



CANTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Members of the Board of Finance:

Attached is the proposed budget for the 2010-2011 school year, which was adopted by the Board of Education on March 4, 2010. The proposed 2010-2011 budget seeks a 0% increase over this current year's spending. We have approached the development of this budget responsibly, recognizing the extraordinarily difficult economic times and the fiscal constraint of the town, while maintaining our obligation to meet the individual needs of the students in the Canton Public Schools.

The budget process began in January with each building administrator, the Director of Pupil Personnel Services, the Director of Music, and Athletic Director presenting their budget requests to Lynn McMullin, Assistant Superintendent, Edward Hoyt, Business Manager, and the Superintendent of Schools. These administrators then presented their budget requests to the Board of Education. The Finance Subcommittee then met several times to review the requests and to provide feedback as this budget was developed. This budget was developed with the following priorities in mind:

- Fund contractual obligations associated with staffing the school district at a level to promote high levels of student achievement.
- Ensure that all class sizes remain within the Board of Education's Instruction Policy's Class Size Guidelines.
- Meet the individual needs of students receiving special education and related services.
- Continue to provide effective Professional Development opportunities to staff, supporting their work toward district and school goals
- Continue to maintain our school buildings.

Contractual obligations related to employee salary and benefits along with increased costs in utilities, out-of-district tuition, and transportation accounted for a \$928,545, or a 4.17% increase over this year's spending. Administrators' budget requests totaled \$359,809 or a 1.61% increase. Combined increases totaled \$1,288,354, representing an increase of 5.78%.

Although every administrative request was justifiable, I worked to reduce every area of the budget possible, reducing the budget by over \$855,433. There are reductions in the area of instructional supplies, equipment, and professional development. No new requested staffing positions were part of this budget proposal. On February 9, 2010, I presented a proposed budget request to the Board of Education with an increase of \$432,912 or 1.94%.

The Board of Education's Finance Subcommittee met several times to review the Superintendent's proposed budget. Every line item and personnel position in the District was reviewed carefully. On March 4, 2010, the Board of Education voted to reduce the budget further by reducing funds in various line items where more accurate information had been obtained, such as in workers' compensation and transportation fuel. Reductions were made in the utilities line items, as we will be challenging the staff and students in each of our buildings to conserve energy more than ever before through various activities. We also continue to implement energy conservation measures wherever possible.

The following personnel changes were also made:

- Elimination of .5 FTE Director of Physical Plant
- Reduction of .5 FTE Library/Media Specialist
- Reduction of .5 Custodian
- Elimination of four paraeducator positions
- Reduction in secretarial support

This budget request does include funding for the replacement of technology that is six years old or older. Funding is also included for current software and subscription licenses.

The Board of Education will continue to implement an athletic participation fee for students participating on athletic teams. These fees will fund the cost of the athletic trainer and associated costs associated with the athletic budget.

This budget development process required extra attention this year from start to finish, as each request and line item was scrutinized as never before. It is our hope that you will support this budget as submitted. If additional reductions are made, existing non-certified and certified staff and programs will be affected, which would greatly diminish the quality of our school system. We wish to see the Canton Public Schools continuously improve by providing the highest quality educational experiences and opportunities for our students. The Board of Education and I look forward to discussing these details with you.

Sincerely,



Kevin D. Case

Superintendent of Schools

Charting our Course

Our Vision

Opening Minds ~ Transforming Lives

As a leader among schools in Connecticut and a source of pride in the community, the Canton Public Schools shape the future of its students by *opening minds* and *transforming lives* through creative and innovative programs.

Our Mission

The Canton Public Schools unite with families and the community to provide challenging educational experiences and opportunities that develop the intellectual, physical, social and emotional potential of our students.

Our mission is to prepare productive, tolerant and responsible citizens with the character and independence to embrace and contribute to the world.

Together We Make a Difference

We commit ourselves to using innovative as well as research-based ideas to:

- promote high student achievement
- practice focused educational leadership
- make sound financial choices

We accept this challenge and invite our stakeholders to join us in transforming this vision into reality.

Our Values

Individually and collectively the Community, Families, Faculty, and the Canton Board of Education hold these values for themselves and for the children they serve.

All children deserve an educational environment where they are:

- ... valued for themselves as unique individuals
- ... treated with love, respect, and care by their educators and peers
- ... guided and taught to challenge themselves in ways that stretch them as individuals
- ... provided a safe environment in which to learn, take risks, and excel

All children shall have the benefit of:

- ... high quality resources
- ... exposure to varied opportunities to inspire all the various aspects of their academic, intellectual, and social interests
- ... a community that understands the value of its supportive role in ensuring the tradition of a strong educational legacy for each generation of students

All children are entitled to a childhood.

Accomplishments

Improvements in the Canton Public Schools since 2005

Significant improvements have been made to virtually every aspect of the Canton Public Schools since the last strategic plan, *Raising the Bar*, was developed and implemented in June 2005. Listed below are a few examples for each strategic issue that was identified in 2005. This list is not intended to be an exhaustive compilation of every improvement in the school district.

Student Achievement and Excellence in Teaching and Learning

- Improved student achievement as measured by the Connecticut Mastery Test and Connecticut Academic Performance Test, as well as by in-district assessments (See Appendix)
- Implemented formalized data teams in each department and at each grade level where staff members collect, analyze, and utilize student achievement data to inform their instruction; Time is allotted for teams to meet on a regularly scheduled basis
- Developed district goals based upon data and wrote a Continuous Improvement Plan with specified goals and objectives that align with district goals
- Developed a system of support for K-12 students not meeting grade level curriculum, CMT, or CAPT goals, including summer school opportunities
- Provided additional early intervention support services to students through the use of tutors
- Developed common assessments K-12 to monitor student progress
- Staff utilize the software program, *Curriculum Mapper*, to ensure fidelity of the K-12 curriculum and to monitor district-wide standards
- Revised and implemented the Teacher Evaluation and Continuous Professional Growth Plan based upon effective, research-based practices
- Aligned Professional Development opportunities for staff with their grade level and department goals
- Ensured that more Professional Development is embedded within teachers' daily instructional practices, i.e. utilization of instructional coaches at the elementary level through Columbia University and at the secondary level through the Collins Writing Program
- Provided Professional Development to staff to support data team process, curriculum initiatives, and to teach effective research-based teaching practices, i.e. differentiation of instruction
- Improved new teacher induction to support beginning and newly-hired teachers including several meetings throughout the year to discuss topics related to curriculum, best teaching practices, student management, parent communication, etc...

- Furbished most classrooms with the educational technology (LCD Projectors, Smart Boards and/or Mimeo Boards) to allow for the integration of technology within the curriculum
- Developed systematic hiring procedures to ensure the recruitment, hiring, and retention of a highly-qualified and diverse staff
- Celebrated Canton Middle School as the Connecticut Association of School's 2008-2009 Middle School of the Year
- Celebrated Canton Intermediate School as a Finalist for the Connecticut Association of School's 2009-2010 Exemplary School Climate Award
- Celebrated Canton Music Program as a Grammy Signature School Finalist for the third time in four years, more often than any other K-12 music program in Connecticut

Rigorous and Relevant Programs

- Revised the K-12 Science curriculum to align with state and national standards
- Incorporated the Columbia University's Teacher's College Reader's and Writer's Workshop approach into the K-6 Language Arts curriculum
- Revised the K-12 Physical Education/Health Curriculum to align with state and national standards
- Implemented the Computer Assisted Design and Drafting Courses (CADD) at Canton High School
- Implemented the Grade 9 Integrated Science Course at Canton High School
- Continued to revise the 7-12 World Language Curriculum

Management of Resources

- Updated the *Brick-by-Brick Analysis* annually to determine our level of spending compared to other school districts in our Demographic Reference Group (DRG)
- Accomplished new agent of record agreements were executed in 2007 for Property and Casualty and Health Care Benefits resulting in a reduction of fees of approximately \$9,000 over three years
- Completed an audit of the district's energy use in 2007 resulting in a program for electrical fixture reconfiguration and element replacement resulting in savings of \$18,500 over three years; \$60,346 over five years; and \$309,000 over fifteen years
- Implemented a new life and long-term disability program in 2007 resulting in annual savings of \$25,000
- Negotiated with the Education Association of Canton (Teachers' Bargaining Unit) in 2008 to achieve a cost savings in employee health insurance and prescription drug plans, saving the district \$85,000

- Installed energy efficient storage tanks at Canton High School in 2008, resulting in energy savings
- Purchased heating oil at fixed rate through the Educational Resource Collaborative (ERC) Consortium
- Purchased instructional supplies through the ERC Consortium
- Worked closely with the Board of Finance, Town Officials, and Canton Community to pass two of the last three budgets at the first referendum, with one of the budgets gaining approval at a Town Meeting
- Received an Open Choice Grant of \$114,000 to fund tutoring support services along with technology hardware and software
- Received a Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) grant of \$15,000 to fund textbooks and resources for the Finance Course at the High School
- Implementation of High School Parking Utilization Fee, Canton Parents as Teachers (CPAT) Utilization Fee, and Participation Fee for High School Athletics to generate additional revenue

Management of Facilities

- Conducted a Space Study of the school buildings to determine possible options for providing additional instructional space at Cherry Brook Primary School to meet growing enrollment needs; As a result, two additional spaces were created by relocating computers to the library/media center and by renovating the former stage area in the gymnasium
- Created thirty additional parking spaces at Cherry Brook Primary School
- Corrected many facilities items deemed insufficient and out of compliance by the Americans with Disabilities Act at Canton Middle/High School
- Worked with an architectural firm in collaboration with Town Officials to create a Master Plan for all Town Athletic Fields
- Refurbished West Field at Canton Middle/High School to create a regulation size all purpose field
- Installed video cameras at each building to ensure safety and security of students and staff
- Inventoried all furniture, fixture, and equipment
- Developed annually a five-year Capital Improvement Plan prioritizing the facilities and equipment needs of the district

Stakeholder Relationships and Public Outreach

- Utilized the *AlertNow* Parent and Staff Notification system to inform parents and staff of important announcements, as well as emergency situations via phone and e-mail messages

- Maintained websites at each school and distributed monthly school newsletters via the students, through direct mailing, and through e-mail
- Established Quality Councils at each school made up of various representatives from that school's community; The Council meets regularly to work on developing and implementing school improvement initiatives
- Established Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO's) at Cherry Brook Primary School, Canton Intermediate School, and at Canton Middle School which meet monthly and support the work of the school in a variety of ways
- Worked in partnership with the Canton Community of Concern/Substance Abuse Council to provide quality educational programs for students related to the prevention of substance abuse
- Produced district-wide Board of Education newsletters highlighting school district happenings distributed to Canton community members a few times each year
- Developed a district-wide website and continually updated it to provide community with reports and updates on school district happenings; Received award for 2009 Best Website by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)
- Published annual *Brick – by – Brick Analysis* budget communication and received the 2009 award for Best Budget Communication by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education

Mapping Our Route

Strategic Issues and Goals

Key Drivers of Success:

District-Wide Communication that is informative, timely, and responsive

- Develop a District-wide comprehensive and interactive Communication Plan that is clear and concise and facilitates collaboration for the purpose of strengthening all stakeholder relationships.
- Create an integrated process map that enables staff and administrators to track the status of initiatives within their building as well as across the system.
- Seek the most effective means of informing and connecting parents, K-12, to what is going on across the school system.

Leadership that builds, grows and inspires vision and commitment

- Develop an infrastructure that identifies pivotal leadership roles, defines competencies, and supports the execution of leadership initiatives.
- Utilize a structured process for setting expectations and evaluating leaders.
- Formalize a leadership development program.

Teaching, learning, and assessment practices that promote development, innovation, and accountability for students and teachers

- Launch the *Teacher Evaluation and Continuous Professional Growth Plan* for teachers. Assess and evaluate its effectiveness in producing high student achievement and excellence in teaching.
- Design and pilot alternative assessments for students that reflect students' learning styles, interests and achievement, and go beyond traditional State testing.
- Engage and train more teachers in peer mentoring and coaching relationships that will expand their skills for the purpose of enriching their students' experience.
- Provide and prepare teachers to offer students mentoring opportunities K-12.

Curriculum that is relevant, rigorous, well coordinated, and effectively communicated

- Continue to support the refinement and implementation of curriculum that is rigorous, accessible to all, and aligned with local, state, and national standards and frameworks as detailed in Canton's School Improvement document.
- Research, pilot, and evaluate programmatic structures for the purpose of creating different methods of scheduling, assessing students, and delivering instruction.
- Review and integrate the topics that address "globalization needs" throughout Canton's curriculum, K-12. (Learning and Innovation Skills, Life and Career Skills, Information, Media and Technology Skills)

Management of Resources that maximizes financial assets and encourages human growth

Financial

- Continue to develop cost projection models and utilize those forecasters currently in use.
- Examine possible solutions to alleviate space issues (...especially at Cherry Brook Primary).
- Explore potential revenue producing programs.
- Continue to make progress towards implementing master plans already developed for technology and athletic fields.
- Continue to explore sharing and/or partnering internal and external services with other school districts and the Town of Canton.

Human

- Continue to recruit, support, and retain highly-qualified and diverse administration, faculty, and staff who are curious, willing to experiment, and who can contribute to the district's creative potential.
- Develop a professional growth and continuous improvement plan for administrators.

Culture and climate that is rooted in ownership, commitment and generosity

- Identify the behaviors needed in order to support a positive and productive environment, for which the entire school community is accountable.