



## **Superintendent's FY2020 Budget Message**

The mission of the North Middlesex Regional School District is *"To provide a comprehensive educational experience focused on students becoming contributing members of society."* Each year, it is the Superintendent's job to advance that mission with a budget that puts in place people, programs, and buildings; that supports energized instruction and engaged learning; that pushes innovation in all aspects of the school experience and remain aligned with our core values.

The Strategic Plan of the North Middlesex Regional School District provides a road map for our work, with goals and strategies tied to our mission. In addition, we measure the value and success of our work against five (5) Core Values:

1. The well-being of our students is at the heart of what we do.
2. Learning is a lifelong process for both students and staff.
3. A safe and supportive school climate is essential to student success.
4. All members of the North Middlesex community have the capacity to grow and develop their character.
5. We respect diversity in all forms.

With respect to the FY2020, our main focus is on addressing key needs in the classroom through strong programing, providing adequate administrative support to assist teachers in the implementation of new programming, and in maintaining our push to become a 1:1 district with regard to technology, while continuing to work toward long-term solutions to the financial implications of our growing capital improvement list.

Budgets are the vehicle by which leaders communicate their priorities and implement the mission, vision, core values, and goals of the organization. Without a commitment of financial resources, the goals of the school system cannot be accomplished. The decrease in student population has had little impact on the budget due to increases in the areas of contractual obligations, rising health insurance costs, transportation increases, and the need to address social emotional education and supports for our students.

Specifically, this budget is consistent with the district's vision and education priorities. Areas of focus include:

1. To create a proposed budget that is transparent and specific so that School Committee and community leaders can understand our proposals and how they support the educational vision of the District.
2. To create programmatic consistency at both the elementary and middle levels as we work towards truly becoming a PreK-12 district. Currently there are differences in programs and delivery of curriculum among all three elementary schools and both middle schools.
3. To build a support system to assist the Assistant Superintendent with curriculum, instruction, assessment, and data analysis as well as building principals with additional support in educator evaluation.
4. To examine all potential sources of revenue that the District has at its disposal in order to fund additional enhancements without overly burdening the annual operating budget.
5. To build an equitable technology infrastructure so that we can increase our purposeful use of technology to benefit students and staff.
6. To implement salary, benefits, and contract language in a clear and consistent manner for all employees.
7. To begin implementation of a long-term vision for instructional materials and equipment.

While the aforementioned investments represent increases to the FY2019 budget, the FY2020 budget still does not address other needs such as additional FTEs in nursing and counseling, a more aggressive approach towards 1:1 in technology, progress on our capital improvement needs, and other key supports for students and teachers.

## Overall Budget Picture

The FY2020 budget development proposal represents a 4.92% increase over FY2019 (4.81% excluding debt service). Specifically, the budget would increase by \$2,703,875 from \$55,006,195 to \$57,710,070. Furthermore, the general fund includes 462.84 FTE, a slight increase from the 454.56 FTE in FY2019.

It is also important to note that of the 4.81% increase (excluding debt service):

- 2.42% is the result of employee contractual obligations including salaries and benefits for active and retired employees
- .57% is the result of regular and special education transportation increases
- .14% is the increase in the Middlesex Retirement assessment

More specifically, the total budget increase, separate from the aforementioned, is 1.68%.

In addition, our budget is based on three (3) key overall principles:

- Classroom teachers and maintaining appropriate class size are important.
- Professional learning and program evaluation are critical elements of a successful organization. A second focus has been on teaching and learning, program review, professional learning around system objectives, and data analysis as the building blocks of continuous improvement.
- We have prioritized providing consistent programming at the elementary and middle levels, while putting a focus on how to actively market NMRHS as an institution that offers an education and overall culture that, at minimum, matches private, technical, and charter schools in the area.

While these beliefs have served our students and families well in the past, they do not fully capture the priorities of this school system and community. Moving forward, we will focus more fully and transparently on the following views and policy choices:

- The elementary and middle school model facilitates strong connections between school and families, in addition to allowing for the creation of strong, long-term relationships between teachers and students. After much discussion with all stakeholders, we have a renewed commitment to this model.
- Put simply, educators matter. Supporting our educators and their families is an important aspect of ensuring an outstanding experience for our students. We believe that providing opportunities for quality professional learning, support for the families of our teachers, and competitive salary, benefits and working conditions are critical elements in guaranteeing that outstanding educators stay in NM. Moreover, hiring and retaining outstanding school leaders to evaluate and coach teachers is also significant to the success of our system.
- Equity does not mean equal. Some of our students require more of our teachers and services than others in order to meet the high academic and social standards we set. Our emphasis on differentiation within the classroom and using quality assessment to drive instruction provide two tangible examples of our work to meet the needs of all learners, which can only be accomplished reasonable class sizes. Furthermore, our special education programming directs important resources to particular populations to ensure that all students and families have access to quality instruction, support, and information.
- Quality early education programming is an integral part of a public school system. While we have consolidated buildings and moved our Preschool program, we are dedicated to enhancing what is already an outstanding program. The Preschool's recent move to the Squannacook Early Childhood Center has provided staff and students with a high quality education environment.
- Technology is an important component of a quality teaching and learning environment. Equitable access to the contemporary tools of teaching and learning for all teachers and students is no longer something that is "nice to have." Appropriate tools are the basics of a quality classroom and are necessary to prepare students to be college and career ready. This is now more true than ever as the state has moved to a computer-based assessment.
- An agile central administration is necessary to serve a comprehensive school district in a time of constant change as we continually evaluate everything that we do. While we accept the high demands put upon us by both the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary

Education and the NM community for a school system that is high performing and one to be proud of, it is clear that changes and additions will need to be made to the central administration in order to ensure that we can meet these requirements, while providing appropriate levels of service and support to teachers and building administrators.

We know that compromises and choices will need to be made and that these ideas will require a substantial financial commitment on the part of the NM taxpayers. We look forward to the opportunity to continue these discussions over the coming months.

This FY2020 budget proposal represents an opportunity to provide critical resources to support student services, to continue to enhance our special education services in NM, to reaffirm our commitment to the belief that class size matters, and to reiterate our pledge to provide an equitable technology plan throughout our schools within the framework of the larger, ongoing conversation about the resources and choices that will be necessary to make our mission, vision, core values and goals a reality.

I have actively consulted with my leadership team, in formulating the FY2020 plan. The following spending plan represents my best judgment of the greatest good in line with our obligations to both the current citizens and the taxpayers of the next generation.

### Expenditures

#### *Educator, Secretarial, Nursing, Custodial, & Paraprofessional Increases*

<b>FTE</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
1.0	AES	Grade 1 Teacher	\$60,000	Currently, this group is at 29 students, which has been a struggle this year with one (1) K teacher. We will continue to monitor the numbers over the summer.
1.0	VBES	Certified Nurse Assistant	\$28,800	As the district's largest elementary school by approximately 100 students, this position is needed to triage and assist as needed.
1.0	NMRHS	American Sign Language Teacher	\$65,000	As a highly popular foreign language class at NMRHS, this position is needed to provide students with the ability to take three (3) years of ASL, which is required by

				most colleges.
1.0	DW	Occupational Therapist (Replaces COTA)	\$28,000	
1.0	DW	Administrative Assistant	\$51,500	Position approved by SC in October for a January 2019 start date. This role serves as the executive assistant for the HR Director and Business Manager.
0.5	DW	Gateway Job Development Specialist	\$28,880	Position approved by SC in October for a January 2019 start date. This role will work to establish employment opportunities for our 18-22 population.

*Educator, Secretarial, Nursing, Custodial, & Paraprofessional Reductions*

Based on our current projections, which includes student population, class size, and scheduling, we are projecting a 4.0 FTE decrease in staffing. This will become more transparent as the spring approaches.

*Administrative Staff Increases*

<b>FTE</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
1.0	DW	STEM Coordinator	\$95,000	With increasing demands on students, teachers, and administrators additional district support is requested to support our stakeholder groups and DESE requirements.
1.0	DW	Humanities Coordinator	\$95,000	

*Employee Salaries & Benefits*

1. Employee retirement expenses directly impact the budget on an annual basis. Specifically, we are forecasting exit costs of cost of \$75,000 (level funded) in FY2020. However, through the recruitment process to fill these positions, we will look at a combination of skill-set and cost to the district, which usually results in a decrease.
2. Although the actual rates for health insurance will not be made available for several more weeks, our assumptions are that these will increase 10% from FY2019. Based on this projected increase for active and retired employees , we are expecting an increase of \$287,310 from FY2019.
3. Teachers, Paraprofessionals, Secretaries, and Nurses have all agreed to new collective bargaining agreement. Each of these agreements includes a 2% COLA for FY2019, FY2020, and FY2021.

### *Utilities & Legal Fees*

The district continues to look for ways to optimize utility costs across buildings. The district went “live” with two solar projects this past year on the North Middlesex Regional High School and Ashby Elementary School. The transfer of Peter Fitzpatrick School also resulted in savings in building costs and utilities. Telephone costs are now tracked in the utilities lines due to the change in DESE codes.

Legal services include a minor increase anticipated for FY20.

### *Textbooks, Instructional Materials & Equipment, and Professional Learning*

North Middlesex Regional High School is requesting an increase of \$8,250 for Virtual High School due to the change in prior policy of utilizing district staff to provide VHS services. DESE also added the code (2345) to segregate costs of “Distance Learning.”

### *Special Education & Transportation*

The district continues to work with students to find the least restrictive environment. Tuitions for FY2020 are budgeted at \$4,676,000 which is slightly less than FY2019, but due to a reduction in the use of Circuit Breaker funds, results in an \$135,000 increase to the general fund budget. The district continues to work to streamline costs for both in-district and out-of-district special education transportation. The increase in special ed transportation due to enrollment is projected at \$75,000. The district continues to see increases in the McKinney Vento homeless transportation and this remains difficult to predict, but is mandated by the federal government. We anticipate a \$35,000 increase in McKinney Vento homeless transportation.

### *Technology*

Hardware & Infrastructure Increase: The hardware refresh cycle for technology devices, audio/video projectors, and sound cards has increased slightly due to the expiration of a technology lease and the IP phone lease coming in slightly less than anticipated. This will allow us to install mounted interactive

projectors with sound bars in classrooms, some of which have no existing mounted audio/video technology. This year, hardware purchases include a computer refresh for AES and SMS, the replacement of approximately one quarter of the district Chromebooks, the installation of 22 mounted interactive projectors with sound bars across the district, and upgraded replacements for the existing wireless access points at HBMS, NMS, AES, SMS, and VBES.

Hardware & Infrastructure Decrease: The lease for servers and backup systems has ended, which resulted in a \$52,140 decrease. Additionally, the budget for the phone system lease has been decreased by \$15,000. E-Rate quotes are still coming in, but a significant decrease to internet and wide area network costs is anticipated.

### *Transportation*

The District's Regular transportation contract will expire at the end of June 2019. After going out to bid, the district received only one response to the bid from our existing bus company, Dee Bus Service, Inc. Dee has been serving NM for the past five years and provided us with a bid proposal that represents a 10.75% increase for FY2020.

The District receives reimbursement for students living greater than 1.5 miles from school at the percentage that is approved during the state budget process. This continues to be less than the originally proposed 100%. We anticipate state transportation reimbursement of \$981,984 based on the numbers received from the Governor's Budget.

In an effort to facilitate transportation for after school programming (extra help/fine arts/athletics), we will be recommending the addition of two (2) middle school late buses. We are proposing one (1) at Nissitissit and one (1) at Hawthorne Brook. Each bus will run on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

### *Custodial & Maintenance*

The district continues to fund capital repairs to the buildings within the overall budget. The FY2020 budget includes \$275,000 allocated for this purpose. The capital planning committee will be meeting to prioritize the projects for FY2020. Additionally, the high school building project recently provided NMRHS with

the equipment necessary for indoor and outdoor needs required for the new school, which, in turn, led to less enhancement requests in this budget.

### *Contingencies & Circuit Breaker*

The district plans to utilize circuit breaker funds to support special education tuition costs in FY2020. The total budget for special education tuition costs is estimated at \$4,676,000. In response to that, \$3,676,000 will be budgeted from the general fund in FY2020 and \$1,000,000 will come from circuit breaker revolving funds.

(An average of \$749,765 per year is carried from circuit breaker for unanticipated special education costs)

### Revenues

#### *State Revenue:*

- Federal and State Grants - The district budget includes the Governor's estimates of an increase in Chapter 70 funds of \$20 per student, Chapter 71 (transportation) \$981,984 and charter school reimbursement lines \$67,800. These amounts are set by the state budget process which begins with the Governor's budget release on January 23, 2019.

#### *District Revenue:*

- The FY2020 budget proposal is supported with \$1,000,000 of Excess and Deficiency (E&D) funds. This is \$360,000 less than was used in the FY2019 budget. The district has not yet received the certification of E&D from the Department of Local Services, but the anticipated number is approximately \$3,000,000.
- In FY2019, School Choice revenues are projected at \$575,674 (78 Students from 13 Communities). The district utilizes the school choice fund to offset health insurance costs. We will recommend that school choice is expanded for FY2020 to help fill out classes that have available space and would not require another teacher. The budget for FY2020 School Choice revenue is estimated at \$624,310.

#### *Federal and State Grants:*

The district receives a number of state and federal grants. The largest of these is the SPED Allocation 240 Grant. We plan on utilizing this grant to pay for paraprofessional salaries and special education summer school salaries for FY2020. The total state and federal grants that were awarded for FY2019 totalled \$1,092,427:

- Title 1 Grant \$146,846
- Title IIA \$69,213
- Sped Allocation \$828,977
- Title IV \$11,293
- Early Childhood Allocation \$36,098

The district had reductions beginning in FY2018 in the Title 1 funding due to changes in the calculations and poverty factors that resulted in a reduction of the grant by approx \$140,000.

*Other Revenues:*

- Facility Use Unknown - New Policy & Pricing Structure
- FLLAC \$174,031 (9 Classrooms/Gymnasium/Cafeteria)
- Tuition-In (SPED) \$145,000 (4 Students)
- Pre-School \$120,000
- Before & After School Revolving \$18,700
- Food Services Revolving

The district currently runs a fully self-funded food service program (excluding capital investment). The district has been using a privatized Food Service Management company since FY2011. The current vendor is Whitsons Food Service has been serving the district since FY14. We have a participation level in the lunch program of just under 40%. The district currently serves breakfast in all buildings as well. The free and reduced % district wide is 25.7% as of 12/31/18. The food service continues to struggle to keep a breakeven program each year and higher participation and reduction in outstanding lunch balances could help this. The district food service budget is not released for FY20 yet, but we anticipate a similar budget to FY19.

*Revenue Challenges*

- The overall revenue projected from state funds is an increase of only 0.48%
- Use of one time funds (i.e E&D) can create structural issues for budgeting in future years
- Transportation reimbursement continues to be less than 100%
- The modest budget increases for the district result in difficult assessments for our member towns

Possible Additions

I believe the FY2020 budget proposal described above represents a realistic scenario for the fiscal year. However, there is some possibility that NMRSD may receive additional revenues that would permit us to enhance this budget plan. Although final recommendations will be formulated when and if these funds become available, and in accordance with any restrictions imposed by the eventual funding program, our priorities for additional improvements and restorations would include the following (in no particular order):

<b>FTE</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
1.0	SMS	Special Education Teacher	\$65,000	
1.0	SMS	Special Education Paraprofessional	\$30,000	
1.0	VBES	School Nurse	\$37,000	
1.0	VBES	Special Education Teacher	\$55,000	
1.0	VBES	Reading Specialist	\$65,000	
1.0	VBES	School Adjustment Counselor	\$55,000	
1.0	NMRHS	Grounds Custodian	\$35,000	
1.0	SECC	Custodian	\$30,000	
1.0	DW	Instructional Technology	\$50,000-	

		Technician		
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### Capital Plans for Schools & Budget Implications

The district has segregated a specific capital budget for FY20 of \$275,000 in the general fund budget. These funds have been separately identified from the existing plant and facilities budget lines. We anticipate that the separation will allow better management of the capital costs and allow the capital planning committee a solid number to prioritize the capital needs of the District. In addition to the capital repairs funded in the budget, the district will be looking at several larger building projects. These include Ashby Elementary demolition of the old 1960's wing, Varnum Brook Elementary entrance, third floor HVAC upgrades at Nissitissit Middle School, Playground space at Nissitissit Middle School. The larger capital improvements have significant consequences for the operating budget, especially in the outfitting of classrooms, maintaining buildings and supporting systems.

We continue to work with the towns to implement energy saving projects through the use of the Green Community State Grant. These projects include Hawthorne Brook Middle School Boiler, Hawthorne Brook Middle School HVAC air handling units for the gymnasium (pending), Varnum Brook Elementary School weatherization, Nissitissit Middle School lighting, Hawthorne Brook Middle School lighting (pending), Spaulding Memorial School lighting (pending). Without the support of the communities and their commitment to the NM District these projects would not be possible. The savings in energy is a benefit for all of our communities!

### Conclusion

The FY2020 spending proposal for NMRSD represents our effort to continue a strong educational agenda in a challenging fiscal environment, continued examination of our priorities and beliefs, and at a time when we are contending with the costs of serving our students and families at a level that NMRSD demands of its public school system.

This plan is focused on our Vision, Mission, and Core Values, along with the long-established priorities and policy drivers of this system:

- Classroom teachers and class size are important.
- Professional learning and program evaluation are critical elements of a successful organization.
- Serving NM students within the NMRSD is best for families and our schools.
- Our 3-tiered level model best facilitates the academic program and community that NM families are looking for in their school system.
- Teachers matter
- Equity does not mean equal . . . some of our students require more of our teachers and services than others in order to meet rigorous standards.
- Quality early education programming is an integral part of a public school system.
- Technology is an important component of a quality teaching and learning environment.
- An agile central administration is necessary to serve a complex school population.

Most importantly, this FY2020 proposal is designed to allow us to address key needs in the classroom, in classroom support, in special education, and in technology during the coming year, while continuing to work toward long-term solutions to the financial implications of our growing capital improvement list.

We look forward to the opportunity to provide elected officials, appointed representatives, and the community with further explanation of these important proposals over the coming months. In the meantime, we are happy to share all of NM's accomplishments from FY2019, which would not be possible without a committed community:

### **North Middlesex Regional High School**

- Class of 2018
  - 83% went on to two and four-year colleges
  - 7% joined the workforce
  - 7% went to prep school, trade school, or joined the armed forces
  - 50 recipients of the John & Abigail Adams Scholarship
- NMRHS Student Council - MASC Gold Council of Excellence Award

- Advanced Placement - 205 students participated and 59.5% earned college credit from the college they plan to attend
- Girls' Field Hockey, Girls' Volleyball, Girls' Soccer, & Girls' Cross Country qualified for the 2018 Fall MIAA State Tournament
- Girls' Cross Country won their division for the first time in school history
- Student Vocalists
  - 6 All-State Choir recommendations
  - 4 All-State Chorus participants
- Musical Theatre Productions
  - *Godspell - The Revival* - 8 TAMY nominations with 2 awards
  - *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* - 14 TAMY nominations with 4 awards
- Choir Ensembles
  - Women's Choir Gold Medal @ MICCA Festival
  - Chamber Choir Silver Medal @ MICCA Festival
  - Concert Choir Silver Medal @ MICCA Festival
  - Women's Choir Gold Medal @ NYC Music Festival - National Youth Choir Invitation to Carnegie Hall - March 2019
  - Chamber Choir Gold Medal @ NYC Music Festival - National Youth Choir Invitation to Carnegie Hall - March 2019
  - Concert Choir Gold Medal @ NYC Music Festival - National Youth Choir Invitation to Carnegie Hall - March 2019

### **Nissitissit Middle School**

- 11% increase on Mathematics MCAS from the previous test
- Implementation of a Best Buddies Program
- Several Band and Chorus students were selected for Central Districts
- Concert Band earned a Bronze Medal at MICCA
- Chorus performed at the Pepperell Senior Center
- Band marched in the Pepperell Memorial Day Parade
- 2 STEAM days annually with guest speakers and interactive programs for students
- Implemented a Community Rowing Program - Concept Rowing
- Veteran's Day Assembly
- CLASP after-school enrichment
- Mural club
- Maker Space/ Genius hour for grades 5 and 6
- Student productions: "James and the Giant Peach" and "Honk"

### **Hawthorne Brook Middle School**

- 2017-2018 Gold Medal @ METG for Excellence in Performance
- Fall production of *The Wizard of Oz* sold out all four performances
- Select Chorus performed at the Townsend Senior Center
- Bear-I-Tones *A Cappella* Group
- CLASP after-school enrichment program focusing on coding, crafting, Harry Potter, baking, and cooking
- Cross Fit Kids before school program
- Wake Up & Work Out before school program - game based
- Yoga before school
- Robotics Club
- Band performed at the Senior Center Luncheon
- 12 Band students accepted into Central Districts Festival
- Silver Medals @ MICCA for Concert Band and Wind Ensemble
- Band received the top 3 awards at their performance trip to Hersey, Pennsylvania - First in Class, Top Middle School band Overall, and Character & Citizenship

### **Squannacook Early Childhood Center**

- Relocated to our new space at 66 Brookline Street, Townsend, Ma
- Piloting Footsteps2brilliance reading app for home use with our student population
- Utilizes We Thinkers - social strategies and principles in the alignment of Social Emotional Learning
- Host special visits from HBMS Chorus and other communities events
- Connection to Jana Harrison (Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Coordinator)
- Started TEO Backpack Weekend Food Program

### **Ashby Elementary School**

- Exceeded the states target set for 2018 MCAS in grade 3 ELA, and Grade 4 ELA and Math
- Utilizes a five day a Response to Intervention block every morning where students work on individual reading target set by our school data team with support from the I-Ready assessment software

- Houses the district special education program, +STEPS
- Participate in Special Olympics
- We participate in the CAUSE Day in the Spring, which has replaced Jump Rope for Heart
- Developed a Social Emotional Learning staff team
- We have built a strong connection with the local Ashby churches and TEO to support families at the holidays and each weekend through the Weekend Backpack Food Program
- Hosts music concerts that incorporate band in grade 3 and 4 and K-1-2 concert, Memorial Day concert, and our 4th-grade play (The Most Epic Birthday Party Ever!)
- Work with student council from the HS in collections for Project 351

### **Spaulding Memorial School**

- Exceeded the state target set for English/Language-Arts achievement on 2018 MCAS
- Utilize a Tier I model to teach two (2) social-emotional lessons per month in every classroom
- Utilize an Intervention Block three (3) times per week where individual goals are set for students working below, at, or above established grade-level targets
- Partners with the Townsend Ecumenical Outreach (T.E.O) to provide Weekend Backpack Food Program to students and families in need.
- Partnered with TEO and student council to hold food and pajama drive to promote good citizenship.
- Works with Atwood Acres Senior Center and local Veterans in Hospital to provide Valentine's cards each year.

### **Varnum Brook Elementary School**

- 83% of students met targets on 2018 MCAS
- Houses three district special education programs (ACHIEVE/TLC/Language-Based)
- Partners with the Pepperell Senior Center for the Sir William Pepperell Reading Program
- Various community assemblies - Breakfast with Santa, Turkey Trot, Food Drive, and Veteran's & Memorial Day Assemblies
- Involvement in Special Olympics

- Participates in the Jump Rope for Heart

### **District Curriculum and Instruction**

- North Middlesex curriculum leaders continue to lead the state in organizing cross-district curriculum opportunities bringing together 25+ districts and over 100 educators to collaborate around the state frameworks and effective teaching practices.
- North Middlesex brought back a full day of targeted professional development offerings run by teachers, for teachers in November. Over 25 staff members presented for their colleagues in our district and an additional number of staff members presented at the annual NPEN (Northeast Professional Educators Network) Professional Development day to 2600 teachers across nine different sites.
- Teachers across the district continue to enhance their curricula, assessment methods, and instructional practices to ensure students are engaging with rigorous, meaningful activities.
- North Middlesex has been working with SERESC delving deep into social and emotional competencies, starting with self-awareness and self-management. Each building has created an Social Emotional Learning team to help lead the work for teacher and student understanding. This multi-year partnership will help align expectations and skill sets for a successful student experience.
- The district continues to support understanding how inquiry around data collection can efficiently and effectively increase student learning through the school-based data leadership team meetings and trainings. With increasing demands on administrators, teachers, and students, being a critical consumer of the information available helps our staff on a daily basis with the high demands placed on them while teaching.

### **Special Education**

- As we have done in past years, district special education paraprofessionals participated in a series of trainings related to providing supports for our students.
- Our district mental health team (school counselors, psychologists, behavior analysts) participated in a series of trainings designed to support our students needing therapeutic supports and intervention. These trainings included topics such as suicidal ideations and

interventions, assisting students with trauma, and homeless/foster care services for students.

- The district implemented the SBIRT Screening Tool (Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment) implemented by middle/high school nurses.
- The district continues to utilize and subscribe to Project Interface mental health referral service. This service is available to the district community as well as all three member towns.
- NM is one of 40 districts in the state who meet monthly for trainings, collaborate and discuss current mental health topics/trends.
- The district is piloting the SHAPE tool (School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation System).
- NMRSD continues to provide OUTSTANDING support to its students with disabilities across the district. This is evidenced by the wide range of students we support throughout the year. This is further evidenced by the fact the district returned 5 students from out of district (private school) placements at the start of and during this school year.

### **Technology**

- Phones and phone systems at HBMS, NMS, AES, SMS, VBES, and SECC have been replaced with systems using current telephone technology.
- All computers at VBES were replaced with updated models.
- 18 new mounted interactive projectors with sound bars have been installed in district classrooms with 6 more planned before the school year is out. The result will be that all kindergarten through grade 12 core subject and grade 5 through 12 substantially separate classrooms, as well as many non-core subject classrooms, will now have mounted interactive projectors with sound bars. All remaining pre-kindergarten, Gateway, full classroom special ed, library, art, and music classrooms are budgeted to receive mounted interactive projectors with sound bars in the 2019-2020 school year.
- 120 Chromebooks have been replaced with updated models maintaining a better than 2:1 student to device ratio with up to date mobile devices, in addition to bring your own device (BYOD) access at all schools.
- Wireless access upgrades have begun at all elementary and middle schools for better support for a large number of wireless devices in each building. Wiring upgrade plans have been started to allow for the

additional wireless access points required to increase to a 1:1 student to device ratio while maintaining BYOD access at all schools.

- An internal evaluation of existing department operational tools and procedures identified several cost savings and efficiencies we were able to implement as reflected in this budget.