

Significant Impacts to the Budget

Salaries

Net Budget Impact: \$455,559

The change in salaries is predominately driven by contractual increases for five bargaining groups. All collective bargaining agreements are finalized. One new position is proposed, a Social Worker at Somers Elementary School. This is an essential position that will provide the appropriate supports for the increased student social and emotional issues which are barriers to learning. Additionally, it will ensure equity of mental health services among all schools.

Insurance and Benefits

Net Budget Impact: \$232,700

The majority of the change in insurance and benefits is driven by a projected increase in health insurance premiums. Last year, the school district switched health care insurers to achieve a 0% increase in the budget. We anticipate a 9% increase in premiums for school year 2019-20. Along with premium changes, health insurance projections are impacted by changes in staff and benefit plan design. Additionally, there are increases in social security and Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB).

Tuition

Net Budget Impact: \$121,700

Somers Public Schools does an exceptional job of providing an appropriate education program to meet the specialized needs of our students. There are situations when SPS programming may not be appropriate for a particular student. Costs of outplacements continue to grow and are difficult to predict, especially for students new to Somers. We are anticipating new outplacements next year based upon information we have gathered through the PPT process. Magnet school tuitions are expected to increase due to the lack of financial support from the state.

Transportation

Net Budget Impact: \$53,000

The increase in transportation expenses is a direct result of contract negotiations with First Student. The current five-year contract runs through June 2022.

Future Impacts

2020-21: 4.75%

2021-22: 4.75%

Utilities

Net Budget Impact: \$14,700

Fuel supply increase due to projected market price increases.

Maintenance

Net Budget Impact: \$23,815

The Long-Range Facilities Plan outlines a roadmap for repairing our aging infrastructure. As we address these issues, we must continue to identify and remediate other matters not in the plan. This will mitigate additional bonding in the future. Last year there was a reduction of \$10,000.

Instructional Resources

Net Budget Impact: \$71,790

Elementary student achievement in language arts has remained stagnant or declined for a number of years. This has also impacted language arts performance at the middle and high schools. Significant investments have been made in teacher training and program implementation, yet the materials needed to implement the language arts program have not been included in past budgets. Utilization of the Fountas and Pinnell Classroom curriculum materials will standardize and enhance the current workshop model of reading instruction while increasing mastery in reading and language arts.

Instructional supply budgets were reduced by \$39,000 in 2018-19. This had a negative impact on teaching and learning. We have increased the instructional supply budgets by \$20,000 to mitigate the effects of the 2018-19 budget cuts.

Extracurricular

Net Budget Impact: \$12,157

All activity advisors and coaches receive stipend increases per Somers Education Association Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Equipment

Net Budget Impact: \$49,830

Technology is an important instructional resource in the district's programming. A five-year technology plan has been developed to ensure our resources are current, responsive, and functional. The \$71,000 budget reduction in 2018-19 resulted in the technology plan not being fully implemented.

Administrative Overhead

Net Budget Impact: \$56,375

Special education legal fees have increased due to a number of cases requiring representation. We anticipate they will continue into next year. Additionally, we will be engaged in the collective bargaining process for three units next year. Each negotiation requires extensive legal services.

The social and emotional needs of children today are unprecedented. School systems are not well-equipped to effectively deal with these issues while providing an appropriate and responsible education. The district will be implementing a new Social Emotional Learning program. Year one will focus on providing staff with the appropriate training so they can successfully implement a new curriculum.