

Coventry Public Schools
Robert Carroll, Director of Finance & Operations
Goal Achievement: 2016-2017

1. Identify, define, and measure the critical skills and attributes that are required for success and align systems to continuously improve student performance and achievement.

- *Work with the Superintendent and Administrators to examine the financial impact of implementing programmatic changes to be recommended for FY18.*

The budget development process for the district begins in the fall of each year. School administrators and department heads review, refine and propose a new budget to the Superintendent's office by Thanksgiving. During this time, discussions are held with each administrator to confirm any staffing changes. Information on district-wide contracted services, such as telephone and copier costs are shared with the cost centers so that a prorated portion can be included at each site. An in depth review of staffing levels is conducted with the PSSS department, as is a review of the out-placed student population. The Business office also works closely with the Director of Educational Technology and the Facilities Director to develop both the general fund budget as well as the Capital Improvement Plan. This year the administration brought forth a budget proposal that included funding for additional instructional improvement resources and additional special education support services. At the same time, overall staffing levels saw a net reduction of 1.24 FTE. In January of 2017, the Superintendent presented to the Board a budget with, what normally would have been considered a modest 1.86% increase.

- *Continue to examine all areas of operations to develop a fiscally conservative budget which proactively supports the needs at the districts' school facilities.*

For the 2017-18 fiscal year, we have projected significant cost savings for health and dental insurance, employee pension costs, and heating as a result of the natural gas conversion.

Sometimes improvements come with an additional cost as demonstrated in the administration's telephone expense account. This year our Technology staff oversaw the implementation of a new Voice over IP (VoIP) telephone system. This new telephone system has many advanced features not previously available to our staff, including caller ID, conference calling, voicemail to email conversion, and missed call notification.

- *Work with the Superintendent, the Board of Education and the Town Council to determine an appropriate level of funding to foster the educational environment.*

Clearly this is proving to be a most difficult budget development season. This year's financial affairs of the State of CT are in dire straits. Locally the Town Council has rescinded their budget proposal, citing a lack of information. Currently four different versions of a State budget have been proposed. As time passes, the State's fiscal woes worsen. It is highly unlikely that a local budget will be adopted by July 1, 2017, requiring the Town to implement a temporary 90 day budget authorization. The Business office is working with the Town Finance Director to develop a proposed 90 day budget based on the current fiscal year expenditures. This will require the district to implement budget reductions in order to attain the level of funding previously proposed by the Town Council.

- *Support the high school administration as they address recommendations noted in the NEASC Accreditation Report.*

Fortunately many issues identified in the NEASC evaluation were budget neutral. Financially, the most significant issue deals with the fitness center. Discussions have been held with Mr. Petrone, Mr. Blake, and Mr. Trudelle to seek a long term solution. Another identified issue called for a privacy area for the school nurse's office. This recommendation has been incorporated into the proposed school entrance security improvements brought forth by the School Energy and Building Efficiency Building Committee (SEBEBEC).

- *Work with the district's Technology Committee and the Education Technology Department to assist in implementing Year 2 of the review the district's technology plan and address the district's technology needs.*

The Business office worked with the Director of Education Technology in executing Year 2 of the plan. Numerous pieces of equipment were acquired and deployed throughout the district. The departments worked closely together to maximize our purchasing power by leveraging eligible equipment upgrades thru the Federal Universal Service Fund, also known as E-Rate.

- *Continue to provide support to staff to aid in their efforts to secure additional outside funding sources to support district initiatives.*

I am currently working with the Technology Department to acquire software that will combine several different software platforms as well as providing energy cost savings. Roughly 60% of the cost of this software is covered by the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund.

Collaborated with the staff of the PSSS office and Director of Teaching and Learning to complete annual applications for several federal entitlement grants.

2. Maintain and promote a positive and respectful learning community.

- *Work with the Superintendent and the Coventry Early Childhood Center staff to clearly define all financial aspects of the proposed preschool arrangement, ensure full compliance with regard to the Smart Start Grant, and examine the possibility of incorporating financial operations of the preschool into the Coventry Public School system beginning in FY 2018.*

Progress is being made in this endeavor, the Business office is prepared to administer the finances of the non-profit preschool organization. The Smart Start and School Readiness portions are already in place. Numerous meetings have been held with Town office personnel, the Town Council, the Board of Education, and current and former staff of the CECC to ensure all aspects of the transition are addressed. A proposed budget has been developed and a chart of accounts has been established in the Infinite Visions software platform. The Business office is prepared to manage the financial portion of the operation as of July 1, 2017. In the upcoming months, employees will be hired by the Board of Education to staff the program.

- *Collaborate with the School Energy and Building Efficiency Building Committee as they undertake the immediate task of converting the heating systems at the CNH/CHS Complex to natural gas. Work with the committee is developing a long term plan to update HVAC systems and address Fire, ADA and Building Code Compliance issues district wide.*

A committee was formed roughly two years ago and has been meeting regularly. It was charged with identifying energy efficiencies, electrical and mechanical upgrades, ADA compliance, and other security improvements at all of the schools and a number of Town buildings. In the spring of 2016, the SEBEBC shifted their focus and directed their attention to the Natural Gas Conversion project. Heating systems at the CHS/CNH Complex have been replaced, heating systems at the Complex and the Administration building have been converted to natural gas. Conceptual plans were presented to the Town Council on April 14, 2017 and the committee is on hold, awaiting further direction from the Town Council. The SEBEBC presented a \$4.5M proposal for improvements at all four schools and the Administration building.

- *Assist the Director of Facilities in the development of a comprehensive capital equipment replacement plan that will guide the District toward a proactive approach to maintenance equipment replacement.*

As demonstrated under Mr. Trudelle's goal presentation, he and his staff are dedicated to maximizing the capabilities of the School Dude software package. From identifying and cataloging various pieces of equipment, to creating preventable maintenance schedules. This program allows the department to identify issues early and avoid costly repairs. As this database is expanded, it will provide a reliable resource for developing the District's Annual Capital Improvement Plan.

3. Recruit, retain and develop high quality staff at every level.

- *Complete the implementation and full integration of the Time and Attendance Management system for all hourly employees.*

All regular hourly employees are now electronically clocking in/out of the Veritime system. This provides the payroll coordinator with an up-loadable database that is scanned for errors. Each employee is scheduled for a certain time period and exceptions display in red. Overall accuracy is much improved as time can be tracked to the minute. Lost timesheets are a thing of the past. Since July 1, 2016 we have not had the need to run a special payroll.

Human Resources continues to automate the application, hiring, and ongoing administration processes. Federal law now allows electronic I-9 filings.

- *Monitor developments at the State level that pertain to changes in the areas of Human Resources, Student Data Privacy, Grants Management and Finance (Uniform Chart of Accounts, CCJEF v Rell)*

Implemented a new background check on all new hires which includes contacting prior employers to ask specific questions about allegations of sexual misconduct. This process places additional demands on existing resources such as staff, postage, and filing space.

The Business Office is working to comply with new rules and regulations from the Connecticut State Police with regards to record keeping of fingerprints for new hires.

At the federal level, we are awaiting a court decision on the appeal of legislation to increase the minimum salary requirement for overtime pay. There are also talks of scaling back some of the restrictions in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

- *Provide the Business Office staff with opportunities for customized professional learning, specifically targeted toward their respective job responsibilities, to enhance their knowledge base and increase efficiencies.*

This year the Business office staff participated in a variety of professional development opportunities. The topics covered included: Intermediate Excel training, Wage and Hour Classification of Exempt vs. Non-Exempt Employee Status, Preventing Sprains and Strains, Developing Comprehensive RFP's, Being an Employer in the Digital World, and Cost Effective Strategies to Reduce the Achievement Gap. Office staff attended the annual CAS conference in which Shipman & Goodwin presented legal updates on employment background check requirements and the Freedom of Information Act. In addition, staff continues to attend Infinite Visions User Group meetings to review recent updates to the program and identify opportunities to improve productivity.