



OLD SAYBROOK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

50 Sheffield Street, Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475-2399

Jan G. Perruccio
Superintendent of
Old Saybrook Public Schools

Amity Goss
Director of
Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

Julie Pendleton
Director of
Operations, Facilities, & Finance

Kathleen Bai
Director of
Pupil & Professional Services

To: Principals, Program Directors, and Instructional Leaders

From: Jan G. Perruccio, Superintendent
Julie Pendleton, Director of Operations, Facilities and Finance

Date: October 3, 2018

Re: Objectives and Goals for the Budget Process for 2019-2020

As we begin crafting the operating budget for the 2019-2020 school year, we want to remind you to give careful thought to the following and let these discussion points serve as your guide to budget creation. **Please read this carefully.**

- **Budget the plan!** We want to be sure we are asking for the resources needed to budget for the strategic plan and not just planning the budget. This means that you will want to and need to talk about the strategic plan in your budget conversations. The staff must be aware, by now, of the direction our strategic plan is taking. Please refer them to the website for additional details on the [strategic plan](#). All resources, including financial resources, have been assigned to this plan, and each of you has building/program goals that are driven by the plan and they need to be considered. We need to continue to develop the practices we have promised to deliver in both our district goals and our personal and professional goals. We also need to be fiscally responsible. Remember to add or trim from requests accordingly.
- **Our district's strategic plan** directs us to support:
 - Personalized learning
 - Increased authentic learning experiences
 - Innovation
 - Creativity
 - Critical thinking
 - Collaboration
 - Global relationships
 - Cultural awareness
 - Opportunities for regionalism
 - Professional development designed to meet staff learning needs
 - Use of technology to create learning environments
 - Learning flexibility through student climate and voice and anytime learning

Please identify which goal(s) in the strategic plan are supported through the resources you are requesting. This should be done on the same page as the request (column 6 of request form).

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www.oldsaybrookschoools.org

"The mission of the Old Saybrook Public Schools is to educate and prepare students to achieve their highest aspirations, care for others and the environment, and contribute to a global society by working in partnership with families and the community, and by engaging each learner in a rigorous, personalized, and meaningful educational program."

- **Start from \$0.00. The best way for each administrator to know her/his budget completely is to budget from the first dollar.** It is sometimes the practice in some districts to look at last year's numbers and level fund or increase the line items slightly. Given that we have so many initiatives to address and we want to spend tax dollars respectfully, we ask that you understand what you are asking for and ask for what you need to sustain services and advance programs. Take the time to learn the expenses that have been assigned to each line item and predict and plan your building's/program's needs for 2019-2020. Reviewing each line item for the last 3 to 5 years, you'll begin to understand the cycle of expenses. Look for line items that have historically been under or over budgeted and examine why that may be true. In addition, help your teachers to understand the budget for their department/grade and the implications of their requests.
- **Things are NOT "business as usual".** We are in unique times. Please look carefully at expenses and clearly identify them as priority 1, 2 or 3. Please do not leave this work to us at central office as we may choose differently than you would have hoped. We have to be ready to make cuts at every step of the process and will not have time to discuss which of the many items marked number 1 are the most important. (See the last bullet below for more on this.)
- **Professional Development** must, by directive from the State Department of Education, be individualized to meet the needs of teachers in our district. We continue to use EdReflect, as well as SafeSchools. Think about the needs of your staff as they work to adhere to and develop the goals of the strategic plan, and do your best to project and predict their needs in 2019-2020. Please coordinate your efforts in this area with Amity Goss.
- 80% of our operating budget is dedicated to **staff salaries and benefits**. I will meet with each of you to discuss current staffing as it relates to enrollment trends and status. **Be thoughtful about your building/program's staffing needs.** Do we have the right number of staff members? Are we utilizing them well? Are they assigned to maximize their impact on students? Conversations about human resources will always be part of our budget process although I know these conversations can be difficult.
- Look around the building and speak to your staff members. Do you want to make us aware of any **facilities/maintenance** issues? We may already know about it, but we'd rather you include it in your budget presentation. It can always be removed if it has already been identified. Please coordinate your efforts with Julie Pendleton.
- **Technology** is a tool of learning. What do you need to meet the needs of students who will be using technology to learn every day? Please coordinate your efforts with Amity Goss.
- **If it isn't budgeted, there won't be money for it. Really!** Plan for the needs of your building/programs because we will not be able to accommodate additional requests after the budget is fixed. The reason for this is that there are a few somewhat unpredictable line items in any district's budget. They include: price of commodities (oil, gasoline, etc.), which are usually set before the academic year is over or soon after, collective bargaining agreements yet to be negotiated, medical insurance participation rates, extraordinary student expenses (usually in the area of special education) and, at times, transportation. These situations can create extenuating circumstances that put pressure on our budget, but, in most years, we shouldn't have to freeze our budget early in the year if we plan carefully. We would like to avoid early budget freezes through careful budgeting.
- **Continue to prioritize your requests.** As the budget season gets busy, decisions will need to be made rather quickly. If we have a prioritized list of initiatives and associated expense created by you, we will do our best to honor your sense of the priorities. Ask your staff

members to do the same when making requests. We think they will appreciate having the opportunity to identify those programs they have identified as most important. If you prioritize your requests in the order of importance, we will be able to move quickly but still be respectful of the building level priorities if priorities are conveyed at the beginning of the process.

- 1 = Most important
- 2 = Somewhat important – could defer or look to share resources with another department, program or school in the district
- 3 = Would be nice to have

