Bethel Board of Education Special Meeting - Budget Prep Preview Presentation

Thursday, January 4, 2024 7:00 PM
Board of Education Conference Room E, Live Stream:
http://devos2.bethel.k12.ct.us/show?video=763ff4de0370 Materials can be
viewed at: https://meetings.boardbook.org/Public/Organization/2425 The
opportunity for members of the public wishing to make comments can attend and
comment in-person or may send public comments to the Board via email or
letter and it will be included as part of the record of the meeting., 1
School Street, PO Box 253, Bethel, CT 06801

1.	**Call to Order**	**Speaker(s):** Policy 9326
1.A.	Roll Call for Quorum	
1.B.	Pledge of Allegiance	
2.	**Issues Affecting the 2024-2025 Proposed Board of Education Budget & Strategic Plan Update**	**Speaker(s):** Christine Carver
3.	**Recommended Executive Session**	
3.A.	CT General Statues 1-210(b)(9) Negotiations - Bethel Education Association	
4.	**Adjourn**	

Strategic Plan Update
Winter, 2024

Empowered Learner
Goal: Develop empowered learners who engage in autonomous decision-making, self-directed learning, and reflection, and take ownership of progress and outcomes so that they can contribute as active, productive members of society. If we design environments that foster curiosity and engage learners in authentic, relevant problems and tasks where they can set goals, initiate actions to achieve those goals, seek feedback, and reflect on their progress, then they will be empowered[1] and develop their agency[2] and self-efficacy[3].

Clarity of Instruction	Understand the intellectual engagement framework and its role in learner empowerment ● Use of the Danielson Intellectual Engagement Guide to identify components within intellectual engagement ● Calibration with teachers and administrators on the indicators of intellectual engagement through professional learning sessions, faculty meetings, and instructional rounds ● Partnered with the Center for Public Research and Leadership to support our work around intellectual engagement Engage in curriculum development and leverage resources to include varied perspectives ● Use of edreports.org to evaluate materials for high-quality content and a broad variety and range of texts ● Conscious effort to include equitable experiences for students within our curriculum including but not limited to varied authors, backgrounds, multiple entry points to access a task, understanding bias, and media literacy ● Established a curriculum revision process to support continuous reflection and refinement of curriculum development Develop an understanding of the progressions of learning both content and process ● Calibration of expectations across classrooms and grades using student work ● Calibration of expectations through learning walks between and across schools

---

[1] Empowered: Student ownership of learning.
[2] Agency: The capacity to direct one's efforts toward specific goals.
[3] Self-efficacy: A set of beliefs about your ability to effectively perform tasks.

Design of Learning Opportunities that foster empowerment of our learners	Design flexible learning opportunities to challenge students where they are ● Unit Inquiry Projects that allow for choice and voice for students ● Participation in the annual STEAM Expo that allows students to create and test a passion project ● Opportunities for students to select how they want to represent their learning (e.g. artistically, written expression, presentation, song) ● Differentiated learning opportunities including extension activities and reteach activities ● Multiple pathway opportunities at BHS including AP, Early College Experiences, certificate programs, and experiential learning opportunities Deliberate instruction and application of the Global Competencies ● Global competencies are included in all of our K-12 curricula ● Learning goals for students include the global competencies which are planned, taught and assessed across the district ● Use of global competency rubrics for student self assessment ● Report cards include student progress reflecting the global competencies Understand and design varied forms of feedback and reflection ● *Learner-Focused Feedback* book study with Leadership Team ● PLCs use of the Professional Learning Cycle that requires monitoring and feedback loops to support both educator and student learning ● Multiple mechanisms for varied stakeholder feedback including, but not limited to surveys, focus groups/small groups, 1-1 conferencing, written, oral, and digital feedback
Design Learning Environments (physical and virtual spaces) and culture that foster empowerment in our learners	Purposely plan for and engage in digital and physical environments that support personalized, differentiated, and individualized instruction and real-time feedback as appropriate. ● Use of computer-based programs that support varied learning needs such as IXL, My View, code.org, ReadWrite, Google Translate, Desmos, etc. ● Opportunities for students to select how they want to represent their learning (e.g. artistically, written expression, presentation, song) Foster relationships that develop social construction of learning ● Emphasis on global competencies, including collaboration, to support learning and growth ● Learning opportunities are regularly planned that require students to make sense of what they are learning through multiple forums including, but not limited to discussion, questioning, building, and drawing. Create the capacity of all learners to cultivate and engage in a culture of risk-taking and resilience ● Model a culture for learning in our classrooms that supports risk-taking and mistakes as opportunities for learning and growth ● Use of a K-8 mastery-based grading system that allows for multiple opportunities to show what you know

	Strengthen Relationships with Community Members including parents, local organizations, and local business ● Developed family literacy and math nights with learning games and information for families ● Continue partnerships with businesses to support our BHS Pathways

Emotional Intelligence
Goal: To develop and promote students' self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, relationship skills, goal-directed behavior, personal responsibility, decision-making, and optimistic thinking; in order to improve students' social and emotional well-being, and their performance in school and in life. Theory of Action: If we develop a strong system to develop Emotional Intelligence by implementing programming aligned to a research-based framework and/or standards and integrated with academic instruction, assessing student progress and needs, and organizing our responses to student needs in a multi-tiered system of interventions, then our students will develop the skills necessary to regulate their emotions, interact positively with others, and succeed in school and in life.

| Universal, for ALL students

Regular Education | Establish leadership teams at the district and building levels to support implementation and engage in ongoing progress monitoring. The team should include staff and students in different positions, including teachers, PPS staff, and others, in order to have diverse perspectives.
● District Climate and Wellness Committee reviews district-level data and makes recommendations for school teams
● School Climate teams in each building review EI (e.g., DESSA, tier 1 behavior trends, discipline) data
● Monthly grade level PLC meetings K-5, every 6 weeks 6-8
● EI committees within every building engage in planning/updating lessons and special events (e.g, Wildcat Committee at BHS)

Develop **staff** awareness and skills related to the 5 core EI competencies, by: building connections between the EI core competencies and the global competencies; designing and implementing a professional learning program for school staff; and creating a professional culture that emphasizes respect, inclusivity, and collaborative problem-solving.
● Professional learning program- formal PL days, faculty meetings, PLC meetings
● Staff/school charters
● PL for secretaries, custodians, IT staff, paraeducators, and job coaches

Develop & Implement: EI programming that is aligned to a research-based framework and developmental standards, creating explicit connection to learning behaviors, the global competencies, and digital citizenship.
● RULER program PreK-8
● Character Strong as a curricular resource and additional lesson development by Wildcat Committee 9-12
● Teen Mental Health First Aid- all 11th graders
● Signs of Suicide- 7th and 9th grades
● Integration of academic content and EI- establishing a clear connection |

	between EI, global competencies, and cognitive engagement (CASEL framework and Danielson framework) ● Applied projects, example= math fluency project at Johnson Develop a plan for implementation of programming utilizing PPS staff, classroom instruction, school-wide, and district-wide activities. ● EI program schedules in each building, as developed EI committees ● SRBI meetings focus on Tier 1 strategies for teachers in the classroom All staff will be trained in restorative practices with emphasis on connections to EI programming. ● Paraeducator training plan ● Previous training at BMS and BHS, strategies implemented Develop a menu of regular education evidence-based strategies and interventions to improve social-emotional functioning, to be implemented by teachers in the classroom setting, with support and collaboration by EI Coach. ● Google Drive of strategies in process, to be available on EI website Develop a plan for evaluation of short and long-term outcomes, by selecting assessments that will yield information regarding district goals, and establishing a timeline for data collection and analysis. ● DESSA implemented 3x year in K-8 ● Additional data reviewed regularly- attendance, discipline, school climate surveys, counseling contacts, crisis interventions, etc. ● Attitudes & Behaviors survey, 8-12- 2022 Partner with families and the greater community by: communicating the definition and importance of EI, providing opportunities for professional learning in core EI competencies, and co-leading initiatives to promote social-emotional well-being of our youth. ● RULER family nights ● Monthly parent workshops offered by EI coach ● "Mind Your Mental Health" wellness events conducted by faith-based community organizations ● Connection with Bethel Community Cares Coalition ● Meet and greet with Bethel Business community at BHS ● Youth Mental Health First Aid
Interventions and Supports	Develop a district-wide system for social-emotional interventions including: ○ Universal screening measure(s) ○ Uniform process for reviewing data by the school SRBI teams ○ Criteria for identifying students in need of Tier 2 and Tier 3 support ○ Intervention Documentation Forms (IDFs) for social-emotional goal-setting and progress monitoring ● DESSA- universal screener and progress monitoring ● Data reviewed by grade level PLCs and district EI School Climate Teams

	and used to identify students in need of intervention Develop a menu of evidence-based strategies and interventions to improve social-emotional functioning, that includes targeted and intensive interventions to be implemented by PPS staff. ● Research-based interventions provided ● Partnering between PPS staff and EI coach for planning and in specific cases Provide professional learning opportunities for PPS staff, to support the implementation of effective interventions to improve social skills and emotional regulation. ● Training provided in: DBT Skills in Schools, ACT/AIM, Youth Mental Health First Aid, and social skills interventions Collaborate with parents/guardians to design and implement strategies and interventions for children. ● Communication process developed for students entering SRBI ● Team meeting and parent contacts tracked ● Home visits when needed Strengthen connections, including communication and referral pathways, to community-based resources and mental health professionals. Strengthen connections with community partnerships-clergy, adult mentors, and school-to-work connections. ● Collaboration with Carelon (formerly DCF voluntary services) ● Communication and collaboration with community resources (e.g., Youth Continuum)

Resources	
Goal: To ensure that our staff has the appropriate resources to create the empowered learner and develop social-emotional competencies of our students. **Theory of Action:** If we provide our staff with the appropriate fiscal resources, then all of our students will be developed to their greatest potential	
Resources to develop and support the Empowered Learner	Expand coaching model to support Tier 1 instruction, particularly at BHS (STEM). - STEM Coaching implemented in the Fall of 2023. - Focus of coaching is in implementation of Illustrative Mathematics and formative assessment to address learning needs. - Coaching feedback and professional learning supports our district's Theory of Action addressing rigorous and relevant learning opportunities that intellectually engage students Ensure all learning environments across the district are equitable to support the 21st Century Learner. - Safety and security upgrades to BMS, BHS, and Berry to reflect improvements made during the renovation projects at RS & JS - Addition of NovoBoards at BMS, BHS, and Berry Ensure adequate technology and replacement cycle districtwide to support a blended learning environment. - Technology and replacement cycles have been developed. - Implementation is fund dependent. - All staff devices were replaced with ARP/ESSER funding - A variety of classroom communication boards were also replaced with ARP/ESSER funding. - Purchasing of student Chromebooks has been replaced according to cycle. Ensure an appropriate number of qualified, experienced, and properly trained staff to manage and support all facets of technology districtwide. - Increased by 1.0 FTE. - Reorganized the technology department to create greater efficiencies. - Still an ongoing need for more full-time staff. Implement BOE-established class size guidelines to create the conditions to meet our students' needs - The Board of Education passed a regulation creating the optimal average class size guidelines. - Added/adjusted staff to meet the needs. Evaluate existing staffing resources to maximize efficiencies. - This process is done annually as part of budgetary planning. Provide formal and embedded professional learning to shift instructional practices for the empowered learner, to include blended learning. - The focus of professional learning was first on the acceleration of

	learning to address academic needs as a result of the pandemic. ● 2023-2024 Professional Learning was focused on implementation of new literacy programs (K-8), access to grade-level standards, and intellectual engagement. Explore resources to enhance the scope of internships. ● BHS is implementing strategies to enhance internships based on feedback from local business members and the Director and Chair of Economic Development. Provide programming for parents (internal or from external sources) to engage parents in understanding their role in empowering their learners. ● Parent programs have increased greatly in the last year. The 2023-2024 focus in elementary school has been in the area of literacy (Family Literacy Nights), mathematics (Family Mathematics Nights), and emotional intelligence (RULER Nights). ● District has run community engagement events, including State of the Schools. ● Mental Health First Aid was offered to families. ● Annual STEAM Expo engages families and community
Resources to develop Social-Emotional Competencies	Hire a social-emotional coach to develop and implement EI curriculum. ● Completed. Funding through this academic year. Identify and purchase curricular resources and/or programs to support EI. ● Completed. RULER program and licenses were purchased for K-8. ● BHS purchased curricular resources to support the advisory program. Provide opportunities for professional learning to implement EI practices, EI curriculum, and restorative practices, inclusive of equity issues. ● Focus of the 2022-2023 school year Professional Learning was in the area of EI. Training was scheduled on all Professional Learning days. Provide programming for parents (internal or from external sources) to engage parents in understanding their role in EI
Infrastructure (security, physical capital & facilities)	Evaluate and implement the long-range security plan against future needs. implement the 10-year plan to address capital needs. ● Security audit was conducted. A long-term plan was developed. ● District wrote and received a security grant from the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services. ● District advocated and received town funds to complete almost all other security needs.
Human Capital	Ensure that our workforce is reflective of our student body. ● This is an ongoing area of need. Due to state shortages of teaching and paraeducator staffing, there have not been any systemic ongoing strategies. Recruit students of color into our Cadet Teaching program to create a pipeline of certified staff. ● Completed. Ensure our hiring practices promote the hiring of minority staff.

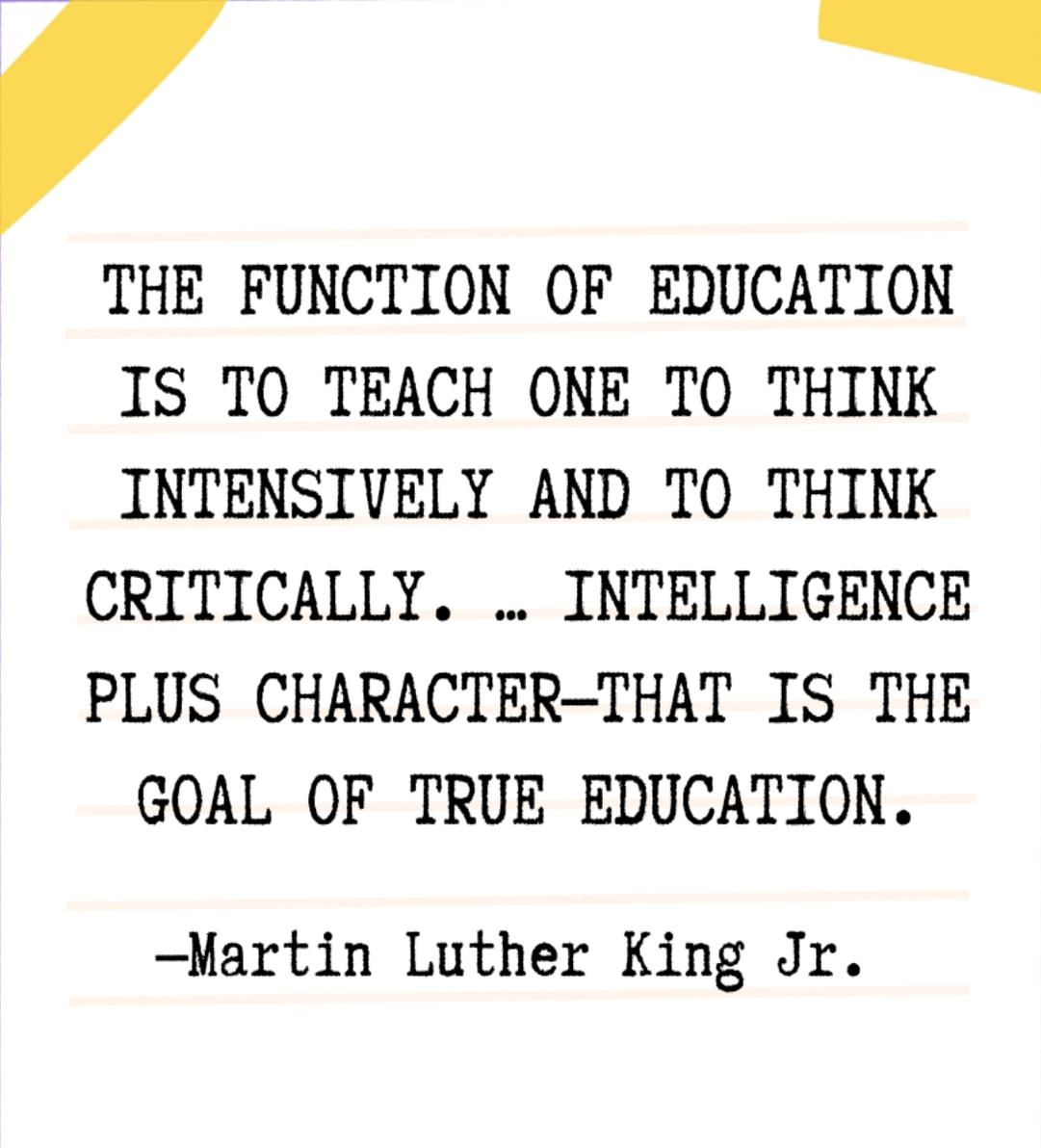|	

	● This is an ongoing area of need.
	Screen incoming candidates around issues of equity.
	    ● While we continue to screen with that purpose, applications for all levels of positions have decreased.
	Ensure that our induction programs include professional learning focused on equity.
	    ● Monthly PL is offered in areas including, but not limited to understanding and supporting special services, use of assessment data and collecting student learning evidence, lesson planning and rigorous instruction, and emotional intelligence

BUDGET & STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

January, 2024

THE FUNCTION OF EDUCATION IS TO TEACH ONE TO THINK INTENSIVELY AND TO THINK CRITICALLY. ... INTELLIGENCE PLUS CHARACTER—THAT IS THE GOAL OF TRUE EDUCATION.

—Martin Luther King Jr.

AGENDA

1. To understand the factors influencing the budget – "The Story" which will explain the numbers to be presented on January 18th.

2. To receive a Strategic Plan update.

Mission

The mission of the Bethel Public Schools is to foster a culture of excellence and achievement accomplished through strong, collaborative relationships with parents and the community, and rigorous teaching and learning opportunities for all learners.

Our graduates will be compassionate, skilled, and inquisitive individuals, who take initiative in making positive contributions to society.

THE STORY

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

Budget Goals & Drivers

Budget Goals

1. Maintaining our current curricular and extra-curricular programs;

2. Maximizing resources to support fiscal efficiency; and

3. Supporting the needs of students with disabilities and our multilingual learners.
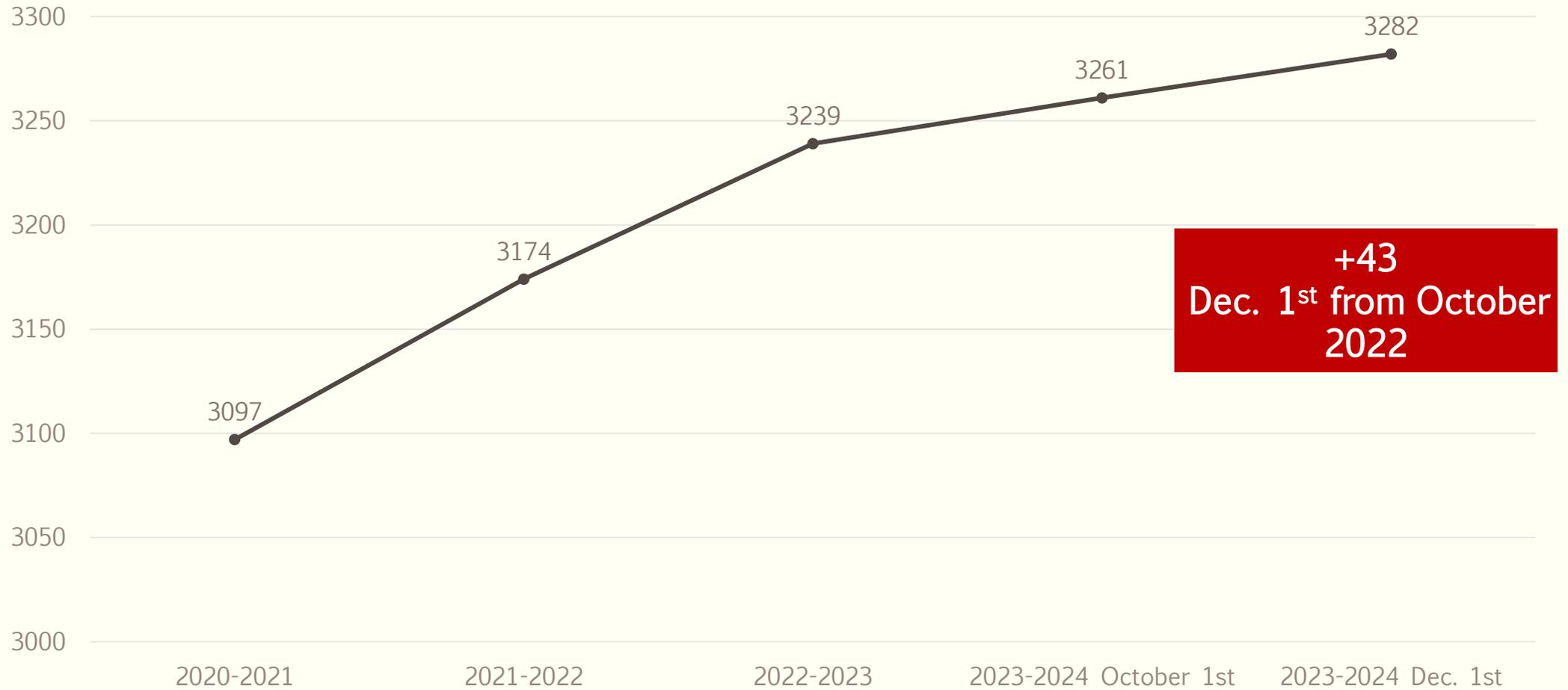
Budget Drivers

1. Contractual obligations;

2. Increase in number of students with disabilities and multilingual learners, who have more complex needs;

3. General inflation; and

4. New legislation, unfunded mandates.

PROJECTED ENROLLMENT
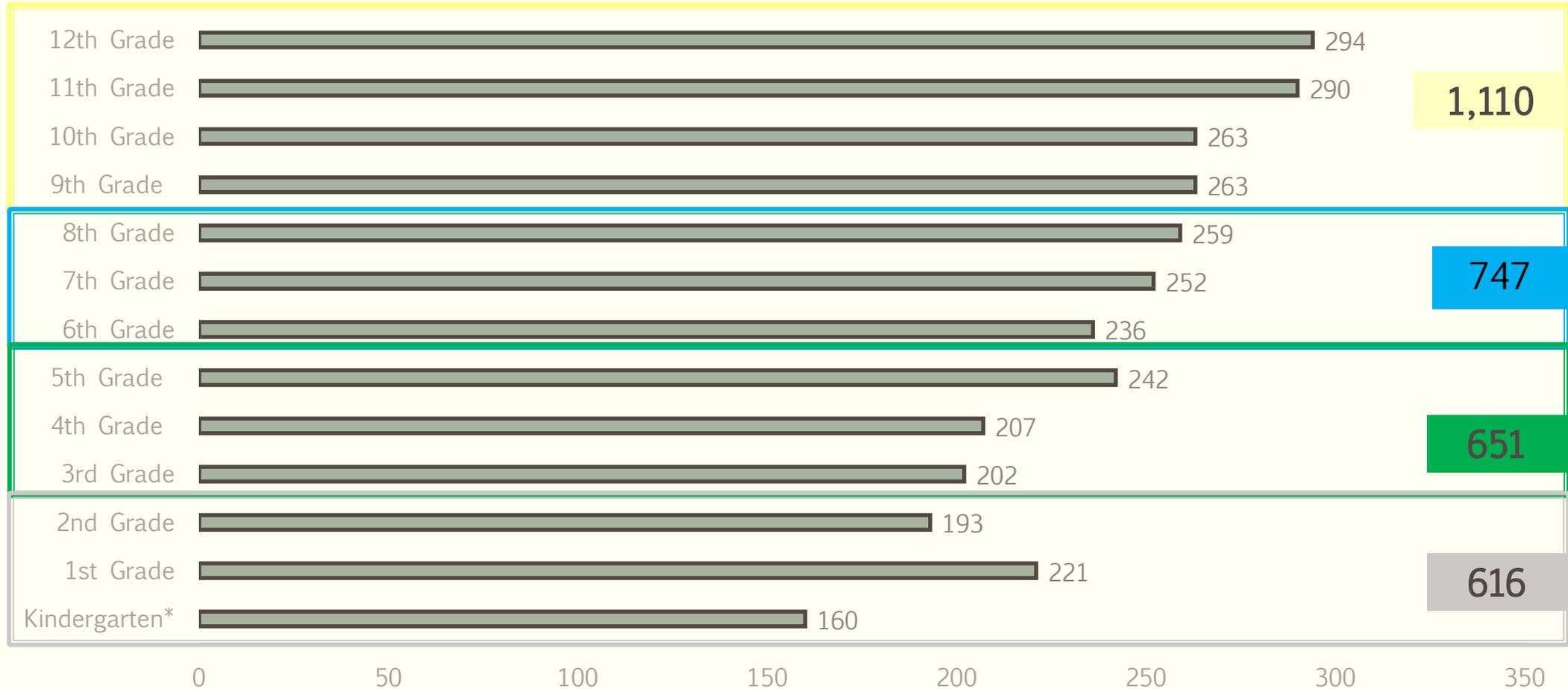
2024-2025 School Year

Problem that needs to be planned for......

Housing developments currently under construction will very likely bring in more students.

Projected Enrollment by Grade Level, K-12, 2024-2025 (as of January 2, 2024)

Grade	Enrollment
12th Grade	294
11th Grade	290
10th Grade	263
9th Grade	263
9–12 total	**1,110**
8th Grade	259
7th Grade	252
6th Grade	236
6–8 total	**747**
5th Grade	242
4th Grade	207
3rd Grade	202
3–5 total	**651**
2nd Grade	193
1st Grade	221
Kindergarten*	160
K–2 total	**616**

Enrollment reflects actual students in each grade level & does not include growth, which has happened each year.   *Kindergarten enrollment based on estimates due to change in law.

CHANGE IN KINDERGARTEN AGE REQUIREMENT TO BE 5 ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1ST WILL CHANGE UTILIZATION OF STAFFING

Kindergarten Waiver Process

Legal Requirements – Preschool

✓ Must provide services to students with disabilities from their 3rd birthday through the school year of the student's 22nd birthday.

✓ Majority of classrooms are required to be integrated (50/50 ratio) of students with disabilities to typical peers.

✓ With change in Kindergarten age, some students with disabilities will likely have preschool for three (3) years, as opposed to the current two (2). It is dependent on when their birthday falls and the age of "child find" (when they entered the program).

✓ We happen to have a lot of students with disabilities this year with the fall birthdays, so we will need increased sections of full day preschools.

Circle of Friends (COF) – Change in Kindergarten Age

3 Year Old Classroom

- 3 ½ day Preschool Sections

- Will not take typical peers unless 3 by September 1st

Transportation only provided to students with disabilities.

4 Year Old Classroom & Transition K

- 5 Full Day Classes at Berry School
  - 2 Kindergarten FTE reallocated for 1 year
  - 28 Students with disabilities, 32 Typical students
  - Prioritize typical students who would have been Kindergarten eligible prior to law
  - Tuition for full day, $175.00 per week for typical peers only.
    - Will provide sliding scale to families in need.
    - Offsets cost of running program.
  - Comparative Preschool Tuition
    - COF tuition is lower than area preschools because it only operates during school hours and does not have a before and aftercare component.

Projected Enrollment by School

Rockwell School

| Grade	Projected Enrollment 2024	# of Sections Fall 2023	# of Sections` Fall 2024	Variance	Projected Class Size 2024
K*	80	5	4	-1	20
1st Grade	109	5	5	0	21.8
2nd Grade	96	5	5	0	19.2

Berry School

Grade	Projected Enrollment 2024	# of Sections` Fall 2023	# of Sections Fall 2024	Variance	Projected Class Size 2024
K*	80	5	4	-1	20
1st Grade	112	5	5	0	21
2nd Grade	97	5	5	0	19.4

Reallocated 2 Kindergarten sections to Preschool due to the change in law.

Projected Enrollment – Johnson School

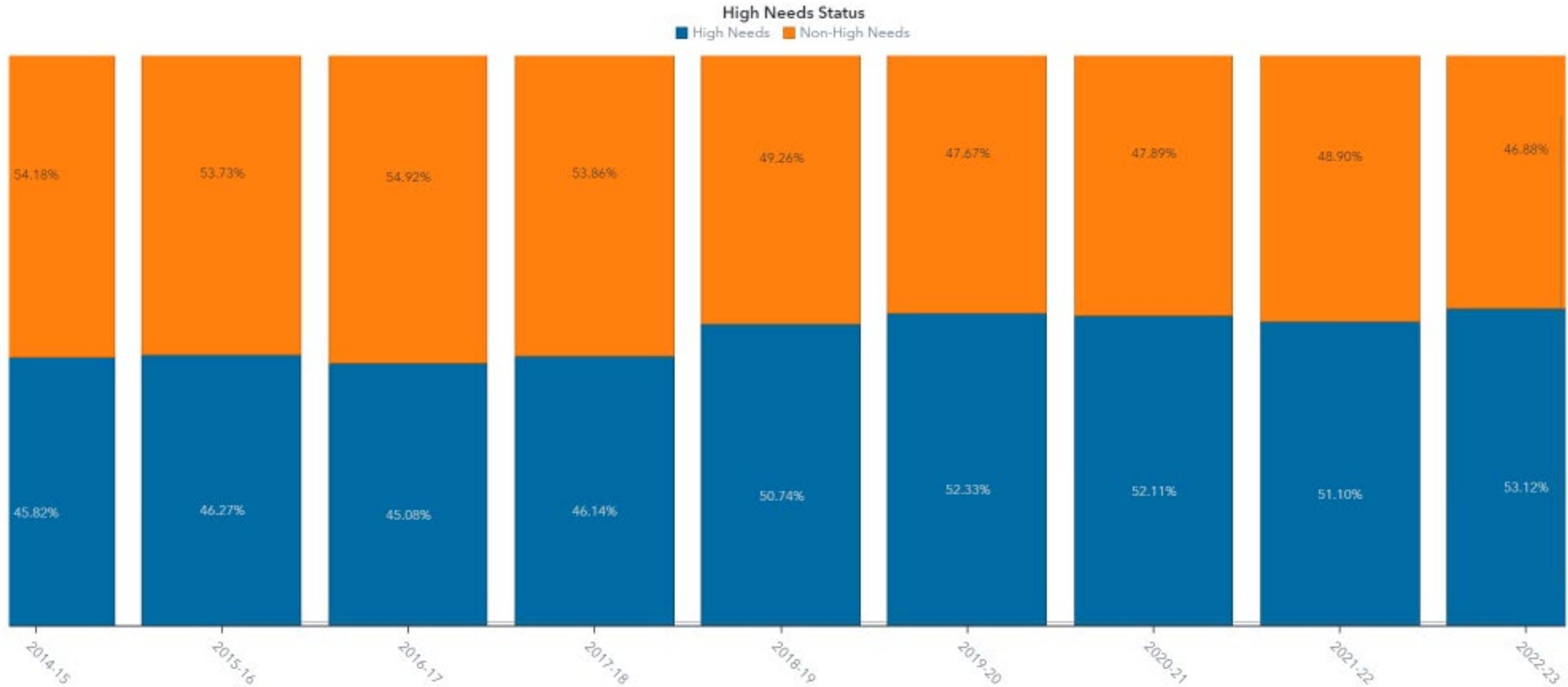| Grade	Projected Enrollment 2024	# of Sections Fall 2023	# of Sections` Fall 2024	Variance	Projected Class Size 2024
3	202	9	9	0	22.4
4	207	10	9	-1	23
5	242	10	10	0	24.2

Reduce 1 section added this year because of increased enrollment.
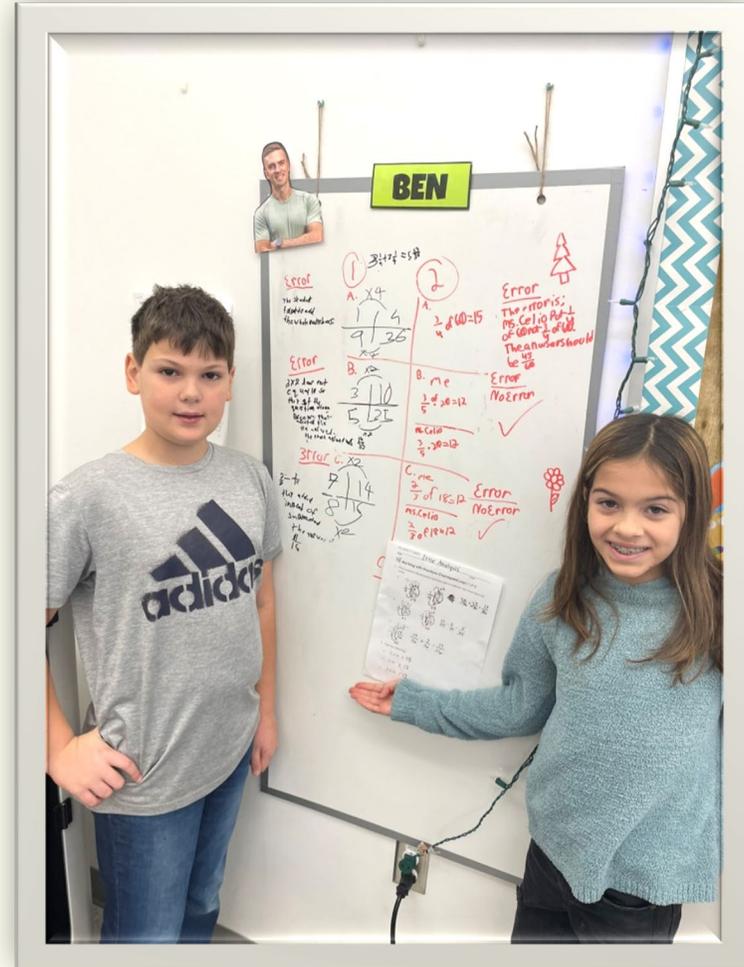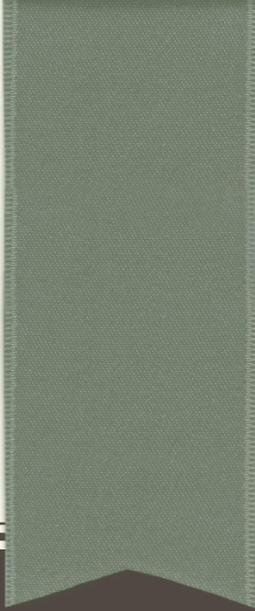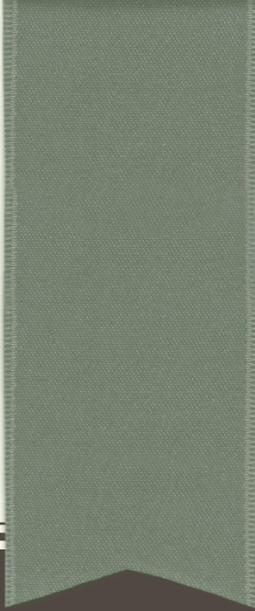
HOW HAVE DEMOGRAPHICS SHIFTED WITH INCREASED ENROLLMENT?

How does the State of Connecticut Define "high needs"?

- Students with disabilities
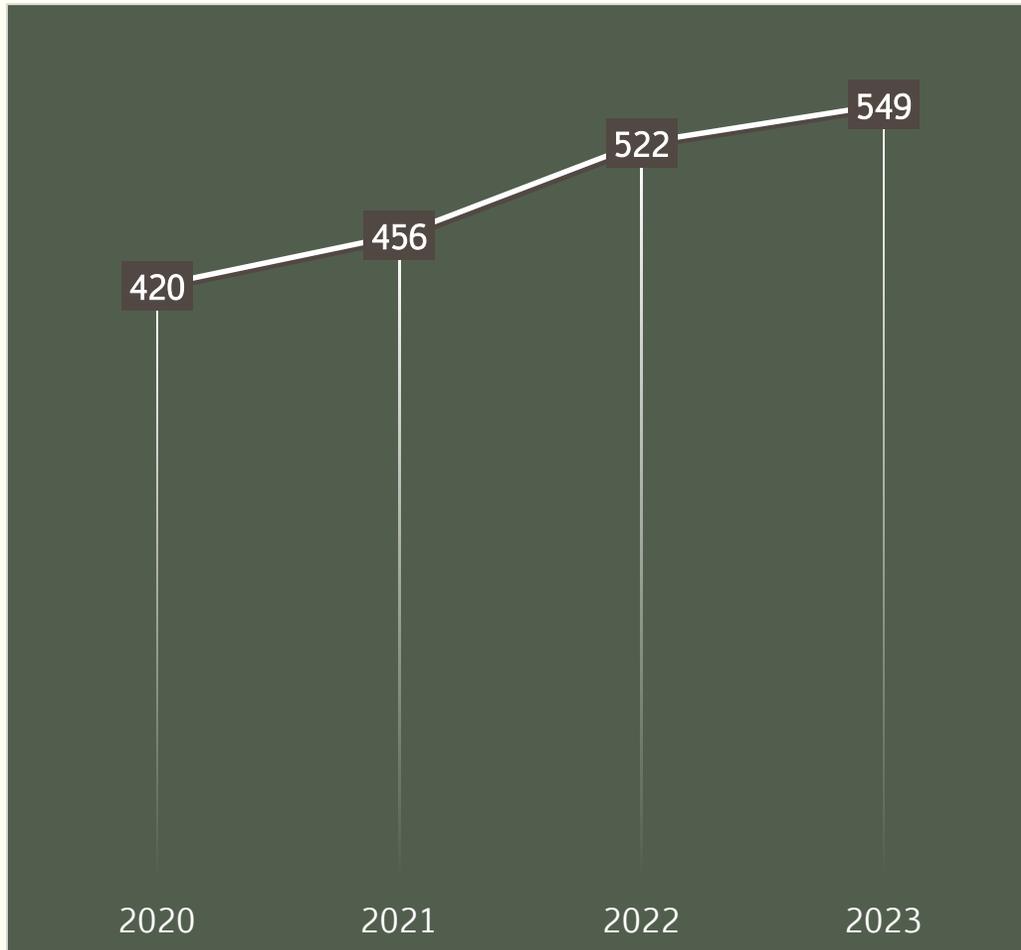
- Multilingual Learners

- Free & Reduced Lunch

"High Needs" Students by Percentage Over Time

High Needs Status

■ High Needs ■ Non-High Needs

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Non-High Needs	54.18%	53.73%	54.92%	53.86%	49.26%	47.67%	47.89%	48.90%	46.88%
High Needs	45.82%	46.27%	45.08%	46.14%	50.74%	52.33%	52.11%	51.10%	53.12%

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with Disabilities

Chart: Students with Disabilities
- 2020: 420
- 2021: 456
- 2022: 522
- 2023: 549

✓ October 2023 number not verified yet through PSIS

✓ 2023-2024 - Increased 1.0 Special Education Teacher & .6 Speech and Language to meet students
  ✓ IDEA Grant Funding increased because number of students increased. Used this increased funding for these positions.

✓ 2024-2025 - Will need an additional special education teacher for elementary for next school year
  ✓ Increase in elementary students with complex disabilities after school year started at Berry School.
  ✓ Proposed in operating budget FY 25

✓ Total between both years is 2.6 FTE
  ✓ 1.6 Paid through IDEA Grant
  ✓ 1.0 in FY 2025 Operating Budget

✓ Increase in transportation cost (out-of-district & in-district)

Pupil Personnel Staff in the Bethel Public Schools or Related Services

- School Counselors
  - 3 FTE at the Elementary
  - 3 FTE at Bethel Middle School
  - 4 FTE at Bethel High School

- School Social Workers*
  - 1.5 FTE at Johnson
  - .6 FTE COF/BS
  - .5 FTE at Rockwell
  - 1.4 FTE at Bethel Middle School
  - 2.0 FTE at Bethel High School

- School Psychologists
  - 1 FTE (BS/RS)
  - 1 FTE Johnson
  - 1 FTE Bethel Middle School
  - 1 FTE Bethel High School

- Occupational Therapist
  - 2 FTE District Wide

- Physical Therapist
  - 1 FTE District Wide

- Board Certified Behavior Analyst*
  - 3 District Wide

- Speech and Language Pathologists*
  - 7.0 FTE District Wide
  - Had to add .6 this year to meet the hours (IDEA Grant)

*added staffing over the past few years to meet students' needs
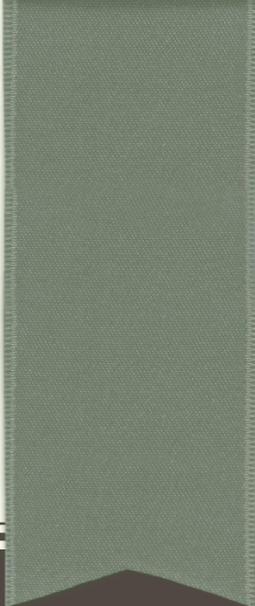
GOOD NEWS WITH GRANTS & PROGRAMS

Grants Recently Received to Support Student Wellbeing

- Primary Mental Health Grant
  - Provides part time "Child Associate" to work in K-2 for students with students with emotional/behavioral concerns
  - Prevention model
  - Heavy emphasis in working with families
  - Play therapy based

- Mental Health Grant
  - Provides a 1.0 FTE of Social Worker – added to elementary
 - Grant runs through the 2024-2025 school year

School-Based Health Centers (Federal Grant & Insurance)

- Each school approved for School-Based Health Centers (mental health only).

- Partner with Community Health, Inc.

- Completely separate from the schools, but provides community-based services in the school (removes transportation barriers/access to services) based on parental request and approval.

- Schools can make referrals for services, with parental support.

- Clinical Services
  - Counseling
  - Medication management
- Mental Health Workers in all schools
  - Elementary share Clinicians
  - Bethel Middle School – 1 Clinician
  - Bethel High School – 1 Clinician
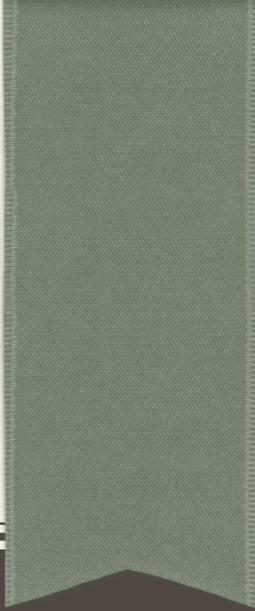
MOST SIGNIFICANT NEW LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT

Public Act Public Act 23-137

✓ New law requires that we serve students with disabilities through the school year of their 22nd birthday.   We used to serve students until their 22nd birthday.
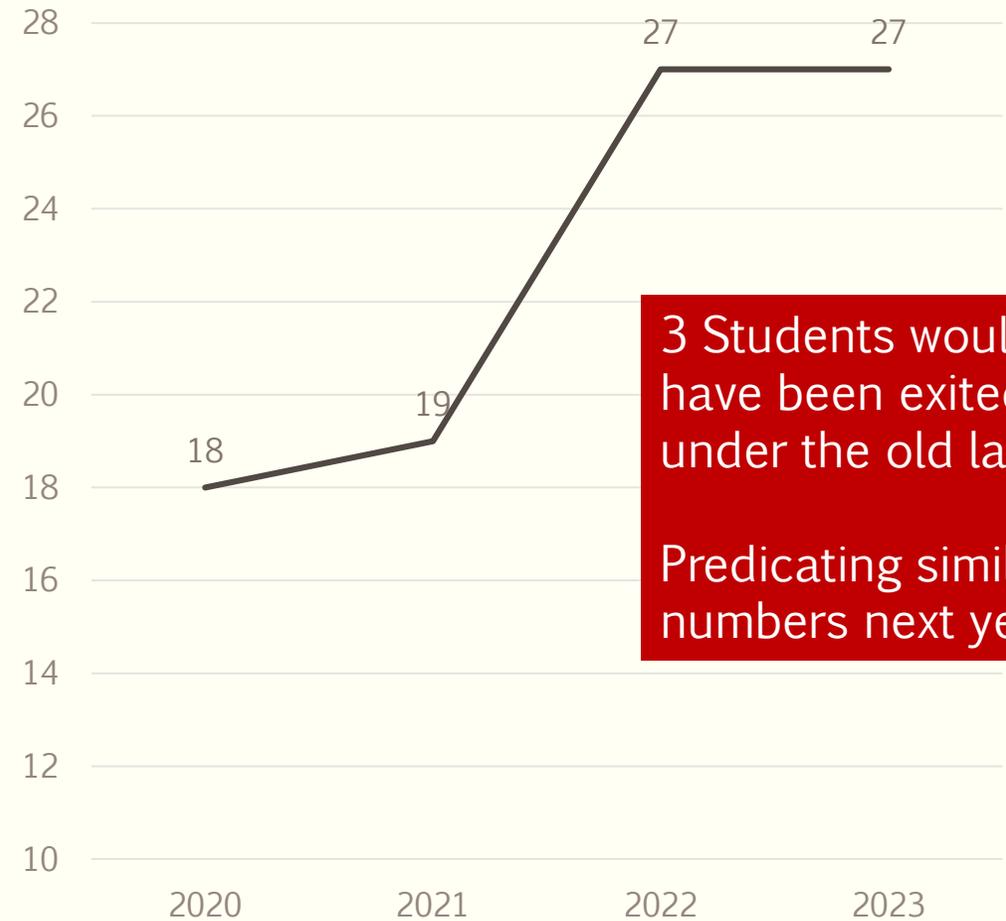✓ After budget passed, we had an additional $257,693.38 in expenses with the changes in the law.

What we would have had to pay if the law had not gone into effect…..

Tuition Cost 22nd Birthday	Transportation 22nd Birthday	Total Cost
$132,240.00	$54,626.02	$186,866.02

What we now have to pay since the law went into effect……

Tuition Cost Full Year	Transportation Cost Full Year	Total Cost
$290,880.00	$153,679.40	$444,559.40

Number of Students on Out of District Placements & Settlement Agreements (November, 2023)

3 Students would have been exited under the old law

Predicating similar numbers next year

Chart data:
- 2020: 18
- 2021: 19
- 2022: 27
- 2023: 27

Excess Cost Reimbursement – Better News

- State Reimbursement to offset costs of high needs students with disabilities based on calculation
  - 4.5 times the cost if we place a child or the child has lots of services in district (when we exceed $79,871).
  - 1 times the cost if DCF (Department of Children and Families) or the court system places the child ($17,749).
  - State is supposed to reimburse the cost at 100% when the amount is exceeded.
  - New law is much better than the previous system, provides for higher levels of reimbursement.
  - New state law allows for a tiered system of reimbursement based on community wealth.
    - Bethel's reimbursement is supposed to be at 88%, which is better than past years.
    - Reimbursement rates are actually calculated based on state budget amount and all submitted expenditures and then divided according to the tiered ranking system.
    - Bethel actually received 76%, no way to accurately predict reimbursement percentage.
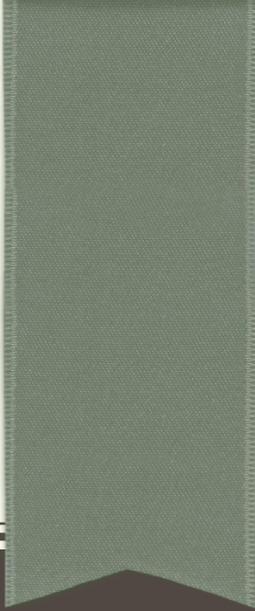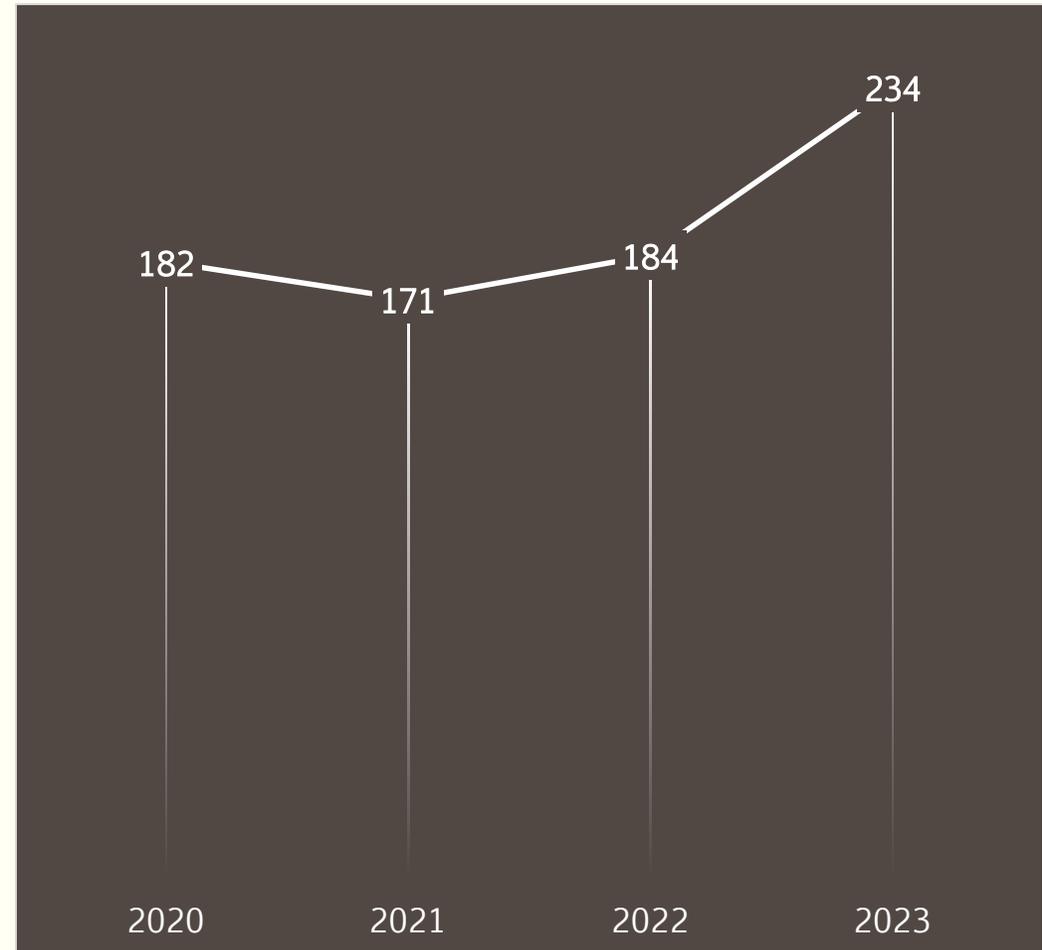
MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

BIGGEST TRENDS

- ✓ More students
- ✓ More older students who did not receive schooling for multiple years in country of origin due to pandemic, causing significant gaps in academic skills.

Multilingual Learners, October 1ˢᵗ PSIS Submission

- Increase in students.

- Increase in students who had no schooling in country of origin during the pandemic, effecting literacy skills in native language.

- All schools will meet the bilingual status.

- Will need an additional Literacy Specialist, likely at Bethel Middle School.

Multilingual Learner Needs at Bethel Middle School

Grade	Identified EL/ML students that are in need of Intervention with Reading Specialist	Dismissed EL/ML students that are in need of intervention with Reading Specialist	Total By Grade
6th grade	14 Students (4 currently working with Reading Specialist)	7 Students	21 Students
7th grade	15 Students (5 currently working with Reading Specialist)	16 Students (5 currently working with Reading Specialist)	31 Students
8th grade	11 Students (4 currently working with Reading Specialist)	8 Students	19 Students
Totals	40 Students in Need of Support of Reading Specialist (Two non-readers)	31 Students in Need of Support of Reading Specialist	71 Students Total 53 Students need reading intervention that are not currently getting that service

Request for 1.0 FTE to provide Literacy Support for our Multilingual Learners

Legal Requirements - Bilingual requirement 20 of same language within a school

Bilingual Status by School *

School	Bilingual Status	# Spanish	# Portuguese
Berry	Spanish	22	11
Rockwell	Spanish	21	8
Johnson	Spanish	40	21
BMS	Spanish	39	16
BHS	Spanish	33	19

*Balance in total enrollment of Multilingual Learners is other language groups

Languages Spoken by Students**

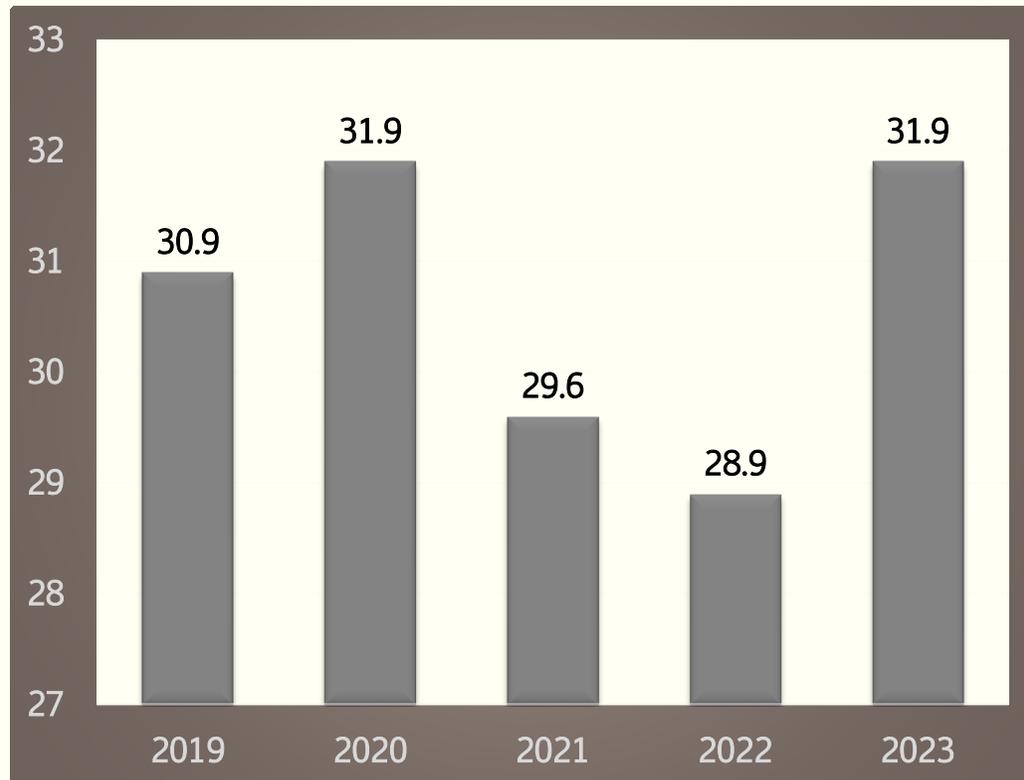|	
Albanian	Portuguese
Cantonese	Punjabi
Chinese	Russian
French/Creole	Sindhi
Greek	Spanish
Gujarti	Tagalog
Hindi	Urdu
Japanese	Vietnamese
Kannada	

**As reported by parents
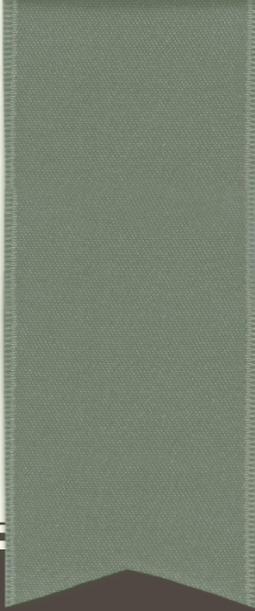
# STUDENTS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH

Free & Reduced Lunch, October 1ˢᵗ

Percentage of Students Qualifying

Why did we see fluctuation in Data?

- More students qualifying as direct certification (Husky or SNAP). Income guidelines slightly increased because of inflation.

- Small pool of paper applications – no more free lunch, only free breakfast.

- Percentage the same as pre COVID, but overall more students.
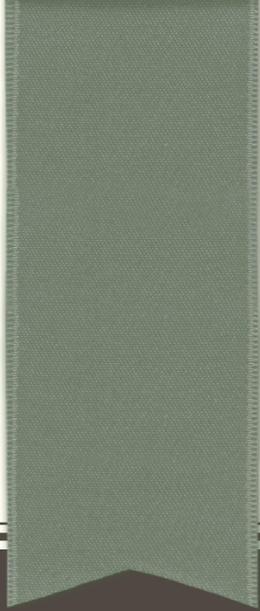
ANOTHER HELPFUL COMPETITIVE GRANT RECEIVED…..

What else is helping going into next year…..

High Dosage Mathematical Tutoring

- $314,600 (ends December 2025)

- Bethel Middle School, Grades 6-8

- Using outside vendor – SmartStart, Education

- Provides in person, small group intervention for 143 students

- 2-3 times a week for approximately 40 minute periods
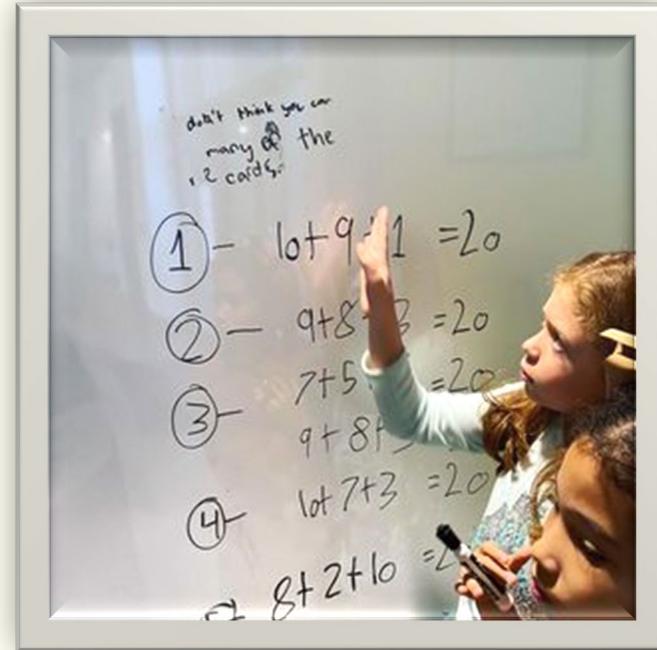
Staffing Summary for Operating Budget & Other Considerations

What you can expect to see....

- 1.0 Special Education Teacher

- 1.0 Teacher to meet the literacy needs of our Multilingual Learners

Other Labor Considerations....

- Negotiating with the Bethel Education Association (Teachers) in Summer/Fall of 2024.
  - Contract ends July 1, 2025

- Negotiating with Paraeducators (contract ends June 30, 2024)
  - Significant state shortage
  - Paraeducator Health Subsidy – anticipated to continue
    - Provided a partial subsidy towards employee contribution toward deductible

PER PUPIL SPENDING & ACCOUNTABILITY RANKINGS

"The purpose of the Bethel Public Schools is to improve student achievement."

How does the state calculate Per Pupil Expenditure?

✓ Operating Budget

✓ All District Grants
  - ✓ Increase in PPE in the last few years due to ARP Funds

✓ In-Kind Services from Town of Bethel
  - ✓ School Resource Officers, maintenance, utilities, pension contributions

Provides for equal comparisons between districts.

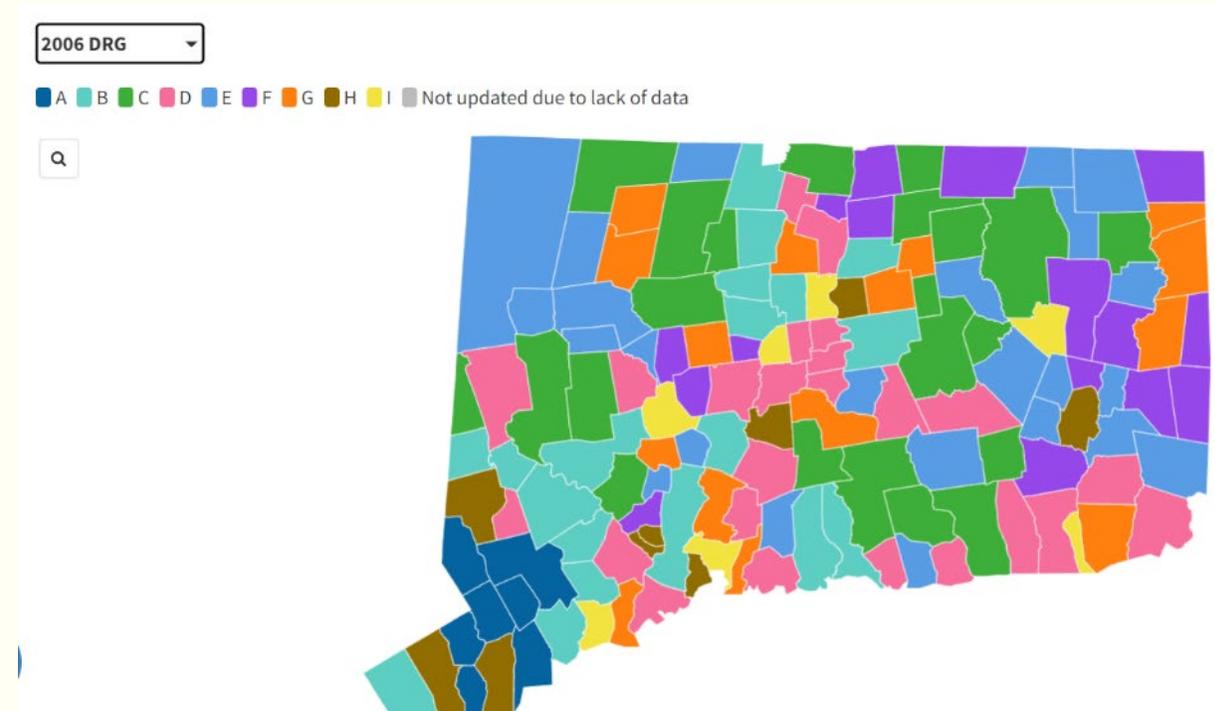School & State Finance Project District Comparisons

How are we compared? What is a District Reference Group?

The District Reference Groups (DRGs) are a classification system that groups local and regional public school districts together based on the similar socioeconomic status of their students.
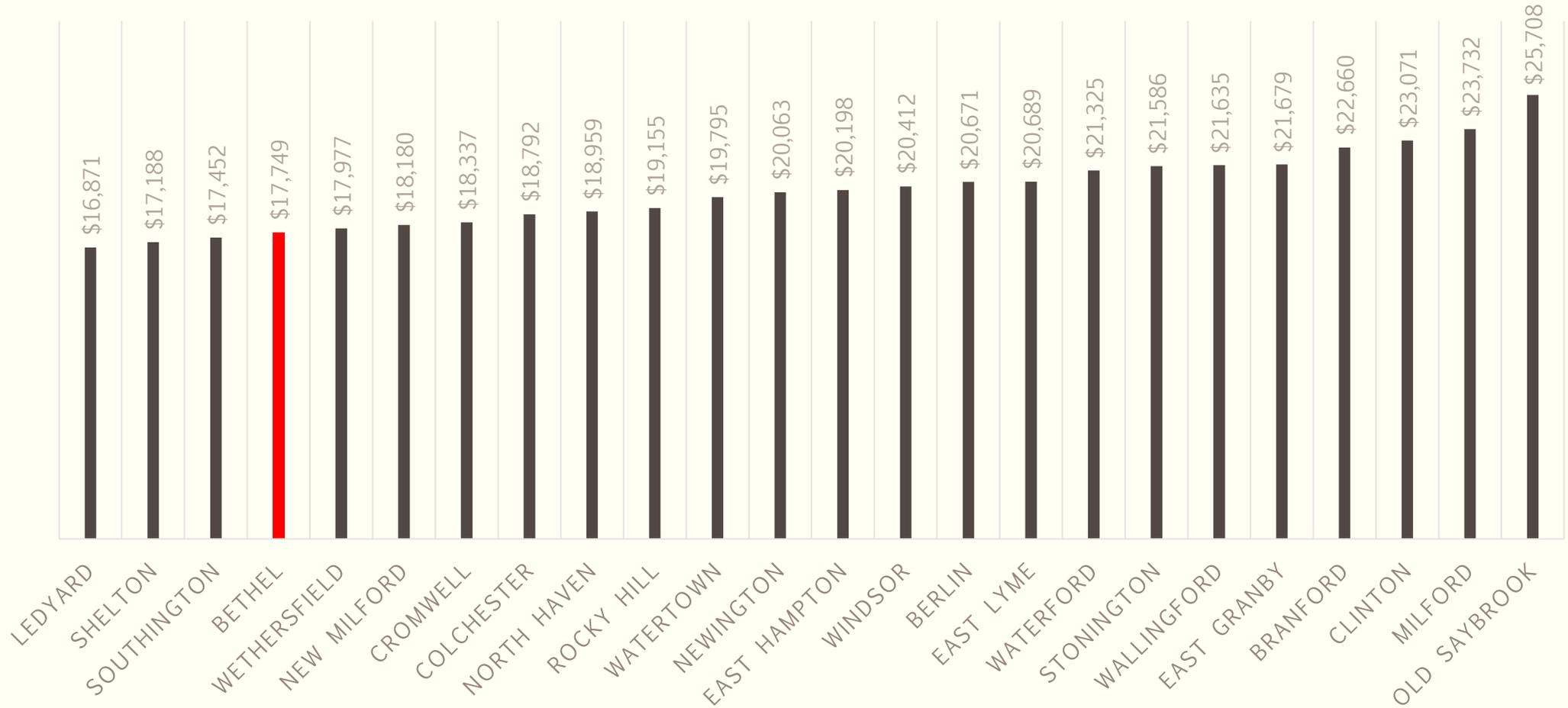
✓ **Income** - Median Household Income

✓ **Education** - Percentage of parents with a bachelor's degree or higher

✓ **Occupation** - Percentage of students with parents aged 16 or older, employed, and holding jobs in executive, managerial, and professional specialty occupations

✓ **Family Structure** - Percentage of students living with families without a wife or husband present or in non-family households

✓ **Poverty** - Percentage of students from families with incomes eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals

✓ **Home Language** - Percentage of students whose families speak a language other than English at home

✓ **District Enrollment** - Gross enrollment for the local public school district

Recently "unofficially updated" by the School & State Finance Group

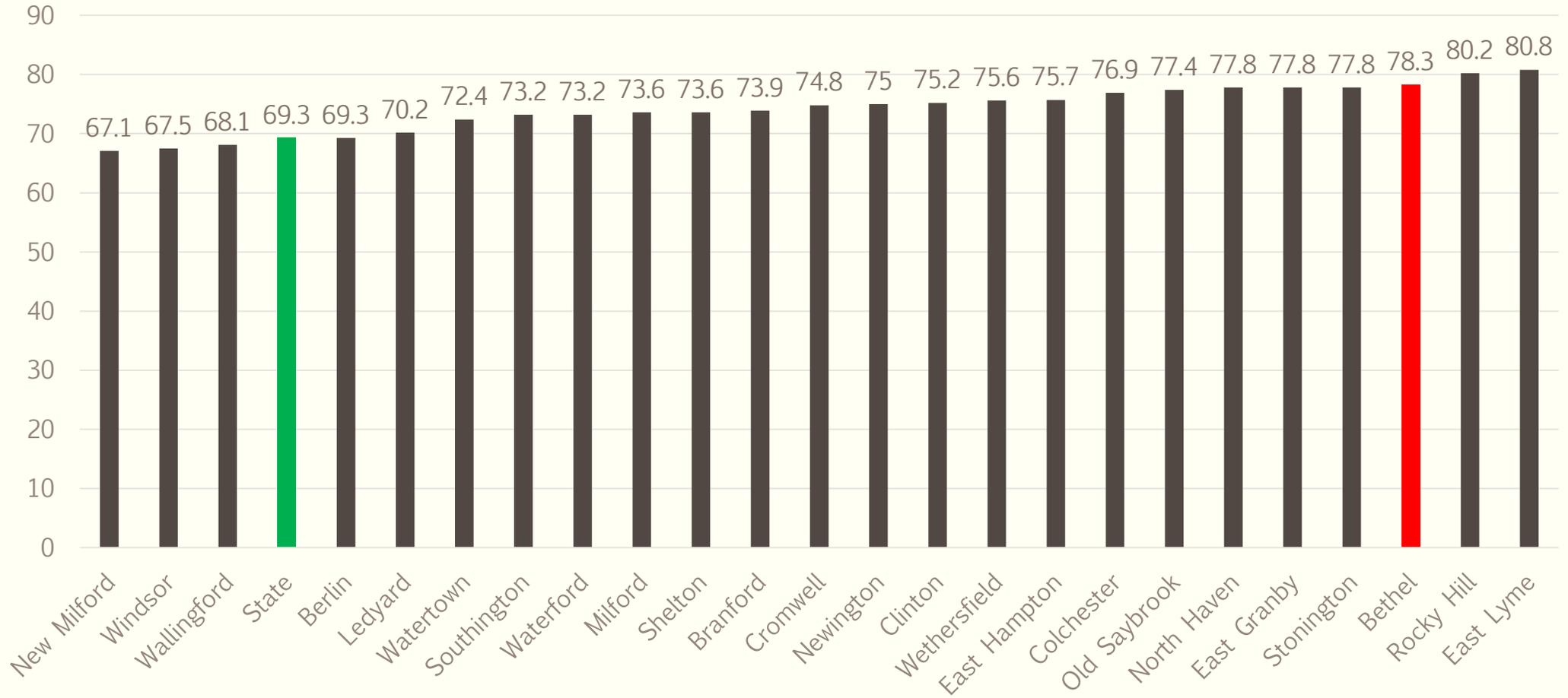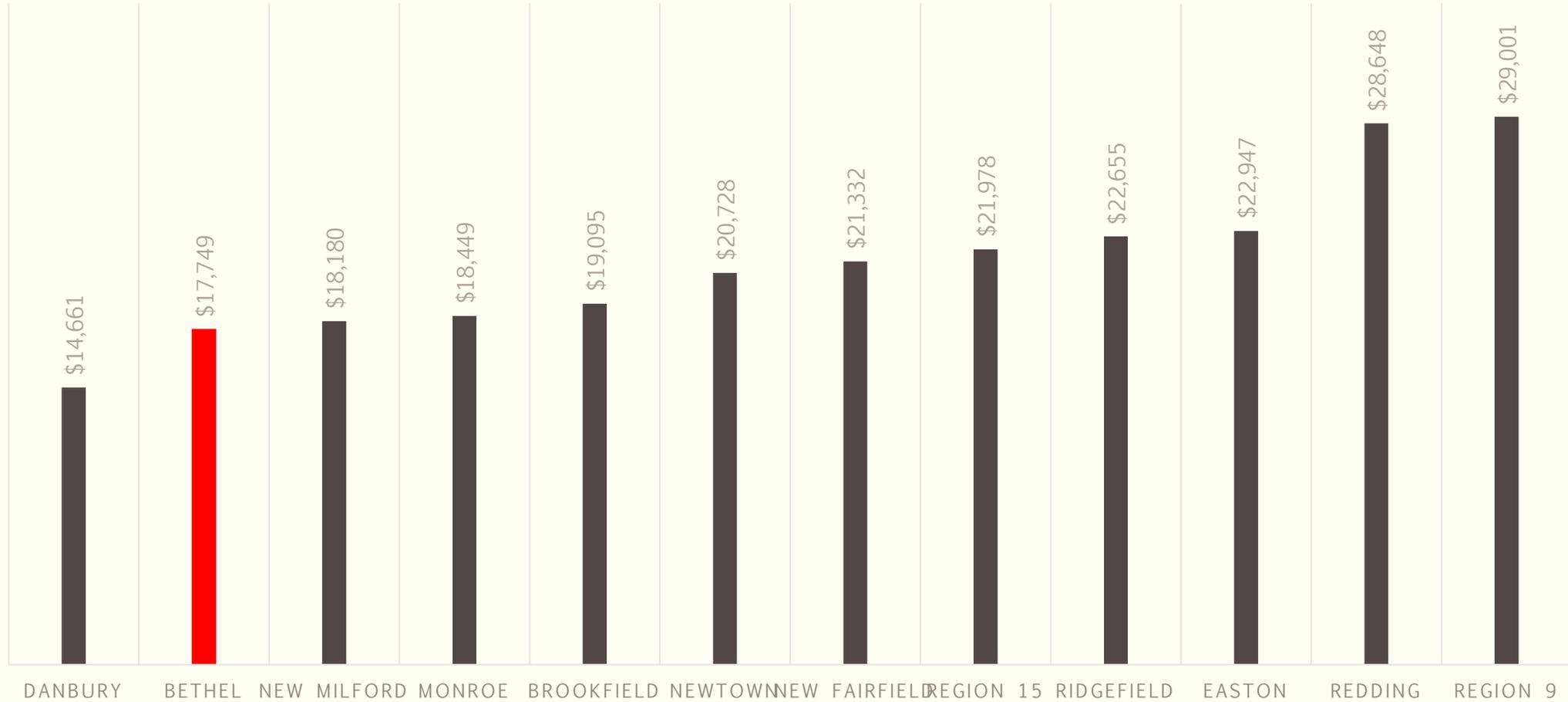State Department of Education has not updated it since 2006

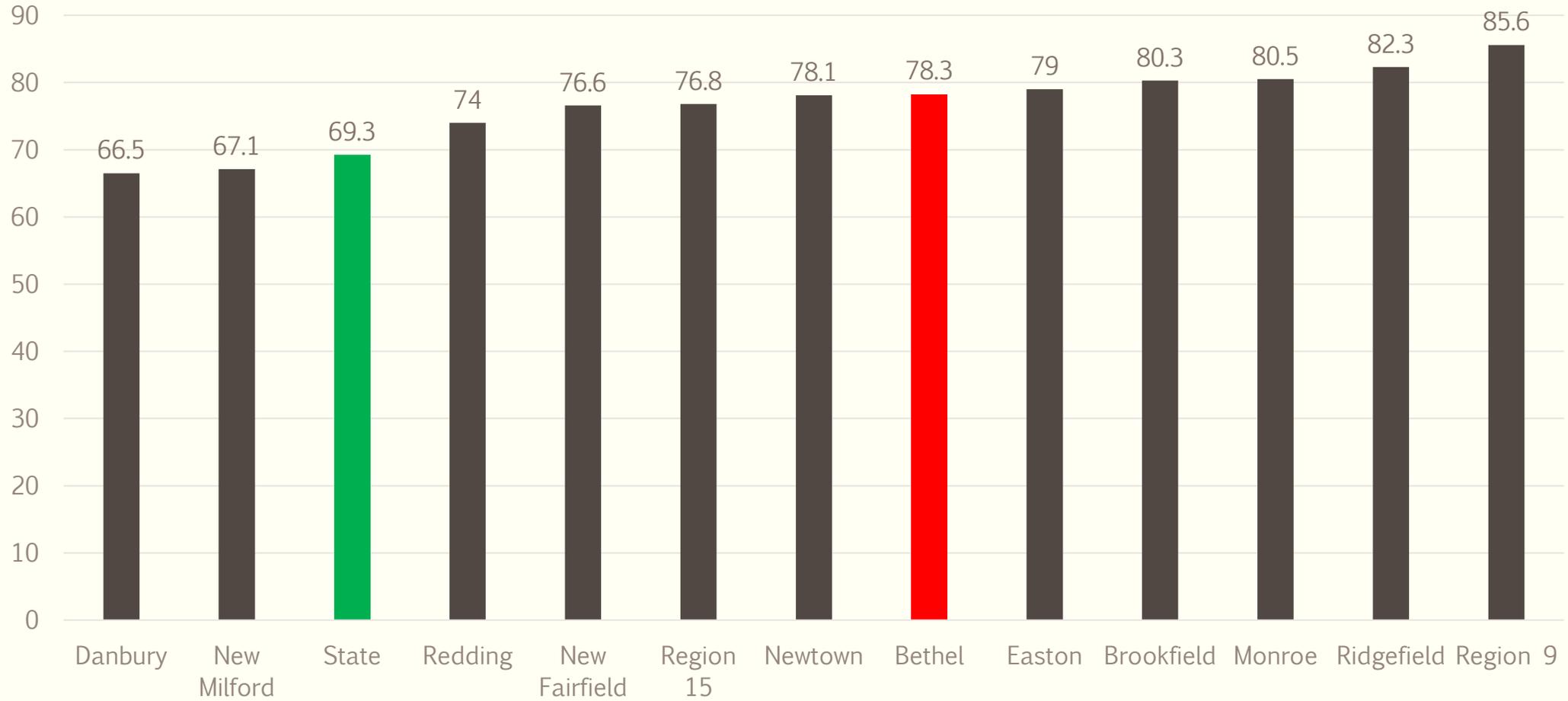District Reference Groups (DRG) Per Pupil Spending, 2022-2023

District	Spending
LEDYARD	$16,871
SHELTON	$17,188
SOUTHINGTON	$17,452
BETHEL	$17,749
WETHERSFIELD	$17,977
NEW MILFORD	$18,180
CROMWELL	$18,337
COLCHESTER	$18,792
NORTH HAVEN	$18,959
ROCKY HILL	$19,155
WATERTOWN	$19,795
NEWINGTON	$20,063
EAST HAMPTON	$20,198
WINDSOR	$20,412
BERLIN	$20,671
EAST LYME	$20,689
WATERFORD	$21,325
STONINGTON	$21,586
WALLINGFORD	$21,635
EAST GRANBY	$21,679
BRANFORD	$22,660
CLINTON	$23,071
MILFORD	$23,732
OLD SAYBROOK	$25,708

DRG Accountability Scores, 2022-2023

Regional Per Pupil Expenditures, 2022-2023

- DANBURY: $14,661
- BETHEL: $17,749
- NEW MILFORD: $18,180
- MONROE: $18,449
- BROOKFIELD: $19,095
- NEWTOWN: $20,728
- NEW FAIRFIELD: $21,332
- REGION 15: $21,978
- RIDGEFIELD: $22,655
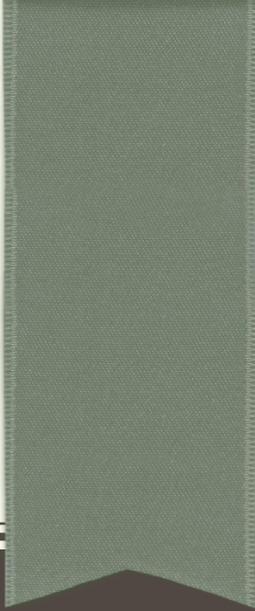- EASTON: $22,947
- REDDING: $28,648
- REGION 9: $29,001

Regional Accountability Scores, 2022-2023

The dilemma ……

How do we continue to make progress with more students and a shifting demographic?

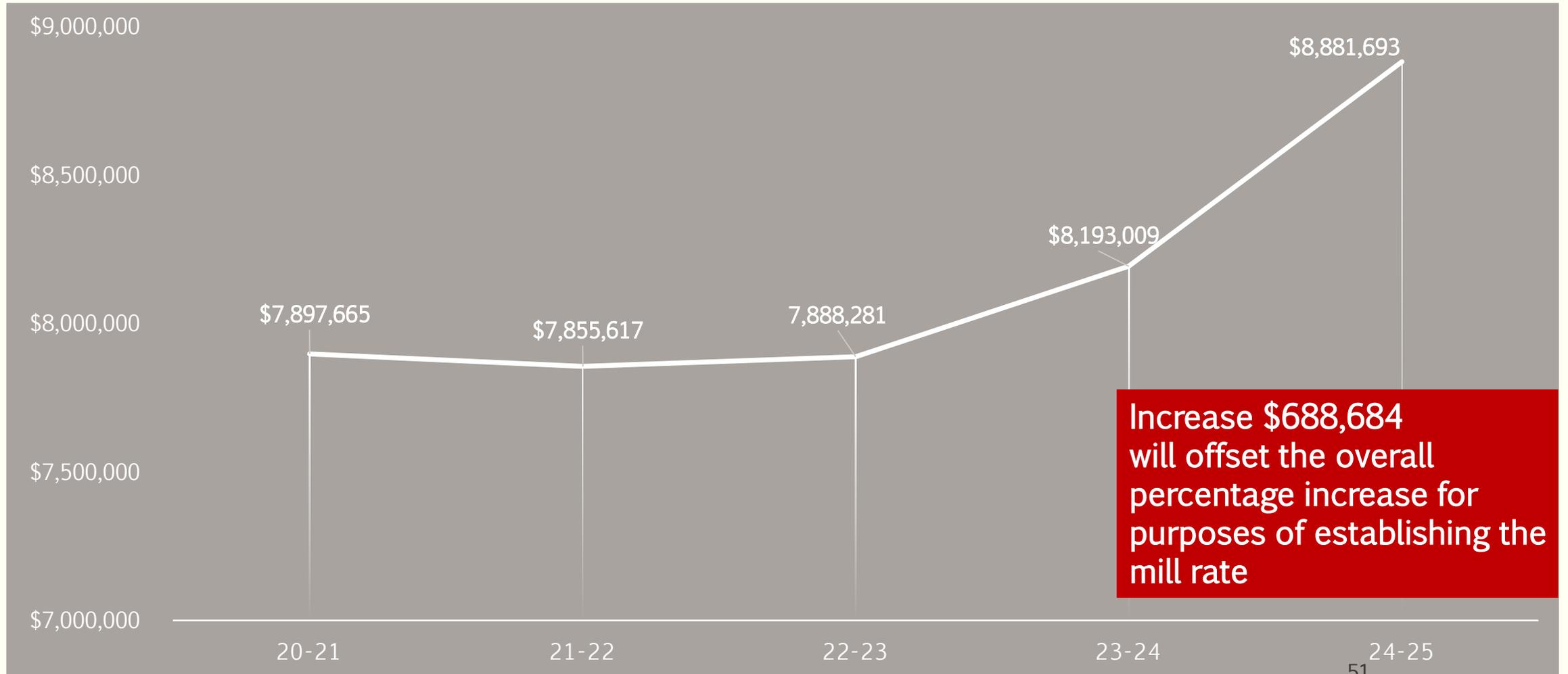# CHANGES IN REVENUE FROM GRANT FUNDING

Planned for ARP Grant Cliff

✓ Board of Education moved the special education positions into the operating budget (1 special education teacher & 5 paraeducators) with increased funding in Excess Cost, once the legislation was finalized in June 2023.

✓ Spent the majority of funding on non-salary items (literacy program, technology, infrastructure work, etc.).

✓ Detailed descriptions of grant expenditures can be found on our Financial Dashboard
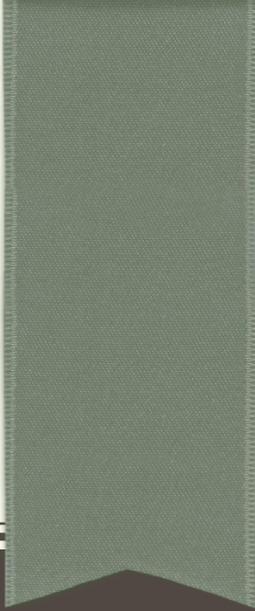
SOME MORE ENCOURAGING NEWS REGARDING STATE AID

Educational Cost Share (ECS) – Projected Based on State Biennial Budget

$9,000,000

$8,881,693

$8,500,000

$8,193,009

$8,000,000 $7,897,665 $7,855,617   7,888,281

Increase $688,684 will offset the overall percentage increase for purposes of establishing the mill rate

$7,500,000

$7,000,000
              20-21   21-22   22-23   23-24   24-25

51

INSURANCE

✓ Claims are up
✓ Need to budget at cap

FACILITIES

- ✓ Overages in 460
- ✓ New State Mandates

Summary

Budget increase will reflect maintaining existing curricular and extra curricular programs with two (2) increases in requested staffing:

- 1.0 FTE to meet the needs of our students with disabilities with complex needs at Berry School

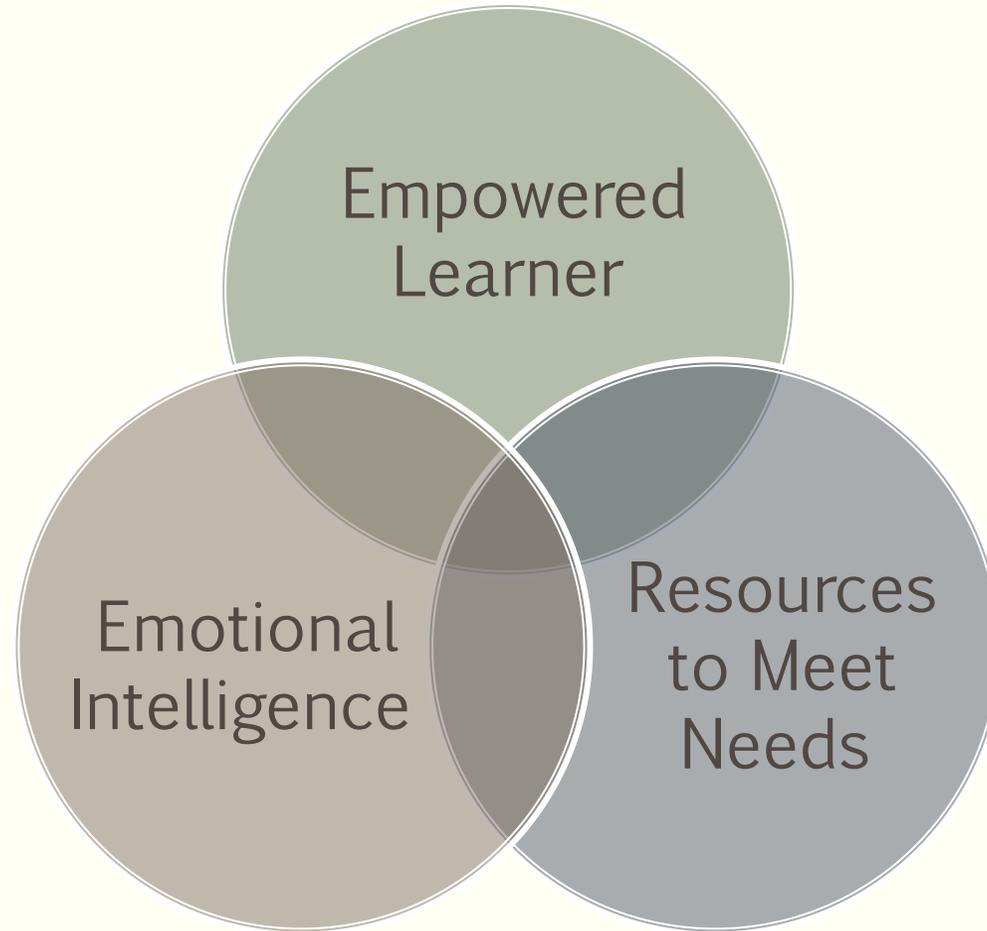- 1.0 FTE to meet the literacy needs of our multilingual learners

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

What is our work?

Three Focus Areas

SET ADVANTAGEOUS GOALS
awareness
forethought
intentionality
planful competence

INITIATE ACTION TOWARD THOSE GOALS
choice
voice
free will
freedom
autonomy
individual volition

REFLECT AND REVISE
self-reflectiveness
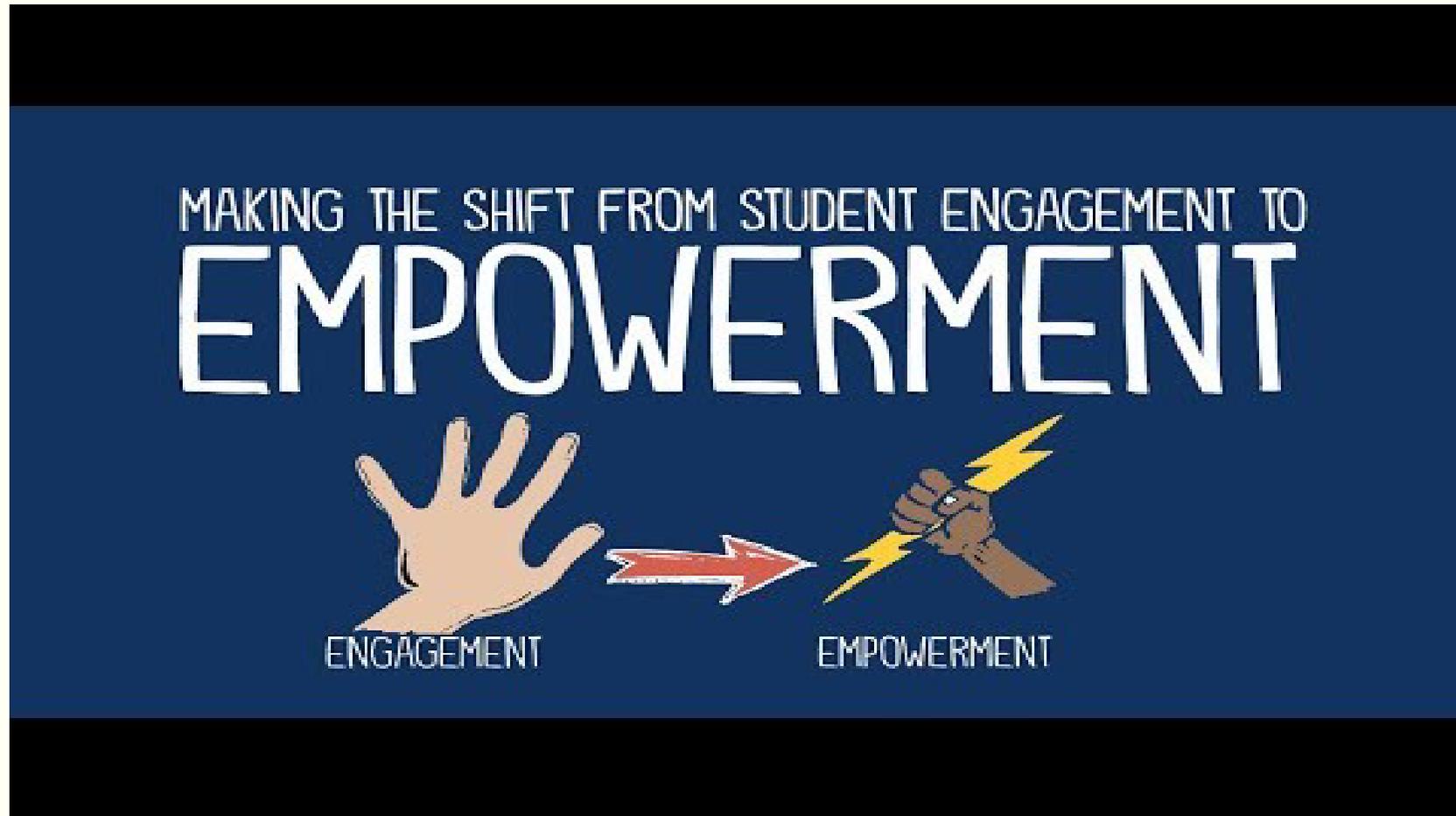self-assessment
self-control
self-discipline
grit
perseverance

INTERNALIZE SELF-EFFICACY
growth mindset
internal locus of control
empowerment
self-efficacy

THE EMPOWERED LEARNER

Who is doing the thinking? Who is doing the work?

What does empowered learners mean?

Information Age – How it has changed education….

- "the modern age regarded as a time in which information has become a commodity that is quickly and widely disseminated and easily available especially through the use of computer technology". Miriam Webster

Where we were…

Dissemination of Information

Where we need to be…

Application of Knowledge/Skills

Artificial Intelligence only exacerbates the shift.

Global Competencies – Vision of a Graduate

Collaboration

I can engage, communicate, and compromise with others to accomplish a shared goal

Key Skills: Articulated thoughts; critical dialogue, questions, cooperation, flexibility, and initiative

Creativity & Innovation

I can create, communicate, and implement original ideas through perseverance and keeping an open mind.

Key Skills: Explorations, originality, refinement, function, and presentation

Critical Thinking

I can make informed decisions and solve complex problems.

Key Skills: Information & discovery, analysis & interpretation, reasoning, problem solving & solution finding, self regulation & reflection

The Empowered Learner

Goal

Develop empowered learners who engage in autonomous decision-making, self-directed learning, reflection, and take ownership of progress and outcomes so that they can contribute as active, productive members of society.

Accomplishments & Major Work

- Provided extensive Professional Learning to teachers on intellectual engagement
    - Ensured access to rigorous and relevant curriculum based on grade level standards

- Based on data, implemented Pilot with grades 5-6 with the Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL) in literacy.

- Implemented new science pilot based on Open Sci Ed

- Continued to develop instructional strategies in mathematics
    - Focus on mathematical fluency
    - Implemented pedagogy from Building Thinking Classrooms.

- Develop and implemented extended professional learning Plan for Staff working with our Multilingual Learners

- Implemented new literacy resources K-8
    - Purchased resources
    - Ongoing professional learning in implementation
    - Modified assessment practices to enhance instructional time

What are the attributes of intellectual engagement? How is it reflected in our global competencies? What do you notice about the instructional practice?
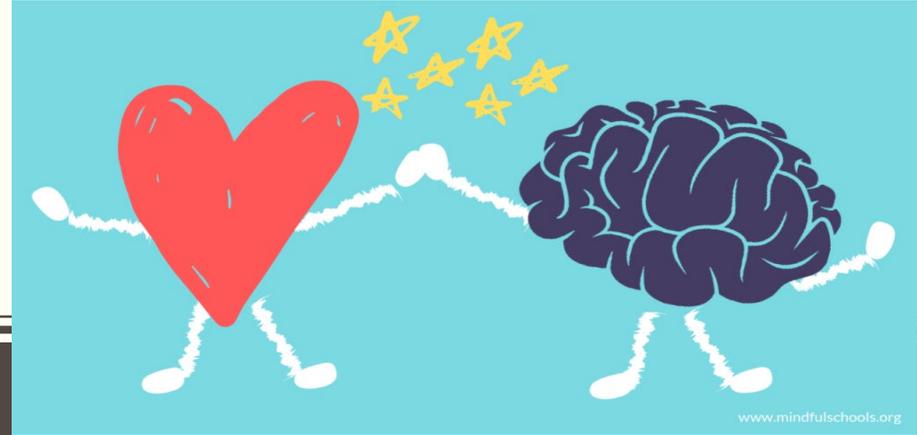
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional Intelligence

Goal

To develop and promote students' self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, relationship skills, goal-directed behavior, personal responsibility, decision-making, and optimistic thinking; in order to improve students' social and emotional well-being, and their performance in school and in life.

Accomplishments – Major Work

- Year 1 – Develop adult capacity

- Year 2 & 3 - Implement of emotional intelligence curriculum with students
    - Tight alignment of emotional intelligence curriculum with global competencies
    - Implementation of RULER (K-8) and Character Strong (9-12)

- Year 4 – Integrate concepts skills in instructional practices
    - Goal Setting
    - Perspective
    - Persistence in Task
    - Problem Solving
    - Decision Making Skills
    - Management of Emotions

RESOURCES

Accomplishments & Major Work

Resources to Support Empowered Learner & Emotional Intelligence
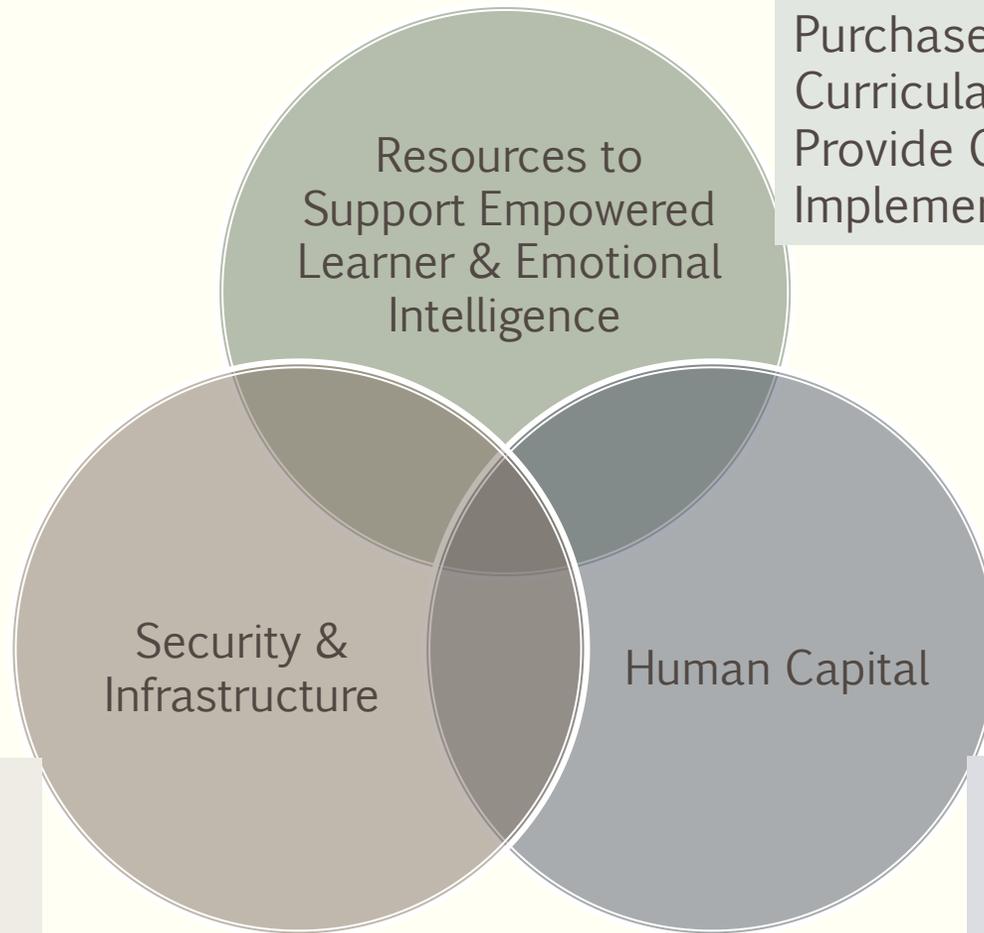
Purchase and Implement Curricular Resources
Provide Coaching Support
Implement Professional Learning

Security & Infrastructure

Human Capital

Implement 10 year Capital Plan
Implement features from Security Audit in all schools

Develop and implement a Diversity Hiring & Retention Plan
Professional Learning aligned with Focus Areas/Goals

NEXT BUDGET PRESENTATION

January 18th – The numbers…..

References

- Edsight

- School & State Finance Project