

<b>King Philip Regional School District</b>	<b>18 King Street</b> <b>Norfolk, MA 02056</b>
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TO: Dr. Elizabeth Zielinski and Members of the School Committee

FROM: Audrey Lacher, M.Ed., Director of Special Education

RE: Special Education Budget Projections

DATE: 1/20/16

**Executive Summary**

**In-District Programming** – Maintaining King Philip’s internal program capacity is not only central to providing students with a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) but also pivotal to being fiscally responsible. In addition to inclusion opportunities, co-assisted classrooms, resource academic classes, and resource support classes, the District now has eight (8) specialized programs between the high school and the middle school. As a result, the number of out-of-district placements continues to be mitigated by our specialized in-district programming. Current student enrollment (FY ‘16) in the specialized programs is 99. Some of these 99 students have returned to the District from out-of-district placements due to our comprehensive program capacity, which can now address students with more complex learning profiles. Further, due to the specialized program supports and ancillary services provided, many other students have averted out-of-district placements. For the current (FY ‘16) school year, five (5) students who were in out-of-district programs were brought back to King Philip’s specialized programming. One student returned to the middle school and the other four (4) returned to the high school.

A critical component of effective special education programming is accurate identification of students who are eligible for special education services. Through the re-evaluation process, students’ growth is carefully assessed and the need for continuation of services is thoughtfully considered by the IEP Team. Students no longer requiring specialized instruction in order to make effective progress are exited from special education. These efforts become evident when DESE data is analyzed relative to the average (FY ‘15) percentage of students on IEPs: the state average is 17.1%; King Philip is 13.6%; Norfolk is 16.2%; Plainville is 15.8% and Wrentham is 15.9%.

**Elementary Census** - The elementary census was sent out to the elementary districts on September 11, 2015 and returned to King Philip by October 2, 2015. Subsequent to that, meetings were immediately set up with the three elementary district teams to gather clarifying information relative to the documentation provided through the census. King Philip representatives at these meetings included: Audrey Lacher (Director of Special Education), Connie Eckart (District Team Chair), Barbara Collins (Out-of-District Coordinator) and Nancy Amin (MS Team Chair). The following projections are based on the data collected from these preliminary meetings. King Philip representative(s) attend all team meetings

that occur throughout the school year in an effort to inform programmatic and fiscal decisions for each incoming 7<sup>th</sup> grade student. It is at those meetings that final, legally binding educational decisions are made for special education services that will be provided by King Philip. During the school year, King Philip will also observe those students that may require more intensive support in order to gain a better understanding of their particular needs.

The data indicates that there will be a total of sixty-four (64) special education students entering the King Philip Regional School District from the three elementary districts in FY '17. Of these, fifty-six (56) have been identified as in-district (W=24; N=17; P=19), and four (4) have been identified as out-of-district (W=0; N=1; P=3).

Please note that the accuracy of projections for FY '17 can be impacted by either an increase and/or a decrease in student support needs throughout the remainder of sixth grade.

**Staffing Summary** – The census meetings indicate the need for 3.0 (1:1) teaching assistants for the incoming 7<sup>th</sup> grade students who require 1:1 support as designated on their existing IEPs. In response to this need, 3.0 teaching assistants at the middle school will be reassigned to these three (3) incoming 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. This shift in assignments is due to the fact that their three (3) current 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be moving up to the high school. Through creative reallocation of staffing resources at the high school, including flexible scheduling, increased student independence, and fading supports, King Philip is able to absorb these additional two (2) students' (1:1) support needs within the current infrastructure. Therefore, King Philip requires only 1.0 teaching assistant to accommodate this increase in students with more intensive support needs. The 1.0 (1:1) teaching assistant will cost \$40,006.00. Teaching staff, as well as ancillary service staff, will remain level service at both the middle school and the high school. Teaching assistant staffing will remain level service at the middle school.

Due to our comprehensive in-district programming, we will continue to be well-positioned to provide services throughout the educational continuum for our high-need students at both the middle and high schools.

**Out-of-district placements** – There are 48 students in out-of-district placements as of October 1, 2015. For FY '17, there are three (3) students that will be graduating and no students that will be turning 22. The projected number of out-of-district students for FY '17 is 54. This number is arrived at using updated actual data as of 1/20/16, indicating that we have 50 out-of-district students. We also have 4 incoming 7<sup>th</sup> grade students, and 3 pending students (based on legal issues and programmatic concerns). The breakdown of the projected costs for tuition and transportation for the 4 incoming 7<sup>th</sup> grade students is \$335,319. The total projected costs for tuition and transportation for all of the 54 students, inclusive of in-district transportation for King Philip's students in specialized programs and net (after) circuit breaker is \$4,714,764 compared with \$4,086,296 in FY '16.