

Budget-Related Questions for BOE/Administration

Proposed Staffing Additions

1. **Do you anticipate having a critical mass of similarly situated students in future years who would trigger a need to open additional 8:1:2 classes?**

Yes, between our own students and the ability to accept students from other districts we believe we will have a sustainable program.

2. **In terms of staffing needs, what is the long-range plan for the students in this new program once they age out of elementary school?**

Our long term plan is to expand the program for the group through their school careers. This would have similarly staffed cohorts in 3-5, MS and HS. We would look to maintain the budget neutrality due to both less expenditures in out of district placements and tuition based students.

3. **What happens if the need for special education teachers declines after the teacher hired for this anticipated cohort has achieved tenure?**

Our hope is to create a sustainable program for students with this level of disability. Hiring and tenure laws work the same way for special education and general education teachers and staffing is based on need.

Facilities Maintenance and Improvements *SHS Auditorium*

1. **What was the process by which you arrived at the scope of the proposed renovation to the high school auditorium, what features are included that were not part of the 2014 plans, and what is the rationale for each of the major components?**

In recognition of needed improvements, repairs and renovations were included in the 2014 Bond proposal which was approved by voters in December 2014. Work included mitigating water intrusion issues beneath the stage area, new seating, house lights, aisle lighting, sound board, processor and wireless microphones. Unfortunately, none of the work was completed

except for the water mitigation due to the cost of other bond projects coming in much higher than originally estimated. In subsequent years an internal committee was formed to continue to study and make budget recommendations focused on recognized auditorium needs. In the past 5 years these lower impact budget items addressed some safety issues, a sound board replacement and replacement of the house lights with LED lighting. House lights were the only issue that was included in the original 2014 bond proposal.

2. How often is the high school auditorium used, what groups/organizations use it, and will the proposed funds address all of the needs for its intended uses?

The High School auditorium is a multiple use space used practically by many Scarsdale groups including from instructional, musical, theatrical and athletic.

3. What is the anticipated lifespan of each major component of the high school auditorium renovation (e.g., seating, carpeting on the aesthetic side and rigging, etc., on the technical side)?

Seating and carpeting 15-20 years while rigging will need constant monitoring and will require inspections and annual repairs but not a full replacement. Technical items are always subject to obsolescence.

4. When will the outreach and focus groups to gather input on the high school auditorium be completed and presented as a report to the board of education?

5. Will outreach include community members whose organizations historically have also used the auditorium outside of school hours?

A meeting was held on February 28th for the purpose of gathering feedback from multiple groups who use this space. In addition to administration, department leaders, architects and consultants, the following groups were invited to attend to provide feedback on the proposed renovations.

- All performing arts music ensembles (bands, orchestras, choirs)
- All theater classes and drama club members
- All Studio Theater Tech class members
- Student government representatives
- Athletics department representatives
- PTA parent representatives (through their leadership)
- FMA parent representatives (through their leadership)

6. Please clarify how the 2014 bond relates to the \$736,431 in unspent funds previously earmarked for the proposed high school auditorium renovations. What are the estimated costs of each of the major components for the entire project, and what is the total cost (inclusive of the \$736,431 amount)?

Although the voter approved bond scope included the auditorium work, final bid prices came in much higher than anticipated and this work was deleted from the scope (with the exception of the water mitigation work beneath the stage). In fact, subsequent annual budgets included transfers to this other bond work in order to complete those projects. Once projects were finally completed in total in 2018 there was \$736,431 remaining from these transfers.

Estimate is as follows:

Remove and replace seating and carpeting, new skim concrete	\$356,975
Stage rigging and safety improvements	\$277,500
Stage light replacement and improvements (LED)	\$403,500
Sound system improvements including assistive listening	\$135,000
Electrical and theatrical wiring upgrades	\$134,500
New stage flooring (behind proscenium), refinish front floor	\$45,238
Storage, painting, backstage lighting and cleaning*	\$56,461
Theatrical Lighting focusing and training	\$32,000
Contingencies, soft costs and fees	\$508,826
TOTAL BUDGET	\$1,950,000

7. What is the timeline for starting and completing the auditorium renovation?

If approved. this work would occur over two summers per Budget Session #3.

8. When will the next building conditions survey be completed and available to the public and is a working version of the most recent Building Conditions Survey (BCS)/Facilities Master Plan (of projects that have been identified but not yet been completed) posted publicly?

The next BCS is scheduled (per the NYS Education Department) for the summer/fall of 2021. The Facilities Master Plan is currently an internal document made of the roof master plan and fields master which can be found here <https://www.scarsdaleschools.k12.ny.us/Page/26072>, and other identified projects that have arisen since the original BCS and through the 2018 bond

process with BBS Architects whose work can also be found the referenced pages. The original BCS can be found [here](#).

9. What are the current plans and projected costs for non-BCS items that were in development for further consideration at this time last year, including renovations to the Heathcote office and high school LRC and plans for Edgewood, Fox Meadow, and Heathcote kitchens?

These items remain as projects for possible consideration in a future bond issue.

10. What is the status of the District Sustainability Committee's efforts to explore long term cooling solutions, alternative energy sources, environmentally friendly food service and waste disposal practices (e.g., feasibility and utility of reintroduction of dishwashers in lieu of compostable plates and utensils, composting on-site), and appropriate funding for such projects (e.g., grants, EPC, or annual budget)?

Please see page 10 of 155 in the Budget Session #1 presentation found [here](#). Also, please note that dishwashers are included as part of the Greenacres kitchen and the Learning Commons. Spatial issues in Quaker Ridge, Fox Meadow and Edgewood cafeterias prevent installation of dishwashers without additional renovation and disruption. Heathcote would require the same, however, there is additional space. The Middle School is challenged with the current layout. A formal study has not been completed.

11. What are the current plans for public access to bathrooms at the Middle School outside of the school day, including the timeline for completion and cost? Do you anticipate such costs will be a component of the school budget, the village budget, or a combination of both, and when?

The Middle School Comfort station is funded in the Village's budget. The District is working cooperatively with this Village to see this project through to completion in what is currently planned for the summer.

12. What is the cooling plan for the gyms at the middle and high school where ceiling fans have been ruled out due to their potential to interfere with the interscholastic activities that take place there?

There are no immediate plans for cooling these spaces. However, the District does recognize the challenge of keeping these spaces cooler during the warmer months of the school year. As such, the District is gathering estimates on this work as a project that could be included in a future bond or budget.

13. What future plans, if any, are being considered for addressing needs for collaborative and large group spaces at each of the seven schools and what are the projected costs of such plans?

There are no immediate plans to pursue this very costly work at this time. This work was presented as part of BBS's study found [here](#).

Safety, Security, and Emergency Management

1. What cost-benefit or other analysis, if any, has been done to assess the visitor management system, particularly with respect to the numbers of monitors and hours of staffing, the Raptor system, the impact to each individual school's culture, and the time and expense relative to alternative systems or approaches contemplated or in use in other school districts?

Both the addition of safety monitors and the utilization of a Visitor Management process has received positive feedback from our teachers, administrators and parents serving on various District and Building level safety committees. The model being used in Scarsdale is similar to many Districts and was supported for inclusion in the current year's budget by various District safety committees and the Board of Education.

2. How do the District's SSEM annually recurring costs (in dollars and as a percentage of the overall budget) compare with those at school districts with comparable enrollment and facilities/campus size?

A study has not been completed however the staffing model at Scarsdale is not unusual for school districts.

Transportation

1. Depending on the outcome of the proposed transportation study, do you anticipate changes to the transportation budget to account for bus route reconfiguration and/or different seating and storage capacity needs for bus riders based on size/age of students and their carry-ons?

If a transportation study is completed, any recommendations desired to be implemented which have significant additional cost would be included in the 2021-22 budget.

2. **Depending on the outcome of the proposed transportation study, do you anticipate incurring any future costs relating to outfitting the bus fleet with additional features such as video or tracking devices?**

It is the District's anticipation that the study would result in a number of recommendations which may or may not result in additional costs or provide savings. Ultimately it would be the District's decision whether to implement these recommendations.

Curriculum and Professional Development

1. **Do you anticipate any budgetary implications should the NYS Regents implement any changes to the high school graduation requirements following its re-evaluation process?**

Not at this time. We have discussed replacement of Regents with Performanced Based Assessments, which would impact how Program Improvement funds are allocated.

2. **Do you anticipate any further changes to the FLES program (in light of the recent shift in the beginning of instruction from first to second grade) or to the number and make-up of teachers of world language at SMS and SHS?**

Not at this time. We have assessed a positive impact on verbal fluency in Spanish for students entering middle school with shifts from two 40-minute classes per week to three 20-20-40 minute classes per week. FLES teachers are engaging in on-going professional development with a focus on differentiation.

Coordination with Village

1. **How is traffic congestion, parking, and pedestrian/bicycle safety on campus and on roads immediately surrounding the schools addressed in this budget and how are those efforts coordinated with the village for budget and other efficiencies?**

The District works in concert with the Village providing feedback via building and District safety committees. Additional safety monitors included in the 2019-20 budget have assisted in relieving a number of these concerns on campus.

2. **What is the cost of the district's waste management/composting/recycling initiatives and how are those efforts coordinated with the village for budget and other efficiencies?**

The District does not pay directly for waste management or recycling as this is provided for by the Village. The District does pay for carting of its composting materials from all buildings. Total cost is approximately \$32,000 per year + supplies.

3. What efforts have been made to coordinate with the Village on issues surrounding improved cellular reception in and around the schools and what are the potential costs of addressing cellular dead zones?

It is the District's understanding that the Village is actively pursuing cellular options.

Instructional Technology

1. What is the general feedback received thus far from teachers, students, and parents concerning the 1:1 technology and mobile device programs at both the middle school and in the elementary schools?

The feedback has been positive for the most part. We had criticism from some 6th grade parents last year, and Meghan and I met with a group of them as part of a focus group. There was concern about the amount of screentime students were experiencing due to teachers who wanted to have "paperless" classrooms. Meghan and I met with those teachers, because the parents had many valid points, and described the parent feedback. My understanding is that the teachers adjusted their practice, and I did not hear anything from 6th grade parents this year. I was planning to reach out to our Middle School parents in the future, but of course, that plan has to be adjusted.

2. After the proposed purchase of 1:1 iPads for 8th graders, what remaining costs, if any, are anticipated for this initiative (e.g., software updates, etc.)? When will the first batch of 1:1 iPads need to be replaced?

These costs are included in the technology budget, including the software budget to fund the apps. The lease/purchase plan will fund iPads for 6th graders each year, which they will keep for three years. The hardware lease/purchase (which is flat) is for four years, so these iPads will be handed down to the elementary schools for one year, then they will be sold or recycled, depending on their condition.