

MT. BLUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHESTERVILLE – FARMINGTON – INDUSTRY – NEW SHARON – NEW VINEYARD – STARKS – TEMPLE – VIENNA – WELD – WILTON

129 SEAMON ROAD, SUITE 2, FARMINGTON, ME 04938

Phone (207) 778-6571 | Fax (207) 778-4160

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TO: RSU 9 Board
FROM: Christian M. Elkington, Superintendent
RE: Budget Meeting Question & Answer Updates
DATE: 4-11-2023

- **What percent of our budget comes from federal funding?**
 - This depends on the year but typically federal funds help with Title Grants and Special Education. It can vary from 3%-5% in addition to what comes from the state and what is raised locally.
- **What % does Mainecare pay us for SPED programming?**
 - It depends on if the program qualifies.
 - If the program qualifies about 70% of the cost will be returned to the district.
- **What are the ages that the district is responsible for special education students?**
 - Grades K through age 22.
 - We are responsible for students with disabilities who have not graduated with an RSU 9 diploma until they reach the age of 22.
 - At this time we do have responsibility for students with disabilities in preschool within our buildings. CDS services through Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) is responsible, not us. Maine's public schools are one of two states who have not made oversight of 3 & 4 yr. Olds the expectation.
- **Do you have an idea about students with special needs coming next year?**
 - We have 15-16 new K kids coming in the fall with special ed needs that we know of. At least 6-8 of them have significant needs, as in non verbal students with Autism.
- **What positions are currently in ESSER?**
 - Please refer to today's (4-11-2023) handout.
- **Do you have any nurse comparisons?**

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- For 23-24 RSU 9 (5.6) (401 students per nurse (spn))
- Other districts:
 - Skowhegan 5.6 nurses(.6 from ESSER) 2300 students (479 spn)
 - Lewiston 12 (3 from ESSER) for 5400 students (600 spn)
 - Lisbon, 3 1300 students (433 spn)
 - Jay/Livermore, 4 (1 from ESSER) 1400 students (467 spn)
 - MSAD 58, 3 (.5 from ESSER) 589 students (236 spn)
 - Turner 6, 1975 students (329 spn)
 - Auburn 7, 3000 students (429 spn)
 - MSAD 10, 6 (2 from ESSER) 1800 students (450 spn)
 - MSAD 56, 3 (1 from ESSER) 775 students (388 spn)
 - MSAD 44, 1 nurse & 1 CNA 650 students (433 spn)
- **Demographic Questions: Section 3 of the Budget Book**
 - **Do the student counts per school include special ed students? Staff?**
 - They include classroom teachers and total enrollment (all students).
 - Most special education students, unless they are assigned to an all inclusive program, are assigned to a classroom.
 - Does not include special education teachers.
 - **What is current enrollment vs projected enrollment?**
 - If a student is K current year, are they counted in grade one for projected enrollment number? Example: Mallett Pre-k 2023 = 55 Mallett. K 23/24 = 96
 - Answer: in other grades yes, for K, since some of our families choose not to enroll in Prek we use an average from the previous few years.
 - **Question specific to CCHS chart: probable reduction in one classroom teacher based on enrollment - question: Is this based on the school's enrollment or district enrollment?**
 - The chart is related to CCHS enrollment.
 - If the question is do we look at everyone's enrollment? The answer is yes as we must make sure that overall district resources are shared evenly, fairly, and are giving us the biggest bang for our funding. Having classes with major enrollment differences, unless there is a specific, documented educational reason, is not a fair use of resources.
 - **Is there a number or percentage that enrollment must drop that determines whether we eliminate a teaching position?**
 - It is reviewed every year for the reason mentioned above.
 - First as a principal and now as superintendent when I see classes of 13 and below, I look to see about why and whether or not resources could be better used for more of our students.
 - **Would a school be able to add a teaching position if enrollment numbers increase?**
 - Yes, it is my understanding that this in fact was decided for CCHS three years ago during the budget development process, when they went from 11 to 12 classroom teachers.
 - Each winter enrollment numbers are reviewed to see if our classroom teacher needs/ predictions for the following year need to be adjusted.
 - Before my time, in rare cases we have hired an ed tech to assist in a larger classroom, when students have moved in over the summer.

- If over the summer in one school, we get an influx in a grade level it may cause us to look to adjust staff across schools or look to change class configurations (introduce split class).
- **Of the anticipated influx of high needs and/or non-verbal students coming into the district, are any expected to attend CCHS? Or are they all going to the new Wilton program?**
 - If CCHS was going to receive a couple of students with significant needs (there are always move-in possibilities during the summer) they are in the best resource-supported position to transition students into the school. CCHS's class sizes are the smallest in our district and their social worker, and special ed teacher ratios have the lowest per student numbers in RSU 9.
 - The anticipated high needs/non-verbal students that we know of and are expecting will all be going to the new program in Wilton.