

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The three elementary schools in New Canaan have a long tradition of balancing high expectations for academic growth with attention to the social and emotional growth of the child. Children take ownership of their learning, are valued for their thinking and ideas, and share in the daily responsibilities of the school. Faculty and staff are committed to creating an environment where children feel safe and are encouraged to take intellectual and creative risks. Our elementary administration and staff welcome collaboration from parents, families, and our community as we work to help children grow to be active citizens at school, in our town, and in our world.

The proposed 2018 budgets at each of the elementary schools have been developed for our schools to sustain strong and rigorous instructional programs across all curriculum areas, academic as well as in the arts, ICT/library media, FLES, and physical education. Our goal is to deepen and expand concepts and skills from one year to the next, with an emphasis on the application and synthesis of learning to new contexts. The budget proposals support such priority needs as the continued implementation of balanced literacy instruction that now includes a research-based, multi-sensory phonics program (Foundations), additional informational text sources in the realm of social studies subscriptions (*Time for Kids* and *Scholastic News*) to integrate leveled literacy resources across disciplines, and innovative furniture and equipment that will support collaboration and flexible problem solving in the classroom while also providing for the movement and sensory needs of elementary students.

Enrollment at East School as of October 1, 2016 was 547 students, constituting 29 K-4 classroom sections. Projections for the 2017-2018 school year, though estimated to be a decrease of 11 students, would continue to require 29 classroom sections in order to maintain Board of Education class size guidelines at these grades. These class size guidelines support the effective implementation of instruction in the classroom, with the teacher able to meet with small groups for targeted instruction that is adjusted to meet the range of student needs in the class. As we move class cohorts forward and welcome a new cohort of kindergarten students, we anticipate using classroom space as we have in this past year and so both space and staffing should remain stable, as reflected in the 2018 proposed budget for East.

Budgetary increases at South School are based upon projected enrollment and anticipated numbers of class sections for the upcoming school year. South School's enrollment as of October 1, 2016 was 545 students and it is projected to be at 547 students for the 2017-18 school year. Even though our overall enrollment is projected to increase only slightly, we are anticipating increasing to 29 sections. This is due to keeping within class guidelines in our primary grades. At this time, we anticipate increasing our number of classroom teachers by one and our specials teachers by .2.

The enrollment at West School as of October 1, 2016 was 489 students (excluding 36 preschool students) and the 2017 -18 enrollment projections show a decrease bringing us to a total of 464 students. As a result, this decrease will impact the number of sections next year. We are projected to maintain 24 (K-4) classroom sections and 3 preschool sections, with a total of 27 sections. Our current cohort of kindergarten students is projected to remain at 4 sections next

year and the projected number of incoming kindergarten sections is projected to be 4 sections for the 2017-18 school year. While these projections keep class sizes well within the Board of Education guidelines, the reduced enrollment will result in a reduction of 2 (K-4) classroom sections at West School. West School does not anticipate any increase in the number of classroom teachers. The projected decrease in enrollment will result in a reduction of the number of classroom teachers by two.

With such enrollment and number of classroom sections with our youngest children in the district, we are committed to ensuring that students across all classes at each building at a given grade level have access to a full repertoire of special area offerings (PE, music, art, ICT, etc.). With the projected class sections, the elementary schools will continue to share part-time special area staff across the three buildings as a district budget efficiency as we have done in past years. Similarly, we have begun to share special education staffing across the buildings to best address the needs of caseloads at each school.

Our attention across all three elementary schools is also turned to teaching assistants and other supervisory staff. This staffing is critical in ensuring that adequate safety supervision is available to students at arrival, dismissal, lunch, and recess periods on the playground as well as when there is a staff absence. We look to maintain our current staffing of teaching assistants, supervisory staff, and interns to ensure adequate supervision and classroom instructional support.

Elementary schools budgeted costs are related to ongoing updating of district curriculum, instruction and assessment, as well as classroom learning environments, all designed to meet 21st century learning standards and expectations, customized to New Canaan student needs. Pending actual enrollment, the elementary schools are prepared to be flexible with the placement of support staff and “specials” staff to ensure resources are available where needed.

