

## **“Adequate” Pittsfield schools**

John Freeman, Superintendent, Pittsfield School District

Doug Hall, Chichester, NH

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The current budget for Pittsfield schools is \$10,302,402. With 581 students, that amounts to \$17,732 per student.

The State of New Hampshire calculates an amount of funding that is “Total Calculated Cost of an Adequate Education” in each town in the state. For the 2018/19 school year the amount stated for Pittsfield in the Department of Education’s spreadsheet is \$2,690,333.

We decided to determine how Pittsfield’s existing budget could be reduced by 74% to reach the State’s level. It really wasn’t possible. So we decided to add the State’s “Stabilization” grant for this year of \$2,185,277, Special Education aid of \$284,000, and Medicaid Reimbursement of \$130,000. With the target of the resulting total of \$5,289,610, we created a new budget. During this budgeting exercise, every attempt was made to keep as much of the “core” teaching in place as possible.

To achieve this budget level, however, many Federal and State laws, and the State’s Minimum Standards will be violated. For those interested, we can provide the 500+ line item budget and a list of such violations of law and regulation line item by line item.

As you read the needed changes below, please recognize that this lower budget is still more than double what the State has stated is enough for an “adequate” education in Pittsfield.

### **Changes Throughout the District**

Eliminate all art, music, and physical education classes in all grades

- Currently there are 3 teachers: 1 art, 1 music, 1 physical education; PS-6 students receive instruction in each, every four days; programs in art, music, and physical education for elementary school students would be terminated

Eliminate all school nurses and any medical support

- Currently there are two nurses, one in each school building; medical support includes substitute nurses and access to external medical professionals on a rare, but as-needed basis; nurses also assist with certain health curriculum topics at both the elementary and middle high school; elimination of these positions would require administration of medications by non-health professionals; elimination would result in termination of services to special needs students whose IEP’s require such; would also limit ability of classes to experience field trips when classes include one or more medically fragile students; health and medical consults with teachers and parents would also be eliminated

Eliminate several behavior support positions, both counselors and support staff

- Currently there are 4 positions: 1 counselor/behavioral support professional position and 1 support staff position at each building; elimination of these positions would place significant additional burden on supervisors – both classroom teachers and paraprofessionals who may supervise recess and other periods, as well as administration for addressing individual student behavioral needs; may also force complex special needs students to be placed out of district

Eliminate four custodians

- Currently have 8 custodians; elimination of 2 of 4 daytime positions would reduce district's ability to keep up with minor repairs as well as maintenance on the district grounds, including maintenance and clean-up at Drake Field, which is district property located away from the buildings; elimination of 2 nighttime cleaning positions would reduce the ability to maintain current level of cleaning and minor maintenance

Reduce building cleaning to twice per week at best

- Reduced staff would require nighttime crew to take on some tasks of daytime crew and spread the nightly cleaning tasks over 2 to 2.5 nights for full cleaning of buildings and grounds

Eliminate many provisions in the current teacher contract, including life insurance, health insurance buy-back, sick day buy-back

- Of course, these issues would need to be negotiated, which would be highly unlikely; however, elimination of basic job benefits would need to be considered by the school board as an alternative to cutting teaching staff

Eliminate field trips

- Currently, the PTO and parent fees supplement modest allowance for field trips; the district's commitment to field trips would be eliminated

Eliminate all athletic programs

- Currently have middle and high school teams in soccer, basketball, softball, and baseball; volleyball has recently been eliminated; all programs would now be eliminated

Eliminate district reading specialist

- The district reading specialist provides guidance to teachers, to teacher teams, and to the curriculum development process; this position, which supports both the general population and struggling students in different ways, would be eliminated

Eliminate 34.5 paraprofessional positions, including special education teacher aides

- Currently, two general paraprofessionals serve our kindergarten classes; most other paraprofessionals serve special needs students as requirements in individualized education plans; two paraprofessionals provide support for student management; elimination of these positions would put the district in "non-compliance" of special education laws

Eliminate purchase of equipment, supplies, books, subscriptions, technology apps, etc.

- District would not make any equipment, book, or supply purchases to support instruction in any grade or subject area

Eliminate ESOL program (English for speakers of other languages)

- Small, federally-required ESOL program would be eliminated, terminating support for children who are speakers of other languages

Eliminate all transportation services (parents to transport their children)

- All transportation – regular education and special education – would be eliminated; parents would be required to provide transportation to and from schools

Eliminate all funds for substitute teachers

- Substitute teachers would not be provided when teachers are absent due to illness, emergency, training, etc.; students in absentee-teacher classrooms would be distributed among other classes and/or assembled in a central location – such as cafeteria – for the day

Eliminate three special education teachers

- Elimination of special education teachers would require that other special education teachers increase their caseloads; additionally, direct contract time with students and time for teacher consultation would be significantly reduced

Eliminate reimbursement for university courses, workshops, and professional development

- All professional development – both for individual teachers and for larger segments of the faculty – would be eliminated; this would curtail most innovation and school improvement efforts

Eliminate mentor teachers who support new teachers

- With high rate of staff turnover, loss of mentor teachers would eliminate a critical layer of support for new staff

Eliminate technology personnel, equipment, training, etc.

- Two technology-related positions have already been eliminated: IT coach and online learning coordinator; the final two positions in the district – IT manager and IT assistant – would also be eliminated, leaving the district without any support for technology use by either students or adults

Eliminate several categories of consultations for complex learners

- Complex learners require the services of external consultants to assist teachers and parents in providing their education; for example, these include vision specialists and psychologists, which provide support for specific students

Eliminate all travel reimbursement

- District would eliminate all reimbursed travel, for example, to attend external training, to attend state-wide meetings, for home visits, etc.

Eliminate all co-curricular programs (clubs, activities, etc.)

- The district offers clubs and activities at all three levels – elementary, middle, and high school; these programs – restorative justice, chess club, student council, ski/snowboard club, etc. – would be eliminated completely

Eliminate the summer recreation program

- The district co-sponsors (along with local charities) a summer program at Drake Field; activities include field trips to a number of regional attractions; the program has a very positive reputation and fills needs of families for care and enrichment during the summer months; this program would be eliminated.

Eliminate guidance program, including both an administrator and counselors

- Currently, the district employs 1 administrator and 2 counselors (1 counselor having been eliminated a number of years ago); these individuals provide guidance for career as well as guidance for students, families, and staff regarding critical and emergency student issues; these positions would be eliminated

Eliminate SAP counselor (substance misuse)

- In collaboration with Second Start and a federal grant, the district provides one SAP counselor who serves both middle level and high school students and families; this service would be eliminated

Eliminate speech/language, PT, OT, and vision services for special needs students

- These services are provided through external contracts and are required in individual student IEP's; these services would be eliminated, and the district would be out of compliance with federal and state law

Eliminate summertime work on development and change

- Teachers are paid \$25/hour for summertime work on innovations and school development; this opportunity would be eliminated

Eliminate stipends for teacher leaders

- Teacher leaders provide support and leadership for school operations and school improvement; these roles would be eliminated

Eliminate all librarians, media center staff, and media centers

- Media centers in both buildings would be closed due to lack of staffing and resources

Eliminate school board stipends

- Modest annual stipends for board members would be eliminated

Eliminate school board expenses, including legal consultation and auditing services

- School board periodically requires consultation with counsel; annual audits are also required; these resources would be eliminated

Reduce time of superintendent to one day/week

- Superintendent position would be further reduced to one day per week; many duties required by school board policy and tradition will be eliminated

Eliminate photocopiers and their supplies

- Photocopying equipment – used in support of student learning, logistics, and communications – would be eliminated

Eliminate maintenance of athletic field

- The district owns and maintains a park in downtown Pittsfield – Drake Field; the Field is utilized for soccer and baseball teams, but also includes a boat launch, playground, basketball court, and tennis courts which are used by community members; it is often the site of community events; maintenance would be eliminated

Eliminate building level administrator

- The schools are led by a dean of instruction and a dean of operations service both schools; one of these positions would be eliminated, resulting in one “principal” for both buildings

Eliminate office incidentals: postage, supplies, advertising, etc.

- Modest allocation for office supplies and operations would be eliminated

### **Changes At Pittsfield Elementary School**

Increase average class size to 30

- The current staff of 16 classroom teachers would be reduced to 11 teachers, increasing average class size in K-6 to from about 20 students per class to about 29 students per class.

Eliminate an office secretary

- One of two clerical staff to be eliminated, requiring remaining clerical staff of one to assume all roles currently being addressed by two staff

### **Changes At Pittsfield Middle High School**

Eliminate business education, family & consumer science, and health

- Eliminate 2 high school teachers in unified arts team, eliminating courses

Eliminate science teacher

- Eliminate 1 of 4 high school science teachers, requiring larger class size (exceeding state limit in laboratory classes), elimination of some required courses, and elimination of some electives

Eliminate student participation in Concord Regional Technical Center classes

- Currently, 17 juniors and seniors participate in CRTC programs (none of these specialized career-oriented classes are offered in Pittsfield); this option would be eliminated

Eliminate foreign languages program

- Foreign language teacher has previously been eliminated; this would close our offerings, which currently entail a paraprofessional who supervises *Rosetta Stone* online instruction

Eliminate an office secretary

- One of two clerical staff to be eliminated, requiring remaining clerical staff of one to assume all roles currently being addressed by two staff

We note again that we have tried to retain as many core teaching positions as possible to reach this budget target of \$5,289,610.

Reducing further to the level the State declares is the “cost of an adequate education” will require lopping off another \$2.6 million. This will require a wholesale reduction in the number of classroom teachers and class sizes will approach 60 students per teacher.