

**2024 – 2025 Board of Education’s Proposed Budget  
Questions/Answers**

**1. Program 100 Instructional Technology – page 11**

**BCS**

Q: Why is there an increase in online services?

A: Kami, a software product used by both schools, was moved from the Library budget to Instructional Technology, which is a more appropriate placement as it is primarily used by classroom teachers.

Q: Why is there an increase in Technology Supplies?

A: This reflects an increase in the cost of Chromebook cases.

Q: Why is there a decrease in Technology Related Hardware?

A: The student Chromebook replacement cycle, which will be the same moving forward, replaces three grade levels annually in grades 1, 5 and 9. Grade 1 is paid for out of the Open Choice grant. Complete costs include Chromebooks, 4-year support plan, enrollment in Google Management Console, and asset management support. While the decrease at BCS includes inflation, it also reflects fewer devices needed due to enrollment.

**BHS**

Q: Why is there an increase in online services?

A: Kami, a software product used by both schools, was moved from the Library budget to Instructional Technology, which is a more appropriate placement as it is primarily used by classroom teachers.

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**2. Program 105 Art – page 12**

**BCS**

Q: Why is there a decrease in the instructional supplies?

A: Supplies were left over from the previous year requiring less to be ordered.

**BHS**

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: This is for ink for the new large-format printer in the art room.

**3. Program 110 English Language Arts (ELA) – page 13**

**BCS**

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: This amount represents the actual need.

Q: Why is there a decrease in textbooks?

A: We were able to pre-buy some materials with grant funds which will be used in the classrooms this year, which lowered the amount in this line.

Q: Why is there an increase in the workbooks line?

A: We plan to use the writing workbooks for students.

**BHS**

Q: Why is there a decrease in textbooks?

A: Based on enrollment, textbook needs vary annually.

Q: Why is there a decrease in dues and fees?

A: Membership is no longer used.

**4. Program 120 World Languages – page 14**

**BCS**

Q: Why is there an increase in online services?

A: This is the same resources we have used in the past and this year was the renewal year for the 2-year subscription.

Q: Why is there a decrease in textbooks?

A: Additional textbooks and/or replacements are not needed at this time.

**BHS**

Q: Why the decrease in online services?

A: New teacher chose different instructional materials.

Q: Why the decrease in instructional supplies?

A: New teacher chose different instructional materials.

Q: Why the increase in textbooks?

A: Potential for AP Spanish class which would require updated textbooks.

**5. Program 140 Computer Instruction – page 15**

**BCS**

Q: Why is there a decrease in online services?

A: We are now using a free resource for typing instruction.

**BHS**

N/A

**6. Program 160 Mathematics – page 16**

**BCS**

Q: Why is there an increase in online services?

A: The last few years we have had to transfer funds to cover the actual cost of Ready Math. We anticipate this budget amount should cover the entire program cost and yearly cost increase.

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: Some supplies need replenishing and additional materials need to be ordered for the new instructional coach position.

**BHS**

Q: Why is there a decrease in online services?

A: The *Kuta* software used by department is on year 2 of a 3-year subscription.

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: Supply needs vary annually.

**7. Program 170 Science – page 17**

**BCS**

Q: Why is there a decrease in online services?

A: Some resources previously purchased have been replaced with free resources.

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: Some materials are new this year and other consumable materials needed replenishing. The price of some of the materials also went up.

**BHS**

Q: Why is there an increase in professional services?

A: Increased cost of waste disposal.

Q: Why is there a decrease in online services?

A: We are in year 2 of a 3-year subscription for Gizmos.

Q: Why is there an increase in dues and fees?

A: This is for the annual membership for New England Association of Chemistry Teachers to support the new chemistry teacher.

**8. Program 180 Health & Physical Education – page 18**

**BCS**

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: Some instructional supplies were purchased this year with Choice funds because they were needed for students this year.

**BHS**

Q: Why is there an increase in repairs and maintenance?

A: Cost of annual inspection/maintenance of fitness room machines has increased.

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: Supply needs vary annually.

**9. Program 190 Social Studies – page 19**

**BCS**

Q: Why is there a decrease in online services?

A: We are not going to purchase multi-year subscriptions for next year due to pending potential resource changes.

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: This is due to the replenishment of supplies and the cost has gone up on some of the supplies.

Q: Why is there a decrease in periodicals?

A: Due to shifts in instruction, we are not renewing a resource (*Science Spin*) which is part of *K-5 Scholastic News*.

**BHS**

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: Supply needs vary annually.

Q: Why is there an increase in periodicals?

A: Increased cost of the Wall Street Journal.

**10. Program 310 Business Education – page 21**

**BHS**

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: Fewer new items are needed for next year.

**11. Program 320 Family and Consumer Sciences – page 22**

**BCS**

NA

**BHS**

Q: Why is there an increase in repairs and maintenance?

A: This is due to the increase in cost for the fire suppression equipment inspection.

**12. Program 350 Music – page 23**

**BCS**

Q: Why is there an increase in professional services?

A: Grades 4 and 5 are now doing more work with the accompanist.

Q: Why is there an increase in repairs and maintenance?

A: More BCS students are using school instruments, which requires more repairs and maintenance.

Q: Why is there an increase in online services?

A: The cost of the online subscriptions has increased.

Q: Why is there a decrease in travel expense?

A: No longer needed.

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: The cost of some materials went up.

### **BHS**

Q: Why is there an increase in repairs and maintenance?

A: There is an increase in the number of music students and more instruments need to be repaired.

Q: Why is there a decrease in online services?

A: Some software packages are no longer used for instruction.

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: Increased number of music students requires additional music and supplies.

## **13. Program 360 Technology Education – page 24**

### **BCS**

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: The same projects as in the past years, but supply costs have increased for consumables.

### **BHS**

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: Needed supplies vary each year depending on courses and enrollments as well as increased costs.

## **14. Program 600 Continuing Education – page 25**

Q: Why do we pay for continuing education?

A: Sections 10-67 to 10-73(d), inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S) require that adult education services be provided by local school districts, free of charge, to any adult 17 years of age or older who is not enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school program. Mandated services that must be provided include High School Completion Programs, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Citizenship classes.

### **Provider Districts**

These are districts, like Vernon, that provide the state-mandated in their own district and to other districts. Vernon accomplishes this through Vernon Regional Adult Bases Education (VRABE), a unit of the Vernon Public Schools that specializes in adult education. VRABE provides the required adult education for 13 cooperating towns in addition to Vernon.

### **Cooperating Districts**

These are districts that for several reasons – primarily cost-effectiveness, but including expertise in a highly-regulated, grant-funded state and federal environment – contract out with a Provider District to provide the mandated adult education services for their district. VRABE's Cooperating Districts include Bolton, Colchester, Coventry, East Windsor, Ellington, Glastonbury, Griswold, South Windsor, Tolland, Vernon, Wethersfield, and Region 19 (Ashford, Mansfield, Willington).

### Fee Structure

VRABE structures its fee based on a district's usage, and the cost per pupil per program per year. Five-year running average enrollment is used to avoid large yearly fluctuations in a town's fee, and VRABE's overall State Grant Request (the source of determining costs) is approved yearly by VRABE's Policy Board, consisting of the superintendents or their representatives from each town.

## **15. Program 440 Library Media Center – page 26**

### **BCS**

Q: Why is there a decrease in online subscriptions?

A: The subscription (*Cami*) was moved to the instructional technology line.

Q: Why is there an increase in other supplies?

A: The cost of materials went up and additional bins for books to be forward facing are needed.

Q: Why is there an increase in dues and fees?

A: A membership (CASL) was previously paid for by the teacher and is now part of the budget.

### **BHS**

Q: Why is there a decrease in online subscription services?

A: The subscription (*Cami*) was moved to the instructional technology line.

Q: Why is there an increase in library books?

A: The BHS library/media specialist continues to work with faculty to find appropriate non-fiction books to support curriculum. In addition, the increase also includes several titles for the newly released Social Studies curriculum.

Q: Why is there an increase in other supplies?

A: Needed supplies vary each year depending on library activities.

## **16. Program 910 Athletics – page 27**

Q: Why is there a decrease in the professional trainer and athletic trainer supplies?

A: We do not anticipate we will be able to secure a professional trainer again next year.

Q: Why is there an increase in dues and fees?

A: The NCCC conference has increased membership fees.

Q: Why is there an increase in the cost of uniforms?

A: The cost of uniforms has increased.

Q: What is the uniform replacement cycle?

A: Several years ago, the Superintendent instituted a uniform replacement cycle. Below is the most updated uniform replacement cycle.

**Bolton Center School**

<b>Team</b>	<b>Replacement Year</b>	<b>Last Purchased</b>
Boys Basketball	2024-25	2020-21
Girls Basketball	2024-25	2020-21
Cross Country – Boys & Girls	2025-26	2021-22
Softball - (Jerseys only)	2027-28	2022-23
Baseball - (Jerseys only)	2027-28	2022-23
Soccer - Boys	2028-29	2023-24
Soccer – Girls	2028-29	2023-24

**Bolton High School**

<b>Team</b>	<b>Replacement Year</b>	<b>Last Purchased</b>
Track & Field – Boys	2022	_____
Track & Field – Girls	2022	_____
Basketball – Girls	2024-25	2018-19
Soccer – Boys	2025-26	2019-20
Soccer – Girls	2025-26	2019-20
Cross Country /Track Boys & Girls	2025-26	2021-22
Softball	2026-27	2021-22
Tennis – Girls	2026-27	2021-22
Tennis – Boys	2026-27	_____
Baseball	2027-28	2022-23
Volleyball	2027-28	2022-23
Basketball - Boys	2028-29	2023-24

**17. Program 200 Special Education – page 30**

Q: Why is there a decrease in district pupil services?

A: This is based on the out of district IEP needs of the individual students as well as a few students graduating and/or moved out of district.

Q.: Why is there an increase in the field trip line at BHS?

A: To cover staff costs to support out of state field trips to support students with IEPs.

Q: Why is there a decrease in professional services?

A: Actuals came in less this year and projected costs came in less for next year for outside evaluations for students with IEPs.

Q: Why is there an increase in online services?

A: We have added online platforms to meet the specialized instructional needs of students per their IEPs. Further, the cost of other platforms have increased including Learning Ally and SNAP, which is the nurse’s platform, as well as a cost to move SNAP to a cloud based server. Additionally, local boards of education are now required to provide at least 18 hours of

professional development to paraprofessionals per year. This per para cost is part of this line and totals \$3,750.

Q: Why is there an increase in tuition?

A: This is due to rate increases based on projected IEP services and an additional outplacement.

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies at BCS and a decrease at BHS?

A: The increase at BCS is based on student needs and programs/materials outlined in IEPs. In addition, new curriculum has been requested to support the reading needs of students who require very specialized instruction. At BHS the decrease is based on student needs outlined in IEPs.

Q: Why is there a decrease in tests at BHS?

A: We do not need to purchase protocols this year.

Q: Why is there an increase in student transportation out of town?

A: Fuel costs have increased.

Q: Why is there an increase in student transportation PK-home?

A: This represents the contracted rate for the M & J bus and it is for the entire school year, as opposed to part of the year as was the case last year.

Q: Why is there a decrease in excess cost reimbursement?

A: It is anticipated that certain outplacements will not meet the excess cost reimbursement threshold because combined tuition and transportation costs are not high enough to be reimbursed per state guidelines. **See below for an explanation of Excess Cost.**

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION EXCESS COST GRANT**

The special education excess cost grant reimburses school districts for the reasonable costs of special education for a student who lives in the district that exceed 4.5 times the district's average per pupil expenditures for the preceding year and 100% of the cost of special education for any student placed in the district by a state agency and who has no identifiable home district in the state. Reimbursable costs include those for special education instructional personnel, equipment and materials, tuition, transportation, rent for space or equipment, and consultant services. The grant does not reimburse districts for regular education costs attributable to a special education student.

### **HOW THE GRANT IS CALCULATED**

The excess cost grant is calculated by adding up all the reasonable costs of special education services a district provides to a particular student and subtracting the district's "basic contribution." The basic contribution is 4.5 times a district's average per pupil expenditure for the preceding year. Bolton's per pupil expenditure is \$20,678, in the case of a resident student, and 100% of that expenditure in the case of a state-agency-placed child with no identifiable home school district. Any expenditure exceeding the basic contribution is reimbursable by the state.



**18. Program 210 Extended School Year (ESY) – page 32**

Q: Why is there an increase in out of district ESY pupil services?

A: This is based on rate increases based on projected services.

Q: Why is there an increase to ESY online subscriptions at BHS?

A: This is a reclassification from instructional supplies.

Q: Why is there an increase in tuition to other districts/private schools/ed agencies?

A: This is based on actuals and on projected increases.

Q: Why is there a decrease in ESY instructional supplies at BHS?

A: This was a reclassification-moved to ESY online subscriptions.

Q: Why is there an increase in out of district student transportation?

A: Additional students are out placed and require transportation.

**19. Program 2110 Social Work – page 34**

Q: Why is there a decrease in instructional supplies?

A: This is based on requests from the social worker.

**20. Program 2120 Guidance – page 35**

Q: Why is there an increase in online services?

A: We have *Naviance* at both schools and the cost increases every year. Naviance is a college, career, and life readiness (CCLR) platform used at BCS in the middle school and at BHS.

**21. Program 2130 Nursing – page 36**

Q: Why is there an increase in repairs and maintenance at BCS?

A: The company has quoted a slight increase in these services for the upcoming year.

Q: Why is there an increase in other supplies at BCS and a decrease at BHS?

A: Based on projected needs and inventory and the cost of consumable supplies increases every year.

**22. Program 2140 Psychological Services – page 37**

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: This is based on requests from the psychologist to support reinforcement and materials for counseling and social skills groups.

Q: Why is there an increase in tests?

A: We need to purchase protocols to support triennial testing as well as testing for new referrals. Additionally, a revised cognitive test is due to be released during the school year.

**23. Program 2150 Speech and Language – page 38**

Q: Why is there a decrease in PD?

A: The SLP did not request to attend the National ASHA Conference next year.

Q: Why is there an increase in instructional supplies?

A: Additional materials are required to meet the needs of students per their IEPs.

Q: Why is there an increase in tests?

A: We have additional students who require testing, therefore, protocols are needed.

**24. Program 2210 – Program Improvement and Evaluation – page 40**

Q: Why is there a decrease of \$849 for in-service at BCS and an increase at BHS of \$1,390?

A: The decrease at BCS is due to fewer staff requests. At BHS, the increase reflects two major conferences (English and Social Studies) will be in Boston in fall 2024, and two teachers from each department are planning to attend.

Q: Why is there an increase in online services?

A: This reflects a general cost increase due to inflation for Atlas (curriculum-mapping software).

**25. Program 2320 Central Administration – page 41**

Q: Why is there a decrease in BOE support services?

A: As a result of moving to meetings that allow for online participation, videographer no longer needed because the meetings are now recorded via Zoom.

Q: What accounts for the increase in central support services?

A: Increase in the cost of goods and services including Frontline the applicant tracking software, CABE services, JI advertising for bids, and general supplies.

Q: Why is there an increase in dues and fees?

A: ASCD memberships were added to include all teacher leaders and there is a rate increase.

**26. Program 2330 School Insurance – page 42**

Q: Why is there an increase in property/general liability insurance?

A: Based on recommendation from our insurance consultant, we are projecting cyber insurance at a 15% increase over FY2023 actual. This policy renews annually in March.

**27. Program 2410 Building Administration – page 43**

**BCS**

Q: Why is there an increase in postage?

A: The cost of postage has gone up and there has been an increase in how many items we mail home (teacher summer letters, veterans assembly invitations, and many other smaller mailings).

Q: Why is there a decrease in travel expense?

A: Less money was budgeted because there have been fewer travel expenses in recent years.

**28. Program 2510 Fiscal Services – page 44**

Q. Why is there an increase in professional meetings?

A. Funds for software training have been reclassified from professional services.

Q. Why is there a decrease in professional services?

A. Decrease is due to an off year for the required bi-annual actuarial valuation and reduction in software training being reclassified to professional meetings.

Q. Why is there an increase in postage?

A. Postage rate increased.

**29. Program 2580 Systems Management – page 45**

Q. Why is there an increase in professional services?

A. Both the BOE and Town transitioned this year to a new IT Support Service to better meet the needs of both entities. During the course of their discovery this year, Novus (our new IT vendor) found that the number of adult devices is 370 compared to the previously reported number to Novus by CREC (our previous provider) of 215 devices. This required an adjustment to this year's fees for endpoint management program, email protection, and automated patching for Windows and third party applications and response licenses. The endpoints provide management of specific reporting and protections most commonly requested as requirements for cyber liability insurance. In addition, *Veam Backup and Replication Services* was reclassified from online services. The budget increase is 17% due to the fee adjustment to cover additional devices this year FY24 that had not been budgeted for and a \$20,000 transfer occurred in December to address this deficit. However, the actual annualized increase from current year would have been a 7% vendor projected increase.

Q. Why is there a decrease in internet services?

A. We do not have a need at this time to continue certain hotspot services.

Q. Why is there a decrease in online services?

A. *Veam Backup and Replication Services* was reclassified to professional services, nonrenewal of *Site Improve*, and lower renewal price for *Fortinet*.

Q. Why did software supplies increase?

A. In FY24 we added the deploy component of PDQ to enhance the inventory component for Windows devices and as such we were under budget for FY24. The increase includes this FY24 adjustment and a 3% renewal increase.

**30. Contracted Salaries and Wages – page 47**

Q. Why is there an increase in the salaries and wages for administrators?

A. Contractual increases.

Q. Why the increase in the salaries and wages for teachers?

A. Contractual increases offset by new hires and vacancy projection savings.

Q. Why the increase for the salaries and wages for paraprofessionals?

- A. Contractual increases offset by new hire savings.
- Q. Why are there changes in the various ESY (Extended School Year) lines?
- A. ESY staffing is based on the IEP needs of students who are anticipated to qualify for the program.
  
- Q. Why is there an increase in the administrative assistants' line?
- A. Contractual increases.
  
- Q. Why is there an increase in administrative/business support?
- A. Contractual increases offset by not filling BOE calendar management vacancy.
  
- Q. Why is there an increase in the nurse/OT/PT/BCBA line?
- A. Contractual increases.
  
- Q. Why is there an increase in the operation/maintenance line?
- A. Contractual increases.
  
- Q. Why is there an increase in substitute instructional staff line?
- A. Increase accounts for known projected long term sub coverage.
  
- Q. Why is there an increase in the co-curricular/advisor stipends line?
- A. Contractual increases and new stipend request for BCS Student Support Services.
  
- Q. Why is there an increase in athletic stipends?
- A. Contractual increases and new stipend request for BCS Volleyball Coach.

### **31. Personnel Benefits – page 48**

- Q. Why is there an increase in health insurance?
- A. We are budgeting a 6% premium increase to cover potential increase in final rates which the State Partnership Plan expects to have sometime in March. On January 23<sup>rd</sup>, the State Partnership Plan's projected rate increase is 3-5% revised down from 3-7% in November. The amounts are based on current enrollments, staffing projection forms for next year, and vacancy projections to include insurance which is not taken in the current year.

### **32. Program 2600 Operations & Maintenance – page 50**

#### BCS

- Q. What drives the decrease to purchased property services?
- A. Spare parts for boiler moved to operation supplies and full roof under warranty instead of partial which resulted in lower pricing.

#### BHS

- Q. Why is there an increase to purchased property services?
- A. Increased costs due to inflation on fire alarm inspection, septic pumping, fire extinguishers inspection, and lawn service. Shredding services are no longer split between district and BHS. The energy management maintenance increased due to inflation and cost increased due to older equipment.

BCS & BHS

Q. Why the increase to repairs and maintenance?

A. Due to inflation the price of replacement parts and maintenance items have increased as well as vehicles and age of equipment needing more repairs.

BCS & BHS

Q. Why the increase in telecommunications?

A. Rate increase.

BCS

Q. Why the increase in operations and maintenance supplies?

A. Due to inflation and supply issues the cost of supplies has increased and boiler spare parts have been reclassified from purchased property services.

BHS

Q. Why the increase in operations and maintenance supplies?

A. Due to inflation and supply issues the cost of supplies has increased and more repairs done in house.

BPS

Q. Why the decrease in gasoline?

A. Cost per gallon decreased.

BHS and BPS

Q. Why the decrease in diesel?

A. Cost per gallon decreased.

BCS and BHS

Q. Why the increase in other supplies?

A. Contract for boot allowance reimbursement increased from \$200 to \$300.

**33. Program 2700 Transportation – page 52**

Q. Why have the transportation lines increased?

A. These are the contractual increases with the BPS bus contractor, M&J. This will be year four of a five year contract extension.

Q. Why the decrease in diesel fuel?

A. Cost per gallon decreased.

**34. Capital Reserves Appendix A – page 54**

Q. How does the CAPA process work?

A. The process is a bit different this year as a result of the Charter change and the newly established Finance Committee. The BOE Buildings and Grounds subcommittee meets with the Superintendent and Director of Buildings and Grounds to review the requests. The subcommittee

then makes a recommendation to the BOE and the BOE votes on the proposed CAPA list. The CAPA list for both the BOE and BOS is then examined at Finance Committee meetings on CAPA. They examine all the requests and make a recommendation to the BOS. The BOS votes on the Finance Committee's CAPA recommendations to determine the CAPA list to be presented as part of the BOS budget.

**35. Summary of Budget Adjustments Appendix B – page 55**

Q. What does Appendix B represent?

A. Appendix B represents the budget requests by teachers and administrators at the top of the page for a 4.97% increase over this year's budget. The list of reductions represents cuts made by the Superintendent of Schools for a recommended budget increase of 3.52%.

**36. Summary of Total Education Budget Appendix E – page 59**

Q. Where does this chart come from and why is it in the budget?

A. This chart represents the total cost of education in Bolton that includes both the general fund and grants. This chart was developed collaboratively by the Board of Education and Board of Finance.