

*Ashford School  
Board of Education  
2019-2020 Budget Proposal  
Summary*

*For Submission to the Board of Finance on March 7, 2019*

**Historical Perspective**

If you average the previous six-year's approved budgets and combine them with our current proposal, the Board of Education's budget has increased at an average of 1% per year for seven years. That increase is considerably below increases that have occurred in the cost of living, and the budgets of other agencies and school districts in the region.

- 2013-2014                    0.7% decrease
- 2014-2015                    3.6% increase
- 2015-2016                    1.8% increase
- 2016-2017                    0.4% decrease
- 2017-2018                    Zero
- 2018-2019                    1.35% increase
- 2019-2020                    4.3% proposed increase

Despite these conservative budget increases we have worked diligently, and have made considerable progress in improving our curriculum, technology, equipment, supplies, facility, faculty and staff. We have become known as one of the better schools in the region, offering a comprehensive education and exemplary programs to our students in the arts, humanities, and sciences. *We firmly believe our current budget proposal keeps us on this path in a responsible manner.*

**Summary by Object, of the Board of Education's 2019-2020 Proposed Budget  
(4.3% Increase - Total increase of \$322,753)**

**100 Administration - Increase \$3,001**

- Anticipated 3% salary increase for the Director of Pupil Services to meet wage compliance, all other Administrators have waived an annual salary increase

**111 Certified Salaries - \$77,754**

- Contractual increase per AEA Collective Bargaining Agreement arrived at through state mandated mediation
- Addition of .5 FTE (half-time) Middle School Math Interventionist

**110 Non-Certified Staff Increase \$29,331**

- Anticipate 2% increase for non-union staff
- Increase in hours for school and central offices due to staff reduction of 1 full time employee in FY19
- A \$3,000 contractual wage increase for attainment of an advanced degree
- Two non-union staff employees have waived wage increases
- Contractual increase per current MEUI Collective Bargaining Agreement for custodial, cafeteria and transportation employees

**112 Paraeducators - Increase \$64,677**

- Contractual wage increases per current MEUI Collective Bargaining Agreement
- Increase of 2 full-time Special Education paraeducators as necessitated by student needs

**113 Substitutes - Increase \$1,352**

- Increase in per diem and hourly substitute rates in FY19

**151 Additional Compensation** - Decrease (\$1,382)

- Decrease in the number of teachers participating in the TEAM mentor program

**210 Employee Insurance** - Increase \$95,967

- 3.5% estimated increase in health and dental insurance premiums and multiple changes to individual employee coverage levels. Increases in other insurance lines and Health Savings Account lines. Savings in FY19 for Workers Compensation insurance due to negotiations with a new broker.

**220 FICA Medicare ER** - Increase \$5,540

- 3% overall increase in employer contribution

**230 Retirement Benefit** - \$15,511

- Contractual retirement benefit increased by .5% and an additional retired teacher was added to the insurance plan

**260 Unemployment** - Decrease (\$5,000)

- Based on cost reduction as no layoffs are anticipated

**330-340 Purchased Services** - Increase \$14,066

- Contractual increase in special education services
- Increase in legal services due to AEA negotiations in FY20 and all other purchased services
- New broker fees have saved Town and BOE \$45,000 in FY19

**400 Maintenance** - Decrease (\$5,547)

- Decreases in several maintenance lines after reviewing five-year average expenditures

**431 Equipment Maintenance** - Increase \$1,845

- Increase in the number of 1:1 computers results in more repairs

**510 Student Transportation** - Decrease (\$1,013)

- Decrease in parts/supply costs

**520 Other Insurance** - Increase \$1,484

- 4% placeholder pending receipt of the final cost, based upon provider statements

**530 Communication** - Increase \$9,600

- Increase of internet service fees by CEN. This was previously provided free of charge by the state.

**550 Printing** - Decrease (\$316)

- Decrease following a review of five-year averages

**561 Tuition Other** - Decrease (\$12,043)

- Number of out-placed and magnet school students have decreased by three in FY19. This cost also reflects anticipated excess cost reimbursement by the state.

**580 Mileage** - decrease (\$480)

- Reduced following a review of five-year average expenditures

**600 – 610 Instructional Supplies - Increase \$10,023**

- Decrease in maintenance supplies
- Increase in technology subscriptions due to new programs and a review of all current technology subscriptions.

**620 Utilities - Increase \$3,232**

- Increase reflects an estimated 5% cost increase

**624 Fuel - Increase \$14,713**

- Locked in rate increase in diesel fuel costs less Region 9, DPW, Fire and Ambulance fuel usage.

**640 Books - Decrease (\$500)**

- Library books and textbooks to be purchased through the use of grant funds rather than the General Fund Budget.

**730 Equipment - \$938**

- Increase in adaptive equipment costs, as necessitated by individual student needs to access education
- Increases and decreases in other lines within this object

**In Conclusion**

This document provides you with an insight into the “give and take” process that ultimately forms the Board proposal. We have reduced expenses wherever practical, and only increased expenses where required by contract, outside influences, or special student needs. A more complete version of our budget proposal, along with more detailed narrative explanations, will be available on our website and at our Board of Finance presentation on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

The Ashford Board of Education is responsible for providing the best possible comprehensive educational experience for the students of Ashford. They must do this by balancing the cost of this education with the impact it has upon the taxpayers of Ashford. This is a delicate balance. Ashford students leave Ashford School to attend high school where they must compete with students from all over the region. Therefore, they must be wholly prepared for their high school experience, as well as the choices that follow it. Students must choose to either enter college or pursue a career after high school. They must make these choices based upon their education and personal interests.

All of these choices involve competition with a diverse population of classmates from other school districts. To succeed in secondary school or in a career, they rely upon the foundation that they received at Ashford School. We provide a sound curriculum, a caring, nurturing, clean and healthy environment, as well as personal skills and decision-making abilities to all of our students.

Our budget is the primary source of our ability to provide our students with an exemplary educational experience. It funds staff, faculty, books, supplies, equipment, technology, professional development and curriculum development, as well as facility maintenance and transportation among other things.

We believe that this current proposal, and our budgets over the past several years demonstrate our serious, conservative and competent approach to both the education we provide and the management of its cost to our taxpayers.

***If you have any questions or concerns about this proposal that are not answered at our budget meetings, feel free to contact Dr. Longo at [jplongo@ashfordct.org](mailto:jplongo@ashfordct.org) or make an appointment to come in and discuss our budget and your concerns.***