
**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

BLANDFORD CHESTER HUNTINGTON MIDDLEFIELD MONTGOMERY RUSSELL WORTHINGTON

TO: SCHOOL COMMITTEE
FROM: DAVE
SUBJECT: FUTURE PLANNING
DATE: SEPTEMBER 12, 2007
CC: ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

The first question for future planning is “How do we provide appropriate educational services within the budgetary constraints of the district?” I’d like to lay the groundwork for this with the following information:

CONSIDER. . .	THEN	NOW
Total Staffing ('03 vs. '08)	224	216
Total Enrollment ('03 to '08 projected)	1371	1246
Grant funding ('02 vs. '06)	\$1.6 million	\$1 million
Chapter 70 Funding ('03 vs. '07)*	\$6,957,600	\$5,817,025
Per Pupil Chapter 70 Funding ('03 vs. '07)	\$4,938	\$4,527

* State Educational Aid targeted for Gateway is at 55.27% but we are not receiving that much nor 100% of transportation reimbursement.

In addition:

- We have 6.91 students per square mile;
- The state figures show our foundation budget at \$11,133,504; our actual foundation figures are \$14,138,668. (*Foundation* is required spending on identified line items; *Non-foundation* is spending on bussing and capital items; *Above-Minimum Spending* is the additional money needed to cover all expenses).
- In the past five years, only 18% of increases in the budget have been met by the state; the remaining 82% was met by increasing local taxes and user fees, and we’ve minimized budget increases by making reductions in many areas.
- Current Educational Services Provided: Academics, Counseling, Special Education, Athletics, Extra-curricular activities, behavioral programs, and alternative placements for high school (Mt. Tom).
- The following services have been curtailed or eliminated over the past decade: Net Prep (computer systems training), Woodshop (MS), second foreign language, business courses, aviation courses, reading (MS), instrumental music (elementary), school to career counselor (MS/HS), decreases in professional development funds, literacy coordinators, and department coordinators;
- We have implemented student fees (parking (\$105/semester), athletics (\$105 per sport) and MS Afterschool Program (\$30/session).
- Gateway ranks near the bottom in comparable districts for tax impact on local towns, per pupil costs, and property taxes paid in the towns compared to income.

The question of what do we want to provide our students may best be answered at each level (elementary, middle, and high school). In the end, balancing needs against finances over the long-term may provide the answers or direction we need to make the decisions required each year to set the budget and earmark priorities for funding.