



*Our mission is to create an inspiring, challenging, and supportive environment where students are encouraged and assisted in reaching their highest potential.*

February 6, 2017

Dear Town Manager Kennedy:

This budget transmission letter marks a major transformation both in format and substance. Through much dialogue over the last year with the Town Council, Finance Board and School Committee, we have arrived at the format included via electronic media in this correspondence. The attached budget document represents the agreed upon presentation and reflects a tremendous amount of work hours to create the changes. Concurrent to this tremendous effort we have also pursued in partnership with the town a public platform called OpenGov.com. Upon completion of our budget, we will use OpenGov.com as a public dashboard. We are proud to say that these innovations will provide an unprecedented transparency to our entire budget process.

The Committee approached the FY18 budget design by focusing on several priorities including responding to the agreed design features of the Finance Board. The Committee was encouraged to think of themselves as an editorial board committed to creating an excellent budget. During this year's process the School Committee reflected on hundreds of queries over eight formal meetings to establish a budget that is a zero increase from last year and a zero increase in the district's portion of taxpayer support.

- Westerly Public Schools budget continues to run with a tight margin, leaving little room to respond to those unexpected and unplanned situations that arise every year. To prove the point we finished last year's budget approximately 0.4% positive operational fund balance. This means that detailed planning and strict adherence to budget line items is a must.
- The voters of Westerly recently approved the creation/restoration of a Finance Director for the town essentially ending the successful five year consolidation of financial operations. You and I agreed that this will require the full staffing of finance offices at both the town and school district as they were deployed prior to the consolidation. The town and district have agreed to hire a consultant to provide guidance for the disentangling process and will split the costs.
- For the third year in a row the school district budget audit came in on time and without any significant findings. A major accomplishment! The final budget presentation will use the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBOI) and National Standards for School Budget and Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) as well as the enhanced recommendations from the Finance Board using the MUNIS budget module. The goal continues to achieve the ASBOI and GFOA

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Superintendent

Alicia J. Storey  
Assistant Superintendent

Debra Bridgham  
Director of Finance

Melissa Denton  
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Westerly Public Schools  
School Committee Goals:

Support excellence in student  
performance.

Recruit, retain, and develop  
high quality staff.

Fully engage parents and  
community.

Develop and implement  
comprehensive financial  
strategy.

Improve and maintain  
Westerly School Facilities.

award for excellence in budget presentation. Core to the national standards is a budget that has clarity and detail that essentially will allow any person from anywhere to understand what we are doing and how we are paying for the work. We are not just redesigning the presentation of the budget, we have now a fully articulated match to the town budget format in MUNIS and our own aspirations for how the budget should work.

- The failure of the redesign bond effort for our elementary schools leads the district to taking steps to respond to various capital improvement needs. Some of those needs are built into the capital improvement request recently presented to the town planning board. Some of these needs will also need to be built into the operations of the building and maintenance budget. We will ready our response to the upcoming report of Condition of School Facilities and the Facilities Condition Index (FCI) being developed by the Rhode Island Department of Education.
- The Committee eliminated reliance on fund balance. The FY17 budget relied on \$200,000. We are planning to not use any fund balance to balance the FY18 budget. A major accomplishment!
- This year as we have in the past, take several “acceptable risks” including level funding over 85% of our budget lines. The budget is full of items which involve “acceptable risk” and they are as diverse as property and liability insurance deductibles and maximums, the self-insured health fund, the amount projected for out of district tuitions, substitute costs and snow removal.
- Our budget decisions will include a reduction of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) at several levels including administration, teaching and support staff. This will be generated by the decision to close an elementary school and other reductions. As we are aware there are increases in specific demands for staff based on student needs. This is driven by special education priorities, curriculum and instruction priorities, and are all student based. All of our staffing decisions are set in long term planning. In fact over the last six years we have changed over 240 positions out of our 580 full and part time employees by implementing various strategies that support our district priorities, save money, and expand the pool of expert educators.
- As always the district will keep safety and well-being a priority. An additional topic for this year will be the appropriate level of response for implementing and responding to cyber-security issues. As a Future Ready district, our technology efforts will focus on several areas all at once. Over the years we have invested in hardware for the district and these assets will have to be maintained.

- We will assume complete responsibility of our legal costs, ending support from the town in the new fiscal year. This will add to our legal costs but provide us direct oversight of our legal priorities.
- We will also be adding to some areas of the budget. For example, we have committed to funding all AP tests.
- We must sustain our efforts to respond to the Basic Education Plan (BEP). Several major areas continue to define our future work: (1) elementary school response, (2) early childhood, (3) technology, (4) continued work on preventative maintenance, and (5) full implementation of our new strategic plan.

In summary, we welcome the continued high level of cooperation between the Town of Westerly and Westerly Public Schools, the strong support of our greater community, and the ever improving performance of our district. We look forward to a positive, innovative and successful year ahead.

Once again, if you have any questions regarding our budget work, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Roy M. Seitsinger, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Roy M. Seitsinger, Jr., Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools



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February 6, 2017

Dear Town Manager Kennedy:

I am pleased to present the 2017-2018 Budget for Westerly Public Schools for the period of July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. This school committee adopted budget is presented in compliance with applicable Rhode Island statutes and regulations promulgated by the Rhode Island Department of Education. The intent of this balanced budget is to support our existing educational programs and maintain academic opportunities for Westerly students. In accordance with State of Rhode Island guidelines, the Westerly School Committee may amend or revise the adopted budget with respect to revenues and expenditures. This adopted budget reflects no increase in the town appropriation and an nominal increase in anticipated revenue from state aid in 2017-2018. The district continues to face the economic uncertainties of state revenue, legislative mandates and other increasing costs. The district is financially sound and this document was created to provide the reader with an understanding of the budget development process. Tough decisions and strong leadership throughout the budget development process will continue to be important factors in maintaining the district's financial position in the future.

### **Major Budgetary Issues**

This adopted budget was prepared using the best district level information available at the time of presentation. Revenue assumptions incorporated the most current economic, financial and budgetary information provided by the Rhode Island Department of Education. Major district budgetary challenges identified by the administration and addressed by the Committee included, but were not limited to the following:

1. District Enrollment Decline
2. Increasing Out of District Tuition Payments
3. Maintenance of Aging School Facilities
4. Stagnant or Declining Revenue (Local, State and Federal Levels)

### **Economic Conditions**

According to her website, Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo, state leadership and local leadership all recognize that a skilled workforce is key to growing jobs, improving family economic security and ensuring the fiscal health of our state. "Today's jobs and unemployment report reflects both the progress our state has made and the lingering challenges we have to confront to ensure that everyone can 'make it in Rhode Island.' 5.3 percent is RI's lowest unemployment rate since August 2007. Change won't happen overnight, but I'm encouraged by the momentum we have."

In order to keep making progress, we have to provide opportunity for all Rhode Islanders; that means continuing to:

- Strengthen neighborhood schools,
- Help Rhode Islanders build the skills that matter so that they can compete for the jobs of the 21st century economy,

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- Prepare high school students for college and career,
- Make college more affordable for more families, and
- Support recent college graduates with student loan forgiveness and first-time home buyer support.
- \$1.2 million to invest in the state's Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) initiative to continue the manufacturing training partnership at Westerly High School and potentially create another partnership related to manufacturing.

Westerly Public Schools strives to take full advantage of all of these state initiatives in the name of our students, staff and families. Besides the above commitments, we are enthusiastic supporters of the new public/private training venture recently completed in downtown Westerly called the Westerly Higher Education and Job Skills Center that we anticipate will be a great boon not only to high school students but also the underemployed, unemployed, veterans, and homeless.

#### **The Budget Process & Timeline:**

Prior to 2012, State Aid was determined year to year by legislative action. For FY 2012 the State of Rhode moved to a forward looking funding formula. As part of this formula a transition schedule was created. Districts that experience a gain in State Aid will have funding phased in over a seven year period; districts with a decrease will see funding reduced over a period of ten years. Based on data evidence of historical underfunding, Westerly Public Schools has received the full increase, and will now remain level funded.

The 2017-2018 adopted budget book is the result of months of planning through an attentive and engaging process with district stakeholders. The school district and the municipality follow a well established and well understood calendar of events and deadlines. The budget development process began with a comprehensive review of 2016-2017 district salaries and respective classifications to ensure a solid base from which to project into the future budget year. Next, came individual budget meetings with school principals and department managers to address non-salary operational needs. These budget meetings were essential in confirming current spending patterns, understanding district micro level goals and identifying district priorities.

The Westerly School Committee met to discuss the district's 2017-2018 budget plan. There were a total of eight meetings. The Committee provided a process overview, answered related questions and dispelled various "myths" regarding the district budget, financial conditions and related cost considerations. This process culminated on February 1, 2017 when the School Committee voted unanimously to adopt a school budget with a 0% increase in municipal aid and 0% increase over current year expenses and prioritized as needed.

The next steps in the process includes a presentation of the final School Committee budget to the Town Manager on or before February 1, 2016. The Manager will move

the budget forward by integrating the school district budget into the full municipal budget. Both the town and the school district will engage in an advisory and collegial discussion with the appointed advisory Board of Finance. With the advice of the Board of Finance, the School Committee has prepared the agreed upon budget document. This was labor intensive, but it includes line item detail for each expense. After their review, the Finance Board will make recommendations and present it to the Westerly Town Council who will set the bottom line of the district budget for FY 2017-2018.

### **Budgetary Changes**

After careful consideration and analysis, the Committee adopted a budget with zero increase over the current year budget. In order to complete this task, while maintaining student services, programs and recognizing the decline in the district's student population, the decision was made to close Bradford Elementary School. This decision was difficult, but allowed a reduction in staff, not only at Bradford, but in other positions throughout the district.

The Westerly School Committee had a difficult job recognizing limited resources while striving to meet increasing demands for student achievement. The Committee has been consistent in communicating its desire for continued educational excellence, minimizing the impact on jobs, developing a financially responsible plan and balancing the needs of students, staff and community in meeting district goals. Curriculum priorities and activities (music, playgrounds, field trips) remain the budgetary responsibility of the district.

### **Summary**

The statewide economic recovery continues to be slow, precarious, even volatile. As conditions change, responsive measures taken by the State will continue to affect Westerly Public Schools. The Westerly School Committee continues to be responsible and follows a long term approach to planning and decision-making. This document provides detailed information on the process by which the budget was developed and the decisions that were incorporated in short and long term planning.

The Westerly community can remain confident in the district's commitment to transparency and sound financial management in these challenging times. Prudent and strategic financial management remains a top priority. The Committee's budgetary decisions reflect its commitment to student performance and a quality-education for all.

Respectfully,

*Debra J. Bridgham*

Debra J. Bridgham  
Finance Director  
Westerly Public Schools

**WESTERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**FY 2017-2018**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROPOSED BUDGET**  
**Summary**

	<b>2017 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>SCM FY 2018 Proposed Budget</b>
<b>Revenues</b>	56,521,782	-	56,521,782
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Wages & Benefits	46,289,046	(229,605)	46,059,441
General Operating	1,708,000	257,165	1,965,165
Contract Services	1,133,545	(1,229)	1,132,316
Tuitions	3,875,000	153,691	4,028,691
Repair & Maintenance	1,134,689	(13,074)	1,121,615
Utilities & Fuel	1,515,003	(129,875)	1,385,128
Technology	566,500	(84,493)	482,007
Other Detail	300,000	47,420	347,420
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>56,521,783</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>56,521,783</b>

**WESTERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROPOSED BUDGET  
FY 2017-2018**

**Revenues**

	<b>2017 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>SCM FY 2018 Proposed Budget</b>
Town Aid	45,710,811	-	45,710,811
State Aid	9,070,990	61,711	9,132,701
Medicaid Reimbursement	1,172,500	-	1,172,500
Tuitions: Preschool	42,500	24,538	67,150
TSSCC Programming	190,000	50,220	240,220
Rental	105,000	10,604	115,604
Transportation Fees	5,000	(1,600)	3,400
Miscellaneous	24,981	(21,473)	3,508
Out of District Tuition	-	76,000	76,000
Fund Balance	200,000	(200,000)	-
	-	-	-
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>56,521,782</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>56,521,782</b>

**WESTERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
 SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROPOSED BUDGET  
 FY 2017-2018  
 Wages and Benefits**

	<b>2017 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>SCM FY 2018 Proposed Budget</b>
Wages	33,590,390	(166,268)	33,424,122
Benefits	<u>12,698,656</u>	<u>(63,337)</u>	<u>12,635,319</u>
*Total Wages and Benefits	46,289,046	(229,605)	46,059,441

\* Detail by category will be provided on final document

**WESTERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**FY 2017-2018**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROPOSED BUDGET**  
**General Operating**

	<b>2017 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>SCM FY 2018 Proposed Budget</b>
Conferences & Dues	125,000	5,833	130,833
Auto & Mileage	15,000	2,449	17,449
Instruction Material	625,000	85,847	710,847
Periodicals & Textbooks	200,000	25,217	225,217
Furniture	20,000	25,800	45,800
Disposal	85,000	1,564	86,564
Alarm	100,000	4,114	104,114
Legal & Prof Fees	75,000	87,000	162,000
Property Ins	390,000	11,700	401,700
Office & Postage	58,000	(18,083)	39,917
Advertising	15,000	25,725	40,725
<b>Total General Operations</b>	<b>1,708,000</b>	<b>257,165</b>	<b>1,965,165</b>

**WESTERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
FY 2017-2018  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROPOSED BUDGET  
CONTRACT SERVICES**

	<b>2017 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>SCM FY 2018 Proposed Budget</b>
Audiology	35,000	-	35,000
Athletic Trainer	15,000	5,000	20,000
Contracted Nursing	95,000	(20,000)	75,000
Dentist	5,000	-	5,000
Evaluation	25,000	(10,000)	15,000
Interpreters	30,000	-	30,000
Mobility Specialist	500	(500)	-
Music Therapy	30,000	8,000	38,000
Occupational Therapist	295,000	-	295,000
Officials & Referees	40,000	7,184	47,184
Other Services	100,000	(16,954)	83,046
Other Tech Services	37,000	2,815	39,815
Physical Therapist	50,000	5,000	55,000
Physicians	5,000	-	5,000
Police Details	110,000	(10,000)	100,000
Pro Development	17,000	(17,000)	
Psychologist Contract	50,000	(20,000)	30,000
Specialist	99,045	(45)	99,000
Speech Therapist	-	-	-
Student Asst	50,000	-	50,000
Temp Clerical Support	5,000	10,601	15,601
Training Services	500	42,170	42,670
Transport Contract	20,000	12,500	32,500
Tutoring	19,500	-	19,500
<b>Total Contract Services</b>	<b>1,133,545</b>	<b>(1,229)</b>	<b>1,132,316</b>

**WESTERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**FY 2017-2018**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROPOSED BUDGET**  
**Repair and Maintenance**

	<b>2017 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>SCM FY 2018 Proposed Budget</b>
Custodial Services	200,000	7,999	207,999
Custodian Supplies	30,000	10,912	40,912
Electric Supplies	27,000	(7,603)	19,397
Lumber & Hardware	8,500	10,300	18,800
Paint	28,500	(1,780)	26,720
Machinery	7,500	2,500	10,000
Equip Rental	2,500	(520)	1,980
R& M Furniture	250,000	(83,506)	166,494
R&M Building	140,000	37,294	177,294
R&M Buses	157,189	3,853	161,042
R&M Electrical	7,500	3,200	10,700
R&M HVAC	95,000	-	95,000
R&M Plumbing	65,000	20,550	85,550
R&M Vandal	1,000	1,000	2,000
Snow Plowing & Supplies	40,000	3,626	43,626
Grounds keeping	60,000	(14,726)	45,274
Pest Control	10,000	(1,173)	8,827
Other	5,000	(5,000)	-
<b>Total Repair &amp; Maintenance</b>	<b>1,134,689</b>	<b>(13,074)</b>	<b>1,121,615</b>

**Westerly Public Schools**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROPOSED BUDGET**  
**FY 17-18**  
**Technology**

	<b>2017 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>SCM FY 2018 Proposed Budget</b>
Tech Repairs	25,000	(11,764)	13,236
Tech Supplies	25,000	12,130	37,130
Tech Lease Payments	137,500	(60,498)	77,002
Tech Hardware	-	57,682	57,682
Tech Software	379,000	(82,043)	296,957
<b>Total Technology</b>	<b>566,500</b>	<b>(84,493)</b>	<b>482,007</b>

**WESTERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**FY 2017-2018**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROPOSED BUDGET**  
**Out of District Tuitions**

	<b>2017 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>SCM FY 2018 Proposed Budget</b>
Charter Schools: Compass, Green, Kingston Hill and Beacon	625,000	247,780	872,780
Chariho	725,000	55,510	780,510
CCRI	-	-	-
Conventry Tech	-	-	-
Special Ed: Chariho	75,000	(27,000)	48,000
Special Ed: Devareux	30,000	(30,000)	-
Special Ed: Bradley	1,300,000	(150,000)	1,150,000
Special Ed: Anchor Learning Acadmy		-	-
Special Ed: Cranston Arc		-	-
Special Ed: Eleanor Briggs	55,000	(55,000)	-
Special Ed: Family Services/Mt Pleasant	250,000	(250,000)	-
Special Ed: Fall River Deaconess		-	-
Special Ed: Harmony Hill	-	58,200	58,200
Special Ed: Groden Center	184,000	(52,300)	131,700
Special Ed: Meeting Street	118,000	(118,000)	-
Special Ed: Mount Pleasant		479,485	479,485
Special Ed: Middlebridge	-	-	-
Special Ed: Northern RI Collaborative	45,000	(45,000)	-
Special Ed: Ocean Tides	40,000	17,000	57,000

**WESTERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**FY 2017-2018**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROPOSED BUDGET**  
**Out of District Tuitions**

	<b>2017 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>SCM FY 2018 Proposed Budget</b>
Special Ed: Pathway/Kent Center/Arthur Trude	163,000	68,065	231,065
Special Ed: Providence Center		-	-
Special Ed: RI School of the Deaf	-	6,075	6,075
Special Ed: South Kingston		-	-
Special Ed: Sargent	80,000	526	80,526
Special Ed: School One	-	-	-
Special Ed: The Grove School	-	24,150	24,150
Special Ed: Tides	15,000	(15,000)	-
Special Ed: Crystal Springs	60,000	(1,800)	58,200
Special Ed: Orchard Farm	55,000	(4,000)	51,000
Special Ed: West Bay Collaborative	-	-	-
Special Ed: Waterford Country School		-	-
Special Ed: St Mary's	55,000	(55,000)	-
		-	-
<b>Total Out of District Tuitions</b>	<b>3,875,000</b>	<b>153,691</b>	<b>4,028,691</b>

**WESTERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
 FY 2017-2018  
 SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROPOSED BUDGET  
 Utilities & Fuel**

	<b>2017 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>SCM FY 2018 Proposed Budget</b>
Electricity	706,387	(91,386)	615,001
Natural Gas	326,025	59,106	385,131
Telephone	103,241	46,368	149,609
Water/Sewer	62,489	3,549	66,038
Gas, Diesel & Fuel Oil	<u>316,861</u>	<u>(147,512)</u>	<u>169,349</u>
<b>Total Utilities &amp; Fuel</b>	<b>1,515,003</b>	<b>(129,875)</b>	<b>1,385,128</b>

**WESTERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**FY 2017-2018**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROPOSED BUDGET**  
**Other**

	<b>2017 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Increase/Decrease</b>	<b>SCM FY 2018 Proposed Budget</b>
Athletic Supplies	40,000	12,500	52,500
Training	2,500	(2,500)	
Field Trips	70,000	-	70,000
Transition Academy Travel	-	41,133	41,133
Grad/Honor Supplies	15,000	4,000	19,000
Medical Supplies	15,000	9,556	24,556
Moving	2,500	(1,000)	1,500
Music K-12	15,000	10,953	25,953
Playground	10,000	-	10,000
Pool Rental	6,500	907	7,407
PSAT/AP Testing	20,000	(20,000)	
Testing Supplies	15,000	1,774	16,774
Safety	-	23,000	23,000
Uniform Supplies	55,000	(22,996)	32,004
Vehicle Registration	13,000	(9,835)	3,165
Virtual HS	15,000	465	15,465
Other	5,500	(537)	4,963
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>47,420</b>	<b>347,420</b>