

John F. Doherty, Ed. D.  
Superintendent of Schools

82 Oakland Road  
Reading, MA 01867  
Phone: 781-944-5800  
Fax: 781-942-9149



Craig Martin, M.Ed.  
Assistant Superintendent

Carolyn J. Wilson, M.Ed., JD  
Director of Student Services

Gail Dowd, CPA  
Director of Finance

# Reading Public Schools

*Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow*

To: Reading School Committee  
From: John F. Doherty, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools  
Date: August 29, 2016  
Re: FY18 Prioritized List

At the July 25<sup>th</sup> School Committee Meeting, we presented to you a list of priorities with cost estimates for the FY18 budget. This list, shown below in Table 1, contained \$2,000,000 to address the structural deficit and an additional \$1,925,000 in resources to address the challenges that we are facing in our school district.

**Table 1-List of Resources Necessary to Address Challenges and Structural Deficit**

| Area/Position  | Resources   | Funding Needed     |
|--|---|--------------------|
| Structural Deficit (.7% Budget Increase in FY18)           | To address gap between available revenue and level service budget   | \$2,000,000        |
| Salary Adjustments   | Staff salary  | \$360,000          |
| Full Day of School on Wednesday at Elementary              | 4.5 FTE Elementary Teachers<br>Additional Paraeducator Hours  | \$455,000          |
| Middle School Health Education                             | 2.5 FTE Health/PE Teachers at Parker and Coolidge   | \$140,000          |
| High School Program Improvement                            | 4.0 FTE Teachers for AP and Electives   | \$220,000          |
| Additional Supports for Struggling Students (Tutors, BCBA) | 4.0 FTE Academic Tutors<br>1.0 FTE Board Certified Behavior Analyst or Equivalent   | \$150,000          |
| School Transformation Grant Funded Positions               | 1.0 FTE Data Analyst<br>1.0 FTE Administrator for Social and Emotional Learning   | \$160,000          |
| Curriculum Supervision Leadership                          | 2.0 FTE PreK-8 Curriculum Coordinators<br>1.0 FTE PreK-12 Fine Arts and Wellness Coordinator<br>Restructure RMHS Department Heads | \$285,000          |
| Special Education Leadership                               | 1.0 FTE Assistant Director for Student Services   | \$95,000           |
| Additional Clerical Support                                | 2.5 Secretaries or Equivalent   | \$60,000           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>\$3,925,000</b>  | <b>\$3,925,000</b> |

On August 16<sup>th</sup>, the Reading Board of Selectmen voted to place a \$7,500,000 amount for the override ballot question on October 18<sup>th</sup>. If the ballot question is approved by the voters, it has been discussed by the Board of Selectmen and School Committee that \$2,960,000 of that amount will be allocated to the FY18 school department budget.

Since August 16<sup>th</sup>, I have been meeting with our administrators to develop a more prioritized list for the \$2,960,000. This list is described below in Table 2. It should be emphasized that the entire original list was identified as resources necessary to address our current challenges and we purposely did not prioritize the list at that time. Each item on that list directly or indirectly had an impact on student learning. Therefore, the recommended list below is based on what will have the greatest overall impact on student learning with the resources that potentially could be available.

**Table 2-Prioritized Resources Needed to Address Challenges and Structural Deficit**

| Area   | Resources  | Funding Needed     |
|--|--|--------------------|
| Structural Deficit (.7% Budget Increase in FY18)           | To address gap between available revenue and level service budget                | \$2,000,000        |
| Salary Adjustments   | Staff salary   | \$360,000          |
| Curriculum Supervision Leadership                          | 2.0 FTE PreK-8 Curriculum Coordinators   | \$195,000          |
| Additional Supports for Struggling Students (Tutors, BCBA) | 4.0 FTE Academic Tutors<br>.5 FTE Board Certified Behavior Analyst or Equivalent | \$107,000          |
| Special Education Leadership                               | .5 FTE Assistant Director for Student Services                                   | \$48,000           |
| Middle School Health Education                             | 2.5 FTE Health/PE Teachers at Parker and Coolidge                                | \$140,000          |
| High School Program Improvement                            | 2.0 FTE Teachers for AP and Electives  | \$110,000          |
| <b>Total</b>   |  | <b>\$2,960,000</b> |

Below is a brief description of the rationale behind each of the items on the list. The list below is not in a particular order. For greater backup, please refer to the document that I distributed at the July 25<sup>th</sup> meeting titled, *Rationale for FY18 Budget Discussion*, located on our website at <http://www.reading.k12.ma.us/test/budget-information/>.

1. **Structural Deficit (\$2,000,000)**-This is the amount necessary to have a level service budget in FY18. It will allow us to continue to provide the same level of staffing, course offerings, supports, and class sizes that will exist during the 2016-17 school year. It will not restore any positions that we reduced in the FY17 budget.

If the override does not pass, we will need to reduce this amount in the FY18 budget which could result in up to 30.0 FTE in teachers, administrators, and support staff being reduced from FY17 staffing levels in the FY18 budget.

2. **Salary Adjustments (\$360,000)**-This amount is allocated to improve salary schedules and help retain current staff and attract new staff when positions open. Currently, our teacher salary schedules are in the lower half of 30 comparable communities and it is become more and more difficult to retain staff and attract staff, particularly in the areas of special education, math, science, foreign language, school psychologists, and social workers.

3. **Curriculum Supervision Leadership (\$195,000)**-This funding will provide K-8 curriculum leadership and supervision in the STEM areas and Literacy. The K-12 Fine Arts and Health Coordinator was eliminated from the original list. It will help with the coordination of curriculum K-12, oversee the pacing and alignment of curriculum, and supervise and evaluate assigned staff in K-8. This will help support our building principals in the supervision and evaluation process, who currently have ratios of forty staff and above in some schools.
4. **Additional Supports for Struggling Students (\$107,000)**-This amount will support 4.0 FTE academic tutors (2.0 FTE at the middle school and 2.0 FTE at the High School) and a .5 Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). There is a reduction of .5 FTE BCBA from the original list. The tutors will provide academic interventions for any student who is struggling. These are general education positions. The .5 Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) will provide social emotional and behavioral coaching to staff to help address students with behavioral and social emotional needs. It is our intent to restructure funding from special education consulting to increase this position to 1.0.
5. **Special Education Leadership (\$48,000)**-This amount will fund a .5 FTE Assistant Director for Special Education, which is a .5 FTE reduction from the original list. We will combine this position with either our .5 Out of District Coordinator or a .5 Team Chair at one of our schools to create a full time position. This position will provide leadership and support in special education transportation, supervision and evaluation, health services, and ELL.
6. **Middle School Health Education (\$140,000)**-This amount will fund 2.5 FTE Health Educators at the middle school for semester long health classes in Grades 6, 7, and/or 8. Health education was cut out of the middle schools in 2013. The middle schools currently do not have a formal health education program and teach a set of concepts during scheduled Physical Education classes.
7. **High School Program Improvement (\$110,000)**-This amount will fund 2.0 FTE Teachers at the High School, which is a reduction of 2.0 FTE from the original list. Essentially, this funding will restore the 2.0 FTE in classroom reductions (not including the Freshmen advisory program) that was cut in the FY17 budget.

#### **Areas Not Prioritized for Funding**

Table 3 below lists the areas from the original list that are not recommended to be funded out of the \$2,960,000. As emphasized above, these areas are important, but we needed to make difficult choices given the amount of funding available. Please note that it is anticipated that in FY20, the School Transformation Grant positions will be funded out of the operating budget from the funding currently allocated in the structural deficit for science curriculum.

**Table 3-Areas Not Recommended For Funding from Original Prioritized List**

| <b>Area/Position</b>                          | <b>Resources</b>  | <b>Funding Needed</b> |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| Additional Supports for Struggling Students   | .5 Board Certified Behavior Analyst   | \$43,000              |
| High School Program Improvement               | 2.0 FTE Teachers for AP and Electives   | \$110,000             |
| Curriculum Supervision Leadership             | 1.0 FTE Fine Arts and Health Curriculum Coordinator                             | \$90,000              |
| Special Education Leadership                  | .5 Assistant Director of Student Services                                       | \$47,000              |
| Full Day of School on Wednesday at Elementary | 4.5 FTE Elementary Teachers<br>Additional Paraeducator Hours                    | \$455,000             |
| School Transformation Grant Funded Positions  | 1.0 FTE Data Analyst<br>1.0 FTE Administrator for Social and Emotional Learning | \$160,000*            |
| Additional Clerical Support                   | 2.5 Secretaries or Equivalent   | \$60,000              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                  |   | <b>\$965,000</b>      |

\*The School Transformation Grant positions will be funded for the remaining three years (FY17, FY18, FY19) of the grant. It is anticipated that these positions will be funded in the operating budget once the grant ends because the funding for the science curriculum, which is in the structural deficit amount, will not be needed after FY19.)