

General Questions

- 1. Projected FY06 numbers were to be provided at a future date. Are they now available?**

Estimated spending at the function level is provided in the attached tables. Please note the projected shortfall will be covered by anticipated circuitbreaker payments and the proposed \$160,000 supplemental appropriation. The bottom line shows a \$20,000 balance.

- 2. Information was provided previously to explain the increase in headcount between FY 05 and FY 06. At that time we asked for information regarding the source of funds to pay for the increased staff. Please provide it now.**

At the present time about \$25,000 has been transferred into the Teaching function to cover a portion of the projected shortfall. Additional transfers are anticipated, but cannot be precisely determined until available year end account balances can be better estimated. Also, these positions will be funded by the agreed \$160,000 supplemental appropriation reflecting FY06 state aid that will be recommended at Town Meeting.

- 3. The year's budget package notes that the FY 06 budget for Medicare was much lower than costs being actually incurred. What is the source of funds being used to fund that short fall?**

The Medicare account is about \$75,000 under funded in FY06. About \$45,000 has been funded via the following transfers:

Account	Description	Amount
521	Medicare	44,540
144	Contingency - Expenses	(10,000)
141	Assistant Superintendent – Expenses	(1,000)
143	Business Office - Expenses	(1,000)
253	Professional Development - Expenses	(7,500)
260	Technology – Expenses	(10,000)
230	Teaching Expenses - Health	(5,040)
230	Teaching Expenses – AHS	(5,000)
220	Principal Expenses – Course Reimbursement	(5,000)

- 4. What individual items, if any, are on the list of “rebuilding” items and will need to be funded even if the total rebuilding program is not funded?**

Presently, there are two rebuilding items that should be funded: (1) the nursing upgrade to RN at South School for \$14,000, and (2) 1.5 SPED FTEs at Shawsheen for \$72,000.

- 5. Please provide the most recent student population projections. If the most recent student population projections are less than six months old, please also provide the previous population projections.**

Updated projections for FY07 are being prepared by the New England School Development Council and should be available in the next few weeks. The most recent projections are therefore those prepared for the FY06 budget. They are attached as a separate document.

- 6. The proposed APS budgets are in excess of projected revenues allocated to the schools. What are the projected changes to the budget if the original requests for funds are not met?**

This will be a School Committee decision made during the budget process.

Budget Workshop Questions

- 1. During the presentation of Question 1 it was noted that funds from the pre-K revolving fund are used to offset evaluation and counseling services expenses. What is the source of funds for this revolving fund? Are evaluation and counseling services expenses an appropriate use of this revolving fund?**

Tuition is the source of revenue for the revolving fund. All services paid by the Preschool Revolving Fund are for preschool students. The School Department believes this is an appropriate revolving fund expense.

- 2. During the presentation of Question 2 it was noted that two nurse positions were being upgraded from LPN to RN. What are the specific responsibilities that an RN can and will perform which an LPN can not and does not perform? Will the change in nursing status require the lay-off of a current employee to make room for the RN?**

Upgrading selected nurse staff from LPN to RN is driven by the medical needs of students in each school. The increasing complexity of in-school medical conditions, plus the on-demand needs of certain students, requires expanded RN staffing. Specifically, LPNs cannot develop medical care plans; train; plan or coordinate with parent and physicians; assess or diagnose medical conditions. RNs are needed to promptly and effectively address student medical needs.

As with all reductions in staff levels, it is possible that a layoff will be required in order to accommodate a reduced number of LPNs.

- 3. The last chart of Question 3 shows APS SPED costs as a percent of the total operating budget and compares that percentage to the MA DOE State Average. It was noted that the APS numbers show SPED expenses net of the circuit breaker reimbursement. Are the SPED DOE state averages calculated on the same basis such that circuit breaker funded SPED expenses are not included in the expenses used to calculate the state average?**

We have found that there have been some inconsistencies in comparing Andover's Special Education spending vs. the state average. Attached are two tables to help clarify Andover's special education spending. One table shows that Andover's share of the budget dedicated towards special education is greater than the state average. The second table shows that Andover's per pupil special education spending is less than its 16 peer communities for FY04.

According to DOE, circuitbreaker spending **IS** included in the first table. Circuitbreaker funds **ARE NOT** included in the per pupil spending table, also according to DOE.

- 4. During the presentation of Question 5 it was noted that the elimination of All Day Kindergarten would result in an increase of general budget costs of approximately \$360,000 because the highest paid teachers are allocated to the All Day Kindergarten revolving account. Does that indicate that revenues from the All Day Kindergarten program are subsidizing general fund costs? Why?**

No. This is an indication that the average cost of an ADK teacher is higher than the average cost of a recently hired elementary school teacher. If fee-paid ADK teachers were restored to the general fund budget, positions now filled by less senior teachers, who in most cases receive lower pay, would be eliminated. This would increase the general fund budget.

- 5. During the presentation of Question 5 it was noted that the All Day Kindergarten program produced more solid academic results. Are there any other factors such as staffing (more experienced employees and additional aides) which may impact the academic results?**

Below is a summary of findings analyzing the benefit of all day kindergarten vs. half day:

- Children learn more in full-day kindergarten programs than they do in half-day programs, according to a study published in the *American Journal of Education*.
 - The results show that, on average, learning gains made in full-day programs translate to about a month of additional schooling over the course of the school year.
 - The study says that the full-day programs benefit all students regardless of economic status, race, or gender.
- An analysis released by the *National Center for Educational Statistics* says that full-day kindergarten and rich literacy experiences in the home give children a leg up on reading.

- The analysis found that children who attended full-day kindergarten had the ability to demonstrate greater reading knowledge and skills than their peers in half-day programs did.
 - According a report entitled The Effect of Kindergarten Program Types and Class Size on Early Academic Performance, produced by *Education Policy Studies Laboratory* at Arizona State University, pupils who attended full-day kindergarten programs that year outscored their counterparts in half- day programs on tests of mathematics, reading, and general knowledge.
6. **During the presentation of Question 11 information was provided regarding the closing of the Shawsheen School. The class size (2006-2007) information for West Elementary school does not seem to be consistent with the format and information for the other schools. Also, the analysis of the impact of closing Shawsheen does not address the financial impact of closing the school – i.e. savings from a net reduction of staff and reduction of utilities. Please enhance the analysis of the “Shawsheen Alternative” to include a financial impact analysis.**

Below is an analysis from FY04 showing Shawsheen operating costs and the impact on the school system of moving Shawsheen students to other buildings:

**SAVINGS IF SHAWSHEEN IS TAKEN OFF LINE
(Assumes no use by the School Department)**

Shawsheen Operating Costs

	FY03	FY04
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Principal & Secretary (Salary Only)	\$116,291	\$120,583
LPN (Salary Only)	\$22,801	\$25,297
Buses	\$9,680	\$9,600
Custodial (Salary Only)	\$83,951	\$78,879
Building Operations (Utilities)	\$41,517	\$36,712
Total:	\$274,239	\$271,071

- 1) All instructional costs (teacher salaries, supplies, etc.) would "follow the kids" to their neighborhood school.
- 2) Some busing costs may also have to "follow the kids."
- 3) High Plain would need rooms for at least 2 more classes.
- 4) West Elem. would need rooms for at least 6 more classes.
- 5) Where would the pre-School kids be housed?
- 6) If taken completely off line, it will NEVER open again as a school because the cost to bring it up to code would be prohibitive.
- 7) If used for kids (pre-School?) there would be no savings in utilities or LPN and only partial savings in custodial costs.

