

**WESTPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**\*AGENDA**

(Agenda Subject to Modification in Accordance with Law)

**PUBLIC CALL TO ORDER:**

7:00 p.m. Staples High School, Pupil Services Conference Room 333

**ANTICIPATED EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Pending Litigation

**RESUME PUBLIC SESSION**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** 7:30 p.m. Staples High School, Cafeteria B (Room 301)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION**

**MINUTES:** February 6, 2012, March 5 and March 19, 2012

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS** (15 MINUTES)

**INFORMATION:**

- 1. Update on Bullying Procedures (Encl.) Ms. Gilchrest  
Dr. Babich  
Mr. Rizzo

**DISCUSSION/ACTION:**

- 1. Acceptance of Gifts (Encl.) Dr. Landon

**DISCUSSION:**

- 1. Technology for Instructional Purposes: Myths v. Facts (Encl.) Dr. Landon  
Ms. Comm  
Ms. Gilchrest
- 2. Quarterly Financial Report: July 1, 2011 – March 31, 2012 (Encl.) Ms. Harris

**ADJOURNMENT**

\*A 2/3 vote is required to go to executive session, to add a topic to the agenda of a regular meeting, or to start a new topic after 10:30 p.m. The meeting can also be viewed on cable TV on channel 78; AT&T channel 99 and by video stream @[www.westport.k12.ct.us](http://www.westport.k12.ct.us)

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION WELCOME USING THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES:**

- Comment on non-agenda topics will occur during the first 15 minutes *except* when staff or guest presentations are scheduled.
- Board will not engage in dialogue on non-agenda items.
- Public may speak as agenda topics come up for discussion or information.
- Speakers on non-agenda items are limited to 2 minutes each, *except* by prior arrangement with chair.
- Speakers on agenda items are limited to 3 minutes each, *except* by prior arrangement with chair.
- Speakers must give name and use microphone.
- Responses to questions may be deferred if answers not immediately available.
- Public comment is normally not invited for topics listed for action after having been publicly discussed at one or more meetings.

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**TO:** Dr. Elliott Landon

**FROM:** Cynthia Gilchrest, Michael Rizzo, and Dr. Valerie Babich

**DATE:** April 9, 2012

**RE: Research on Best Practices in School Climate Programs**

In response to your request for research concerning best practices to address bullying throughout the United States, we are providing the following information and will be prepared to discuss this information at the Board of Education meeting on April 9, 2012.

Our initial review has resulted in finding the National School Climate Standards issued by the National School Climate Center. These standards are research based and provide a framework that allows us to assess ourselves against best practices in this area. Secondly, we have included a research summary from the Center for Social and Emotional Education, now known as the National School Climate Center, which is the most comprehensive summary we have identified thus far.

Finally, we have included in your packet 5 Bullying prevention and intervention school-wide approaches that are currently being used in the United States. While there may be more approaches/programs, these 5 were identified as evidence based programs in the conference "Bullying Prevention and Intervention: Realistic Strategies for Schools" which featured Susan M. Swearer, Ph.D., a national researcher in bullying. Currently, two of the five programs are available for use within the Westport Schools. It is important to note, however, that programs are a small component of an overall effort to improve school climate.

We look forward to discussing this information on April 9, 2012.

# **NATIONAL SCHOOL CLIMATE STANDARDS**

# National School Climate Standards

BENCHMARKS TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVE TEACHING,  
LEARNING AND COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

NATIONAL SCHOOL CLIMATE COUNCIL

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## INTRODUCTION

There is growing appreciation that school climate—the quality and character of school life<sup>1</sup>—fosters children's development, learning and achievement. School climate is based on the patterns of people's experiences of school life; it reflects the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning and leadership practices, and organizational structures that comprise school life. The increased attention to school climate reflects both the concern for improving schools and the need for preparing students to address the myriad of challenges they will face in the 21st century.

A growing body of empirical research shows that a sustainable, positive school climate reduces drop-outs and fosters youth development and academic achievement, as well as the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for students to be responsible and productive members of society<sup>2</sup>. All learners want and need to be safe and happy: to be supported, cared for, valued, appropriately challenged and engaged in ways that touch our hearts as well as our minds. Empirical research has also shown that when school members feel safe, valued, cared for, engaged and respected, learning measurably increases, and staff satisfaction and retention are enhanced.

The National School Climate Council stresses that a sustainable, positive school climate is one that fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributing and satisfying life in a democratic society. Such a climate includes:

- Norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe;

- Members of the school community who are engaged and respected;
- Students, families and educators that work together to develop, and contribute to a shared school vision;
- Educators who model and nurture an attitude that emphasizes the benefits and satisfaction that can be gained from learning; and,
- Members of the school community who contribute to the operations of the school and the care of its physical environment.

These factors matter and show the importance of school climate. Practices are designed to promote a positive climate that fosters the environment which ensures all students have an equal opportunity to succeed and become socially conscious and ethical members of society. Furthermore, such practices play a critical role in the graduation of young people who will go on to lead satisfying lives, care about the common good, engage in the democratic process, possess the skills and abilities to work with others in the workplace and in their communities, and who are productive members of society.

Given that all efforts to improve schools benefit from being based on a well developed set of standards and indicators, leaders from across the country have collaborated on the development of the following *National School Climate Standards*<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>This definition of school climate was consensually developed by members of the National School Climate Council (2007). The terms "school climate", "school culture" and "learning environment" have been used in overlapping but sometimes, quite different ways in the educational literature. Here, we use these terms interchangeably.

<sup>2</sup>For information about school climate research, see the following reports: Adelman & Taylor, 2005; Cohen, et al., 2009; Freiberg, 1999; National School Climate Council, 2007.

<sup>3</sup>See Appendix A for details about how these standards were developed.

## ABOUT THE STANDARDS

The National School Climate Standards present a vision and framework for a positive and sustainable school climate. They complement national standards for Content, Leadership, and Professional Development and the Parent Teacher Association's National Standards for Family School Partnerships Standards.

This framework is comprised of five standards that support effective school climate improvement efforts:

1. The school community has a shared vision and plan for promoting, enhancing and sustaining a positive school climate.
2. The school community sets policies specifically promoting (a) the development and sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic and intellectual skills, knowledge, dispositions and engagement, and (b) a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged.
3. The school community's practices are identified, prioritized and supported to (a) promote the learning and positive social, emotional, ethical and civic development of students, (b) enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities; (c) address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage those who have become disengaged; and (d) develop and sustain an appropriate operational infrastructure and capacity building mechanisms for meeting this standard.
4. The school community creates an environment where all members are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school: socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically.
5. The school community develops meaningful and engaging practices, activities and norms that promote social and civic responsibilities and a commitment to social justice.

The *National School Climate Standards* provide a research based framework and benchmark criteria for educational leaders (School Boards, State Departments of Education, Superintendents, Principals and After School leaders) to support and assess district and school efforts to enhance and be accountable for school climate<sup>4</sup>. They also provide guidance for professional preparation and continuing education. Appendix C includes a glossary of terms.

As with most standards, School Climate Standards do not recommend or detail specific assessment, curricular, leadership, professional development, and related systemically informed programs, curricula, or services. Each state and/or school community must consider how best to translate these standards into practice in ways that build on past experiences, values, strengths, priorities, and contextual needs of the local school community.

The five standards presented below include sixteen indicators for supporting student learning, positive youth development and teaching. Thirty-sub indicators further delineate essentials.

<sup>4</sup>See Appendix B for research related to each of the five standards.

# NATIONAL SCHOOL CLIMATE STANDARDS

## School Climate Standard #1

The school community has a shared vision and plan for promoting, enhancing and sustaining a positive school climate.

### Indicators and sub-indicators:

1.1 School policies and practices support school, family, youth and community members working together to establish a safe and productive learning community.

1.1.1 School, family, community and youth members agree to work on strategies to be implemented for ongoing school climate improvement.

1.1.2 Policies and practices are regularly assessed to ensure continual refinement that enhances the quality of a safe and productive learning community.

1.1.3 School, family and youth members collaboratively develop, publicize and model codes of conduct that support positive and sustained school climate.

1.2 Schools gather accurate and reliable data about school climate from students, school personnel and parents/guardians for continuous improvement and share it regularly with the school community.

1.2.1 Educational leaders regularly assess and monitor policies and practices and revise as necessary to determine the effectiveness of school, family and community members working together to support student learning, teaching and positive youth development.

1.2.2 Schools use multiple evidence-based methods of collecting data, such as surveys, observational methods and behavior reports, that recognize the range of factors that shape school climate (e.g., social norms, school connectedness, sense of safety, discipline, learning/teaching, leadership, absence rates and mobility).

1.2.3 School, family, community and youth leaders establish procedures for using school climate findings (including disaggregated data) to establish instructional and/or school-wide improvement goals and implementation strategies that will enhance student learning and positive youth development.

1.2.4 School climate reports are periodically provided that communicate effectively with all school community members and families about goals, benchmarks and progress.

1.3 Capacity building is developed over time to enable all school community members to meet school climate standards.

1.3.1 Capacity building includes developing infrastructure, classroom and school-wide prevention and intervention strategies/practices, and developing policy and systemic changes that promote positive school climate.

## **School Climate Standard #2**

**The school community sets policies specifically promoting (a) the development and sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic and intellectual skills, knowledge and dispositions and (b) a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged.**

### Indicators and sub-indicators:

2.1 Policies and mission and vision statements that promote social, emotional, ethical and civic, as well as intellectual, skills and dispositions are developed and institutionalized.

2.1.1 Policies promote curriculum content, continued monitoring and standards for social, emotional, ethical and civic learning and are fully integrated into the classroom and school in ways that align with 21st century learning and with students' prevailing cultures, circumstances and languages.

2.1.2 Policies for instructional and assessment processes and standards are personalized in ways that model and promote mutual respect, caring and a psychological sense of community.

2.1.3 Accountability measures and data are used and monitored that directly demonstrate the impact of efforts to promote social, emotional, ethical and civic learning.

2.2 Policies and mission and vision statements are developed and institutionalized that promote a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged.

2.2.1 Policies promote engagement and address barriers to learning and teaching while reengaging disconnected students through an intervention framework that generates a comprehensive and cohesive system of learning supports as delineated in Standard 3.

2.2.2 Policies ensure continuing development and sustainability of a comprehensive and cohesive system of learning supports.

2.2.3 Accountability measures, data and monitoring are used that directly demonstrate the impact of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengaging students who have become disengaged.

2.3 Policies promote use and monitoring of natural and informal opportunities (e.g., recreational and extracurricular aspects of classroom and school life, formulation of codes of conduct and fair enforcement of rules, mentoring, and informal interactions among and with students) to ensure they support the helpful norms of learning and teaching that foster mutual respect and caring; engagement; safety and well being; civil, pro social, responsible behavior; and a psychological sense of community.

2.4 Policies ensure the operational and capacity building mechanisms (including staff and student development) related to this standard are fully integrated into a school's infrastructure and are effectively implemented and sustained.



### **School Climate Standard #3**

The school community's practices are identified, prioritized and supported to (a) promote the learning and positive social, emotional, ethical and civic development of students, (b) enhance engagement in teaching, learning and school-wide activities; (c) address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have become disengaged; and (d) develop and sustain an appropriate operational infrastructure and capacity building mechanisms for meeting this standard.

#### Indicators and sub-indicators:

3.1 Specific practices are designed to enhance engagement of every student through classroom-based social, emotional, ethical and civic learning and in school-wide activities.

3.1.1 Instructional and engaging practices focus on cognitive and behavioral learning as well as social, emotional, ethical and civic engagement.

3.1.2 Practices facilitate students' desire and ability to share their perceptions readily (e.g., to enter into dialogues with adults and peers at school), emphasize interests and needs, stress options and choices and a meaningful role in decision making, provide enrichment opportunities, provide a continuum of guidance and support and minimize coercive interactions.

3.1.3 Based on research about intrinsic motivation, practices are designed to maximize feelings of competence, self-determination and connectedness to others and to minimize threats to such feelings. Practices are designed to minimize psychological reactance by not overemphasizing social control strategies and not over relying on extrinsic motivation to promote positive social, emotional, ethical and civic behavior and learning.

3.2 Teachers and school administrators design specific classroom and school-wide practices to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have become disengaged.

3.2.1 Practices include a full continuum of integrated systems of intervention designed to:

- Promote healthy development and prevent negative problems;
- Respond as early after problem onset as is feasible;
- Provide for those whose serious, pervasive and chronic negative problems require more intensive assistance and accommodation.

3.2.2 Classroom and school wide interventions are designed to:

- Enhance regular classroom strategies to enable learning (e.g., improving instruction and classroom management practices for maximum engagement and reengagement of all students and to pursue response to intervention practices for those with mild to moderate learning and behavioral problems)
- Support transitions (e.g., assisting students and families as they negotiate school and grade changes and many other transitions);
- Increase home and school connections;
- Respond to and, where feasible, prevent crises;
- Increase community involvement and support (e.g., outreach to develop greater community involvement and support, including enhanced use of volunteers and community resources that fill priority gaps in the system of supports);
- Facilitate student and family access to effective services and special assistance as needed.

- Provide multiple opportunities for students to have leadership roles that enhance their commitment to school and to the development of themselves and others.

3.2.3 Classroom and schoolwide practices are designed to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have become disengaged; these practices are developed into a comprehensive and cohesive system of learning supports that weaves together school and community resources.

3.3 School leaders develop and sustain a comprehensive system of learning supports by ensuring an appropriate operational infrastructure that incorporates capacity building mechanisms.

3.3.1 The school has administrative leaders who are responsible for the development, operation and sustainability of high quality practices related to this third standard (Practices are identified, supported and prioritized that (a) enhance engagement in teaching, learning and school-wide activities; (b) address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have become disengaged; and (c) develop and sustain an appropriate systemic infrastructure and capacity building mechanisms for meeting this standard.). These responsibilities are delineated in job descriptions.

3.3.2 Sufficient staff are assigned to developing and sustaining such high quality practices.

3.3.3 Leadership and staff are provided continuous professional development in order to develop and sustain practices related to this third standard.

3.3.4 An effective school family community operational infrastructure is in place for weaving school and community resources together and for ongoing planning, implementing and evaluating the comprehensive system of learning supports.

3.3.5 The operational and capacity building systems related to this third standard are fully integrated with the school's mechanisms for improving instruction, management and overall governance.

## **School Climate Standard #4**

**The school community creates an environment where all members are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school: socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically.**

### Indicators and sub-indicators:

4.1 School leaders promote comprehensive and evidence-based instructional and school-wide improvement efforts designed to support students, school personnel and community members feeling welcomed, supported and safe in school: socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically.

4.2 Students, their families, school staff and community stakeholders are regularly surveyed and are asked to indicate what the school should do to further enhance a welcoming, supportive and safe environment.

4.3 School leaders monitor and evaluate the prevention and intervention strategies designed to support people feeling welcomed, supported and safe and use that data to improve relevant policies, practices, facilities, staff competencies and accountability.

## School Climate Standard #5

The school community develops meaningful and engaging practices, activities and norms that promote social and civic responsibilities and a commitment to social justice.

### Indicators and sub-indicators:

5.1 Students and staff model culturally responsive and ethical behavior. This reflects continuous learning that builds knowledge, awareness, skills, and the capacity to identify, understand, and respect the unique beliefs, values, customs, languages, and traditions of all members of the school community<sup>5</sup>.

5.1.1 Curriculum and instructional practices promote curiosity, inquiry into and celebration of diverse beliefs, customs, languages, and traditions of all members of the school community.

5.1.2 Students have ongoing opportunities to provide service to others in meaningful and engaging ways in their school and in the larger community.

5.2 Relationships among and between staff and students are mutually respectful, supportive, ethical and civil.

5.2.1 Every student is connected to a caring and responsible adult in the school.

5.2.2 Social norms in the school support responsible and positive peer relationships.

5.2.3 Discipline procedures are aligned with the goals of supporting students in their learning and being respectful of all individuals; the goals are enhanced with authentic student-driven opportunities for reconciliation when appropriate.

5.3 Students and staff are actively engaged in celebrating milestones and accomplishments as they work to achieve meaningful school and community life.

### References:

Adelman, H.S. & Taylor, L. (2005). Classroom climate. In S. W. Lee (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of School Psychology*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cohen, J., McCabe, L., Michelli, N.M. & Pickeral, T. (2009). School Climate: Research, Policy, Teacher Education and Practice. *Teachers College Record*, Volume 111: Issue 1: pp 180-213. (January). (Available on: <http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentId=15220>)

Freiberg, H. J. (Ed.). (1999). *School Climate: Measuring, improving and sustaining healthy learning environments*. Philadelphia, PA: Falmer Press.

National School Climate Council (2007). *The School Climate Challenge: Narrowing the gap between school climate research and school climate policy, practice guidelines and teacher education policy*. On: [www.schoolclimate.org/index.php/climate/policy/](http://www.schoolclimate.org/index.php/climate/policy/)

<sup>5</sup>This definition of culture competence has been adapted from the State of Ohio's Governors Cabinet Council

# APPENDIX A

## HOW THESE STANDARDS WERE DEVELOPED

### Acknowledgements

The National School Climate Standards are the product of the efforts of many individuals and groups.

In July 2008, the National School Climate Council agreed to develop National School Climate Standards. Over the course of the following year a series of drafts were developed, critiqued and revised as detailed below. The National School Climate Council Development Team, members of the National School Climate Council and additional groups of reviewers provided essential counsel to develop these standards.

The Development Team, comprised of Jonathan Cohen, Mary Lou Rush and Bonnie Hedrick (with able support from Robert Canning), developed a first draft of the standards. This first draft built on the Ohio School Climate Guidelines as well as a recent and exhaustive review of school climate research. The National School Climate Development Team critiqued and helped to revise this draft. Over the course of several months many new drafts were completed, critiqued and revised.

In December 2008, the University of Missouri Review Team (noted below) met to conduct a thorough review of work that had been done to that date. This team engaged in the following activities: (1) Generating a list of characteristics that define a positive school climate and/or delineating our vision of an ideal school; (2) Critically and constructively assessing the definition for a positive and sustained school climate developed by the National School Climate Council; and, (3) Using findings that emerged from the two activities noted above to critique a new draft of the standards. As a result of this process, the University of Missouri Review Team recommended that we continue to include the five basic standards with a number of recommended modifications resulting in a 5th draft of the standards. This draft was reviewed by members of the National School Climate Council resulting in a 6th draft.

In the spring of 2009, over forty principals, superintendents, mental health professionals, educational researchers, and state and national leaders (noted below) reviewed the 6th draft. Their feedback and recommendations resulted in the 7th draft of the standards.

On September 17, 2009, the New England Equity Assistance Center and New England College hosted a meeting at Brown University to offer feedback on the evolving set of National School Climate Standards. Forty of New England's educational equity advocates and school leaders were in attendance (noted below). Attendees included teachers, administrators, professors, consultants and officials from state and city departments of education from New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. The goals of this meeting were: 1) to ensure that the standards help schools effectively and equitably address school climate issues, and 2) to ensure that the standards help schools and communities equitably address the specific, unique needs and common challenges faced in schools by children and families from diverse, minority and underprivileged communities. The group spent the day reviewing the draft School Climate Standards and discussing how each of the five standards might help schools and communities better understand and address the needs of students from various racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, disability and religious groups.

In late September, the National School Climate Council Standards Development Committee reviewed the recommended changes that the New England Equity Assistance Center and New England College group suggested. Many of the suggestions and recommendations have helped to make these standards even more clear, fair and just.

We are also grateful to Jennifer Morton, Ph.D., Emily Stork, Marcy Borten, and Gene Browne who helped in revising and organizing these standards.

We want to acknowledge:

### **The National School Climate Council Development Team:**

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## **Individuals who reviewed the standards:**

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B. Glenn Wilkerson, Founder and President of the ARK Group, Inc.

Robert Williams, Principal, Kirschen Elementary School, California

Patricia Wright, Superintendent/Principal, Spring Lake School District, Spring Lake, New Jersey

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Anne Gilligan, Safe and Drug-Free Coordinator, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Rick Gordon, Founding Director, Compass School and Education Consultant, Westminster Station, Vermont

Molly Gosline, Project Director, Office of Safe & Drug-Free Schools, New Hampshire Department of Education

Phyllis Hardy, Equity & Diversity Specialist, New England Equity Assistance Center, The Education Alliance at Brown University

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Nicole Manganelli, Assistant Director, Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence, Portland, Maine

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Jeff Perrotti, Consultant, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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## APPENDIX B

### RESEARCH SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL SCHOOL CLIMATE STANDARDS

1. The school community has a shared vision and plan for promoting, enhancing and sustaining a positive school climate.

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Henderson, A.T., Johnson, V., Mapp K.L., Henderson, D.D. (2007). *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family/School Partnerships*. New Press.

Kreider, H., Caspe, M., Kennedy, S. & Weiss, H. (2007). *Family Involvement in Middle and High School Students' Education*. Volume 3, Spring, Harvard Family Research Project, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Available on: [www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/publications-resources/family-involvement-in-middle-and-high-school-students-education](http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/publications-resources/family-involvement-in-middle-and-high-school-students-education))

Patrikakou, E.N., Weisberg, R.P., Redding, S. & Walberg, H.J. (eds.) (2005). *School-Family Partnerships for Children's Success*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Payne, A.A. (2008). A multilevel analysis of the relationships among communal school organization, student bonding, and delinquency. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 45(4), 429-455.

2. The school community sets policies specifically promoting (a) the development and sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic and intellectual skills, knowledge, dispositions and engagement, and (b) a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged.

Adelman, H.S. & Taylor, L. (2008). *Rebuilding for learning: Addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging students*. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

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Jennings, P.A. & Greenberg, M.T. (2009). The pro-social classroom: teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(1), 491-525.

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State of Hawaii (1999). *Comprehensive Student Support System* S.B. NO. 519 – TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE, A Bill for an Act Relating to a Comprehensive Student Support System.

State of Iowa (2009). *Developing Our Youth: Fulfilling a Promise, Investing in Iowa's Future*. (Available on: [www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_download&gid=2588](http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=2588))

Partnerships for 21st Century Skills (2006). *Results that matter: 21st Century skills and high school reform*. Tucson, AZ (available on: [www.21stcenturyskills.org](http://www.21stcenturyskills.org))

**3. The school community's practices are identified, prioritized and supported to (a) promote the learning and positive social, emotional, ethical and civic development of students, (b) enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities; (c) address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have become disengaged; and (d) develop and sustain an appropriate operational infrastructure and capacity building mechanisms for meeting this standard.**

Adelman, H.S. & Taylor, L. (in press). Enhancing schools as caring environments. In R. Talley (Ed.), *Building community caregiving capacity*. Oxford University Press.

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Beland, K. (2003). Providing a Meaningful Academic Curriculum, VI. In *Eleven Principles Sourcebook: How to Achieve Quality Education in P-12 Schools*. Washington, D.C.: Character Education Partnership.

Belisle, K. & Sullivan, E. (2007). *Service learning*. New York: Amnesty International.

Blumenfeld, F.J., Fredricks, J., Blumenfeld, P. & Paris, A. (2004). School Engagement: Potential of the Concept, State of the Evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 74, 59-109.

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (2008). *Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Student Benefits: Implications for the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Core Elements*. (Available on: [www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org))

Deci, E.L., La Guardia, J.G., Moller, A.C., Scheiner, M.J., & Ryan, R.M. (2006). On the benefits of giving as well as receiving autonomy support: Mutuality in close friendships. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32, 313-327.

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**4. The school community creates an environment where all members are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school: socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically.**

Adelman, H.S. & Taylor, L. (2007). *Fostering School, Family, and Community Involvement*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory & Hamilton Fish Institute. <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/publications/44%20guide%207%20fostering%20school%20family%20and%20community%20involvement.pdf>

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**5: The school community develops meaningful and engaging practices, activities and norms that promote social and civic responsibilities and a commitment to social justice.**

Cohen, J. (2006). Social, emotional, ethical and academic education: Creating a climate for learning, participation in democracy and well-being. *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 76, No. 2, Summer, pg 201-237. ([www.hepg.org/her/abstract/8](http://www.hepg.org/her/abstract/8))

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## APPENDIX C

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Accountability** refers to the notion that people (e.g., students or teachers) or an organization (e.g., a school, school district, or state department of education) should be held responsible for improving student achievement and should be rewarded or sanctioned for their success or lack of success in doing so. Accountability measures and data refer to the specific measurement systems (e.g., an academic grade or a school climate pattern) that school leaders use to make decisions about student learning and/or school improvement efforts.

**Assessment** is the measurement of knowledge, skills and beliefs to determine the level of student achievement in a particular content area (e.g., performance-based assessments, written exams, quizzes).

**Awareness** refers to how knowledgeable we are about a given topic. It does not relate to our inclination to learn or act in a given way or to what extent we are actually able or skilled to do so.

**Barriers to learning** refers to external and internal factors that interfere with academic and social success at school. They stem from a variety of widely recognized societal, neighborhood, familial, school, and personal conditions.

**Benchmark** is a description of a specific level of student achievement expected of students at particular ages, grades, developmental levels, or during a specific point in the school year.

**Best Practice** is a technique or methodology that has been proven to reliably lead to a desired result through research and experience.

**Capacity building** refers to the process of creating a school environment with appropriate policy and human resource development that will support school reform in an ongoing manner.

**Coercive interactions** refers to the process of educators using force or authority to make a person do something against his or her will.

**Codes of conduct** delineate explicit or implicit principles, values, standards, or rules of behavior that guide the decisions, procedures and systems of a school (or other organizations) in a way that (a) contributes to the welfare of its key stakeholders, and (b) respects the rights of all constituents affected by its operations.

**Culturally responsive educational systems** are grounded in the belief that culturally and linguistically diverse students can excel in academic endeavors. Culturally responsive pedagogy and practice facilitates and supports the achievement of all students. In culturally responsive classrooms and schools, effective teaching and learning occur in a culturally-supported, learner-centered context, whereby the strengths students bring to school are identified, nurtured and utilized to promote student achievement.

**Curriculum** refers to the course of study offered by a school.

**Data-driven decision making** is a process by which district leaders, school leaders, teachers and parents review cause and effect data to determine strengths and prioritize areas in need of improvement to inform instruction, curriculum and policy decisions to positively impact student achievement.

**Disaggregated data** refers to the presentation of data broken into segments of the student and/or parent-guardian and/or

school personnel populations instead of the entire student/parent-guardian-school personnel population. Typical segments, for example, might include students who are economically disadvantaged, from racial or ethnic minority groups, have disabilities, or have limited English fluency. Disaggregated data allows the school community to understand how various sub-groups within the school perceive school climate.

**Dispositions** refers to the tendency to act in given ways.

**Engagement** (disengaged and reengaged) is defined in three ways in the research literature:

- *Behavioral engagement* draws on the idea of participation; it includes involvement in academic and social or extracurricular activities and is considered crucial for achieving positive academic outcomes and preventing dropping out.
- *Emotional engagement* encompasses positive and negative reactions to teachers, classmates, academics, and school and is presumed to create ties to an institution and influence willingness to do the work.
- *Cognitive engagement* draws on the idea of investment; it incorporates thoughtfulness and willingness to exert the effort necessary to comprehend complex ideas and master difficult skills. (School Engagement: Potential of the Concept, State of the Evidence" (2004) by J. Fredricks, P. Blumenfeld & A. Paris. Review of Educational Research, 74, 59-109.)
- *Disengaged students* are those who do not manifest behavioral engagement. The source of the disconnect may be either emotional or cognitive, or both. Reengaging such students usually requires addressing intrinsic motivational needs with strategies that maximize student feelings of competence, self-determination, relatedness to significant others and minimizing threats to such feelings.

**Evidence-based practices** in education refers to instructional and/or school-wide improvement practices which systematic empirical research has provided evidence of statistically significant effectiveness.

**Formative assessment** is the process used by teachers to determine how to adjust instruction in response to student needs, and by students to adjust learning strategies. Formative assessments are used to inform and adjust instruction, and are not used to evaluate student progress for a grade.

**Instructional practices** refers to teaching methods that guide interaction in the classroom.

**Knowledge** refers to the information or understanding that a person has.

**Learning community** refers to a group of people who share common values and beliefs and are actively engaged in learning together from and with each other.

**Learning supports** are the resources, strategies and practices that provide physical, social, emotional and intellectual assistance to directly address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage disconnected students. A *comprehensive system* of learning supports provides interventions in classrooms and school-wide settings and is fully integrated with efforts to improve instruction and management at a school. In keeping with public education and public health perspectives, the system is designed to enable holistic student development while addressing negative social, behavioral, academic and emotional problems.

**Mobility** refers to how often families move from one school community to another within or outside of a school district.

**National School Climate Council** is a group of educational policy and practice leaders devoted to narrowing the socially unjust gap between social school climate research on the one hand and school climate policy, practice and teacher education on the other hand. ([www.schoolclimate.org/climate/council.php](http://www.schoolclimate.org/climate/council.php))

**Operational infrastructure** is defined as the set of mechanisms developed to carry out an organization's major functions. Examples of such mechanisms include leaders, teams and workgroups. The manner in which they are supported, developed and organized shapes their effectiveness. In education, the need to weave together the resources of school, home and community requires both horizontal and vertical operational infrastructures to interconnect related operations at school, families of schools, district, regional and state levels.

**Positive, sustained school climate** is one that fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributing and satisfying life in a democratic society. Such a climate includes: norms, values and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically safe; members of the school community who are engaged and respected; students, family members and educators who work together to develop, live and contribute to a shared school vision; and educators who model and nurture an attitude that emphasizes the benefits and satisfaction that can be gained from learning. Members of the school community contribute to the operations of the school and the care of its social, emotional, intellectual and physical environment.

**Positive youth development** refers to the intentional effort to support the healthy development of youth.

**Professional Learning Community (PLC)** is a collegial group of educators who are united in their commitment to continuous adult and student learning who work and learn collaboratively to realize a common mission, visit and review other classrooms, and participate in decision making.

**Safety – physical, social, intellectual and emotional.** Safety refers to being free from danger. Feeling and being safe is a fundamental and basic need. Feeling safe and being safe are not synonymous. Schools measure rates of physical violence and as a result tend to focus primarily on physical safety. Social safety refers to feeling and being safe interpersonally. Mean-spirited, bullying behaviors, exclusion and harassment undermine social safety. Emotionally safety refers to feeling sufficiently comfortable with our own internal feelings, thoughts and impulses. Feeling emotionally safe supports learners to reach their academic potentials. Intellectual safety refers to being able to take academic risks, to engage in necessary questioning and dialogue when one does not know, and to feel comfortable with being confused.

**Skill** refers to the ability to do something.

**School climate** refers to patterns of people's experiences of school life; it reflects the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning and leadership practices, as well as the organizational structures that comprise school life.

**School connectedness** refers to student perceptions that adults in the school care about their learning and about them as individuals. Connectedness is measured in terms of how much/often students feel close to people at school, are happy to be at school, feel a part of the school, feel that teachers treat them fairly and feel safe at school.

**Social, emotional, ethical and civic learning** refers to the intentional process of promoting students' social, emotional, ethical and civic skills, knowledge and dispositions. There are two major, overlapping educational 'camps' in America today that are focused on social, emotional, ethical and civic teaching and learning: character education and social emotional learning.

**Social justice** refers to the idea that all people are entitled to full access to life's chances, human dignity, peace, and genuine security. Social justice exists when all members of a society lead lives committed to respectful treatment of all and nondiscrimination and non-repression of others.

**Social norms** are the behavioral expectations and cues within a society or group. These expectations and cues are the rules that a group uses for appropriate and inappropriate values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors. These rules may be explicit or implicit.

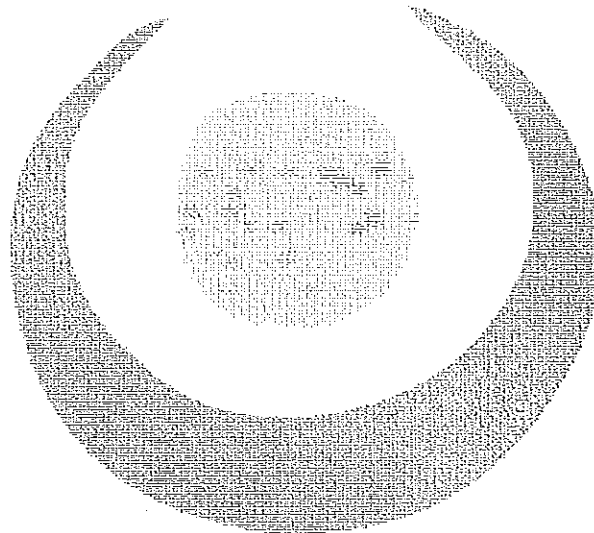
**Summative assessment** is an assessment that is employed mainly to assess cumulative student learning at a particular point in time.

**Twenty-first (21st) century learning** refers to the essential skills, knowledge and dispositions that our students need to succeed as citizens and workers in the 21st century.

**Reactance** is an emotional reaction in direct contradiction to rules or regulations that threaten or eliminate specific behavioral freedoms. It can occur when someone is heavily pressured to accept a certain view or attitude. Reactance can cause the person to adopt or strengthen a view or attitude that is contrary to what was intended and also increases resistance to persuasion.

**Reliable data** refers to information that is accurate and dependable.

**Vision and mission statements** refers to K-12 school goal setting documents that – in theory – act as organizing anchors for all school improvement efforts. Different schools and districts define vision and mission statements in somewhat different ways. Generally, a *vision* statement is the school's clear, motivating description of the desired outcome of K-12 education. Vision statements also define the purpose of K-12 education. A mission statement delineates what the school will do to actualize the school's vision statement.





**CENTER FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL EDUCATION**



## School Climate Research Summary - January 2010

Over the past two decades, researchers and educators have increasingly recognized the importance of K-12 school climate. This summary builds on our 2009 school climate research summary (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009) and details how school climate is associated with and/or promotes safety, healthy relationships, engaged learning and teaching and school improvement efforts. With a few exceptions, the citations below represent empirical studies that have been published in peer-reviewed journals. (If you would like to receive abstracts for the citations noted below, please write to [info@schoolclimate.org](mailto:info@schoolclimate.org).)

The National School Climate Council (2007) defines school climate and a positive, sustained school climate in the following ways:

School climate is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.

A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributive, and satisfying life in a democratic society. This climate includes norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe. People are engaged and respected. Students, families and educators work together to develop, live, and contribute to a shared school vision. Educators model and nurture an attitude that emphasizes the benefits of, and satisfaction from, learning. Each person contributes to the operations of the school as well as the care of the physical environment.

While Perry was the first educational leader to explicitly address how school climate affects students and the learning process (Perry, 1908), the rise of the systematic study of school climate grew out of organizational research and studies in

school effectiveness (Anderson, 1982; Creemers & Reezigt, 1999; Kreft, 1993; Miller & Fredericks, 1990; Purkey & Smith, 1983).

Virtually all researchers suggest that there are four essential areas of focus: *Safety* (e.g. rules and norms; physical safety; social-emotional safety); *Relationships* (e.g. respect for diversity; school connectedness/engagement; social support – adults; social support – students; leadership); *Teaching and Learning* (e.g. social, emotional, ethical and civic learning; support for learning; professional relationships); and the *Institutional Environment* (e.g. physical surrounding).

However, there is not yet a consensus about which dimensions are essential to measuring school climate validly<sup>1</sup>. Over time, research will help to refine and develop our understanding of what aspects of school climate can and need to be assessed.

As detailed below, the systematic study of school climate has led to a growing body of research that attests to its importance in a variety of overlapping ways, including social, emotional, intellectual and physical safety; positive youth development, mental health, and healthy relationships; higher graduation rates; school connectedness and engagement; academic achievement; social, emotional and civic learning; teacher retention; and effective school reform.

For the purposes of this summary, research findings will be divided into the following five dimensions: safety, relationships, teaching and learning, the institutional environment and school reform. These dimensions are interconnected. Thus, information in one section may relate to another dimension as well.

### Safety

Feeling safe – socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically – is a fundamental human need. Feeling safe in schools powerfully promotes student learning and healthy development (Devine & Cohen, 2007).



However, there is a great deal of research that shows that many students do not feel physically and emotionally safe in schools. For example, a study found evidence that high school students are fearful about going to school because of the violence and personal victimization some of them experience during the school day (Astor, Benbenishty, Zeira, & Vinokur, 2002). Studies have also shown that students feel less safe in large schools and that verbal bullying is more likely to occur at such schools (Lleras, 2008). Our Center's school climate assessment work with thousands of schools across America has shown that the adults in the school community (school personnel and parents/guardians) typically believe that bullying and social violence are a "mild" to "moderately severe" problem while students consistently report that it is a "severe" problem (Cohen, 2006).

Although many urban and economically disadvantaged schools are plagued by physical violence, most students are not exposed to physical violence (Mayer & Furlong, 2010). Unfortunately, this is not the case for social, emotional and intellectual safety. In fact, bully-victim behavior is a serious public health problem. Research from the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) National Bullying Campaign showed that up to 25% of U.S. students are bullied each year (Melton et al., 1998). As many as 160,000 students may stay home from school on any given day because they are afraid of being bullied (Nansel et al., 2001). The growing trend of cyber bullying penetrates the home via computers and cellular phones. At least one out of three adolescents report being seriously threatened online, and 60% of teens say they have participated in online bullying. A growing body of research has underscored that bully-victim behavior is toxic; it undermines K-12 students' capacity to learn and develop in healthy ways. When students bully and/or are victimized repeatedly, it dramatically increases the likelihood that they will develop significant psychosocial problems over time. Bullying seems to adversely affect the witnesses, too. A recent study of more than 2,000 students (ages 12 to 16) found that those who witnessed bullying reported more feelings of depression, anxiety, hostility and inferiority than either the bullies or victims themselves (Rivers, Potrat, Noret, & Ashurst, 2009).

Homophobia is one of the most common causes of bully-

victim behavior (Birkett, Espelage, & Koenig, 2009). A recent school climate survey of 6,209 middle school and high school students revealed that roughly nine out of ten LGBT students (86.2%) experienced harassment at school in the previous year (Kosciw, Diaz, & Greytak, 2008). In general, differences (e.g. race, gender, disability, socio-economic and/or cultural differences) are a common focus for bullying.

There is growing evidence educators also feel unsafe in schools. A significant number of teachers are threatened and/or assaulted by students every year (Dworkin, Haney, & Telschow, 1998; Novotney, 2009).

Recent research suggests that positive school climate is associated with reduced aggression and violence (Karcher, 2002b; Goldstein, Young, & Boyd, 2008; Brookmeyer, Fanti, & Henrich, 2006) as well as reduced bullying behavior (Kosciw & Elizabeth, 2006; Meyer-Adams & Conner, 2008; Yoneyama & Rigby, 2006; Birkett et al., 2009; Meraviglia, Becker, Rosenbluth, Sanchez, & Robertson, 2003). However, this relationship has not been fully elucidated. One study revealed that the association between school climate and level of aggression and victimization is dependent upon each student's feelings of connectedness to the school (Wilson, 2004). More specifically, "the amount of connectedness experienced by the average student appears to consistently contribute to predicting his or her likelihood of aggression and victimization despite variations in school climate" (Wilson, 2004, p. 1). Future research needs to critically examine the complex set of individual, group and organizational factors that shape this behavior in schools.

What is clear is that comprehensive, ecologically informed violence prevention efforts provide the essential foundation for improvement. Recent reviews of effective school discipline and bully prevention efforts underscore that we need to recongize and target individual, peer, school, family and community processes (Osher, Bear, Sprague & Doyle, 2010; Swearer, Espelage, Vallancourt & Hymel, 2010).

Another important safety-related dimension is rules and norms. Research underscores the importance of school rules and perceived fairness in regard to students' behavior. There



is evidence that schools in which rules are effectively enforced (i.e. better discipline management) have lower rates of student victimization and student delinquency (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, Payne, & Gottfredson, 2005).

## Relationships

The process of learning and teaching is fundamentally relational. The patterns of norms, goals, values and interactions that shape relationships in schools provide an essential foundation for school climate. One of the most important aspects of relationships in school is how connected people feel to one another. The *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* (2009) defines school connectedness as “the belief by students that adults and peers in the school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals”. There is a growing body of research that suggests that school connectedness is a powerful predictor of and/or is associated with adolescent health and academic outcomes (McNeely, Nonnemaker, & Blum, 2002; Whitlock, 2006; Ruus et al., 2007; Resnick et al., 1997), violence prevention (Karcher, 2002a, 2002b; Skiba et al., 2004), student satisfaction and conduct problems (Loukas, Suzuki, & Horton, 2006). Further, it is a protective factor against risky sexual, violence and drug use behaviors (Catalano, Haggerty, Oesterie, Fleming, & Hawkins, 2004; Kirby, 2001). For a recent summary of this research, see *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* (2009). This 2009 summary details the range of ways that K-12 schools can promote school connectedness.

From a psychological point of view, relationships refer not only to relations with others but relations with ourselves: how we feel about and take care of ourselves. There is extensive research that school climate has a profound impact on students’ mental and physical health. School climate has been shown to affect middle school students’ self-esteem (Hoge, Smit, & Hanson, 1990), mitigate the negative effects of self-criticism (Kuperminic, Leadbeater, & Blatt, 2001), and affect a wide range of emotional and mental health outcomes (Kuperminic, Leadbeater, Emmons, & Blatt, 1997; Payton et al., 2008; Shochet, Dadds, Ham, & Montague, 2006; Way, Reddy, & Rhodes, 2007). Research has also revealed a positive correlation between school climate and student self-

concept (Cairns, 1987; Heal, 1978; Reynolds, Jones, Leger, & Murgatroyd, 1980; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, & Ouston, 1979).

The social emotional climate of a school is also related to the frequency of its students’ substance abuse and psychiatric problems (Kasen, Johnson, & Cohen, 1990; LaRusso, Romer, & Selman, 2008; Ruus et al., 2007; Shochet et al., 2006). More specifically, a positive school climate is linked to lower levels of drug use as well as less self reports of psychiatric problems among high school students (LaRusso et al., 2008). In early adolescence, a positive school climate is predictive of better psychological well-being (Ruus et al., 2007; Shochet et al., 2006).

Moreover, a series of studies revealed that a positive school climate is correlated with decreased student absenteeism in middle school and high school (deJung & Duckworth, 1986; Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1989; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Reid, 1982; Rumberger, 1987; Sommer, 1985) and with lower rates of student suspension in high school (Wu, Pink, Crain, & Moles, 1982). A growing body of research indicates that positive school climate is critical to effective risk prevention (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2002; Greenberg et al., 2003) and health promotion efforts (Cohen, 2001; Najaka, Gottfredson, & Wilson, 2002; Rand Corporation, 2004; Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1993).

Safe, caring, participatory and responsive school climates tend to foster a greater attachment to school and provide the optimal foundation for social, emotional and academic learning for middle school and high school students (Blum, McNeely, & Rinehart, 2002; Goodenow & Grady, 1993; Lee, Smith, Perry, & Smylie, 1999; Osterman, 2000; Wentzel, 1997). These research findings have contributed to the U.S. Department of Justice (2004), the U.S. Department of Education’s *Safe and Drug Free Schools network*, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2009) and a growing number of State Departments of Education emphasizing the importance of safe, civil and caring schools.



## Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning represents one of the most important dimensions of school climate. School leaders and teachers should strive to clearly define the sets of norms, goals, and values that shape the learning and teaching environment. Research supports the notion that positive school climate promotes students' ability to learn.

A positive school climate promotes cooperative learning, group cohesion, respect and mutual trust. These particular aspects have been shown to directly improve the learning environment (Ghaith, 2003; Kerr, Ireland, Lopes, Craig, & Cleaver, 2004; Finnan, Schnepel, & Anderson, 2003).

A series of correlational studies have shown that school climate is directly related to academic achievement (Brand, Felner, Shim, Seitsinger, & Dumas, 2003; Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer, & Wisenbaker, 1977; Brookover, 1978; Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Freiberg, 1999; Good & Weinstein, 1986; Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1989; Griffith, 1995; Ma & Klinger, 2000; MacNeil, Prater, & Busch, 2009; Madaus, Airasian, & Kellaghan, 1980; Rutter, 1983; Rutter et al., 1979; Shipman, 1981; Stewart, 2008; Fleming et al., 2005) and that its effect seems to persist years later (Hoy, Hannum, & Tschannen-Moran, 1998). Researchers have also looked at the relationship between school climate and academic achievement in relation to student classroom participation. When students are encouraged to participate in academic learning, the potential for academic achievement increases (Voelkl, 1995; Ladd, Birch, & Buhs, 1999).

Teacher support is integral to student achievement. Research shows that the student-teacher relationship in kindergarten is related to later academic and behavioral outcomes for students (Pianta, Steinberg, & Rollins, 1995; Hamre & Pianta, 2001). If a teacher-student relationship is negative and conflictual in kindergarten, it is more likely that the student will have behavioral and academic problems in later grades (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Also, teachers' interactions with students can directly affect students' behavioral and emotional engagement in the classroom (Skinner & Belmont, 1993). When teachers

support and interact positively with students, then students are more likely to be engaged and behave appropriately (Skinner & Belmont, 1993).

The specific nature and goals of K-12 instruction impact academic achievement in a variety of ways. Educators (like parents) are always teaching social, emotional, civic, and ethical as well as intellectual lessons, intentionally or not. Research shows that evidence-based character education programs lead to higher achievement scores in elementary school students (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn, & Smith, 2003). Also, evidence-based social and emotional learning programs have resulted in impressive gains in achievement test scores and in increasing the academic emphasis of elementary and middle school students (Battistich, Schaps, & Wilson, 2004; Bradshaw, Koth, Thornton, & Leaf, 2009; Elias & Haynes, 2008). A recent meta-analysis of over 700 positive youth development, social emotional learning (SEL) and character education studies revealed evidence-based SEL programs had many significant positive effects, including improving students' achievement test scores by 11 to 17 percentile points (Payton et al., 2008)<sup>ii</sup>.

Implementing learning activities beyond the classroom is an effective way to incorporate civic education into a school and these activities, in turn, promote student learning. Encouraging active and collaborative learning through authentic projects is most effective in an environment with a civic mission that encourages trusting relationships between all members of the school community (Carnegie Corporation of New York & Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Education, 2003; Wentzel, 1997; Skinner & Chapman, 1999).

Service learning projects promote civic education because these activities teach students how to apply classroom material to real life situations (Morgan & Streb, 2001; Bandura, 2001; Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald, & Schulz, 2001). For example, activities like community service and debates enhance the learning environment by providing students opportunities to participate and begin forming their own opinions of social and government systems (Torney-Purta, 2002; Youniss et al., 2002). Moreover, when these activities are presented in a



collaborative environment, they encourage students to interact and build upon one another's ideas (Wentzel & Watkins, 2002; Ghaith, 2003). If students are given ownership and choice in their service learning projects, there is evidence that students' self concept and tolerance for diversity will increase (Morgan & Streb, 2001).

Furthermore, school climate influences how educators feel about being in school and how they teach. Recent research shows that school climate powerfully affects the lives of educators and teacher retention. School climate enhances or minimizes emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of low personal accomplishment (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008) as well as attrition (Miller, Brownell, & Smith, 1999). Research shows that when teachers feel supported by both the principal and their peers, teachers are more committed to their profession (Singh & Billingsley, 1998). A positive school climate is also associated with the development of teachers' beliefs that they can positively affect student learning (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future defines school climate in terms of a learning community and argues that poor school climate is an important factor contributing to teacher retention (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005).

## Institutional Environment

In this section, we briefly review recent research about how smaller schools can greatly improve school climate and how the physical layout of the school can affect safety.

There are various benefits to smaller schools for student achievement, safety, and relationships among members of the school community. Smaller schools are positively correlated to school connectedness (McNelly et al., 2002). In addition, research suggests that, at the middle-school level, smaller schools lead to better academic performance though the picture is more complicated at the elementary and high school levels (Stevenson, 2006). However, reducing the school size is not the only way to improve the school environment. Instead, a school should strive to form smaller learning communities as a way to improve the learning environment (Cotton, 2001). School space is another environmental dimension that impacts

students' feelings about safety. Astor and colleagues' research (2001) demonstrated that students felt unsafe in unsupervised areas of the school building. In fact, there is a growing body of research that illuminates how environmental variables such as classroom layout, activity schedules and student-teacher interactions can influence student behaviors and feelings of safety (Conroy & Fox, 1994; Van Acker, Grant, & Henry, 1996).

## School Climate and Improvement

School climate is an important factor in the successful implementation of school reform programs (Bulach & Malone, 1994; Dellar, 1998; Gittelsohn et al., 2003; Gregory, Henry, & Schoeny, 2007). For example, teachers' perceptions of school climate influences their ability to implement school-based character and development programs (Beets et al., 2008). Studies about the implementation of character education programs suggest that the most effective ones are those incorporated into the school curriculum and developed holistically with the school community (Kerr et al., 2004).

Some of the most important research that elucidates the relationship between school climate and school improvement efforts emerged from a multi-year study of schools in Chicago. Bryk and his colleagues found evidence that schools with high relational trust (good social relationships among members of the school community) are more likely to make changes that improve student achievement (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). In their most recent summary of this work, Bryk and his colleagues (2010) detail how the following four systems interact in ways that support or undermine school improvement efforts: (i) professional capacity (e.g. teachers' knowledge and skills; support for teacher learning; and school-based learning communities); (ii) order, safety and norms (labeled as "school learning climate"); (iii) parent-school-community ties; and (iv) instructional guidance (e.g. curriculum alignment and the nature of academic demands). These dimensions shape the process of teaching and learning. The authors underscore how their research has shown relational trust is the "glue" or the essential element that coordinates and supports these four processes, which are essential to effective school climate improvement (Bryk,



Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010).

## Summary

School climate – by definition – reflects students', school personnel's, and parents' experiences of school life socially, emotionally, civically, ethically as well as academically. Over the past two decades, research studies from a range of historically disparate fields (e.g. risk prevention, health promotion, character education, mental health, and social-emotional learning) have identified research-based school improvement guidelines that converge predictably to promote safe, caring, responsive and participatory schools (American Psychological Association, 2003; Centers for Disease Control, 2009; Benninga et al., 2003; Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Greenberg et al., 2003).

School climate matters. Positive and sustained school climate is associated with and/or predictive of positive youth development, effective risk prevention and health promotion efforts, student learning and academic achievement, increased student graduation rates, and teacher retention. These research findings have contributed to the U.S. Department of Education examining ways to use school climate and culture as an organizing data-driven concept that recognizes the range of pro-social efforts (e.g. character education, social emotional learning, developmental assets, community schools) and risk prevention/mental health promotion efforts that protect children and promote essential social, emotional, ethical and civic learning (Jennings, 2009).

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### Footnotes:

<sup>i</sup>The list of the factors noted above overlaps with recent research by Osher and colleagues (Osher & Kendziora, in press), who found four major factors in their school climate research: safety, challenge, support and social-emotional learning. Felner and his colleagues (2003) have also conducted extensive and sound school climate research for many years (Felner, Aber, Cauce, & Primavera, 1985; Felner et al., 2001). The factors (in the following parentheses) that have emerged from his work overlap with and support the four major factors noted above: Safety (Clarity of Rules and Expectations, Disciplinary Harshness, Safety Problems); Relationships (Negative Peer Interactions, Positive Peer Interactions, Participation in Decision Making, Support for Cultural Pluralism); Teaching and learning (Teacher Support, Instructional Innovation/Relevance, Student Commitment/Achievement Orientation); and, the Institutional Environment (Student Commitment) (Brand et al., 2003). Other research has underscored how the climate of the classroom colors and shapes school climate (Koth, Bradshaw & Leaf, 2008).

<sup>ii</sup>This work overlaps with recent research findings about risk/protective factors which the Search Institute has synthesized into their "developmental assets" framework (Scales & Roehlkepartain, 2003) and 21st Century skills (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). Each of these organizations have synthesized important pro-social and risk prevention research findings to develop models and instructional goals that complement the social emotional learning/character education research noted above.

*If you would like to receive abstracts for the citations noted below or care to share other empirical school climate research studies that have been published in peer-reviewed journals, please write to [info@schoolclimate.org](mailto:info@schoolclimate.org).*



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**BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION  
PROGRAMS**

# Bullying Prevention and Intervention Programs\*

- Research-based bullying prevention and intervention programs include:
  - *Steps to Respect*
  - *Second Step*
  - *Bully Busters*
  - *Bully-Proofing Your School*
  - *The Peaceful Schools Project*
  - *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program*

\*Empirical support defined by data published in peer-reviewed journal articles or chapters



# WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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ELLIOTT LANDON  
Superintendent of Schools

110 MYRTLE AVENUE  
WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT 06880  
TELEPHONE: (203) 341-1025  
FAX: (203) 341-1029

To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Elliott Landon  
Subject: Acceptance of Gifts  
Date: April 9, 2012

I am pleased to inform you that we have been offered two (2) generous gifts; one from the Long Lots School PTA and the second, from the Staples High School PTA.

The gift from the Long Lots PTA is a Climbing Wall System and Cordless Mat Locking System (that prevents unauthorized climbing from taking place) manufactured by Everlast Climbing Industries, the same company that made and installed the "climbing wall" at Saugatuck several years ago. Delivery and installation of the entire system will cost approximately \$10,000. The gift is a result of a very successful PTA Bingo Night that was held at Long Lots in March.

The second gift, from the Staples High School PTA, is a gift of a small washer/dryer to be housed in the art area. The washer/dryer will be used for the purpose of washing and drying cloths that are used by students and teachers as they work on art projects and also will be used by special education students enrolled in our Life Skills program as part of their learning program. This gift has a value of \$2,150.

I recommend acceptance of these gifts with gratitude and appreciation for these contributions by the Long Lots and Staples PTAs.

## ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

**Be It Resolved, That upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts with gratitude and appreciation a gift of \$10,000 from the Long Lots PTA to be used to purchase a Magna Relief-Feature Climbing Wall System and Cordless Mat Locking System manufactured by Everlast Climbing Industries for installation in the Long Lots School gymnasium; and, a gift valued at \$2,150 from the Staples High School PTA for the purchase of a washer/dryer to be installed in the art area to be used by students enrolled in art courses and those enrolled in our Life Skills Program.**



# WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## *Westport Technology Center*

136 Riverside Avenue  
Westport, CT 06880  
203-341-1217

Natalie Carrigan  
Director of Instructional Technology  
and District Testing Coordinator  
[Nataliecarrigan@westport.k12.ct.us](mailto:Nataliecarrigan@westport.k12.ct.us)

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To: Elliott Landon

From: Natalie Carrigan, Lis Comm, Cynthia Gilchrest

Subject: Technology for Instructional Purposes: Myths v. Facts

Date: April 9, 2012

There is an emerging narrative being circulated around town that propagates several myths and draws conclusions based on inaccurate or incomplete information about the district's internal decision making process and long range plans for technology purchases. Below is an attempt to share facts that are guiding the district's planning.

### ***Myth: Technology purchases do not directly affect students.***

First and foremost- *Curriculum drives our technology purchases.*

In other words, we purchase instructional technology (infrastructure, hardware, software, subscriptions) that allows the district curriculum to be taught in a more effective, efficient, and/or more relevant way. We purchase technology that provides teachers with opportunities to teach that would otherwise not be possible; assists students in deepening their understanding of the curriculum and in making their learning process more interactive and personally connected; provides multiple opportunities for students to develop and refine their critical thinking and communication skills, to create solutions, to collaborate with others and to deepen their global awareness and understanding; and, we also purchase assistive technology so that *all* students – regular and special education alike -- can participate in the regular education curriculum to the greatest extent possible and/or to be able to meet their own personal educational goals.

Without technology there are certain courses we would not even be able to offer to students. For example we would not be able to offer courses like Digital Darkroom, Music and Technology, Computer Science (application programming), and next year's Digital Animation.

*And* we aim to do this in an equitable and systematic way that provides a reliable and consistent environment in which both teachers and students can work without interruption.

***Myth: The district is not looking ahead to how new technologies can be used and has no long-range plan.***

In August of 2011 the BOE put into the 2011-2012 BOE goals the development of a new 5-year strategic tech plan.

GOAL: Continuous Improvement in Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Objective 1. Implement a plan of action that ensures that all students are equipped with globally competitive learning skills.

-- Develop a five year strategic technology plan for curriculum and instruction to include potential modifications to infrastructure, integration of student personal technology into district programs, estimated purchasing requirements and re-allocation of resources.

A subcommittee of the Strategic Technology Committee has been conducting research and preparing the 2012-2017 Strategic Technology Plan that will be presented to the Board of Education for its review, consideration and approval in May 2012.

***Myth: Technology saves money.***

Technology can save money and increase productivity on the business and data side of education. We take advantage of every opportunity that we can to engender savings and have, therefore, been able to provide more services more productively with the same or fewer people in each office.

Technology does not save money on the instructional side of education. In fact in many instances it may cost more to properly meet the instructional goals of the district, but we gain currency, wider access, and higher quality. Case in point: We no longer purchase the book versions of encyclopedias or research resources such as *Opposing View Points*; instead, we purchase online versions. The versions are updated regularly and any student can access any page at home or at school while other students are accessing the exact same page. The overall cost of the subscriptions can exceed the total cost of the purchase of the hard copy books, yet this is a far better way to handle resources than having a single copy of each volume sequestered in the library and available to view "only at the reference table" during school hours.

***Myth: The district is not moving fast enough toward digital textbooks.***

We have when it has been deemed to be appropriate. For example:

- We no longer purchase textbooks for Physics courses (non-AP); instead, we utilize an online service from the University of Texas.
- We no longer purchase textbooks for Biology courses (non-AP); instead, we use online resources and a program that allows teachers to create their own quasi-textbooks.
- We no longer purchase textbooks for Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or Pre-Calculus; instead, we use Hey Math.
- We use Hey Math to provide customized lessons and simulations in grades 6-8 with sophisticated materials that augment current textbooks in use.

- Beginning with the 2012-13 school year, we will no longer purchase hard copy textbooks for 6<sup>th</sup> grade social studies. The chosen textbook is online.
- The vast majority of social studies teachers use online resources as a component of their courses. They use the textbooks more for homework. We are not yet at the point where Internet-based resources are sufficient to have us abandon textbooks entirely in our social studies courses.
- The same is true for all of the other subject areas at this time. Teachers continue to evaluate online and digital resources and the processes in which they teach particular concepts, to see if the manner in which they are teaching can be improved with technology. They integrate what works and discard what does not.

The district gives the Westport curriculum top priority. We have never changed our curriculum to match what a textbook provides; we choose only those textbooks and related materials that best meet our curriculum needs.

***Myth: Digital textbooks are cheaper.***

Not always and usually not by much. There are two main types of textbooks, subject textbooks and trade books (novels).

Apple announced that it will be selling textbooks for \$14.99. It is not well announced, but when asked directly, Apple representatives confirmed that the pricing model will be a subscription model (think consumable workbooks). That means the books are \$14.99 every year. Over 5 years the total cost of the books will be \$74.95. That is on average what we pay now, if not a bit more. The benefit of using the digital textbooks when they become available is that they will always be current; we will never have damaged or lost books; and, we will have available to us comprehensive interactive resources that will enhance students’ learning experiences. The new 6<sup>th</sup> grade social studies online text will cost us \$60.00 over the five year lifespan; however, its pricing model does not include any updates.

Textbook prices will most likely remain at the current level as Apple requires companies to give them 30% of the profits.

Trade books, or novels, are free if they are in the public domain. Approximately 25 % of our novels in the English department at the high school fall into that category. The others must still be paid for, and the pricing model is fast changing. See some examples below:

Title	Amazon paperback	Amazon Kindle	Barnes & Noble paperback	Barnes & Noble Nook
The Secret Life of Bees	\$10.20	\$12.99	\$9.60	\$12.99
Catcher in the Rye	\$9.25	\$3.50	\$6.99	\$4.95
The Pearl (Steinbeck)	\$10.40	\$8.99	\$9.00	\$8.99

***Myth: There are a multitude of digital textbooks available.***

Not so. While there are many trade books available, Apple currently has only 9 textbooks available for purchase. They have said that every major publisher is on board, but they give no timelines as to when those books will be available.

Pearson's road map is for one textbook in each subject area to be published by 2014. They are planning on having all titles published within the next 5 years. Most publishers are currently working towards converting their content from Flash, which does not play on iOS devices (Mac, iPad, iPod), to HTML 5, before they can publish on iTunes.

***Myth: It would be effective for all students to bring their own personal learning devices to class because the school infrastructure is ready for it.***

Not so. As of right now, much of our curriculum and in fact much of the educational software is not browser-based so it is NOT available to students who bring in their own laptops. We have been changing over to software that is browser-based for several years now, but much of that is Flash-based and it will not work on iOS devices. We move as fast as the industry will meet our curriculum needs. Next year one big step we are taking is moving from machine-based office productivity software to Google Apps for Educators.

In terms of wireless infrastructure we need to upgrade the capacity of the wireless network at Staples High School. We need to install wireless at two of our elementary schools. We need to build in redundancy of the wireless network for all schools, and we need to be able to set access to the network based on user *and* device. We will also have to devise charging stations or some other method of ensuring there is enough power available to students as they move from class to class throughout the day. (The school laptops are charged through a cart that is continuously plugged in, including during passing periods.)

***Myth: We are not continuously evaluating technology.***

Not true. The technology department researches, evaluates, and pilots products to determine current issues or needs. For example, the department evaluated competing wireless products for the anticipated Staples wireless network replacement. As a result of this effort, we chose a program that will allow students to access both their personal *and* school network drives from home.

Teachers evaluate and pilot various software programs and devices. For example teachers are evaluating Nooks, Kindles, and iPads. Teachers have evaluated programs for math, reading, and research which are now being used system wide. Library media specialists work with teachers on different grade levels to evaluate the quality of online resources and subscriptions.

Administrators evaluate and pilot various software programs and devices as well. For example, our administrators have evaluated several data mining programs that allow for easier access to data for curriculum teams. They have evaluated programs for parent communication and curriculum mapping that will be implemented throughout the district. They also work alongside teachers in evaluating educational programs.



***Myth: We are not clearly prioritizing technology purchases.***

Not true. We look at our current curriculum and anticipate what will be needed in the future. For example:

- We review which classes will need to have updated machines or software in order to keep functioning. The language and music classes are examples.
- We look at any new classes that will need additional materials and support such as the revised 6<sup>th</sup> grade social studies classes or Singapore math.
- We look at equity in delivery of instruction. Are there any new classrooms that need equipment? Is there an increase in class size where the labs need more computers?
- We look at the school priorities. What are their teachers struggling with? Are there enough laptops and quality online resources for students to conduct research? Are there Smartboards in every space where instructional leaders can make use of them with students? Do teachers need more cameras to document student work and allow students to create presentations?
- We look at what must be done in terms of replacement to maintain a reliable learning environment.

We do look at how to be frugal and make the best uses of resources, but we do not make technology decisions for the sake of budget, but rather for the sake of the education of our students.

***Myth: Cheap machines are just fine.***

Not so. The laptops used by students are used everyday, all day. They are constantly being handled and moved by children and as a result they need to be able to sustain themselves. Five to eight students use the same laptop in one day. All of this adds to the wear and tear on the machines.

We *do* purchase the lower end of the commercial grade laptops with 4 GB of memory AND an upgrade to a 9-cell battery. This battery is needed to last for the majority of the school day, if not the entire school day. The purchasing is based on a specific replacement cycle; every three years for the high school and middle schools, and every 4 years for the elementary schools. Commercial grade laptops provide the same internal hardware allowing for imaging and deployment software to be used, reducing the size of the technician force needed. These decisions are based on best practices for the number of computers serviced by the district and are based upon recommendations made by the community members of our Strategic Technology Committee who are experts in the industry.

***Myth: We are not getting the best price on the laptops we do purchase.***

We endeavor to ensure we receive the best prices. First, we receive educational pricing on our equipment which saves between 10% and 20% off of MSRP. Second, we go out to bid and follow the town bidding guidelines every year. Third, we purchase all of the machines at once so we can get the best deal on a bulk purchase.

***Myth: All students have their own laptop or mobile device.***

No, not all do. An overwhelming majority of students have access to technology, but most have access to desktops, either Mac or PC, *not* laptops. And some families with multiple children have devices that the family shares so not every child in the family has their *own* laptop or mobile device to bring to school.

Based on the survey given to teachers in the fall, as part of our needs assessment for the 2012-2017 5-Year Strategic Technology Plan and 2012-2015 State-driven Technology Plan, many teachers are still requesting more laptops for student use. One reason is that not enough students consistently bring their own devices to close the gap, and teachers need to be confident that the equipment will be there when needed.

Because students do not bring their laptops every day it is not possible to have an exact number of students with useable mobile devices, however we have some estimates we can share. Students tend to bring in devices as the need arises as, for instance, when there is a big group project and they want to have their own machines instead of having to share at school. High school students bring in the most devices and second in number are the middle schools. John Dodig, principal of Staples, did have his teachers survey their classes a year ago and they found that on average 60% of students bring in their own laptops or other devices. In some subjects, such as science, the percentages of students were as high as 80%.

Nearly 95% of the machines brought in by students are iOS devices. There are some who do bring in Windows based laptops. Most elementary students do not bring in their own devices (a few bring in Nooks or Kindles) because not every school has wireless, and the teachers are not yet ready for the students to do so organizationally.

A small percentage of Westport students have no access. We do have a program that is sanctioned by the BOE through a set of guidelines that allows the technology department to loan computers to students in need. Students must qualify for free or reduced lunch status as set by federal guidelines. Those students are given refurbished computers. We do not currently provide them with a means of Internet access other than wireless at school. We will need to reconsider this once the vast majority of our curriculum is presented through online means only.

***Myth: The district has over-bought on laptops for students.***

While the technology department is currently responsible for maintaining 10,000 pieces of equipment including desktops and laptops, the number of laptops in each school is at the correct level to get to a consistent 1:1 program in most cases WITH students bringing in their own devices if the percentages above hold true.

No matter how many devices students bring in we will always need to have a certain number of desktops with very specific curriculum software on them and we will need to provide laptops as spares or as loaners for students as the circumstances warrant.

Level	Total number of computers	Total number of Instructional Computers	Macs*	Laptops*	Current Enrollment	% of students that can be assigned a laptop
High School	1172	963	73	490	1,829	27%
Middle School	980	916	67	277	1,352	21%
Elementary	1564	1474	43	426	2,524	19%

*The counts for each category or included within the total number of Instructional computers and not in addition to the total number of Instructional Computers.*

***Myth: 21<sup>st</sup> century skills can be taught without technology.***

Our district wide project, “Westport 2025: Meeting the Global Challenge,” focuses on four main capacities that all students should graduate with: critical thinking, creativity, communication, and global awareness. In order to develop these capacities students need multiple opportunities to develop, practice, and refine their skills. Students need to be able to have large amounts of readily accessible data to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate. They need many different types of formats in which to create or creatively solve problems. They need to be able to communicate their thinking and solutions with authentic audiences, and they need to understand how their thinking and that of others affects their world. Communication is defined in many different ways now. In a global world, communication is not simply in traditional written or verbal formats. Our teaching methodologies have to match the way students live. They’re digital natives, and we need to keep up with the ways they acquire and share information. Without technology that is pervasive, reliable, and relevant to teaching and learning the challenge cannot be met.

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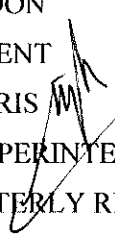
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## INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** ELLIOTT LANDON  
SUPERINTENDENT

**FROM:** NANCY J. HARRIS   
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR BUSINESS

**SUBJECT:** MARCH QUARTERLY REPORT

**DATE:** APRIL 5, 2012

**CC:** F. MEILAN, BUDGET FILE

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Attached is the March Quarterly Report for the 2011-12 fiscal year which reflects a potential fund balance of \$23,790 through the end of the year. The potential balance represents a 0.02% budget variation to the \$98,095,118 Board of Education adopted 2011-2012 budget.

You will note that we have completed 9 of the 12 months of the fiscal year with three months of school expenditures left in the year. This means that many of our expenditure projections continue as preliminary. The differences between the "Adopted Budget" column and the "Adjusted Budget" column reflect the administrative transfers made within each "line item" of the budget as the year has progressed and specific expenditures have been modified.

We encumber salaries for all full time employees and expenditures for anticipated purchases. Those encumbrances and expenditures account for 97.8% of the total budget. Actual expenditures made to date are 73.37% of total budget with encumbrances representing 24.43% of total budget. The remaining 2.18% of the budget projection represents my best estimate of expenditures to be made during the three months remaining in the fiscal year.

Salary accounts reflect several basic structural changes made to this budget. Several additional elementary sections were opened in August to accommodate last minute student registrations, in accordance with the class size guidelines, which caused the hiring of additional teachers and paraprofessionals to support those sections. The use of long term substitute teachers has been very high this year and we have transferred staff savings from absences to offset these costs. The current potential fund balance of \$242,056 represents a 0.37% variation from the total salary budget.

The greatest unknowns at this time are the projected substitute and overtime costs (objects 150 – 156) through the end of the year. I am currently projecting a deficit of \$36,359 in this account grouping. These accounts have the highest rate of volatility since staff attendance, workers compensation injuries, overtime, illness, and pregnancy cannot be definitively estimated. A review of the prior three years' actual expenditure data reveals no pattern whatsoever.

The Board of Education's Westport 2025 initiative has been a focal point of our Curriculum Development (object 119) and Instructional Program Improvements (object 323) work this year. Our partnership with Teachers' College of Columbia University has proven to be instrumental in developing the basis of our new curriculum directions.

The final cost of heating fuel (natural gas & oil) and electricity, which creates a potential fund balance of \$66,850, is still an unknown since the total projections are based on consumption through February. As the Board is aware, the Board of Education and the Town purchase oil collaboratively, with the Board of Education negotiating a BTU contract locking in oil/natural gas prices of \$1.4743 per gallon equivalent through June 30, 2012. We continue to project burning natural gas for the fiscal year. Electricity generation rates have been stabilized until December 2012 under the "all in" electric consortium contract we entered into at \$0.0973 per kilowatt hour. The final fund balances depend on our actual natural gas and electricity consumption which will be impacted by the winter/spring temperatures and the extended use of our buildings. I am projecting a deficit of \$41,370 in Building Projects (account 435) as we had significant costs associated with several mold remediation projects throughout the district, most importantly at Bedford Middle School (BMS) where just before the start of school we discovered improper installation of pipe insulation from the original construction project caused by moisture build up in the ceilings of the lower pods which required immediate attention and re-insulation. Mold was also discovered later in the fall at BMS, caused by insufficient structural steel associated with the original construction project that supports the corridor window walls opposite the auditorium, which required remediation and will require structural changes to the window support design over the summer.

After transferring \$126,000 into the diesel fuel account for our school buses (object 517) we are projecting a budget shortfall of \$2,104. The increased cost is caused by the price of fuel that skyrocketed from 2010-11 to 2011-12.

The special education tuition accounts reflect a potential deficit of \$218,122 net of the Special Education Excess Cost Grants from the State Department of Education. The cost of placing special needs students into out of district placements includes tuition costs of \$3,218,346 and transportation costs of \$386,530. These costs have been reduced by the payment of \$607,747 in February for the Excess Cost Grants to offset extraordinary education costs for many of our special needs students. I have estimated that an additional \$202,000 of reimbursement will be received in June and credited to tuition and transportation upon receipt.

Listed below is a summary of the Line Item projected balances:

LINE ITEM	PROJECTED BALANCE
Total Salaries	\$ 242,056
Total Benefits	26,943
Total Purchased Services	(61,528)
Total Property Services	(1,752)
Total Other Purchased Services	(192,103)
Total Supplies and Materials	25,415
Total Equipment	(11,411)
Total Other	(3,830)
Projected Balance (Deficit)	\$ 23,790

This projection reflects a possible fund balance of \$23,790.

Please note the following as you review the projections (object code provided for reference):

***Salaries:***

- ◆ A variety of certified and non-certified staff have been on paid and unpaid leave throughout the year. Substitutes filling in have been charged to the certified and non-certified substitute accounts (object 151 - 155) and overtime to compensate for loss of custodial staff has been charged to the overtime account (object 156)
- ◆ The in house special education Extended School Year (ESY) costs were charged to the respective salary accounts this year and last year rather than charging these costs as Tuition – Summer Programs (object 569) through Continuing Education.

***Benefits:***

- ◆ Our Unemployment costs continue to run higher than budgeted (object 250), a reflection of the layoffs to personnel we have been required to make over the past two years.
- ◆ Our Workers' Compensation (object 260) experience reflects several costly work related accidents

***Contracted Services:***

- ◆ Based on budget discussions for 2011-2012, we did not add an additional group of interns (object 322) for the January – March cycle.
- ◆ We continue to use technical experts in the Other Professional Technical Services (object 330) to assist in ongoing mold remediation and testing.

***Property Services:***

- ◆ We are closely monitoring the costs and consumption of electricity and fuel oil/natural gas as noted above. (objects 413, 414 & 415)

***Other Purchased Services:***

- ◆ Special Education transportation and tuition expenditures have been reduced to reflect receipt of the estimated State Excess Cost Grant funds. (objects 513 & 560) and reflect the reduction in state funding for the high cost student placements made to public and private educational institutions.

I welcome the opportunity to review this projection with you.

Attachments

NJH:abm

WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOL  
 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT  
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2008-09 Year-End Expense	2009-10 Year-End Expense	2010-11 Year-End Expense	Object Codes	Descriptions	2011-12				Estimated Adjust- ments	Projected To EOY	Balance Available 3/31/2012
					ADOPTED BUDGET	ADJUSTED BUDGET	Encumbered To Date	Expended To Date			
4,234,050	4,452,898	4,696,596	100	Administrators	4,693,184	4,715,818	1,183,988	3,531,829	4,715,817	1	
1,715,937	1,592,539	1,630,106	101	Directors, Coordinators & Dept. Heads	1,658,107	1,635,473	383,236	1,200,452	1,583,668	51,785	
18,430,218	19,177,040	19,634,918	102	Teachers - Regular Education	20,661,417	20,489,417	5,842,223	14,644,324	20,538,647	(49,230)	
10,225,895	10,368,222	10,427,359	103	Teachers - Special Areas	10,668,386	10,558,386	2,927,800	7,599,843	10,549,643	8,743	
2,713,483	2,812,017	2,850,792	104	Teachers - Support	2,906,199	2,826,199	804,595	1,989,227	2,793,822	32,377	
168,342	244,550	213,558	105	Teachers - Curric/Instruc Resource	285,614	285,614	81,380	182,832	264,212	21,402	
805,301	838,608	840,380	107	Media Specialists/Librarians	874,947	874,947	261,364	608,429	869,793	5,154	
1,259,214	1,298,416	1,319,621	108	Guidance Counselors	1,352,918	1,352,918	394,108	936,139	1,340,247	12,671	
3,818,475	3,916,530	3,665,945	109	Teachers - Special Education	3,878,818	3,958,818	1,096,910	2,827,429	3,924,339	34,479	
1,356,567	1,439,616	1,490,692	110	Psychological Services	1,550,274	1,530,274	424,235	1,071,576	1,515,811	14,463	
278,894	297,182	276,427	113	Social Workers	310,867	310,867	87,471	197,010	294,481	16,386	
892,628	957,481	979,981	114	Speech/Hearing Therapists	1,075,272	1,075,272	288,411	762,591	1,051,002	24,270	
135,192	124,098	129,663	115	Staff Leadership	124,520	124,520	31,776	89,820	121,596	2,924	
448,525	488,893	481,549	116	Extra Curricular Activities	544,272	544,272	1,232	400,485	544,272	-	
455,465	472,546	495,802	117	Chaperones	13,740	13,740	0	0	13,740	13,740	
195,956	179,095	239,238	118	Coaches	537,601	537,601	387	182,673	537,601	-	
			119	Curriculum Work/Other	235,000	255,000	0	127,447	277,447	(22,447)	
<b>\$ 47,134,142</b>	<b>\$ 48,674,747</b>	<b>\$ 49,393,727</b>		<b>Sub Total - Certified Salaries</b>	<b>\$ 51,371,136</b>	<b>\$ 51,089,136</b>	<b>\$ 13,809,116</b>	<b>\$ 36,352,106</b>	<b>\$ 50,922,418</b>	<b>166,718</b>	
980,663	1,046,451	990,133	120	Support Supervisors	996,045	981,045	228,043	705,205	933,248	47,797	
2,374,401	2,444,295	2,369,775	121	Secretaries	2,474,391	2,452,391	554,650	1,833,303	2,452,391	-	
1,752,791	1,669,613	1,645,081	122	Paraprofessionals	1,674,376	1,674,376	421,421	1,244,188	1,671,254	3,122	
1,835,454	2,028,848	2,062,522	123	Special Ed Paraprofessionals	2,003,397	1,993,397	484,311	1,487,629	1,977,585	15,812	
2,418,669	2,373,690	2,382,972	124	Custodians	2,518,158	2,473,158	604,648	1,855,283	2,474,931	(1,773)	
418,445	463,808	499,618	125	Maintainers	520,215	523,215	111,406	393,650	523,056	159	
648,983	718,276	726,987	126	Nurses	775,807	775,807	207,022	568,355	775,377	430	
173,491	181,193	188,480	127	Nurses Aides	194,273	194,273	51,031	131,612	182,643	11,630	
414,332	441,749	442,105	128	Technology Assistants	503,904	503,904	118,267	362,215	480,482	23,422	
55,500	60,639	55,348	129	Security Aides	62,780	62,780	13,814	44,207	58,021	4,759	
168,848	192,643	185,117	130	Bus Monitors	192,000	192,000	0	136,117	192,000	-	
184,612	164,942	181,048	131	Athletics (Lifeguard/Athletic Trainer/Officials)	190,700	190,700	44,192	131,424	190,700	-	
112,008	105,067	110,820	133	Other (Student Monitors, etc)	112,399	112,399	22,339	89,977	112,316	83	
300,452	336,943	361,509	135	Occupational Therapist	369,699	373,699	90,055	283,407	373,462	237	
143,692	157,924	146,502	136	Physical Therapist	153,799	153,799	42,079	105,701	147,780	6,019	
<b>\$ 11,982,341</b>	<b>\$ 12,386,071</b>	<b>\$ 12,348,127</b>		<b>Sub Total - Non Certified Salaries</b>	<b>\$ 12,741,943</b>	<b>\$ 12,656,943</b>	<b>\$ 2,993,268</b>	<b>\$ 9,374,273</b>	<b>\$ 12,545,246</b>	<b>111,697</b>	
					<b>\$ 51,371,136</b>	<b>\$ 51,089,136</b>	<b>\$ 13,809,116</b>	<b>\$ 36,352,106</b>	<b>\$ 50,922,418</b>	<b>166,718</b>	
										<b>99.67%</b>	

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2008-09 Year-End Expense	2009-10 Year-End Expense	2010-11 Year-End Expense	Object Codes	Descriptions	2011-12				Estimated Adjust- ments	Projected To EOY	Balance Available 3/31/2012
					ADOPTED BUDGET	ADJUSTED BUDGET	Encumbered To Date	Expended To Date			
-	-	-	140	Continuing Education Teachers	0	0	0	0	-	-	
438,911	359,563	376,428	150	Certified Substitutes - Permanent	422,000	449,000	190,952	226,005	416,957	32,043	
248,837	176,595	154,261	151	Certified Substitutes - Daily	200,000	200,000	16,335	168,580	199,915	85	
52,043	37,696	40,940	152	Cert Subs - Staff Development/Training	50,000	50,000	0	26,009	50,000	-	
30,950	41,430	37,505	153	Certified Substitutes - PPT	32,000	42,000	0	20,475	42,000	-	
434,215	365,304	449,896	154	Cert Subs - Long Term	144,000	404,000	160,629	265,487	446,116	(42,116)	
132,572	171,354	125,425	155	Non-Certified - Substitutes	85,000	85,000	0	71,371	111,371	(26,371)	
305,094	215,583	231,656	156	Overtime	240,000	310,000	0	260,448	310,000	-	
\$1,542,622	1,550,368	1,598,954		ARRA HOLD ACCOUNT	1,173,000	1,540,000	367,916	1,038,375	1,576,359	(36,359)	
				Sub Total - Other Salaries							
\$60,759,105	\$62,611,186	\$63,340,808		TOTAL SALARIES	\$65,286,079	\$65,286,079	\$17,170,300	\$46,764,754	\$65,044,023	242,056	
11,540,219	11,907,589	12,566,364	210	Employee Insurance	12,649,000	12,609,000	3,330,721	9,275,450	12,606,171	2,829	
259,227	262,035	272,589	211	Group Term Life	273,000	313,000	98,117	214,329	312,446	554	
19,762	29,165	27,662	212	Child Care	26,500	26,500	8,754	17,746	26,500	-	
44,500	51,250	36,500	213	Health Insurance Waiver	51,700	51,700	9,000	14,625	43,625	8,075	
1,641,912	1,699,533	1,669,911	220	Social Security	1,815,417	1,727,390	449,453	1,258,961	1,718,414	8,976	
26,569	33,584	33,876	240	Course Reimb & In-Service Training	50,000	50,000	25,200	11,228	46,428	3,572	
27,658	103,901	115,197	250	Unemployment Compensation	100,000	146,500	47,500	96,101	143,601	2,899	
261,261	255,334	279,176	260	Workers' Compensation	275,000	316,527	15,500	300,527	316,027	500	
32,375	32,082	33,670	287	Uniform Allowances	33,000	33,000	951	31,934	34,385	(1,385)	
1,846	17,804	25,852	290	Other Employee Benefits - Relocation	28,674	28,674	2,769	24,982	27,751	923	
\$13,855,529	\$14,392,277	\$15,060,796		Total Benefits (Object 200)	\$15,302,291	\$15,302,291	\$3,987,965	\$11,245,883	\$15,275,348	26,943	
										99.82%	



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2008-09 Year-End Expense	2009-10 Year-End Expense	2010-11 Year-End Expense	Object Codes	Descriptions	2011-12			Estimated Adjust- ments	Projected To EOY	Balance Available 3/31/2012	
					ADOPTED BUDGET	ADJUSTED BUDGET	Encumbered To Date				
118,642	173,418	114,936	320	Homebound/Gifted Activities	100,000	100,000	0	64,464	35,536	100,000	-
12,527	16,874	20,183	321	Gifted Activities	30,000	30,000	6,974	18,526	4,500	30,000	-
117,042	141,357	116,626	322	Educational Interns	28,000	28,000	0	20,295	7,705	20,295	7,705
276,401	254,170	226,595	323	Instl Program Improvements	212,264	212,264	80,840	126,240	35,000	242,080	(29,816)
44,120	18,784	15,047	324	Pupl Services	29,000	29,000	3,679	3,574	21,747	29,000	-
131,284	69,556	58,702	325	PPT Consultations	110,000	110,000	30,658	81,124	15,000	126,782	(16,782)
54,644	95,161	58,490	327	Student Evaluations-Outside	62,000	62,000	21,275	48,675	10,000	79,950	(17,950)
20,571	32,087	20,450	328	Medical Advisor	20,000	20,000	8,650	16,035	-	24,685	(4,685)
328,332	250,791	273,231	330	Other Prof/Techical Services	252,897	252,897	86,033	114,235	52,629	252,897	-
377,435	386,638	291,277	331	Legal/Negotiations Services	300,000	300,000	145,263	147,374	7,363	300,000	-
100,944	43,176	26,231	332	Licenses/Fees	40,000	40,000	8,531	30,068	1,401	40,000	-
<b>\$1,581,942</b>	<b>\$1,482,022</b>	<b>\$1,221,768</b>		<b>Total Purchased Services (Object 300)</b>	<b>\$1,184,161</b>	<b>\$1,184,161</b>	<b>\$391,903</b>	<b>\$670,610</b>	<b>183,176</b>	<b>\$1,245,689</b>	<b>(61,528)</b>
83,938	74,493	83,025	410	Water & Sewer	83,000	83,000	20,673	63,642	-	84,315	(1,315)
2,381,732	2,005,882	1,934,775	413	Electricity	1,999,162	1,865,277	519,888	1,337,979	7,410	1,857,867	7,410
1,185,036	876,472	939,664	414	Natural Gas	1,020,000	985,000	376,395	541,935	-	918,330	66,670
204,055	211,798	18,461	415	Heating Oil	20,000	20,000	6,002	13,816	-	19,820	180
461,775	429,014	505,069	421	Contracted Maintenance	486,754	457,754	78,335	344,482	34,937	457,754	-
356,705	386,894	551,204	431	Building Maintenance	258,500	375,000	85,620	265,019	30,000	380,639	(5,639)
147,244	200,300	209,275	432	Grounds Maintenance	195,000	195,000	28,362	131,698	34,940	195,000	-
83,341	83,176	84,430	433	Equipment Repair - Instructional	117,749	116,750	14,331	49,786	52,633	116,750	-
31,690	37,442	66,276	434	Equipment Repair - Non Instructional	45,800	47,170	4,024	31,791	11,555	47,170	-
183,367	78,984	63,975	435	Building Projects	49,000	159,610	0	155,980	45,000	200,980	(41,370)
58,830	46,000	105,241	436	Grounds Projects	30,750	30,750	0	27,250	25,000	52,250	(21,500)
395,219	138,517	105,570	437	Restorative/Preventative Maintenance	83,000	43,404	4,500	38,404	3,000	42,904	500
158,820	185,090	190,598	440	Copier Rentals	189,000	189,000	49,435	138,548	3,000	190,983	(1,983)
14,342	10,100	14,869	450	Gasoline for Vehicles	13,000	13,000	0	10,541	4,000	14,541	(1,541)
187,941	213,036	225,423	451	Custodial Supplies	226,000	226,000	30,385	186,262	10,000	226,647	(647)
258,520	293,613	248,036	452	Maintenance Supplies	190,000	200,000	340	192,423	10,000	202,763	(2,763)
80,846	74,917	74,762	490	School Security	75,000	75,000	0	64,754	10,000	74,754	246
			492	Capital Non-Recurring Fund	-	-	0	-	-	-	-
<b>\$ 6,274,001</b>	<b>\$ 5,345,708</b>	<b>\$ 5,421,712</b>		<b>Total Property Services (Object 400)</b>	<b>\$ 5,081,715</b>	<b>\$ 5,081,715</b>	<b>\$ 1,218,290</b>	<b>\$ 3,594,312</b>	<b>270,865</b>	<b>\$ 5,083,467</b>	<b>(1,752)</b>
											<b>100.03%</b>

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2008-09 Year-End Expense	2009-10 Year-End Expense	2010-11 Year-End Expense	Object Codes	Descriptions	2011-12				Estimated Adjust- ments	Projected To EOY	Balance Available 3/31/2012
					ADOPTED BUDGET	ADJUSTED BUDGET	Encumbered To Date	Expended To Date			
2,687,873	2,572,490	2,499,865	510	Pupil Transportation - Regular	2,604,143	2,604,143	0	2,599,183	4,960	2,604,143	-
481,339	512,857	488,143	511	Pupil Transportation - Spec Ed Internal	532,827	502,827	508	496,850	21,500	518,858	(16,031)
90,469	95,627	123,811	512	Pupil Transportation - Spec Ed Public	116,400	106,400	32,575	72,305	6,500	111,380	(4,980)
219,542	204,306	209,115	513	Pupil Transportation - Spec Ed Private	250,000	210,000	85,915	111,050	(1,960)	195,005	14,995
24,956	27,752	24,556	516	Transportation - Field Trips	36,370	32,370	3,994	17,968	10,408	32,370	-
398,218	175,283	249,735	517	Diesel Fuel - for buses	222,720	348,720	145,396	203,928	1,500	350,824	(2,104)
	-	920	518	Transportation - Alternative Ed	5,000	5,000	358	562		920	4,080
	6,200	11,879	519	Transportation - Vocational Tech	6,000	0	0	0		-	-
186,146	158,415	154,820	520	Property Insurance	200,000	193,000	0	152,490	25,000	177,490	15,510
12,507	12,507	12,962	521	Flood Insurance	13,000	13,385	0	13,385		13,385	-
307,925	286,112	254,535	523	Liability Insurance	300,000	248,976	2,022	216,091		218,113	30,863
22,765	25,765	26,825	529	Athletic Insurance	27,000	33,639	0	33,639		33,639	-
461,159	455,513	425,302	530	Communication Systems	446,449	446,449	27,624	318,730	100,095	446,449	-
75,680	57,463	56,543	532	Postage	45,000	45,000	12,737	39,157		51,894	(6,894)
85,105	69,518	107,278	540	Advertising & Recruiting	115,000	115,000	71,363	43,066	15,000	129,429	(14,429)
45,036	42,483	31,777	550	Printing & Binding	35,940	35,940	12,008	18,923		30,931	5,009
1,134,993	1,640,393	2,046,523	560	Tuition - Public & Private Institutions	1,800,000	1,808,718	380,651	1,721,545	(90,622)	2,011,574	(202,856)
15,697	57,151	33,641	563	Tuition - Court & Agency Placements	100,000	75,000	26,844	16,242		43,086	31,914
43,000	43,000	51,192	565	Tuition - Alternative High School	61,000	52,282	0	52,282		52,282	-
482,040	397,436	282,958	567	Tuition - Settlements/Litigation	300,000	329,321	25,000	301,501	50,000	376,501	(47,180)
150,000	16,875	21,070	569	Tuition--Summer Programs	16,000	16,679	0	16,679		16,679	-
26,873	32,715	33,783	580	Staff Travel	42,850	52,850	14,992	35,528	2,330	52,850	-
	100,811	100,811	599	ARRA HOLD ACCOUNT	-	-	0	0		-	-
<b>6,951,329</b>	<b>7,000,672</b>	<b>7,248,045</b>		<b>Total Other Purchased Services (Object 500)</b>	<b>7,275,699</b>	<b>7,275,699</b>	<b>841,987</b>	<b>6,481,104</b>	<b>144,711</b>	<b>7,467,802</b>	<b>(192,103)</b>
											<b>102.64%</b>

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2008-09 Year-End Expense	2009-10 Year-End Expense	2010-11 Year-End Expense	Object Codes	Descriptions	2011-12				Projected To EOY	Balance Available 3/31/2012	
					ADOPTED BUDGET	ADJUSTED BUDGET	Encumbered To Date	Expended To Date			Estimated Adjust- ments
885,693	798,944	840,844	611	Instructional Supplies	912,710	865,844	65,146	729,380	60,000	854,526	11,318
401,129	440,743	516,650	612	Software	533,707	542,035	44,909	469,874	27,252	542,035	-
127,102	108,849	119,937	613	Technology Supplies	109,000	136,957	1,296	107,700	27,961	136,957	-
26,477	26,637	29,749	615	Graduation Expense	27,136	27,136	18,754	8,031	5,000	31,785	(4,649)
610,415	458,540	472,392	641	Textbooks	430,196	443,869	10,406	375,278	60,000	445,684	(1,815)
141,543	137,206	146,707	642	Library Books & Periodicals	144,368	151,162	19,653	114,007	17,502	151,162	-
21,314	22,772	22,772	643	Audio/Visual Materials	25,129	18,995	1,263	5,615	12,117	18,995	-
183,835	165,013	152,984	690	Other Supplies	185,220	182,968	28,104	106,724	30,000	164,828	18,140
24,428	23,219	22,852	691	Health Supplies	30,550	29,050	3,318	13,311	10,000	26,629	2,421
<b>2,421,936</b>	<b>2,180,425</b>	<b>2,324,687</b>		<b>Total Supplies and Materials(Object 600)</b>	<b>2,398,016</b>	<b>2,398,016</b>	<b>192,849</b>	<b>1,929,920</b>	<b>249,832</b>	<b>2,372,601</b>	<b>25,415</b>
82,513	43,988	41,261	731	Instructional Equipment - New	24,837	24,529	3,741	29,855		33,596	(9,067)
40,157	25,645	9,835	732	Non-instructional Equipment - New	14,357	14,665	0	15,043		15,043	(378)
22,023	24,825	29,485	733	Instructional Equipment - Replacement	20,393	20,393	0	14,673	5,720	20,393	-
17,740	15,201	28,624	734	Non-instructional Equipment - Replacement	20,765	20,765	0	18,429	2,336	20,765	-
91,837	18,527	40,969	735	Furniture	33,075	33,075	949	34,092		35,041	(1,966)
1,042,569	920,434	810,219	736	Instructional Technology	944,095	944,095	29,328	799,613	115,154	944,095	-
43,233	86,340	45,681	737	Non-instructional Technology	39,265	39,265	2,480	34,334	2,451	39,265	-
			739	Capital Expenditures for Transportation	-	-	-	-		-	-
<b>1,340,072</b>	<b>1,134,960</b>	<b>1,005,084</b>		<b>TOTAL EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>1,096,787</b>	<b>1,096,787</b>	<b>35,498</b>	<b>946,039</b>	<b>125,661</b>	<b>1,108,198</b>	<b>(11,411)</b>
66,207	63,030	71,817	810	Dues and Fees	77,375	77,375	1,273	79,884		81,157	(3,782)
23,880	29,576	28,070	811	Student Activities/Awards	28,740	28,740	8,646	13,142	7,000	28,788	(48)
349,315	328,801	355,872	812	Student Athletics	364,255	364,255	112,833	248,361	3,061	364,255	-
<b>439,402</b>	<b>421,407</b>	<b>455,759</b>		<b>TOTAL OTHER</b>	<b>470,370</b>	<b>470,370</b>	<b>122,752</b>	<b>341,387</b>	<b>10,061</b>	<b>474,200</b>	<b>(3,830)</b>
				<b>TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES</b>	<b>3,965,173</b>	<b>3,965,173</b>	<b>352,099</b>	<b>3,217,346</b>	<b>385,554</b>	<b>3,954,999</b>	<b>10,174</b>
<b>4,201,410</b>	<b>3,736,792</b>	<b>3,786,530</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 98,095,118</b>	<b>\$ 98,095,118</b>	<b>\$ 23,962,544</b>	<b>\$ 71,974,009</b>	<b>2,134,775</b>	<b>\$ 98,071,328</b>	<b>23,790</b>
<b>\$ 93,623,316</b>	<b>\$ 94,568,657</b>	<b>\$ 96,079,669</b>									<b>99.98%</b>