

TO: School Committee
FROM: James Marini, Interim Superintendent
RE: FY10 Budget Priorities
DATE: October 1, 2008

To help focus the discussion on budget priorities for FY 10, I thought it might be helpful for me to frame the issues as I see them. This is intended as a working document only and will be modified as we work through the process of developing budget guidelines. My goal is to receive from the Committee a clear statement of how you want me to proceed in developing the FY 10 budget.

- We are hopeful we will extend all bargaining units by one year to provide both sides the opportunity to resolve issues related to health insurance. Therefore, this year should be considered a contract year and a numerical factor will need to be built into the budget as a placeholder in anticipation of a settlement. As in the past, the placeholder should not be considered the settlement target. It is needed solely for the purpose of having a funded line item in the budget to support negotiations.
- Class size guidelines are needed to develop the budget. For FY10, we will use the following guidelines:
 - Grades K-2 class size 18-22; grades 3-5 class size 23-25. No class will exceed 29 students.
 - At the secondary level class size will vary at both the upper and lower ends.
- Energy and transportation costs are expected to increase. We will need to budget accordingly.
- Potential costs associated with the recommendations of the NEASC. We will have a better handle on this after Dr. Scuzzarella receives a response to her request for an updated review of the progress made by the high school.
- Technology ó With the anticipated consolidation of a Technology Director, the budget will need to include a sustainable source of funding to support hardware replacement and expansion, sufficient technology support staff, and staffing to implement an instructional technology program for elementary students. While the system has done a very good job of purchasing technology equipment and has increased the technology support staff, there is a serious and growing need for district-wide leadership to coordinate our technology initiatives, provide adequate professional development for teachers, and to address the absence of instructional technology for students.
- Return elementary library services.
- Support standards based programs/curriculum.
- Provide funds to implement the Corrective Action Plan in response to the Coordinated Program Review Report Findings.