

*Elmwood School*  
**Executive Summary**  
*January 5, 2012*

## **I. Budget Overview**

The Superintendent's preliminary budget supports funding for Elmwood School to continue to provide a guaranteed and viable curriculum for its students. (*Priority Initiative 1B*) The incoming second grade class is larger than the current one (+20 students) and both the Superintendent's and Principal's budgets include an additional section. The incoming third grade class is anticipated to be significantly smaller than the current one, (-58 students) with a reduction of 2 sections. The Superintendent's and Principal's recommended budgets maintain class size for incoming second graders at 22 students per section, enabling teachers to continue to differentiate for their students and to provide small group instruction, enrichment, and remediation. Third grade class size will be reduced by approximately one student per class, from 24 to 23 students per class. The total number of classes at Elmwood will be reduced from 24 to 23, with an enrollment reduction of 38 students from 532 to 494 and corresponding reduction of specialist time.

Elmwood School will continue to have two reading specialists who work primarily with remedial reading students. The number of reading teachers has remained constant since FY '03 despite the increased number of students entering Elmwood below the second grade reading benchmark. The elimination of the proposed 1.0 reading specialist in the Superintendent's budget means that some students currently at risk and on the Elmwood Watch List (Goal 1, School Improvement Plan) will not receive Tier 2 or 3 Response to Intervention remediation with a reading specialist. As a result, the number of students who need to be evaluated for special education services may increase. (*Priority Initiative 4B-Interventions for Students*)

Despite the Principal's recommendation to increase the FTE of the assistant principal and .4 secretary, the Superintendent's budget continues to include a shared assistant principal (.5) and a 19.75 hour 10 month secretary. As a result, the Principal spends a significant amount of time on disciplinary issues that ordinarily would be dealt with by the assistant principal. The assistant principal is unable to provide the consistent presence for students and teachers that we had prior to FY '10. Having only one full-time secretary throughout the day is a hardship and potential safety issue. The secretary is alone in the office from 11:30 until 3:30 answering the doorbell, telephone, greeting visitors, and providing support to teachers and students. To date, Elmwood and Hopkins are the only schools which have such limited office coverage in terms of both secretarial and administrative support.

## **II. Personnel Summary**

Second and third grade classrooms will remain at approximately the same size with a reduction of 1 classroom teacher due to declining enrollment. (*Priority Initiative 4B: Class Size*)

- Grade 2 = 22 students per classroom
- Grade 3 = 23 students per classroom

The Principal's budget included the following personnel requests:

- .5 additional assistant principal – Shared assistant principal does not provide effective continuity in terms of students, teacher support, discipline, or community interactions.
- Additional 1.0 reading teacher – Current caseload for two teachers is 61 students. This does not provide sufficient time for these specialists to see students in need of remediation as frequently as desired, to model lessons for classroom teachers to improve their practice of teaching reading, or to assess students for the learning support team. As of October, 2011, 27% of second grade students and 14% of third grade students were at or below the fifth stanine in the GRADE test. This is concerning in terms of achieving a score of proficient on the third grade ELA MCAS. (4B)
- Increase technology teacher from .3 to .5 – Having this teacher 1.5 days per week is insufficient to support 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and meaningful infusion of technology into the classroom. (4B) Prior to FY '09, this was a full-time position at Elmwood School.

- Additional .4 secretary – It is very difficult for one secretary to meet the needs of teachers, students, and parents when alone in the office. Having only one person can impact safety in the event of a crisis or intruder. The doorbell rings constantly, parents need to have their CORI's checked, copiers need to be unjammed, the telephone needs to be answered, teachers need supplies, and secretarial work needs to be completed.
- Add one additional general education teaching assistant to provide supports necessary for effective implementation of Response to Intervention. (4B)
- Upgrade the position of Math Tutor to Math Coach to be paid equitably for the expectations of the position. (4B)

The Superintendent's budget does not include any of these requested positions. However, instead of upgrading the Math Tutor from a Scale B Teaching Assistant to a Scale D, the decision was made to hire a math teacher to replace the tutor position. (*Priority Initiative 5B-Compensation and Work Day*)

### **III. Expense Summary**

The Principal's budget was level funded from FY '12 to FY '13. The Superintendent's budget includes a 5% reduction from FY '12 to FY '13. This reduction primarily impacted general supplies and the library budget. The reductions to other line items were minimal. Items previously included in the Text and Materials line items have been moved to the Supply lines at the request of the Director of Finance making a direct comparison of individual line items difficult.

The Superintendent also eliminated \$10,000 of science books requested by the Director of Elementary Education, in the District Curriculum budget, to replace the 1985 science book currently used by third grade students. Instead of a textbook, we had hoped to purchase unit specific books to meet the common core areas of study.

The overall cut in expenses is equivalent to a 7% decrease to reflect a 7% decrease in enrollment at Elmwood School.