




**WESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** WESTON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
**FROM:**  Jerome R. Belair  
Superintendent of Schools  
**DATE:** January 9, 2009

We have entered this budget season fully aware that we have a very difficult budget year before us. This budget is the result of months of work and is needs-based and data-driven. We began meeting with town boards last spring and those meetings informed us of the financial challenges facing Weston in the upcoming fiscal year. The administration began the budget process in early June and our review with the entire administrative team has provided you this recommended operating budget. The principle pressures on the decisions that have to be made, as I see them, are:

1. The Board of Education's desire to maintain high quality education, programs and services.
2. The Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance request for a minimal budget increase.
3. The NESDEC projection of a modest decline in enrollment and grade level enrollment fluctuations.
4. IDEA legislation and a proposed reduction in the Special Education Excess Costs Grant resulting in increased special education costs.
5. Aging computers in need of replacement.
6. The Weston Public Schools' commitment to continuous improvement.

Our response to these pressures must be accomplished through a careful balance of our continuous improvement efforts and the challenging economic times.

After extensive analysis, debate, and thoughtful consideration on the part of many, I bring to you this budget. In the spirit of balance and restraint, the resources requested in this budget are needed. We have worked hard to reduce costs before it gets to the Board level. This was accomplished by the administration thoroughly reviewing each cost center and exploring increased efficiencies and cost containment in all areas of the budget.

We welcome your questions and analysis of this budget. I am confident that we can emerge from this process with a reasonable and responsive budget for the Weston Public Schools. I believe this request has been honed to a minimum and that it is both educationally sound and fiscally responsible.

JRB:lo