



Lexington Public Schools

146 Maple Street ♦ Lexington, Massachusetts 02420

Paul B. Ash, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

(781) 861-2550
email: pash@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us
fax: (781) 863-5829

Our Schools

Creating a World Class Education in Lexington

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Paul B. Ash, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools

On January 12, the School Committee will be holding a Saturday morning meeting to discuss and determine the school district's short- and long-range educational goals. The meeting will be held at Cary Hall, 1605 Massachusetts Avenue, and will begin at 10:00 a.m. The School Committee members believe it is important that the Superintendent's Recommended Budget be evaluated based on the Committee's vision for the school system and current educational and fiscal circumstances. I hope you will be able to attend the Saturday morning meeting as members present their ideas and discuss their goals for the education of our children. The School Committee will begin deliberating the FY 2009 Recommended School Budget on January 14, at Cary Hall, starting at 5:00 p.m. On January 15, residents are invited to comment on the recommended budget at the School Committee's public hearing, which will be held at Cary Hall at 7:30 p.m. A complete list of School Committee budget meetings can be found at http://lps.lexingtonma.org/admin/sc_agenda.html.

Last month, I presented to the School Committee two budgets—the FY 2009 Level-Service Budget and the FY 2009 Supplemental Budget. The level-service budget recommendation includes the funds that are necessary to replicate our current level of services pre-Kindergarten up through Grade 12. The supplemental budget recommendation includes the programs and services we need to improve the quality of education for all students. Both budget documents can be found at <http://lps.lexingtonma.org/>.

When I presented the supplemental budget, I acknowledged that the Town may not have the funds needed to achieve all of the goals in the supplemental budget. However, if our goal is to be a world-class school system, we need to work toward that vision over the next five years. The recommended supplemental budget is an important step toward that goal.

The Recommended FY 2009 Supplemental Budget includes funds that will:

- Expand K-5 literacy and K-5 mathematics intervention services.
- Expand and strengthen in-house, high-quality special education programs that will allow us to keep more students in the Lexington schools and reduce out-of-district special education tuition and transportation costs.
- Continue Lexington's commitment to annual curriculum reviews (Begin the K-12 English curriculum review in FY 09).

- Eliminate the instrumental music fee for children in Grades 4 and 5. This will make it possible for more students to learn to play a musical instrument.
- Offer full-day Kindergarten.
- Provide needed professional staff (0.2 guidance, 0.2 social worker, and 1.3 high school foreign language teachers).
- Provide needed support staff.
- Provide oversight to the high school student community service program (stipend position).
- Begin to restore professional development for K-12 teachers.
- Expand the new-teacher mentoring program designed to improve instruction and teacher retention.

In the months ahead, I look forward to working with the School Committee, Selectmen, Town Meeting members, Town officials, and residents as we discuss our educational vision for the Lexington Public Schools and forge the FY 2009 budget.