

Board of Education's 2026 – 2027 Proposed Budget
Budget Questions and Answers

(Most items are over \$100 difference.)

1. Program 100 Instructional Technology – pg. 11

BCS & BHS

Q: Why is there an increase in online subscriptions for both BCS and BHS?

A: This represents an increase in cost for Kami, an online language arts tool used by both schools; the cost is split by school.

BCS

Q: Why is there an increase in technology related hardware?

A: We have added Viewsonic interactive board replacements to our request.

BHS

Q: Why is there a decrease in technology related hardware?

A: Fewer Chromebooks and cases need to be purchased, due to enrollment changes, and the vendor's price is more competitive.

2. Program 105 Art – page 12

BCS

Q: Why is there a decrease in the instructional supplies?

A: This amount reflects the supplies needed for next year. Supplies were left over from the previous year requiring less to be ordered.

BHS

Q: Why is there an increase in art Instructional Supplies?

A: Art supply needs vary annually based on enrollment and supply costs.

3. Program 110 English Language Arts (ELA) – page 13

BCS

Q: Why is there a decrease in online subscriptions?

A: A few subscriptions were not renewed based on lack of usage; some subscriptions went down in cost, and a few subscriptions were moved into grants.

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: Some items were bought with PTA and grant monies.

Q: Why is there an increase in textbooks?

A: Additional books are being purchased to support the new reading programs.

Q: Why is there a decrease in workbooks?

A: Based on need and usage, not purchasing Wilson program notebooks for grade 2.

BHS

Q: Why is there an increase in English Instructional Supplies?

A: Request for supplies for classroom activities.

Q: Why is there an increase in Dues and Fees?

A: Membership will now include all four teachers.

4. Program 120 World Languages – page 14

BCS

Q: Why is there an increase in online subscriptions?

A: Addition of one new program this year (Blooket).

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: Based on actual needs.

BHS

Q: Why is there an increase in online subscription services

A: Implementation of new AI platform, Speakology.

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: Supply needs vary annually.

Q: Why is there an increase in textbooks?

A: Additional books for French II / French III needed.

Q: Why is there an increase in workbooks?

A: Additional books for French II / French III needed.

5. Program 140 Computer Instruction – page 15

BCS

Q: Why is there an increase in online subscriptions?

A: The programs are all the same, but the cost of them has gone up.

BHS

Q: Why is there a reduction in online subscription services?

A: Budgeting is more accurate moving forward because we have identified a source to replace the previous state program that has been cancelled.

6. Program 160 Mathematics – page 16

BCS

Q: Why is there an increase in online subscriptions?

A: The programs are all the same, but the cost of them has gone up.

BHS

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: Supply needs vary annually

7. Program 170 Science – page 17

BCS

Q: Why is there an increase in online subscriptions?

A: This is the year that we renew a larger subscription that is a multi-year subscription (mystery science).

Q: Why is there an increase in periodicals?

A: Addition of a new resource, science world, that will help supplement instruction.

Q: Why is there an increase in dues and fees?

A: Money allotted for invention convention registration. This was previously in the main office budget.

BHS

Q: Why is there an increase in professional services?

A: Increase cost of waste disposal.

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: A large purchase was made last year for updated tools and digital interfaces.

Q: Why is there a decrease in dues & fees?

A: Different memberships chosen.

8. Program 180 Health & Physical Education – page 18

No Questions for this dept.

9. Program 190 Social Studies – page 19

BCS

Q: Why is there a decrease in online subscriptions?

A: A portion of the TCI subscription was paid through a grant.

Q: Why is there a decrease in periodicals?

A: A reduction in the number of copies for some of the periodicals. Instead of one per student, we were able to purchase class sets to use and reuse.

BHS

Q: Why is there a decrease in textbooks?

A: No new textbooks needed for next year.

Q: Why is there an increase in periodicals?

A: Addition of NY Times for both grade 9 and AP curriculum

10. Program 310 Business Education – page 21

BHS

No Questions for this dept.

11. Program 320 Family and Consumer Sciences – page 22

BHS

Q: Why is there an increase in non-tech repair and maintenance?

A: Increased cost of required hood and fire suppression system inspections.

Q: Why is there a decrease in travel expenses?

A: Budget based on actuals.

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: Increase in food cost and additional classroom events.

12. Program 350 Music – page 23

BCS

Q: Why is there a decrease in professional services?

A: Reduction in the number of hours for the accompanist for performances.

Q: Why is there an increase in non-tech repairs?

A: The cost of repairs has gone up.

Q: Why is there a decrease in online subscriptions?

A: We did not renew one of the programs (sight reading factory) we used previously.

BHS

Q: Why is there an increase in the repair line?

A: Increased cost of repairs.

Q: Why is there a decrease in online subscriptions?

A: Subscription was shifted to a district license resulting in savings.

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional equipment?

A: A variety of drums need to have drumheads replaced.

13. Program 360 Technology Education – page 24

BCS

No Questions for this department.

BHS

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: Based on projected needs for supplies next year.

Q: Why is there a decrease in online subscription services?

A: The Tech Ed program uses various software packages which we update every few years. Each package varies in cost so this budget line fluctuates each year.

14. Program 600 Continuing Education – page 25

Provider Districts

These are districts, like Vernon, that provide the state-mandated adult education services in their own district and to other districts. Vernon accomplishes this through Vernon Regional Adult Bases Education (VRABE), a unit of the Vernon Public Schools that specializes in adult education. VRABE provides the required adult education for 13 cooperating towns in addition to Vernon.

Cooperating Districts

These are districts that for several reasons – primarily cost-effectiveness, but including expertise in a highly-regulated, grant-funded state and federal environment – contract out with a Provider District to provide the mandated adult education services for their district. VRABE’s Cooperating Districts include Bolton, Colchester, Coventry, East Windsor, Ellington, Glastonbury, Griswold, South Windsor, Tolland, Vernon, Wethersfield, and Region 19 (Ashford, Mansfield, Willington).

Fee Structure

VRABE structures its fee based on a district’s usage, and the cost per pupil per program per year. Five-year running average enrollment is used to avoid large yearly fluctuations in a town’s fee, and VRABE’s overall State Grant Request (the source of determining costs) is approved yearly by VRABE’s Policy Board, consisting of the superintendents or their representatives from each town.

15. Program 440 Library Media Center – page 26

BCS

Q: Why is there an increase in online subscriptions?

A: One of our programs, Pebble Go, was upgraded to the premium version.

Q: Why is there a decrease in library books?

A: This amount represents our actual need to keep the library books updated.

BHS

Q: Why is there an increase in Online Subscription Services?

A: The library uses multiple subscriptions, all of which had a price increase.

16. Program 910 Athletics – page 27

BCS

Q: Why is there an increase in non-tech repairs?

A: Inspections and repairs for basketball hoops and gym equipment. This was moved from the Operations budget to Athletic budget to better reflect athletic maintenance cost.

Q: Why is there an increase in athletic supplies?

A: Equipment prices (basketballs, etc.) have increased significantly.

BHS

Q: Why is there in Sports Officials?

A: Increase cost of referees/umpires.

Q: Why is there an increase in Athletic Supplies?

A: Price jump in supply costs. (For example, basketball cost went from \$56 to \$92)

Q: Why is there an increase in Equipment?

A: Soccer nets need replacement.

Q: Why is there an increase in Repairs and Maintenance?

A: Inspections and repairs for bleachers and gym equipment moved from O&M budget to athletic budget.

Q: Why is there an increase in Professional Services?

A: A professional trainer is used to re-certify coaches. The number of coaches needing certification varies annually.

Bolton Center School

<u>Team</u>	<u>Replacement Year</u>	<u>Last Purchased</u>
Softball – (Jerseys only)	2026-27	2022-23
Baseball – (Jerseys only)	2026-27	2022-23
Soccer – Boys	2027-28	2023-24
Soccer – Girls	2027-28	2023-24
Cross Country – Boys & Girls	2028-29	2024-25

Bolton High School

<u>Team</u>	<u>Replacement Year</u>	<u>Last Purchased</u>
Cross Country & Track	2026-27	2021-22
Softball	2026-27	2021-22
Tennis – Girls	2026-27	2021-22
*Tennis - Boys	2026-27	2021-22
*Contingent upon participation numbers to support a boys' team		
Baseball	2027-28	2022-23
Volleyball	2027-28	2022-23
Basketball – Boys	2028-29	2023-24
Basketball – Girls	2024-25	2018-20
Soccer – Boys	2025-26	2019-20
Soccer – Girls	2025-26	2019-20

17. Program 200 Special Education – pg. 30

Q: Why is there a decrease in Professional Meetings?

A: This is based on past years' expenditures and projected meetings for next year.

Q: Why is there a decrease in Pupil Services?

A: There are fewer students out-placed and fewer services required.

Q: Why is there an increase in Professional Services?

A: This is based on a projected increase cost for audiological services.

Q: Why is there an increase in Online Services?

A: This is based on teacher requests and curriculum needs of students with IEPs.

Q: Why is there an increase in tuition?

A: This is based on an anticipated out-placement.

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: This is based on additional reading supplies/materials needed at both schools as well as costs to support additional students in the transition program.

Q: Why is there a decrease in tests?

A: This is based on teacher requests for the projected number of evaluations next year.

Q: Why is there a decrease in Dues/Fees?

A: This is based on actual and projected costs.

Q: Why is there a decrease in out of district transportation?

A: There is one less student requiring this service.

Q: Why is there a decrease in Transportation PK Midday School to Home?

A: At this time, it is not needed.

SPECIAL EDUCATION EXCESS COST GRANT

The special education excess cost grant reimburses school districts for the reasonable costs of special education for a student who lives in the district that exceed 4.5 times the district's average per pupil expenditures for the preceding year and 100% of the cost of special education for any student placed in the district by a state agency and who has no identifiable home district in the state. Reimbursable costs include those for special education instructional personnel, equipment and materials, tuition, transportation, rent for space or equipment, and consultant services. The grant does not reimburse districts for regular education costs attributable to a special education student. Connecticut does not currently fund the excess over the threshold.

HOW THE GRANT IS CALCULATED

The excess cost grant is calculated by adding up all the reasonable costs of special education services a district provides to a particular student and subtracting the district's "basic contribution." The basic contribution is 4.5 times a district's average per pupil expenditure for the preceding year. Bolton's average per pupil expenditure is \$23,411, in the case of a resident student, and 100% of that expenditure in the case of a state-agency-placed child with no identifiable home school district. Any expenditure exceeding the basic contribution is reimbursable by the state.

18. Program 210 Extended School Year – pg. 32

Q: Why is there an increase in Pupil Services?

A: This is based on current IEP needs of students.

Q: Why is there a decrease in tuition?

A: This is based on current projected rates.

Q: Why is there a decrease in transportation?

A: This is based on student needs and current projected rates.

19. Program 2110 Social Work – pg. 34

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: This is based on teacher request to meet the needs of students on her caseload.

20. Program 2120 Guidance – pg. 35

Q: Why is there an increase in online services?

A: We need to add a new piece to our School links subscription that is tied to the Portrait of a Graduate and student portfolio.

21. Program 2130 Nursing – pg. 36

Q: Why is there a decrease in Professional Services?

A: We can move this line to pay out of Medicaid funds this year.

Q: Why is there an increase in other supplies?

A: Overall, costs have increased. More specifically, 3 replacement AED batteries need to be replaced (end of lifetime) and a replacement audiometer is being requested to replace the 30+ year old audiometer currently in use at BC.

22. Program 2140 Psychological Services – pg. 37

Q: Why is there an increase in tests?

A: This is based on the cost of protocols needed for the projected number of evaluations next year.

23. Program 2150 Speech and Language – pg. 38

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: This is based on teacher request to meet the needs of students on her caseload.

Q: Why is there an increase in tests?

A: A new test has been requested to meet the needs of students being tested for articulation concerns.

24. Program 2210 – Program Improvement and Evaluation – pg. 40

BCS

Q: Why is there an increase in in-service?

A: The state library conference was added, along with some slight increases in fees.

BHS

Q: Why is there an increase in in-service

A: This is based on a request for science teachers to attend the national conference next fall.

25. Program 2320 Central Administration – page 41

Q: Why is there a decrease in professional meetings

A: I am prioritizing local conferences and professional growth opportunities that will meet my needs.

Q: Why is there a decrease in BOE support services

A: We will no longer renew our BOE online policy hosting platform as it will now be performed in house within Parent Square.

Q: Why is there an increase in postage?

A: The cost of postage has increased

Q: Why is there a decrease in travel?

A: Based on a reduced need for travel reimbursement

Q: Why is there an increase in other supplies?
A: General increase in the cost of office supplies.

Q: Why is there a decrease in dues/fees?
A: Eliminated redundant services and prioritized the most beneficial/impactful professional memberships.

26. Program 2330 School Insurance – page 42

Q: Why is there an increase in sports injury insurance?
A: Projected policy renewal increase.

Q: Why is there a decrease in workers' compensation insurance?
A: Current year renewal came in lower than the projected cap.

Q: Why is there a decrease in property/general liability insurance?
A: Current year actuals came in lower than the projected for both property/general liability and cyber insurance.

27. Program 2410 Building Administration – page 43

BCS

No questions.

BHS

Q: Why is there an increase in professional services?
A: Table rentals for expanded College Fair.

28. Program 2510 Fiscal Services – page 44

Q: Why is there a decrease in professional services?
A: Decrease driven by no biennial actuarial valuation services for FY27. This is a shared service with the town along with School ERP Pro our accounting system.

Q: Why is there a decrease in repairs & maintenance/lease?
A: Upon our copier lease ending in January, we started a new copier lease which resulted in lower lease & support service cost.

Q: Why is there an increase in dues/fees?
A: Projected cost increase to dues & membership fees.

29. Program 2580 Systems Management – page 45

Q: Why is there an increase in professional services?
A: Contractual increase for IT services.

Q: Why is there an increase in internet services?
A: Projected increase for new port which were previously covered by the state contract.

Q: Why is there an increase in online services?
A: Projected increases for renewals such as Powerschool, Microsoft, Google Workspace, and Parent Square/Smart Sites etc.

30. Contracted Salaries and Wages – page 47

Q: Why is there an increase in the administrators' line?

A: Contractual increases.

Q: Why is there an increase in the teachers' line?

A: Contractual increases.

Q: Why is there a decrease in ESY teachers?

A: One less teacher needed for the extended program based on current needs.

Q: Why is there a decrease in the paraeducator line?

A: Reduction in positions.

Q: Why is there a decrease in the ESY paraeducator line?

A: Fewer paraeducators are required to meet the IEP needs.

Q: Why is there a decrease in the administrative assistant line?

A: Reduction of half a position.

Q: Why is there an increase in the administrative/business support line?

A: Contractual increases.

Q: Why is there an increase in the nurse/OT/PT/BCBA line?

A: Contractual increases.

Q: Why is there a decrease in the ESY Nurse/OT/PT/BCBA line?

A: Fewer hours needed for the BCBA are needed this year.

Q: Why is there an increase in the operation/maintenance line?

A: Contractual increases.

Q: Why is there a decrease in the substitute instructional staff line?

A: Reduction of a daily substitute position at BHS.

Q: Why is there an increase in the substitute custodial staff line?

A: This reflects an increase in minimum wage.

Q: Why is there a decrease in the co-curricular/advisor stipends?

A: This is due to a reduction in stipends based on current needs.

Q: Why is there a decrease in the athletic stipend line?

A: This is due to the reduction of the unified sports stipends.

Q: Why is there a decrease in the sick/vacation payout line?

A: We are projecting less retirement payouts based on information shared by staff in yearly request for information.

31. Personnel Benefits – page 48

The personnel budget is driven by a projected 16% insurance premium increase to cover potential increase in final rates which the State Partnership Plan expects to have sometime in March. The amounts are based on current enrollments, staffing projection forms for next year, and vacancy projections to include insurance which are not taken in the current year.

On January 20th, the State Partnership Plan's projected rate increases between 12-15% consistent with their initial estimate in November. This makes the base increase roughly 14% plus Tolland County's rate adjustment of +1% makes Bolton's projected increase 15% however due to past experience sometimes coming in higher we have added an additional 1% as recommended by our insurance consultant. The amounts are based on current enrollments, staffing projection forms for next year, and vacancy projections to include insurance which is not taken in the current year.

32. Program 2600 Operations & Maintenance – page 50

BCS

Q: What drives the decrease in purchasing property services?

A: Moved inspection for gym equipment to the Athletic budget. No required testing ie. Radon, water heater due this year.

BHS

Q: What drives the decrease in purchasing property services?

A: Moved inspection for gym & bleacher equipment to the Athletic budget. No required testing ie. Radon, generator due this year.

BCS and BHS

Q: Why the increase in repairs and maintenance?

A: Expected increase in tune ups and increase due to age of equipment.

BCS and BHS

Q: Why the increase in telecommunications?

A: Verizon down to 2 less phone lines and a now have a better rate however, Comcast is up due to original agreement expired and the new one is much more expensive. We will research our options this year.

BCS and BHS

Q: Why the decrease in operations and maintenance supplies?

A: Less repairs at BCS are expected with the new HVAC system and BHS we will no longer purchase supplies from Trane.

BCS

Q: Why the increase in Natural Gas?

A: Higher usage is expected.

BPS

Q: Why the decrease in gasoline?

A: Cost per gallon decreased.

BHS and BPS

Q: Why the decrease in diesel?

A: Cost per gallon decreased.

33. Program 2700 Transportation – page 52

Q: Why the overall increase in transportation?

A: This is the current projected increase of approximately 15% based on bids received. We are currently still in the review process of the bid results.

Q: Why the decrease in diesel?

A: Cost per gallon decreased.

34. Capital Reserves Appendix A – page 54

Q: How does the CAPA process work?

A: The BOE Finance subcommittee meets with the Superintendent and Director of Finance to review the requests. The subcommittee then makes a recommendation to the BOE and the BOE votes on the proposed CAPA list. The CAPA list for both the BOE and BOS is then examined at Finance Committee meetings on CAPA. They examine all the requests and make a recommendation to the BOS. The BOS votes on the Finance Committee's CAPA recommendations to determine the CAPA list to be presented as part of the BOS budget.

35. Summary of Budget Adjustments Appendix B – page 55

Q: What does Appendix B represent?

A: Appendix B represents the budget requests by teachers and administrators at the top of the page for a 6.97% increase over this year's budget. The list of reductions represents cuts made by the Superintendent of Schools for a recommended budget increase of 5.17%.

36. Summary of Total Education Budget Appendix E – page 59

Q: What does this chart represent and why is it in the BOE budget?

A: This chart represents the total cost of education in Bolton that includes both the general fund and grants received by the BOE. This chart was developed collaboratively by the Board of Education and Board of Finance.