the HS. As of today, I have added 1 HS math and 1 Elementary Special Education teacher. I hope to fill all depending on the outcome of the budget. Some teachers may leave at the end of the year or extend their parental leaves permanently. I don't have this information at this time.

Question 7: *Unit D contract includes 7 classifications of Paraprofessional positions. Of the 11 Para positions (for a total salary of \$351,388) being moved to the General Fund from Esser3, what is the classification of each of the 11 positions? (Classifications as provided in the contract: Duty Aide/Non Instructional, Instructional/Inclusion, Interventionist, Specialist/Behavioral Program, Elementary Librarian/support staff, Academic tutor/SLPA, OG certified Instructor)*

Answer 7: There are 5 positions classified under the "2. Instructional Paras" in Appendix A of the 22-25 Unit D contract. There is 1 position classified under the "3. Interventionist Paras" and 5 positions classified under "4. Specialist Program Paras".

Question 8: *Document 3: page 3, line 2324 - Long Term Substitute increased \$373K; page 4 line 2325 Short Term Substitutes reduced \$224K Can you explain these changes?*

Answer 8: There are three parts to this answer:

1) DESE's End of the Year Report (EOYR) requires substitutes to be broken out into Long-term and Short-term Substitutes. In the old MUNIS system, this required a manual separation of each expense because the substitutes were budgeted as one amount in "(School Name) or District-wide Substitutes". The FY25 Budget reflects the new MUNIS system which has the breakout of Long-term and Short-term Substitutes for each school budgeted separately.

2) The FY24 Budget was voted as "(School Name) or District-wide Substitutes", so one FY24 budget is being split into two FY25 Budgets. The FY24 DESE code for the Substitute budgets was 2325 as voted, so that is where I placed the budgeted amounts. The new code of 2324 doesn't have a budget in FY24, but does in FY25. Put another way in algebraic form,

FY24 2325 codes = FY25 2324 codes + FY25 2325 codes.

3) The Substitutes budgets have increased to match the actual amount of expenditures in both FY23 and so far in FY24. There is a large increase in substitute expenses in FY24 that continues the trend from FY23.

Question 9: *What forms of communication outreach, to the community, are being done to encourage early Kindergarten registration?*

Answer 9: Elementary Principals solicit through the PAC's and we advertise occasionally in the Express.

Question 10: *Average class sizes were provided in the presentation. Can you please provide current 2023-2024 class size reports by class, grade level and building for K-12?*

Answer 10:

23/24			24/25		
Indian Head					
K-	105	5	?		5
1st-	99	5	105		5
2nd-	107	5	99		5
3rd-	95	5	107		5
4th-	107	5	95		5
Conley					
K-	76	4	K-?		4
1st-	78	4	76		4
2nd-	89	4	78		4
3rd-	71	4	89		4
4th-	101	5	71		4
5th-	83	4	101		5
Duval					
K-	83	4	K-?		4
1st-	62	3	83		4
2nd-	80	4	62		3
3rd-	70	4	80		4
4th-	72	4	70		4
5th-	87	4	72		4

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Whitman Middle

6th-	163	170
7th-	179	163
8th-	174	179

Hanson Middle

5th-	101	5	107	5
6th-	123		101	
7th-	110		123	
8th	97		110	

Question 11: *What is the District's current bond rating and 3 year historical trend of the bond rating?*

Answer 11: Our Standard & Poor's rating is AA-/Stable. Our bond rating was downgraded in June of 2020 from AA. It has remained at AA-/Stable since June 2020. Our bond rating is likely to be downgraded in the future if our audits are not timely filed.

Question 12: *What is the District Treasurer's recommendation for funding the WHRSD OPEB liability?*

Answer 12: From District Treasurer David Leary: "The OPEB liability has to become part of the budget process each year and some funding needs to be budgeted every year."

Question 13: Document 18: Busing Calculations - Reference letter 'u' is for FY25 DW Transport Contracted Services at \$1,690,000. Please provide the back up detail of what this expense includes, # of buses, capacity, rates, and other associated costs.

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Answer 13:

Tiers	# Bus Runs	24-25 Contract Prices per Bus per Day	Days	Projected Cost
1	0	0	180	\$0.00
2	2	X \$463.13 = \$926.26	180	\$166,726.80
3	14	X \$490.10 = \$6,861.40	180	\$1,235,052.00
4	3	X \$523.89 = \$1,571.67	180	\$282,900.60
Totals	19			\$1,684,679.40

Other associated costs including memberships and transport software: \$5,320.60

Total FY25 Budget Transportation Contracted Services: \$1,690,000

Question 14: What expense lines are projected to have the greatest "savings", if any, from FY24 to FY25?

Answer 14: Percentage savings:

- 1) 3100-Attendance & Parent Services – -100% - These budgeted are now budgeted elsewhere
- 2) 2410-Textbooks/Software Media - -69.65% - FY24 program purchase not repeated in FY25
- 3) 2710-Guidance & Adjustment Counselors - -67.12% - matching FY25 budget to FY23 actuals
- 4) 4225-Building Security System- -20.00% - matching FY25 budget to FY23 actuals
- 5) 9100-Tuition to Mass. Schools - -18.63% - \$2.9M of these costs shifted to Circuit Breaker

Dollar amount savings:

- 1) 2410-Textbooks/Software Media - -\$429,958 - FY24 program purchase not repeated in FY25
- 2) 9100-Tuition to Mass. Schools - -\$426,237 - \$2.9M of these costs shifted to Circuit Breaker
- 3) 4110-Custodial Services - -\$80,000 - matching FY25 budget to FY23 actuals except for school cleaning services
- 4) 2451-Classroom Instructional Technology - -\$75,000 - matching FY25 budget to FY23 actuals
- 5) 5200 – Insurance Programs - -\$50,689 - matching FY25 budget to FY23 actuals

Question 15: Aside from salary/contract increases, what expense lines are projected to have the greatest increase from FY24 to FY25?

Answer 15: Percentage increase:

- 1) 1410-Business & Finance – 447.14% - FY25 payroll services expenses budgeted here; not budgeted here in FY24.
- 2) 2415-Other Instructional Materials – 142.50% - matching FY25 budget to FY23 actuals
- 3) 3200- Medical Health Services – 73.84% - matching FY25 budget to FY23 actuals minus one-time FY23 purchases
- 4) 3510-Athletics – 45.83% - matching FY25 budget to FY23 actuals after proper cost assignment
- 5) 1430-Legal Services for School Comm. - 42.86% - FY25 Budget contains SPED Legal Services that was budgeted in Instruction in FY24.

Dollar amount increases:

- 1) 9120-Tuition to Other Schools - \$284,695 – FY25 Governor’s Budget increase in Charter Schools State Assessments on State Cherry Sheet
 - 2) 3300-Transportation – \$78,944 - increase in SPED Transportation Contracted Services
 - 3) 9110-School Choice Tuition - \$73,699 – FY25 Governor’s Budget increase in School Choice State Assessments on State Cherry Sheet
 - 4) 4130-Utility Services - \$63,846 – Rubbish Removal budgeted elsewhere in FY24, now budgeted as a Utility in FY25.
 - 5) 1410-Business & Finance – \$42,925 – FY25 payroll services expenses budgeted here; not budgeted here in FY24.
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