

Westbrook School Department

Strategic Planning Process

Environmental Scan Outline

October 2009

The following are responses to questions posed by Good Group Decisions to support the strategic planning process. Information was gathered anecdotally from local school personnel and through data published in different reports.

Internal

- **Money**

- **What is the current size of the school district budget?**

- *FY 09: \$30, 780,608*
- *FY 10: \$32,988,494*
- *Exceeds State Recommended Essential Program and Services by \$1,233,414*

- **How has the budget changed in size over the past 10 years?**

- *Fairly stable. 4-7% increase although local share has stayed relatively the same.*
- *Increases in free/reduced lunch, so higher subsidy*
- *Special needs income growing*
- *Consolidation with city: Maintenance Director, Technology Director, New Human Resource director shared with city in 2010*
- *Reorganization of Central Office: Elimination of positions of curriculum director, language arts director, Title One director, administrative support staff. Also reduction of time for art and music directors.*
- *Loss of veteran staff and hiring of novice staff has reduced some personnel. Also, consideration of all positions when a vacancy occurs, and some eliminated as needs may have changed.*

- *Lower student enrollment is affecting us. Currently, we have 2,416 students PK-12. This is about 20 students fewer than in 2008-09.*
 - **What are your major areas of expenditures: the “pie chart” of your budget?**
 - *Personnel expenses*
 - *90% is from employee salaries and benefits*
 - *Health benefits fairly stable -0% increase in Blue Cross/Blue Shield benefits in 09/10*
 - *Facilities*
 - *Energy (fuel, natural gas) increased costs*
 - **How has that pie chart changed over the last 10 years?**
 - *Personnel and energy costs always represent the largest parts of the budget*
 - **What are the anticipated changes to spending - new categories, reduced areas, etc?**
 - *State curtailment predicted to be \$1.2 billion. Reductions likely in areas that do not affect children directly.*
 - *Elimination of positions of Assistant Superintendent, Director of Student Services, Curriculum Facilitator, and Gifted and Talented Director, effective July 1, 2010*
 - *Bonding of projects continue (HS, Canal, Congin) and will begin (WMS)*
- **People**
 - **Are you finding the right people (teachers, administrators, and staff)?**
 - *Yes. Westbrook enjoys healthy (often 100+) applicant pools for all levels of employment, particularly in teaching and administration. There are relatively few non-renewals every year. Some highly specialized positions are harder to fill, such as special education, after school programming, and HS math and science. There are often openings for special education ed techs as many of our ed techs are certified teachers and are hired for teaching jobs both in and out of Westbrook. Recent Ed Tech positions have attracted 70+ applicants.*
 - **Is there an abundance or shortage of people for certain positions?**
 - *Some highly specialized positions are harder to fill, such as HS special education, HS alternative learning, speech/language therapists, nurses, and foreign language. There are often openings for special education ed techs as many of our ed techs are certified teachers and are hired for teaching jobs both in and out of Westbrook. Specialized advertisements attract fewer but better qualified candidates to pools, such as in alternative learning.*

- **Has there been a shift in the ratio of personnel over the last 5-10 years?** For example:
 - **teachers to aides**
 - *Consistent*
 - *Special Ed Ed Techs depend upon student need.*
 - **teaching staff to administrative/service staff**
 - *Fewer faculty because of decreased enrollment*
 - *Reduction in administration and reorganization at Central Office level. Shared technology and maintenance departments with City*
 - *Shared food service director with Windham*
 - *Conversations about shared transportation service with Portland and So. Portland*
 - *Westbrook is above EPS model.*
 - **teachers to students**
 - *Average class size is approx. 18:1 at the PK-5 school and, 20:1 at WJHS. Class size varies at WHS.*

- **Have there been changes over the last 5-10 years in the types of qualifications required?**
 - *Under No Child Left Behind, teachers have had to be “Highly Qualified” either through portfolio and work experience or university credit.*
 - *State monitors certification through Certification Governance Committee through Westbrook Education Association.*

- **Have there been changes in performance evaluations – approaches and results alike?**
 - *Westbrook last updated its supervision and evaluation model in 2000. We use the Charlotte Danielson model. Teacher cycles that include goal setting, supervision, and evaluation occurs every two years for continuing contract teacher and annually for probationary teachers in years one and two. Relatively few teachers are not renewed during probationary period and rarely with continuing contracts. Support staff are evaluated annually after their probationary period of 60 days. Administrators set goals with their supervisor and are evaluated every two years.*
 - *It has been suggested among the administrative team that we review and revise the evaluation system.*

- *There have been about 25 non-renewals/resignations of probationary teachers in the past 5 years.*

- **How are staff attitudes and morale changing?**

- *Staff attitudes depend largely on the building in which they work. The Westbrook Education Association often intervenes with issues of morale.*
- *Staff feels overwhelmed by so many initiatives over the past several years as well as from the overabundance of testing and assessment practices.*

- **What does the retirement horizon look like?**

- *Approximately 15-20 are likely to retire. Many junior staff hired in past 10 years.*
- *No significant retirement content areas*

- **Have there been any significant changes to the governance structure (i.e. School Committee) and are any anticipated?**

- *School Committee has 7 members, three year terms plus 2 voting student reps with two year terms, and three terms are expiring this November 2009. Most senior member, 12 years, least senior (3 members) 1 year.*
- *No structural changes in School Committee, only changes in elected membership*
- *Standing subcommittees: Finance, Educational Programs, Transportation, Policy*
- *City Council has 7 members, two year terms, elected every 2 years. Council President chosen annually*
- *Mayor elected every two years. City administrator appointed by mayor subject to approval of $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of city council*

- **Buildings/Facilities**

- **Which buildings will need repairs or updates in the next 5 years? 10 years?**

- *Prides Corner School (K-2) needs the most immediate attention, within 5 years. It is overcrowded and outdated. It also is on the least reusable piece of property.*
- *Parts of the WHS roof dating to original 1950s construction will need to be replaced.*
- *Playgrounds at elementary schools will need attention: Canal(20 years old) in 2009, Congin (16 years old) to follow. Saccharappa and PC are newer.*

- *The latest building renovations/constructions are:*
 - *Prides Corner, 1988*
 - *WHS, 1990*
 - *Saccarappa, 1990*
 - *Canal, 1999*
 - *WRVC, 2002*
 - *Congin, 2005*
 - *WMS, 2010*
- **How many buses and other vehicles will need repairs or updates in the next 5 years? 10 years?**
 - *Age of fleet: 1996-2007*
 - *Plan is to replace 2 buses per year (none in 08/09) and 3 in 12/13, 13/14*
 - *State requires replacement at 100,000 miles or 10 years with some exceptions for older buses with lesser miles*
- **What updates in technology, library resources, special education materials, and/or lab equipment will be needed in the next 5 years? 10 years?**
 - **Special Education**
 - *Updates and expenditures rely upon student need*
 - **Curriculum Resources**
 - *Curriculum plan of replacing texts/materials for one content area K-12 each year on a 5 year cycle*
 - **Library Resources**
 - *Libraries now at state average for spending per pupil.*
 - **Technology Plan**
 - *Five Year Future Plan:*
 - *2010-2011*
 - *Expand tech standards from current 3-8 to PreK-12*
 - *Finish the deployment of the current 3-8 standards working directly with 5th and 8th grade teachers*
 - *Provide integration resources at the PreK-2 schools*
 - *Evaluate the use of voice enhancement systems*
 - *Upgrade E-Mail system (review possible alternative solutions or maintain Exchange and upgrade to new 2010 version which includes enhanced web support for non-internet explorer browsers)*
 - *Begin telecommunications consolidation and upgrade.*
 - *Wire 2nd and 3rd Floors of High School*

- *Wire Canal School*
 - *Prepare wiring at Vocational Center*
 - *Upgrade mobile computing carts at Congin/Canal*
 - *Continue process of providing interactive white boards to all classrooms K-5 and 9-12*
 - *Implement e-mail archive solution*
 - *Upgrade administrators laptops*
 - *Upgrade Central Office computer systems*
- *2011-2012*
 - *Begin the deployment of standards at the Pre-K, K and 9th grades*
 - *Expand mobile carts at Congin/Canal to one per grade level with additional cart at Congin due to greater classrooms per grade level throughout the school*
 - *Continue telecommunications consolidation and upgrade*
 - *Expand WJHS phone system to Canal School, Central Office and if possible High School through additional replicating server located at High School server room.*
 - *Replace current subcloset switching for hardwired connections including phones to provide POE at High School.*
 - *Upgrade Finance Server and SQL Report Writing server*
 - *Continue process of providing interactive white boards to all classrooms K-5 and 9-12*
 - *Any projects from previous year not funded*
- *2012-2013*
 - *Begin the deployment of standards at the 1-2 and 10th-11th grades*
 - *Upgrade PreK-2 computer technology systems*
 - *Continue telecommunications consolidation and upgrade*
 - *Expand phone system to include Vocational Center and Congin School*
 - *Replace current subcloset switching for hardwired connections including phones to provide POE at Vocational Center*
 - *Replace any necessary wiring for phone systems at Prides and Sacc*
 - *Continue process of providing interactive white boards to all classrooms K-5 and 9-12*
 - *Any projects from previous year not funded*

- 2013-2014
 - Evaluate PreK-12 technology standards
 - Upgrade 3-5 technology systems
 - Continue telecommunications consolidation and upgrade
 - Expand phone system to Prides Corner and Saccarappa
 - Evaluate phone resources district wide
 - Upgrade K-5 teacher and staff laptop deployment
 - Finish process of providing interactive white boards to all classrooms K-5 and 9-12
 - Any projects from previous year not funded

- 2014-2015
 - Deploy new MLT distribution to 6-12
 - Upgrade virtual server base including SAN
 - Began deployment of updated technology standards PreK-12
 - Evaluate middle school phone system

- **What updates to athletic facilities will be needed in the next 5 years? 10 years?**
 - No major changes in last 5 years to HS campus fields.
 - New facilities: athletic storage building, softball batting cage, new entry to Olmstead field, updates wireless scoreboard at Olmstead.

- **Have there been changes in the use of school facilities by the community (i.e. increased or decreased demand for event venues or meeting space)?**
 - Recreation department uses facilities
 - Scouts and other community groups use facilities.
 - Policies in place use and charge of school facilities.

- **Are the current facilities adequate for the number and demands of the student population?**
 - Overall, facilities are underused by current enrollment. The elementary schools are lopsided with two schools more populated than the other two. Recent conversations about the future of elementary education with suggestions of

having reconfigured (PK-4 with 5 to MS, PK-5, PK-K and 1-5, PK-K and 1-4 with 5 to MS) or fewer schools.

- **Students**

- **How has student achievement changed over the last 10 years?**

- *Historically, elementary reading has been high but experienced a dip in 2003. It is on the rise again with approximately 65% of students at/above standards. Elementary math has historically struggled, but has been on the rise, approaching 70% of students meeting standards, since the adoption of the Everyday Math program in 2004. These are fairly stable.*
- *Junior High and High School have historically fallen 2-3 points below the state average in reading and math. WJHS has not made Adequate Yearly Progress in math (CIPS4) for the economically disadvantaged and students with disabilities subgroups. WHS has not made AYP in reading (CIPS3) for the whole school and is in monitor status in math for the economically disadvantaged and students with disabilities subgroups. Both schools have done work to improve these areas, particularly at the middle level. This work has included increasing or reallocating instructional time, the use of innovative programming such as learning labs and Saturday school, and instructional planning.*

- **How do Westbrook students compare to other local, state, and national districts?**

- *Elementary schools are comparable, although Canal School typically outperforms Congin School on the MEA. Both schools are above the state average in reading and math. Both school have taken the NAEP (national test) but we only know that the state's 4th graders perform above average.*
- *HS and MS perform below the state average in reading and math.*

- **How are student attitudes and morale changing?**

- *Increasing feeling of disassociation with school. Overall lack of aspiration ("What do you expect, I'm from Westbrook.") Attitude is on an upswing. Earlier early-adolescent behaviors. Challenging transition to school and poor socialization for 4 and 5 year olds.*
- *Home support is dwindling for elementary students.*
- *School truancy is a concern. Many elementary principals transport truant kids.*
- *The number of students and adults on probation is high.*

- *High School completion rate have been consistent over the last six years: 70-75%.*
- *In the class of 2008, 50% go to 4 year college, 29% go to 2 year college and about 5% go to military*
- **Enrollment Projections – 2006 – 2016 by grade span**
 - *K-2: 579 to 561*
 - *3-5: 571 to 544*
 - *6-8: 607 to 523*
 - *9-12: 786 to 663*
 - *Total: 2543 to 2291*
 - *Loss of 252 students within 10 years*
 - *There is a consistent pattern of migration.*

- **Services**

- **Have there been expansions and/or reductions in special or non-academic services over the last 5-10 years?**
 - *Yes, especially ELL. ELL population increased 220% increase in past 5 years!*
 - *Westbrook has a growing in social needs so the need for social and guidance services has increased.*
 - *There is now a K-12 comprehensive guidance program which has been recognized by the state as exemplary.*
- **What services are anticipated to be expanded or reduced in the future?**
 - **Meal programs**
 - *Current Free/Reduced 52.9%*
 - **Nursing and health care services**
 - *Full time LPN at each elementary school needed given fragile health of some students. Full time RN at MS and HS. Proposal to reduce 2 elementary LPNs to part time was rejected by school committee in 2009.*
 - **Guidance and/or family counseling**
 - *3-5 guidance is filled temporarily by Director of Guidance. Definite need for increased elementary guidance.*

- *Increase in social work (1 FT per building) needed as families face increasingly challenging situations (incarceration, addiction, mental health, poverty, homelessness, etc.)*
- **After school programs**
 - *K-5 at 4 schools, run by city Recreation department. PC/Congin have about 30 kids; Sacc/Canal have about 15. Need for increase.*
- **Adult Ed programs**
 - *Currently 5 enrichment to 1 academic in the Fall and 3 enrichment to 1 academic adult ed offering in the Spring. Some enrichment courses may be counted as academic depending on contact hours. There are 4 or 5 new courses offered per semester.*
 - *The HS GED program has expanded over the past 5 years. 21 to 51 grads, 50% were GED.*
 - *Increase needed*
- **Voc/Tech programs**
 - *Good to expand younger then to HS.*
 - *Need to increase since students are career-ready upon graduation.*
- **Special needs, alternative, gifted/talented, homeschooled programs**
 - *Need for increased GT programming at all levels. Only 2 teachers plus teacher/director for whole district*
 - *Increased support for ED, Asbergers, and Autism*
 - *Special Education Ed Tech support for regular classrooms to provide less restrictive programming*
 - *ELL. 220% increase (30 active students in 199, 91 active in 2009.) Catholic Charities are accepting up to 230 refugees in Maine. Westbrook is becoming a first residence for them. Newcomers (from refugee camps and home countries) need to be supported. They range from no English to quite proficient. Because of state requirements, children remain in service for a long time and require extensive testing. We will need to increase services to support this. Testing takes 1 month.*
- **Alternative Learning**
 - *Increased/redefined alt. learning needed.*
 - *Current staff: 4 teachers and 3 ed techs.*
 - *About 50 working with staff in K-5, 29 at WJHS; 8 in grs. 7-8 at housed at Canal, 39 in WHS, 25 in WHS pullout.*

- **Existing Plans and Goals**

- **What goals have been set by the district in the past?**

- **Achievement**

- *Comprehensive Education Plans submitted by each school detailing SMART achievement goals for several years.*
- *District Comprehensive Education Plan abandoned in favor of building based plans.*

- **Strategic direction**

- *Last time as district in 1998 with Goals 2000. HS and WRVC during accreditation.*

- **Technology**

- *Well developed technology plan since 2004:*
- *2004*
 - *WHS: 2 thin client labs (50 terminals) and 60 laptops on carts*
 - *PC, Congin, Sacc: New server for profile, folders, and SIS*
 - *City & School TV station moved to WHS*
 - *Took over management of city technology*
- *2005*
 - *CO, WHS, WRVC: Wireless network, 30 laptops on carts*
 - *Established 2 FT tech. teachers, K-5 replacing 4 ed techs*
- *2006*
 - *WHS, WJHS: 236 Desktops*
 - *Canal, Congin: 50 laptops on carts, established 2 technology integrators replacing 2 tech teachers*
 - *Mitigated Exchange 2000 to Exchange 2003 Server*
 - *Network Assistant and additional tech support hired*
- *2007*
 - *PC, SAcc: 150 desktops and 60 n-station terminals*
 - *WHS: Updates 60 laptops, upgraded wireless (grs. 3-12)*
 - *CO: Replaced desktops, deployed ADS Financial software, upgrades Citrix server, consolidates several SIS into one district level*
 - *WJHS: Tech integrator hired*
- *2008*
 - *Connected all schools vis Gigabit, virtualized server base, upgraded SIS to state provided SIS, upgraded firewall*
 - *Consolidated file/print into data center*
 - *Canal, Congin: 150 desktops and 150 n-stations, laptops for teachers*
 - *WHS: updated laptops*

- 2009
 - WHS: 1:1 laptops
 - WJHS: 1:1 laptops
 - K-12 wireless
 - K-5 laptops for teachers and special educators
 - WHS: integrator hired
 - District tech coordinator stipended
 - All libraries upgraded to Alexandria
- **Other Initiatives**
 - Professional Learning Communities initiated system-wide in 2006
 - Wellness initiatives beginning at K-2 and growing through district
 - CASE-E data management implemented for special educators
 - Response to Intervention (RtI) plan developed for academics (literacy and math) and conduct (2009 pilot for mandatory 2010 implementation)
 - Standards Based Report Cards and progress reports at K-5. Difficult implementation.
 - 5 year curriculum review and replacement of materials cycle implemented in 2003. No textbooks are older than 6 years old.
 - Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) initiated at PK-2 in 2008 and will develop throughout the district in alignment with RtI
 - United Way Project began which involves a Children's Cabinet, PBIS, and the hiring of a Community Coordinator to help manage services for students.
 - A comprehensive Emergency Management Plan was created for each school and the district
 - New data management systems are in place (MEDMS for state reporting and Infinite Campus for local reporting)
 - 50 teachers and administrators are taking a course through WIDE, an extension of Harvard University, called Teaching for Understanding.
 - Library funding now at average. Basically, we budget one book per year per student.

External

- **Economics**
 - **What are the trends in income per capita within the district, over the last 10 years?**
 - Household income, 1999: \$37,873; 2006: \$43,197
 - Unemployment rate, 2006: 3.8
 - **How have property tax evaluations changes in the last 10 years?**

- *Median Sale Price 2006: 209,900*
 - *Average Rental, 2BR: 971*
 - *55% Single Family, 42% Multi Family; 4% Mobile Home*
 - *City valuation: 1,723,650,000*
- **What are the unemployment trends in the district over the last 10 years?**
 - *3.8% in 2006*

• **Demographics**

- **What are the sizes and characteristics of the census type groups in the district and how are they changing?**
 - *Population: 1990: 16,121; 2000: 16,142; 2007: 16,291 Growth .1.4% increase since 02*
 - *Median age: 37.8, under 18 23.2, 65 and over 15.5%*
 - *Increased unemployed and underemployed, adult liquor violations (18.3 per 10,000,) home nurse visits 43.9 per 1000), stimulant prescriptions 23 per 100,) food stamps use(current 15.8%)(Source: Portland Public Health Dept.)*
 - *Decrease in hospital visits (121.4 per 1000) (Source: Portland Public Health Dept.)*
 - *Comparatively, Westbrook has high levels of: meningitis and septicemia, robberies, calls to poison control, home nurse visits, and aggravated assaults (Source: Portland Public Health Dept.)*
 - *Higher than state average for: calls to poison control, adult drug violations, tranquilizer prescriptions, annual adult OUIs, stimulant prescriptions, narcotic prescriptions, home nurse visits, food stamp use, sensory disability, annual robberies, aggravated assaults, workplace injuries, asthma, depression, single mom households, women ages 15-44 on WIC, children under 5 on WIC, meningitis and septicemia, Chlamydia, and homes built before 1980 (Source: Portland Public Health Dept.)*
 - *Westbrook has comparatively low levels of juvenile OUI, emergency department visits, adult liquor violations, non-fluency in English, and female on male domestic violence(Source: Portland Public Health Dept.)*
 - *Lower than state average in: juvenile OUIs, adult liquor violations, emergency room visits, not fluent in English, in poverty, less than a HS education, hospital visits, female on male violence, annual domestic violence, male on female domestic violence, smoking related diagnose (Source: Portland Public Health Dept.),*
- **Is the school-age cohort growing or shrinking?**
 - *Shrinking.*
 - *Currently: 95 students in Alternative Ed*

- *Currently: 945 Free and Reduced Lunch Students*
 - *Currently: 16 homeless children*
 - *Currently: 87 ESOL Students*
 - *Currently: 10 Out of District Students*
 - *Currently: 48 PK students. PK was added in 2006 at primary schools.*
- **What are the changes in cultural/language diversity of the school-age cohort?**
 - *Growing ELL population. Many first placements rather than secondary locations.*
- **Are there significant changes within the elderly population of the district?**
 - *Growing.*
- **Policy**
 - What major policies have impacted the district in the last 10 years, and what changes are on the horizon?
 - **Local**
 - *Safety*
 - *Drop out prevention*
 - *Policy Review Cycle*
 - **State**
 - *Crisis Planning*
 - *RTI*
 - *Graduation requirements*
 - *New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP)*
 - *Mandatory SAT for HS students*
 - **Federal**
 - *NCLB and AYP*
- **Education Trends; Parent, Family, and Community Needs**
 - **Are there emerging popular themes in education or childhood development that will influence curriculum development?**
 - *Continued emphasis on data based decisions. Hopefully, national trend of the Whole Child movement.*
 - *United Way Project*
 - *Need to develop transitions between gr 5 and 6 in math and gr. 8 and 9*
 - *Need to look at reading and writing in grades 6-12*

- **How have parent/family expectations changed over the last few years and what changes are anticipated?**
 - *Growing disassociation with school. Volunteerism more popular in K-2, but lessens as kids move up.*

- **What are the school's relationships with other municipal offices and the broader community? How might they change in the near future?**
 - **Use of facilities**
 - *Share Director of Maintenance. Some use of city/school buildings.*
 - *Consolidation or reuse of facilities at WJHS. Conversations need to continue about how to use elementary schools that face decrease in population.*

 - **Emergency planning**
 - *Coordinated by Assistant Superintendent with city.*
 - *All schools have state approved crisis plans in place*
 - *Regular fire drills held. Some evacuation drills held.*
 - *Good relationship with Police Chief about family police situations.*
 - *SRO shared by WPD and WHS*

 - **Budget planning**
 - *City and schools develop budgets fairly independently although City Council and School Board hold joint workshop on budget and emerging issues Superintendent and City Administrator in close communication.*
 - *Communications about finance and payroll consolidated services being considered.*

 - **Connection to local businesses and non-profits**
 - *Arts projects with the city.*
 - *Junior Achievement in some schools.*
 - *WRVC House Building Program*