

Cumberland School Department

Office of the Superintendent
2602 Mendon Road, Cumberland, Rhode Island 02864-3726
401/658-1600 Fax No. 401/658-4620
www.cumberlandschools.org

ROBERT A. MITCHELL
Superintendent

March 7, 2018

Mr. Raymond Salvatore, Chairperson
Cumberland School Committee
2602 Mendon Road
Cumberland, RI 02864

RE: Superintendent's Recommended FY 2019 Budget Proposal

Dear Mr. Salvatore:

On behalf of the students and staff of the Cumberland School Department, please accept my recommended budget for the 2018-2019 school year in the amount of \$69,014,964, a 3.85% increase over last year. As the Superintendent, I have the responsibility of submitting a budget that meets two important goals. First and most important is to improve the academic performance of all students. Secondly, we have a responsibility to submit a budget that is fiscally responsible. This budget meets both of those goals and is aligned with the District's Strategic Plan. Our goal as a district is to be one of the top five performing districts in the state at every level -- elementary, middle and high school.

By all accounts, the Cumberland School District has made significant strides in the last five years. Cumberland moved from thirteenth in state to ninth on the most recent round of state testing. Although we are committed to improving the performance of Cumberland students in all of our schools, we are focusing more on supporting those schools with the biggest challenges in this budget including BF Norton and McCourt Middle School.

To reduce the achievement gap we are laying the foundation to improve student performance. For example, at BF Norton Elementary School, we have added an Academic Coach and a .5 School Psychologist to the budget to support specific needs in this school. BF Norton would then have a full time School Psychologist to support students struggling with the most significant issues. Having this position will allow for the Principal to focus more time on teaching and learning. We have also added a half time Assistant Principal to support the Principal in dealing with behavior and teaching and learning issues. The Assistant Principal will be shared with Community School (.5 Community and .5 BF Norton). Additionally, we have added a full time Academic Coach. Using student performance data, the Academic Coach will work with teachers on specific classroom practices with the goal of improving student performance.

At McCourt Middle School, we have added an Assistant Principal position. This will provide McCourt with an additional administrator who will be able to focus totally on student behavior. McCourt would have two Assistant Principal Positions; one would be focused on academics and the other on student behavior. We have also added a full time Academic Coach. The addition of this position will allow for both the Assistant Principal for Teaching and Learning and the Academic Coach to focus their full attention on supporting teachers in the classroom every day using data to focus on the greatest areas of need.

The high school has ten and a half new positions. The reason for the significant increase in positions is due to the increased enrollment during the 2018-2019 school year. The class of 2018 has 263 students and the current eighth grade class (the class of 2022) has 386 students that will be entering the high school in the fall. Included in these positions is a half time position in ELA and a half time position in math to support students who are struggling in these subjects. The Math Remedial Course (MRC) and the English Remedial Course (ERC) are designed to reduce the achievement gap of incoming ninth grade students. Students struggling in math or English in grade eight would receive an additional class in the identified subject they are struggling in. To meet the growing mental health issues at the High School, including anxiety and depression, an additional half time School Psychologist position has been added to provide two full time School Psychologists at the High School. We are also moving a clerk to support the High School Guidance Department. This position will reduce clerical tasks school counselors are currently forced to handle and enhance their capacity to focus more attention on supporting students.

At Community School, the budget includes the addition of a half time Assistant Principal position (shared with BF Norton School). Community has approximately 650 students attending that school. It is challenging for the Principal to handle all of the responsibilities for a school of this size. The Principal needs help in dealing with discipline issues and the evaluation of teachers. Although Community is a Blue Ribbon School, the sheer volume of students and staff requires additional support.

This budget includes the addition of eighteen new positions. I have attached a table with the requested positions, the rationale for each and the approximate cost. In addition to the positions already identified, a Director of Pathways and Internships has been added. One major goal of this position is to generate revenue for the district. The high school has applied to the Rhode Island Department of Education to certify the creation of four Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs (Robotics and Engineering, Informational Technology, Law and Public Safety, PLTW Biomedical Science). These programs will allow us to tuition students into the district. As part of the job responsibility for this position, the Director will be responsible for recruiting students to the district. Another important aspect of this role will be to work with employers in and around Cumberland to place students in internships and provide them with real world learning opportunities.

There is no change to the current transportation schedule. Several meetings have been held with the bus company in addition to the transportation study that was conducted last year. There is a meeting scheduled with the General Manager of Durham School Services on Monday, March 19, 2018. The purpose of this meeting is to consider another option in meeting our goal of establishing a later start time for high school students. The additional cost, if any, is not included at this time. There are two important considerations regarding a move of this magnitude. One is the potential cost of additional buses and the other is the important task of preparing families for the change.

Our goal is to continue the positive academic growth that the school district has experienced in recent years. As stated in our strategic plan, Cumberland will be one of the top five performing school districts in the state by 2020. This budget takes an important step in supporting our schools with the biggest challenges. We respectfully request the School Committee's support for the 2019 proposed budget.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Mitchell
Superintendent of Schools

cc: Cumberland School Committee

Attachment: FY19 Budget Proposed Additions

Cumberland Public Schools 2018-2019 Budget Proposed Additions

| # | Position | Rationale | Salary |
|----|---|--|-----------|
| 1 | Pathways Coordinator | <i>Leadership Position to guide and grow a pathways program at HS.</i> | \$95,720 |
| 1 | Special Education Coordinator | <i>LEA position that supports the facilitation of IEP meetings in our EL. Schools.</i> | \$49,686 |
| 1 | Elementary Vice Principal .5 Community .5 BF | <i>Support Evaluations and behavioral supports in the buildings</i> | \$90,000 |
| .5 | Psychologist @ BF | <i>Mental Health Support</i> | \$28,030 |
| .5 | Psychologist @ HS | <i>Mental Health Support</i> | \$35,270 |
| 9 | HS Positions ** (Part of a Math and Part of ELA schedule will be dedicated to teaching remedial help to reduce failure rates in ELA9 and Alg.1 | <i>All the positions are content related to support the enrollment needs of kids at HS</i> | \$447,174 |
| 2 | Academic Coaches 1 @ BF 1 @ McCourt | <i>The Academic Coaches for BF and McCourt are research supported positions that will work between office of Asst. Superintendent and schools to support teaching and learning, data facilitation -- help support academic focus in these schools.</i> | \$99,372 |

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|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1 | MS Tech support .5 @ McCourt .5 @ NCMS | <i>Support Chromebook repairs at MS</i> | \$24,264 |
| 1 | 6th Grade NCMS | <i>Enrollment need. There are currently 196 sixth grade students and 220 entering grade six next year.</i> | \$49,686 |
| 1 | Assistant Principal McCourt | <i>Establish additional supports at McCourt that allows for enhanced capacity to manage teaching and learning & help support academic growth.</i> | \$92,293 |
| 1 | Guidance Clerk | <i>Reduce clerical load on the Guidance Dept.</i> | Budget Neutral |
| 1 | Guidance Counselor | <i>Makes for 6 in the Dept. -- reduced caseloads for all -- the goal is for all kids to receive more face time with the Guidance dept.</i> | Budget Neutral |