

Lexington Public Schools

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

From: Mary Sullivan Kelley, Ed.D., Director of Student Services
Supervisors of Special Education: Elizabeth Billings-Fouhy,
Jim Russo, Maura Johnson, Denise Oldham, and Kathleen Meagher
Barbara Bennett-Fortier, Out-of-District Coordinator

Re: PreK- Age 22 Special Education Services

Date: November 28, 2006

Introduction

During the past ten years, the cost of Lexington's special education program has increased and decreased, as a percentage of the total school budget. In 1996, the total cost of special education was 17.2% of the total school budget. The cost of special education increased to 19.5% in 2000, decreased to 17.5% in 2003, and increased to 19.9% in 2005. In 2005, the average statewide cost for special education was 18.9% of the total school budget.

During this past year, the cost of out-of-district placements has significantly increased in Lexington. The three primary factors were: an increase in the number of students placed in out-of-district schools, an increase in the number of students requiring more intensive placements, and an increase in mandated tuition rates. In order to explain these increased costs and what steps we might take to reduce future costs, this report is divided into four sections.

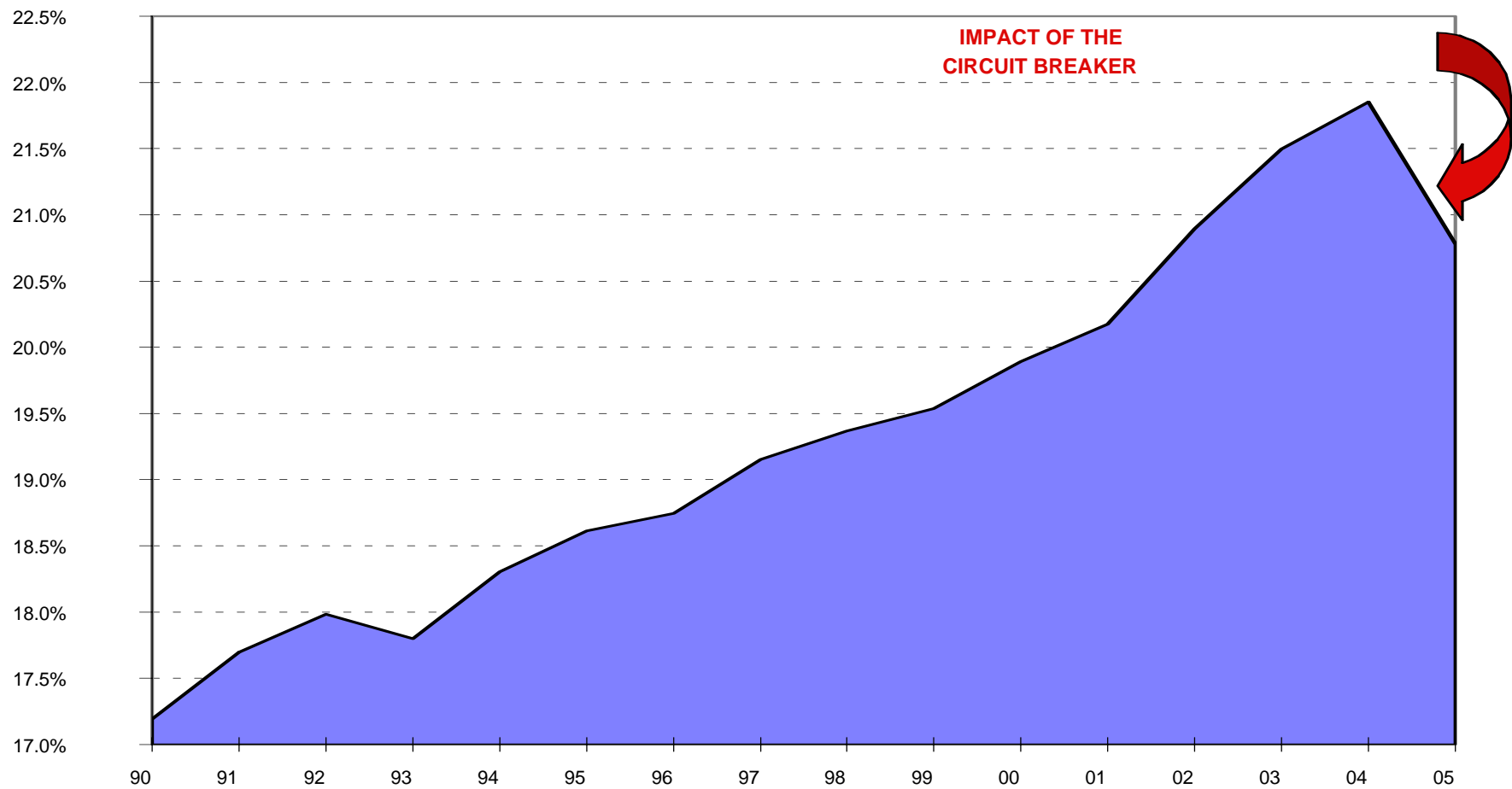
1. **Local and State Trends in Special Education** – This section shows the growth of special education in Massachusetts and its fiscal impact during the past fifteen years. Lexington's special education program is also compared with ten similar school systems in our geographic area.
2. **Current Range of In-district and Collaborative Placements for PreK-12 Students with Mild to Significant Special Needs** - The purpose of this section is to describe the current range of special education programs in the Lexington Public Schools.
3. **Current Range of Out-of-District Placements for Elementary Through Age 22 Students with Significant Special Needs** – Some students require highly specialized educational programs in private day and residential settings. This section describes the six types of private day programs and an overview of services at residential schools.
4. **Recommended New or Expanded Programs** – In order to provide a continuum of services and reduce the need for some out-of-district placements, some new or expanded programs are recommended. For each proposed program, the cost of the new or expanded program is compared with the projected tuition and transportation costs if no program is established.

Local and State Trends in Special Education

SPECIAL EDUCATION STATE AND LOCAL TRENDS

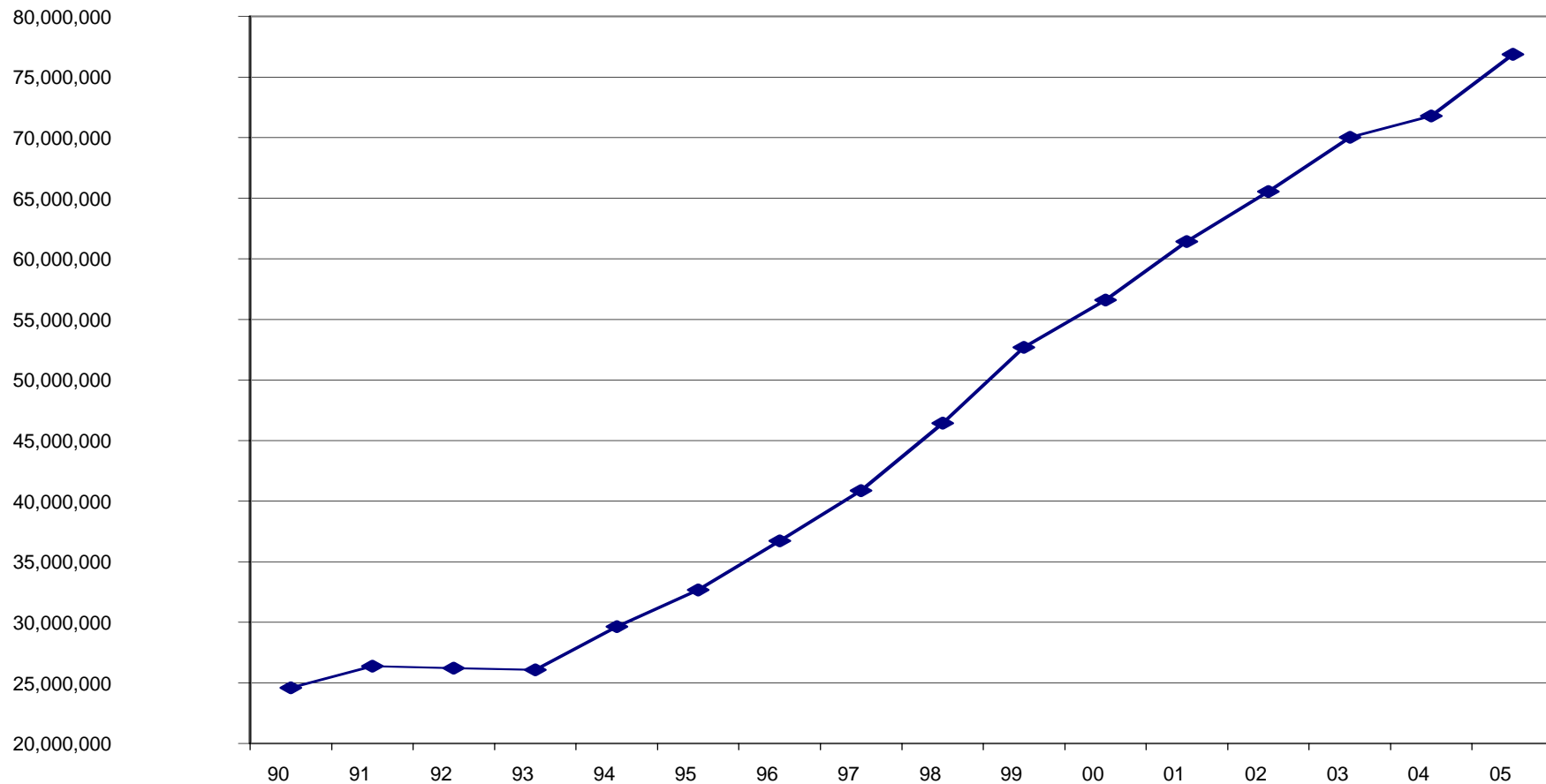
COST TRENDS

**SPECIAL EDUCATION AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL SCHOOL
DISTRICT EXPENDITURES FY90-FY05**



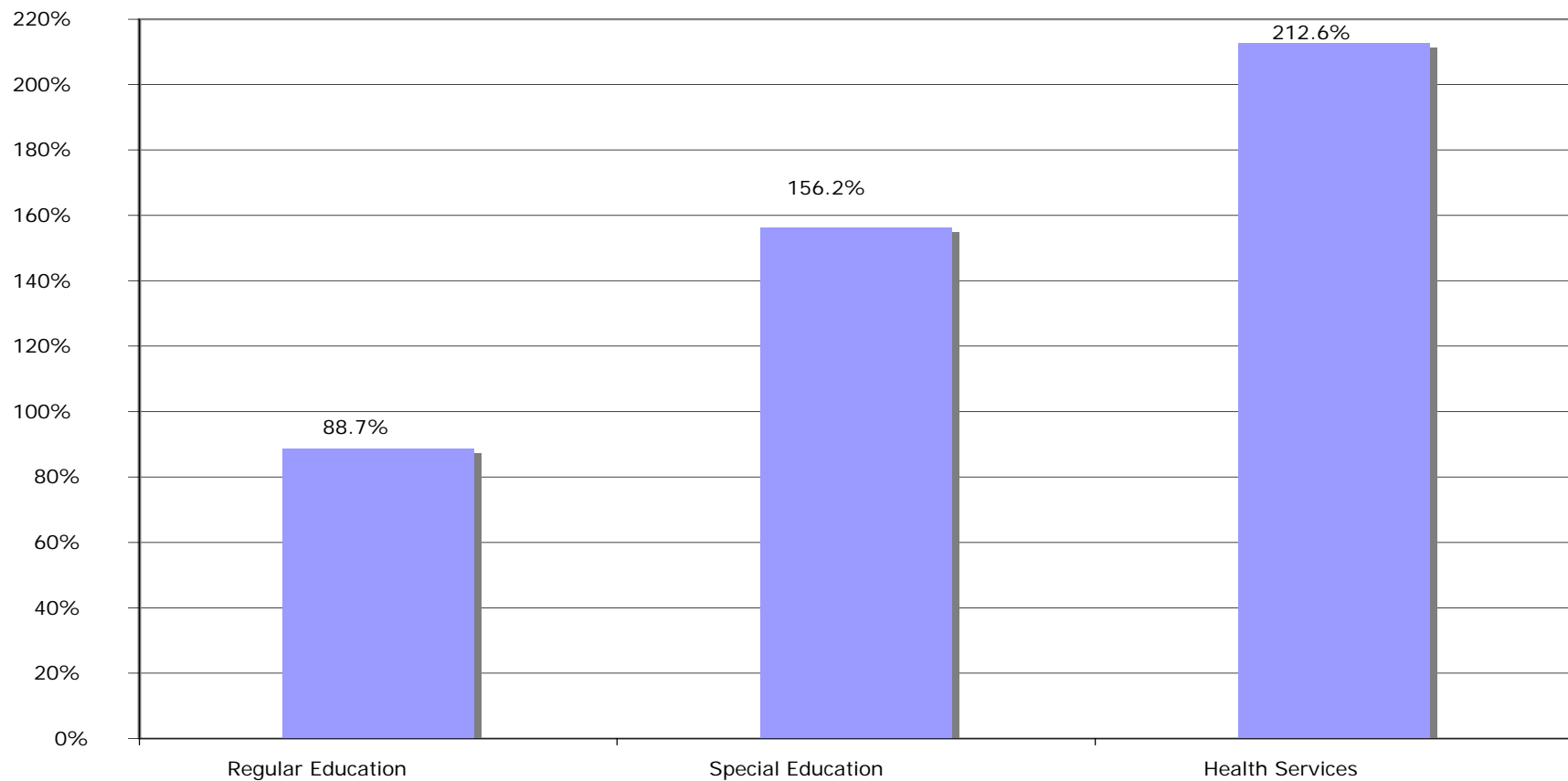
HEALTH COSTS

INCREASES IN SCHOOL DEPARTMENT HEALTH EXPENDITURES
FOR MASSACHUSETTS FY90-FY05



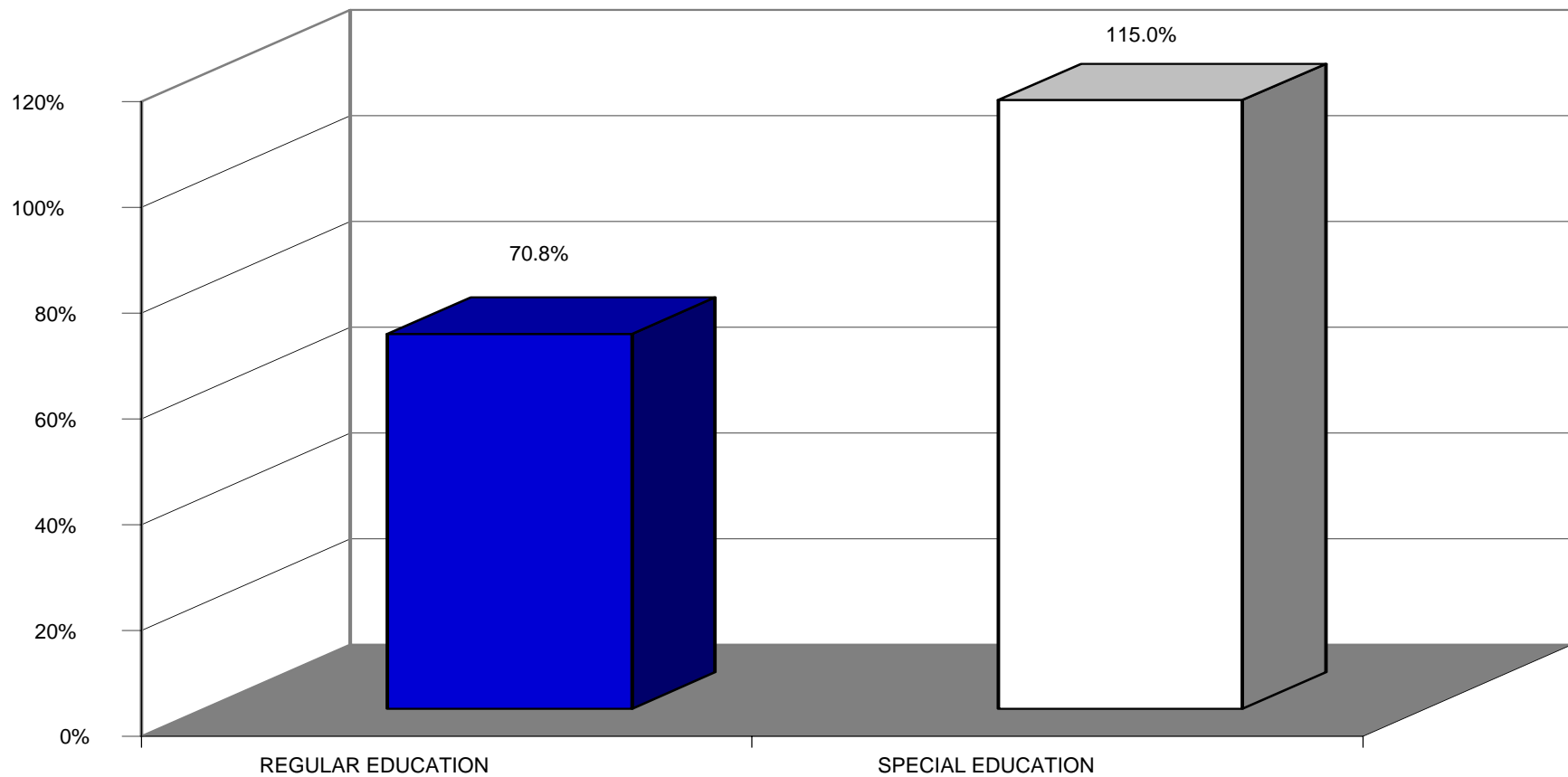
COST INCREASES

PERCENT CHANGE IN DISTRICT SPENDING
FY90 TO FY05



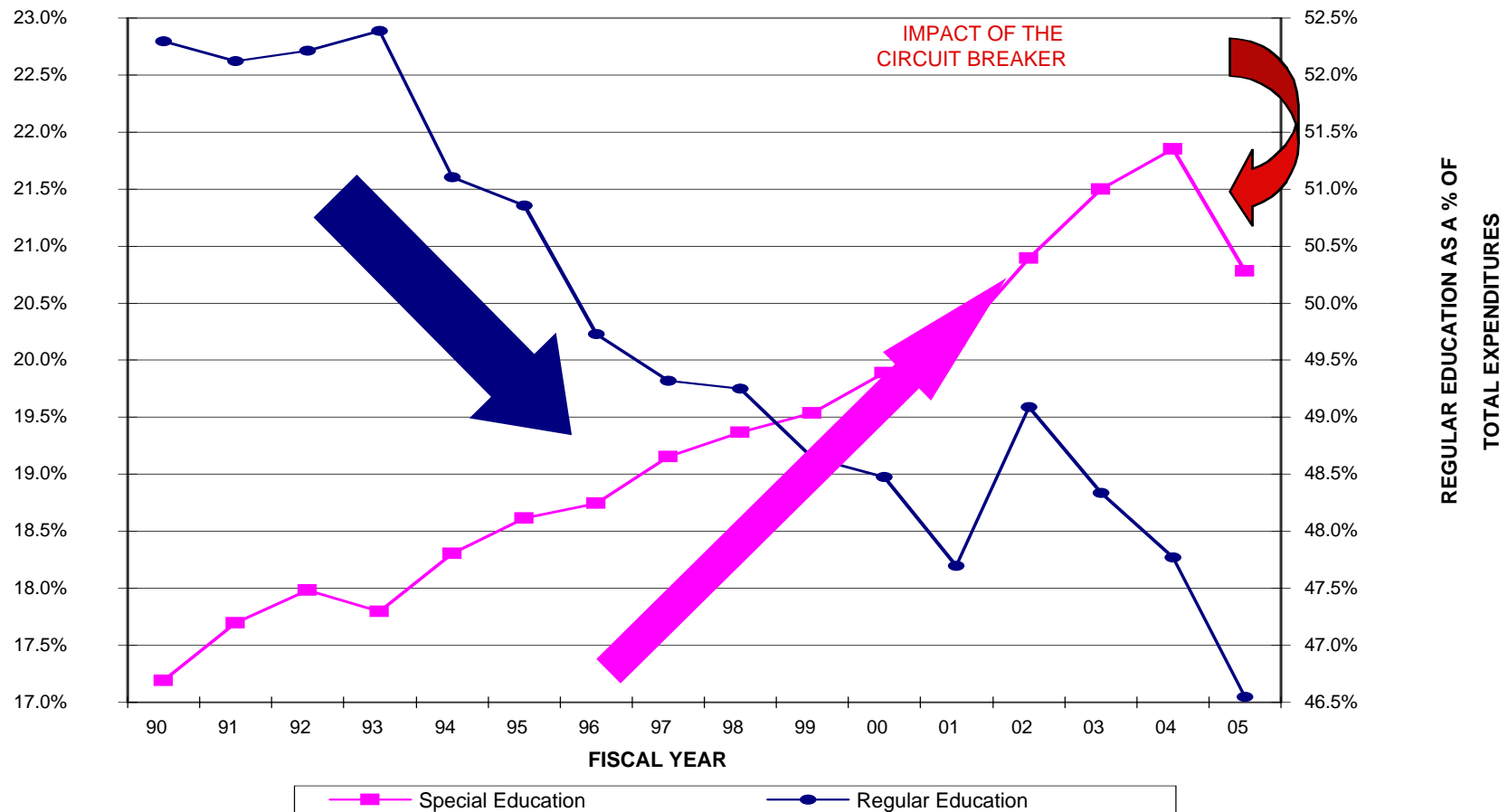
CONTINUED COST INCREASES

INCREASE IN PER PUPIL COSTS FY90 TO FY04



COST TRENDS

TRENDS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REGULAR EDUCATION IN MASSACHUSETTS FY90 TO FY05



TRANSPORTATION COSTS

95-05

MA SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REGULAR EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION COSTS FISCAL YEARS 1995 TO 2005						
FISCAL YEAR	<i>SPECIAL EDUCATION</i>			<i>REGULAR EDUCATION</i>		
	TOTAL SPED EXPENDITURE	ANNUAL % INCREASE	CUMULATIVE % INCREASE	TOTAL REGULAR ED EXPENDITURE	ANNUAL % INCREASE	CUMULATIVE % INCREASE
95	84,424,884			105,676,494		
96	91,321,342	8.2%	8.2%	110,671,629	4.7%	4.7%
97	97,875,680	7.2%	15.9%	115,544,145	4.4%	9.3%
98	105,075,909	7.4%	24.5%	120,782,200	4.5%	14.3%
99	116,869,372	11.2%	38.4%	128,237,343	6.2%	21.3%
00	129,429,988	10.7%	53.3%	134,736,212	5.1%	27.5%
01	138,825,076	7.3%	64.4%	144,814,174	7.5%	37.0%
02	150,500,350	8.4%	78.3%	157,102,021	8.5%	48.7%
03	159,829,896	6.2%	89.3%	158,501,890	0.9%	50.0%
04	167,616,568	4.9%	98.5%	156,608,943	-1.2%	48.2%
05	173,930,125	3.8%	106.0%	176,374,420	12.6%	66.9%
AVERAGE		7.5%			5.3%	

SPECIAL ED AND ED REFORM

The cost increases were equivalent to a large share of new ed reform aid from FY93 to FY99.

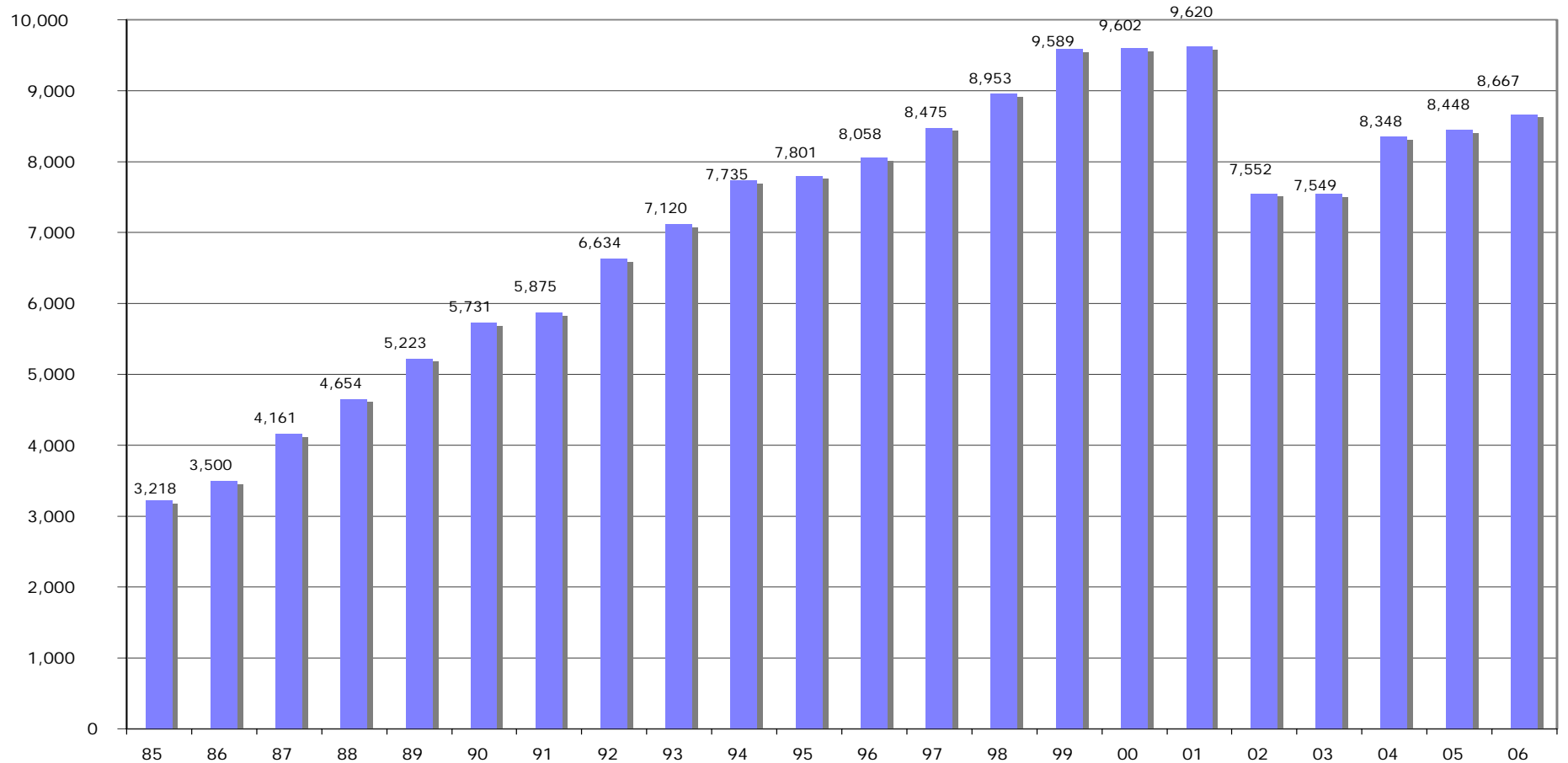
- For 56% of districts SPED increases exceeded 50% of new state aid.
- For 29% districts SPED increases exceeded 100% of new state aid.

PRESCHOOL TRENDS

- FY85-FY01: 199% increase in special needs preschool enrollments in contrast to a 20.4% increase for all other sped prototypes
- FY02-FY06: 15% increase in special needs preschool enrollments in contrast to a 7% increase for all other sped prototypes

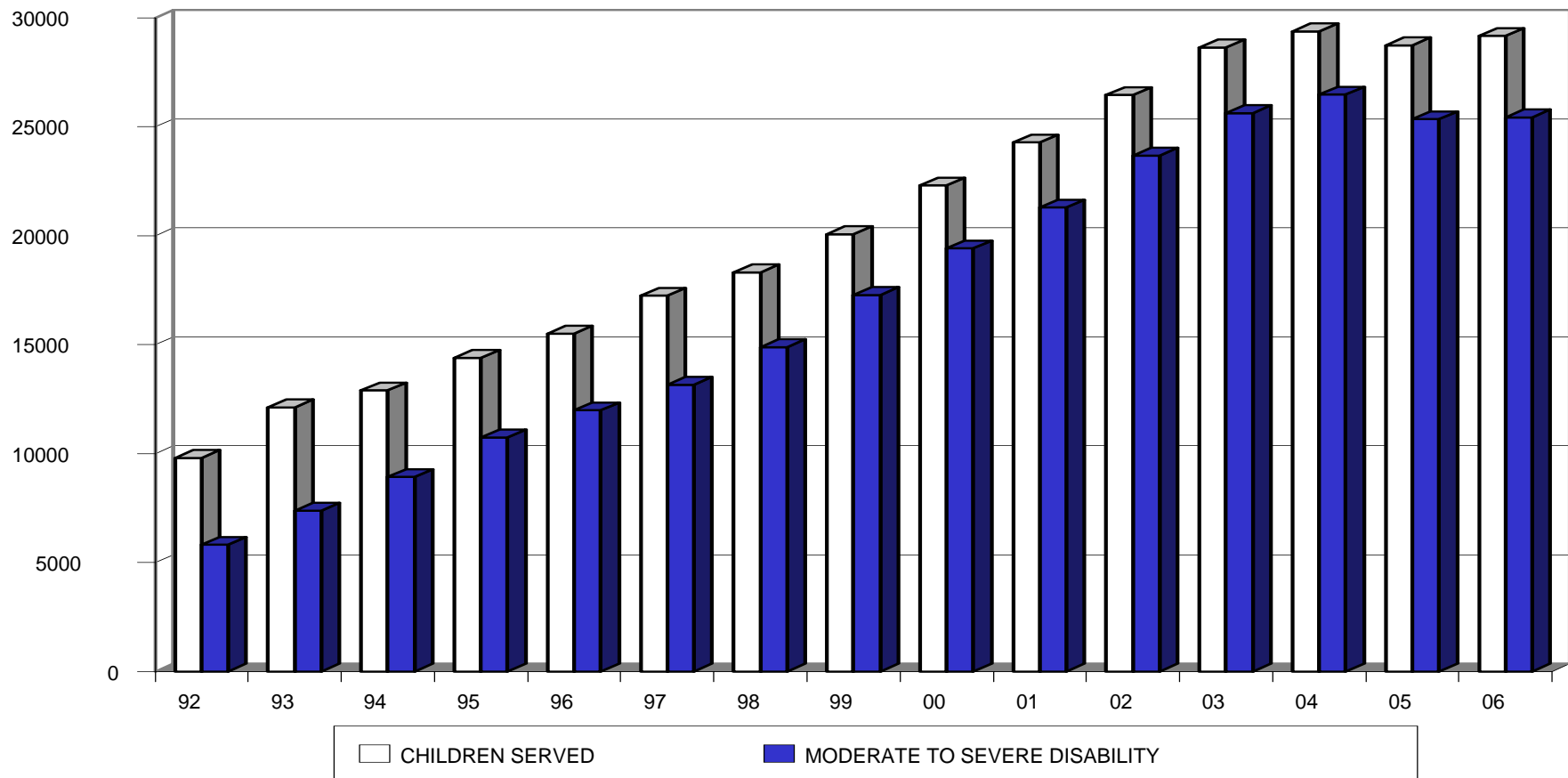
PRESCHOOL TRENDS

TRENDS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PRE-SCHOOL ENROLLMENT
FY85 TO FY06



OTHER TRENDS

EARLY INTERVENTION CHILDREN SERVED FY92 TO FY06



MAJOR CAUSES OF INCREASED COSTS

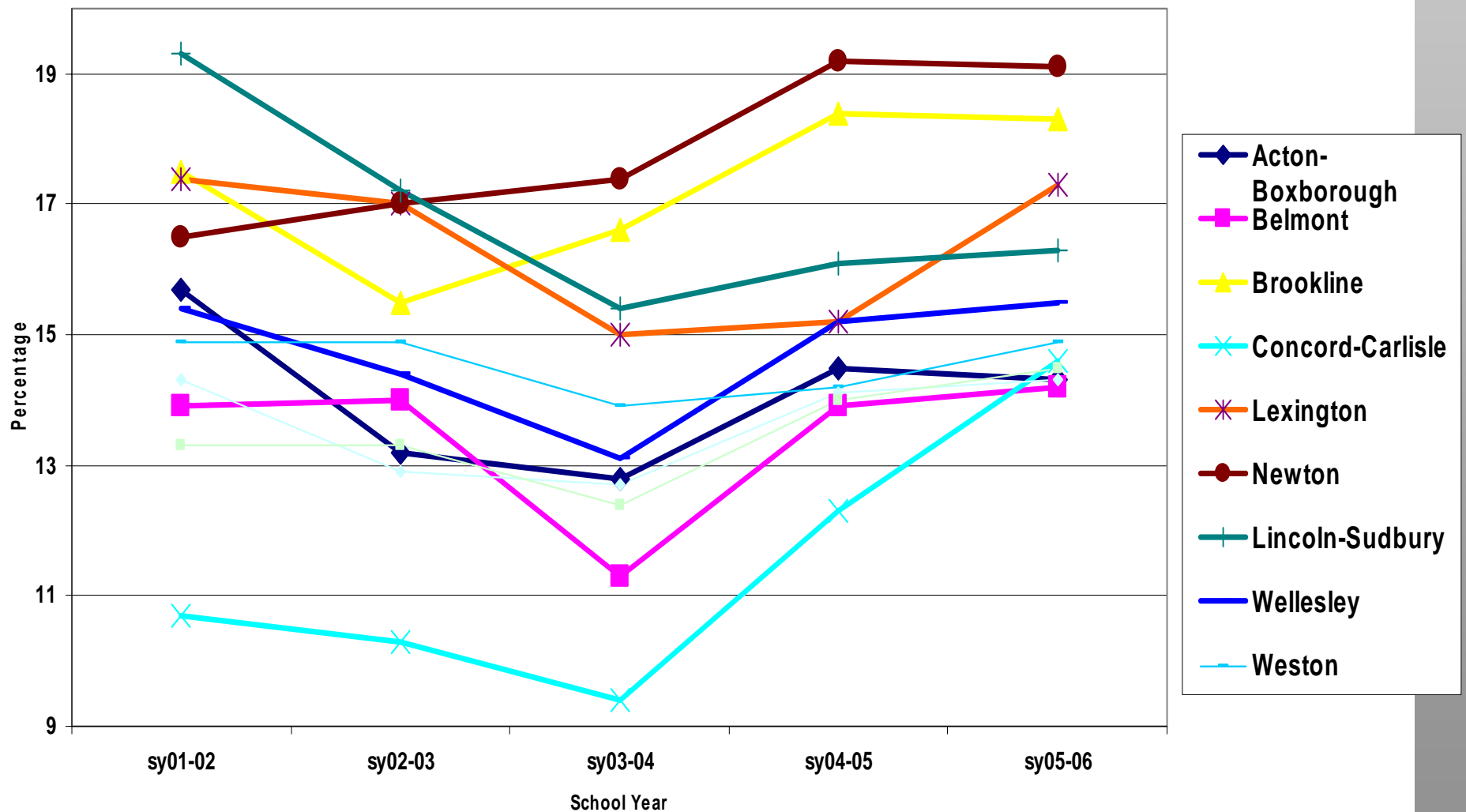
- **Advances in medical technology**
- Deinstitutionalization of special needs children and privatization of services
- Consequences of a higher percentage of children living in poverty
- Increase in families experiencing social and economic stress.

THE PROBLEM

- Is not caused by district policy and practice but rather medical, economic, and social factors.
- Is exacerbated by the lack of adequate funding at a state and federal level for special education and early childhood programs.

LEXINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Not an unusual % of SPED students



Not an unusual % of expensive cases

Number of Children Triggering Circuit Breaker Funds

	SPED sy04-05	Claimed for CB	%	SPED sy05-06	Claimed for CB	%
Acton-Boxborough*	391	48	12%	408	61	15%
Belmont	523	34	7%	533	41	8%
Brookline	1,114	89	8%	1,110	162	15%
Concord-Carlisle*	160	28	18%	188	32	17%
Lexington	948	66	7%	1,095	80	7%
Newton	2,214	146	7%	2,232	146	7%
Lincoln-Sudbury*	243	19	8%	262	24	9%
Wellesley	675	73	11%	718	70	10%
Weston	338	30	9%	354	26	7%
Westwood	403	49	12%	423	51	12%
Winchester	520	41	8%	558	48	9%

**Current Range of In-District
and Collaborative Placements
for Pre-K–12 Students with Mild
to Significant Special Needs:**

A. Lexington Early Childhood Program

Lexington Children's Place, the Lexington Public Schools (LPS) Early Childhood Program, provides evaluation services for young children from the age of 2 years 9 months to 5 years of age to determine eligibility for special education services. Since the Federal and State laws dictate that young children with special needs be serviced in the least restrictive, "most typical" educational setting possible, LPS has developed a range of service options for children with special needs:

Discrete services: Through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), LPS provides discrete OT, Speech and Language or PT services to that child at Harrington Elementary School. Special education consultation is also provided to the private school programs.

Integrated preschool programming: LPS has developed an integrated program model for the children with special needs who cannot be served in the area nursery schools or daycare centers. Children are educated with typically developing peers who do not have special needs. Children receive speech and language, OT, and PT services throughout their school day. Currently, LPS services children in three 10-hour per week preschool classrooms and one 15-hour per week program for children with greater needs.

Full-day intensive services: This classroom is designed for children who require intensive, small group, or individual educational programming. Many of these children are on the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and need very specific teaching methods and strategies.

Longer-year (summer) services (program and discrete services) are provided for children who will substantially regress after an extended period of time without services.

Within this range of programming, there are currently no children serviced in out-of-district preschool programs.

B. Lexington Kindergarten – Grade 12

Students with mild to moderate special needs represent the majority of students served by the Student Services Department (917 students, 85%). These students are included in the general education classrooms and receive some direct instruction by special educators in the general education classroom, or receive separate instruction in half-hour to full-period pullout sessions. Service delivery focuses on a pre-teaching and re-teaching model emphasizing content and skills presented by the classroom teacher. Students also receive other services, when required, by related service providers such as speech and language therapists, occupational and physical therapists, and adapted physical educators.

Students with severe special needs receive all of their teaching and learning in separate classrooms, while other students may receive their instruction in just one or two separate classrooms. Approximately, 163 students (15%) receive such services. Students are taught by special educators and related service providers who work together in the student's general education classroom and/or provide instruction in separate special education classrooms.

Listed below are definitions of terms and services used throughout the report.

Resource Room Classrooms

Resource Room Classrooms, taught by special-education teachers, provide services to students with mild to moderate disabilities who are fully included in mainstream classes, but typically require specially designed instruction in a variety of areas due to their disabilities. Services include direct instruction for development of reading, written expression, oral expression, mathematics, social/emotional, and executive functioning/organization and study skills. There is an increased focus on developing independent learning skills and on the development of self-advocacy skills. Resource Room teachers provide consultation to staff, students, and parents. Instructional Assistants provide services to students in general education settings and/or special education settings when students require additional instructional support. Instructional Assistants are supervised and directed by Resource Room (special education) teachers.

Related Services

Speech/Language – Speech/language pathologists provide direct services in varied settings to students in areas such as receptive and expressive language and social pragmatics. Consultation services can be provided to general education and special education staff to assist students in generalizing skills.

Occupational Therapy – Occupational therapists provide direct services in varied settings to students to develop skills in fine motor, gross motor, visual motor, and visual perceptual development, as well as in sensory processing. Consultation services can be provided to general education and special education staff to assist students in generalizing skills.

Physical Therapy – Physical therapists provide direct services to students to gain strength, improve flexibility, and increase and improve mobility to gain greater independence. Physical therapy provides accessibility to all school areas, facilitating participation in school and school-related activities. Consultation services can be provided to general education and special education staff to assist students in generalizing skills.

Psychology – Psychologists conduct psychological assessments for students, assessing their cognitive and social/emotional functioning. Psychologists also consult with staff regarding student and staff needs.

Counseling – Guidance counselors, psychologists, and/or social workers provide individual and/or group counseling services to students requiring such service to make effective progress in school. Consultation can be provided to staff and parents as needed.

Adaptive Physical Education – Adaptive physical education teachers assist students with various disabilities to develop skills that include large-motor development, eye-hand coordination, and upper-body strength. They also develop skills that promote self-esteem within the physical education curricula. These teachers help students develop skills necessary for participation in physical education, including physical skill sets, socialization skills for group physical activity participation, and positive group interaction skills. Consultation services can be provided, when necessary, to general education physical education staff for students requiring adaptations with the general education setting.

Other Specialized Services – Assistive Technology (provides consultation and determines need for evaluation to determine specific services and software programs to enable students to access the general education curricula), Behavior Specialist (develops and writes functional behavioral assessments and assists in development and implementation of positive behavior intervention plans, along with providing consultation to staff and parents), and Hearing Impaired Specialist, Vision Specialist, and Orientation and Mobility Specialist (identify and monitor use of specialized materials and equipment, along with providing consultation and training to students, staff, and parents).

Lexington Elementary District-Wide Programs

At the elementary level, district-wide programs exist to service low incidence disability areas through more intensive services. Each elementary school houses at least one district-wide program. Students in all of the programs receive related services (Speech/Language, Occupational Therapy, etc.), as needed. There are four district-wide programs:

1. Developmental Learning Program (DLP) - Harrington

The Developmental Learning Program (DLP) services students with significant developmental delays/intellectual impairments. Modified curricula paralleling Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks are utilized. Typically, students receive direct instruction in content areas from special educators, while they frequently join general-education classes (art, music, lunch, etc.) for opportunities to develop relationships with typically developing peers. Many students in the program receive related services (speech/language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, etc.) as needed. Instruction may include activities of daily living and development of social skills.

2a. Substantially Separate Intensive Learning Program (ILP) - Fiske

The Intensive Learning Program (ILP) at Fiske provides services for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with intensive needs including deficits in language, social communication, play skills, abstract thinking, and behavior. The Intensive Learning Programs provide highly individualized services involving behavioral approaches (typically based on Applied Behavior Analysis principles) to learning. Instruction includes social skill development and daily living skill development. Special educators modify content and methodology to teach to mastery, based on academic and behavioral data. Small-group and/or individualized instruction can be provided for the entire school day when necessary and appropriate. Consultation to parents and structured home components are provided as deemed necessary by the TEAM.

2b. Integrated Intensive Learning Program (ILP) – Hastings

The Integrated Intensive Learning Program (ILP) at Hastings also services students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Through this integrated approach students are included, often with support for the majority of their school day, within the general education setting. Special educators provide direct instruction within the general education setting and within special education settings. Special educators use modified content and methodology to teach to mastery, using data collection and behavior analysis. Coordination between special education staff and general educators is essential within this inclusion model. Consultation to parents and related services (such as social pragmatic skill development, occupational therapy, etc.) are provided, as needed.

3. Language Learning Program (LLP) - Bowman

The Language Learning Program (LLP) services students who have significant, language-based learning disabilities. These students have at least average cognitive abilities, but they are not able to read, write and/or use language at the same pace/level as their peers. Many of the students in the program require explicit phonetic-alphabetic instruction beyond that offered through general education. Instruction in literacy is a focus, with emphasis on developing reading and written language skills. Frequently, math instruction may also be provided within the Language Learning Program. Support is available within the general education setting for science and social studies. Substantial modifications can be

implemented in the general education setting. The goal of the Language Learning Program is to build students' literacy skills in a structured and supportive environment that fosters students' confidence while increasing their skills in becoming active learners. Many students also receive related services (speech/language, occupational therapy, etc.), as needed.

4. Social/Emotional Learning Programs (SELP) - Bridge and Estabrook

The Social/Emotional Learning Programs (SELP) at Bridge and Estabrook service students with significant emotional impairment or other disabilities that result in behavioral issues. These students may or may not have associated learning difficulties. These programs provide instruction in developing social/emotional supports within a structured, caring, and therapeutic classroom environment. Students within these programs access the general-education classrooms for varied amounts of time as specified within their Individual Education Programs. Special education services may also be provided within the general education setting. In addition, content area instruction is available on an individualized and/or small group basis when deemed necessary by the student's TEAM.

Lexington Middle-School Specialized Programs/Courses

At the middle-school level, specialized programs exist to service low incidence disability areas through more intensive services. Students in all of the programs receive related services (Speech/Language, Occupational Therapy, etc.), as needed. There are four specialized programs at the middle schools:

1. Intensive Learning Programs (ILP)

The Intensive Learning Programs (ILP) at Clarke and Diamond provide services for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). With support and an integrated approach, students are typically included during the majority of their school day within the general education setting. Small group instruction and modified content and direct instruction in social pragmatics are typical program components, with opportunities sought and provided to practice and generalize social skills. Coordination between special education staff and general educators is essential within this inclusion model. Each middle school has, within the ILP Program, included students with other disabilities, including cognitive impairments, when it appeared to be the most appropriate service model for a child.

2. Language Learning Programs (LLP)

The Language Learning Program (LLP) serves students who have language-based learning disabilities. These students typically have at least average cognitive abilities, but they are not able to read, write and/or use language at the same pace/level as their peers. Students receive specially designed instruction in reading, written language, and executive functioning skills. Math instruction may also be provided within the program. Support is available within the general education setting for science and social studies and additional academic support /reinforcement may be provided within the program.

3. Social/Emotional Learning Programs (SELP)

The Social/Emotional Learning Programs (SELP) programs service students with significant emotional impairment or other disabilities that result in behavioral issues. These students may or may not have associated learning difficulties. These programs provide instruction in developing social/emotional supports within a structured, caring, and therapeutic classroom environment. Students within these programs access the general education classrooms for varied amounts of time, as specified within their Individual Education Programs. Special education services may also be provided within the general

education setting. In addition, content area instruction is available on an individualized and/or small group basis when deemed necessary by the student's TEAM.

4. Special Education Reading

Special education reading teachers provide individual and small group instruction to students in need of systematic rules-based approach to reading. Often, but not always, students are already part of the Language Learning Program (LLP).

Lexington High School Specialized Programs/Courses

At the high-school level, specialized programs/courses exist to service low incidence disability areas through more intensive services. Students in all of the programs receive related services (Speech/Language, Occupational Therapy, etc.), as delineated in their IEPs, as needed. There are six specialized programs/courses at the high school:

1. Language Learning Program (LLP)

The Language Learning Program (LLP) currently serves students who have language-based learning disabilities which impact the areas of reading and writing. Students receive specially designed instruction in reading, written language, and executive functioning skills. Students are mainstreamed for the majority of their classes, but the Language Learning Program also provides some small group instruction in content areas, when needed. In addition, intensive supports including review, reinforcement and paralleling of general education curriculum are available. Students transitioning from Grade 8 Language Learning programs may be appropriate for service within this program.

2. Intensive Learning Program (ILP)

The Intensive Learning Program (ILP) is designed for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Students require specially designed instruction in a variety of academic areas. Small and modified instruction and alternative courses are available. In addition, it is designed to provide direct instruction in social pragmatics, sensory integration, and community based education. The ILP also utilizes professionals for consultation and direct services for behavior, educational support and teacher training. Students are included in mainstream classes and are often supported in that environment with an instructional assistant.

3. Multidisciplinary Support Team (MST) (formerly the AIM program)

The Lexington High School Multidisciplinary Support Team (MST) provides a continuum of integrated academic and social/emotional support for students. Using a collaborative and targeted team approach, each student is provided opportunities for building, practicing and reinforcing competencies and problem-solving strategies necessary for addressing his/her needs and meeting LHS course requirements and graduation expectations.

4. The Transition Program

The 2004 IDEA mandates that students receive transitional services as of their 16th birthday. The Transition staff at Lexington High School works with identified special education students who need additional supports in planning for and exploring post-graduate options. Services focus on students in their junior and senior years. The program provides opportunities for students to complete

interests/aptitude surveys, along with exploration of vocational areas to help identify appropriate post-graduation options. There are opportunities for skill development in the following areas: job readiness; job/college application; the interview process and the preparation process towards meeting identified goals. Students in the more intensive special education programs at Lexington High School must access Transition services in their freshman and sophomore years. Courses provided through the Transition program include Future Visions, Introduction to Careers, and Transition Work Experience. The Transition staff consults with guidance personnel and special education staff and works directly with the Out-Of-District Coordinator as well as organizations in the community, students, and parents. This program facilitates the 688 process and transitions students to post secondary, vocational and educational programs. The Transition Program staff makes connections with adult support networks and agencies.

5. Reading Skills Course

This course is for students who have disabilities that affect reading. The course is designed to strengthen reading skills through decoding, vocabulary and comprehension work. The course concentrates on phonetic analysis, spelling, oral reading, root work and word patterns. Reading selections include short stories, articles and poems, as well as selections from novels and plays.

6. Writing Skills Course

This course is designed for students who have disabilities that affect their written expression, hampering the development of their vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation, sentence formation, paragraph development, and composition skills. Course objectives include identifying and using basic parts of speech, organizing ideas and information prior to writing, generating compound and complex sentences, proofreading, and vocabulary expansion skills.

**Current Range of
Out-of-District Placements for
Elementary Through Age 22
Students with Significant
Special Needs**

Currently, there are 109 students who require an out-of-district placement due to their complex special needs. These students are placed in either day or residential schools. This section of the report provides a description of day and residential programs currently utilized by Lexington students. The costs, which are listed, are approximate numbers due to differences in transportation costs, summer programming, individual aides, and related services. In addition, the programs below do not include pending legal disputes.

A. Day School Programs:

There are seven general categories of disabilities/needs that can lead to an out of district placement:

1. Cognitive Disabilities:

- a. **LABBB: \$32,000 to \$80,000** - Students with impaired cognitive/physical disabilities within our district are for the most part educated through our **LABBB Collaborative**. We are fortunate to have access to this specialized program housed at Lexington High School. There are also smaller high school programs located in Belmont and Bedford. Middle school LABBB programs are located in Arlington, Bedford and Burlington. Elementary LABBB programs are located in Arlington, Bedford and Belmont. Many parents do not realize that LABBB is an outside placement and that we pay for these placements. The cost for LABBB varies depending on the intensity of the disability. Some students who attend LABBB have profound physical disabilities and attend the Intensive Life Skills Program. Other students who are much higher functioning attend vocational programs. The continuum of programming explains the wide range of costs for the LABBB tuition. (35 students)
- b. **Learning Prep: \$28,000** - Every year, we have one or two students who attend Learning Prep. The school defines itself as focusing more on academics and not “giving up” on students with cognitive disabilities. However, students often wind up transitioning to LABBB from this program, which has more extensive vocational and life skill training. (1 or 2 students)
- c. **Cotting School: \$60,000** - Cotting School is located in Lexington and provides educational services and very limited vocational training for physically and cognitively disabled students. (2 students)
- d. **Kennedy Day School: \$44,000** - Kennedy Day School is located in Brighton on the grounds of Franciscan Hospital, and provides a range of academic and support services for multiply handicapped students.

2. Learning Disabilities: \$45,000

These schools provide remediation and strategy building for students with learning disabilities who need a slower paced level of instruction. The Lexington schools should examine what programming could be developed to meet this student population. For example, the development of the ILP at the high school has enabled three students to return to the high school from: Melmark, Arlington School, Murphy and Dwyer. These moves have saved the district approximately \$230,000.

- a. Landmark School: (6 students)
- b. Carroll School: (2 students)
- c. Clearway: (1 student)

3. **Autism Spectrum Disorders: \$76,000 to \$90,000** - This disability requires a very structured day with highly trained instructors, aides, and related service providers.
- a. Melmark: (1 student)
 - b. Crossroads: (3 students)
 - c. Nashoba Learning Center: (2 students)
4. **Social/Emotional: Range from \$35,000-\$50,000**: These students are experiencing a variety of interpersonal and academic struggles that are impacting their ability to make progress. Some students have Autism Spectrum Disorder. Several of these students could stay in district if we are able to expand district programming.
- a. Beacon High School: (3 students)
 - b. Corwin Russell: (3 students)
 - c. Gifford School: (6 students)
 - d. Willow Hill: (1 student)
5. **Psychiatric: \$60,000**
These students have psychiatric disorders that are chronic in nature and need a specialized educational staff and access to larger hospital supports with psychiatric oversight:
- a. Arlington School: (2 students)
 - b. Waltham House: (1 student)
6. **Behavioral Disorders: \$50,000-\$55,000**
- a) Students with significant behavioral disorders are sometimes referred to an outside placement. These behaviors include: escalating physical altercations, an inability to regulate anger, and threatening behaviors that are intimidating. These specialized programs have the ability to contain behavioral dyscontrol and promote self-awareness and personal responsibility.
 - a. Dearborn Academy (3 students)
 - b) In response to sections of the federal statutes of IDEA, certain students who have been temporarily excluded from their educational placements require educational services to be provided by their school district. These students are referred for short (45 day) or year long alternative programming. Typically, these students have often violated the schools discipline code.
7. **Family/Complicated Clinical Issues: \$ 50,000**
At the high school level, there are students who may find themselves in an intense emotional/situational crisis. These students may be unable to attend classes regularly, leave the campus without permission, demonstrate impulsive/risky behaviors and exercise poor judgment. These students typically are involved with extensive out-patient support personnel and are on medication. Some have a history of short-term psychiatric hospitalizations or placements at intensive residential treatment facilities such as the ART on the grounds of McLean Hospital. These students are in need of a supportive, self-paced environment that provides a program to develop psychological strength and alternatives to acting out or self-injurious behaviors. The family is typically in crisis and in need of intensive family therapy and supports.
- a. Victor School: (6 students.)

B. Residential Programs: \$95,000 to \$232,000 (circuit breaker not included)

Students who are placed in residential schools typically come from six paths:

1. Students in day placements who have greater needs than the day program can provide.
2. Students in psychiatric hospitals who are recommended for residential placements due to concerns related to self-harm.
3. Students in a psychiatric crisis who have had several short-term hospitalizations in order to stabilize their behavior but are unable to resume the previous level of functioning. These students continue to deteriorate over the course of the school year.
4. DSS places the students due to issues or concerns within the home and we are obligated to cost share.
5. Students with severe physical needs that require nursing care.
6. Students with cognitive disabilities that do not have independent living skills and are approaching their 22nd birthday.

Typically, students who are referred for residential placements are in need of very intensive services. It may be difficult to identify students at-risk for residential placement. Students may not be demonstrating any lack of progress or emotional struggles within the school day. However, problems may be occurring after school, parents may feel unable to manage their child's risky, impulsive behavior, or a student may have a psychotic episode and be hospitalized "out of the blue". Sometimes these students have not been previously identified as special education students. Parents may request the district to immediately place their child into the most restrictive setting without engaging in the state mandated process for eligibility and placement determination. The cost of a residential facility can vary greatly depending on the specialized services that are required by the particular student. Programs that provide medical care in a school environment are extremely expensive and only the most physically disabled students are referred to such programs.

We have approximately 30 students in residential facilities.

- a) **Cardinal Cushing: \$95,370:** Residential facility for students with cognitive disabilities that have demonstrated a limited ability to comprehend issues related to personal safety and decision-making. These students require a very structured day with intensive life-skills and vocational training. (2 students)
- b) **Perkins School for the Blind: \$232,951** - Intensive life skills and vocational program for blind and disabled students.
- c) **Other:**
Presently the district has approximately eight out of district student cases that are pending legal decisions and assignment of financial responsibility.

Additional Information:

Factors that have contributed to an increase in out-of-district placements, referrals and costs:

- a) **Reduction in state funding for mental health services.** The expectation from agencies and hospitals is that these mental health services are the responsibility of the school district.

- b. **A vast reduction in school district's access to Department of Mental Health Intensive Residential Treatment Facilities (IRTP):** Within the past 10 years, access to state mental health facilities has become quite limited. In the past, children who were experiencing a more long-term mental health crisis would be transferred from an acute hospital setting to more long-term stabilization programs before treatment recommendations were made. These stabilization programs, called Intensive Residential Treatment Programs (IRTP), would provide treatment and assist with transition planning. At this point, referrals to these facilities are almost non-existent. Hospitalized children need to be deemed "committable" by a Department of Mental Health team. This almost never occurs now because the psychiatrist on the hospital unit has to determine the student is committable. This makes the hospital responsible for the patient until there is an opening at an IRTP. Given that determining a student in need of an IRTP obligates the hospital to keep the student in place until an appropriate opening occurs, it is quite rare an occurrence. This information is relevant to Lexington's out of district placements because we are being asked to place students who are in need of intensive supervision and treatment in an educational facility when the student may still be in an acute psychiatric crisis.
- c. **An increase in the number of students with psychiatric disabilities at the middle and high school level** (some psychiatric disorders evolve as students become older). The early childhood behavioral manifestation of these disorders may guide the team to provide one type of support (such as resource room for slow processing). In adolescence this "slow processing" can blossom into a more life long psychiatric disorder (such as schizophrenia). This type of psychotic disorder would be difficult to identify in elementary school. Meaning: students that have made progress in our elementary and middle schools may deteriorate when they reach high school age.
- d. **Students are prematurely returned to their school districts after short-term hospitalizations, which were driven by insurance coverage.**
- e. **An increase in the number of students diagnosed with autism.** Intensive services are required at a young age for the student's entire school career. The supports needed for this population increase tremendously at the high school level when students are faced with issues of adolescence and families face transition to post-secondary settings.
- f. **Minimal state programs and financial support for autism spectrum disorders.** Even though students have met the graduation requirements, this population often does not possess the necessary life-skills development and problem-solving ability required to attend college. The burden of finding an appropriate "next step" for this population falls upon school districts since there are limited state resources available.
- g. **Lack of adequate summer programming for students has led to out-of-district supplemental programming costs.** Our disabled students need yearlong programming. The district needs to develop in-house programming for the ASD and psychiatric population, especially at the high school level.
- h. **Transportation** costs have increased over the years. Some students who are placed in residential facilities also have transportation costs that the district is responsible for paying.
- i. **Individual student aides or nurses** are required for some of our students in day and residential facilities. These costs may be in addition to the cost of the day or residential facility.

SUMMER:

Due to insufficient summer supports for students with social/emotional disabilities and with autism, the district has had to fund specialized programs over the course of the summer. Last summer, we had 18 students at a total cost of approximately \$48,000. Two students from summer placements have not returned to school and parents are requesting the district to continue these placements. Supplemental summer programming has now developed into a request for funding for two out-of-district placements in unapproved out of state schools. Once a student has attended another summer program it can be difficult for the student to change programming again and return to their home schools.

With additional district-wide supports in the summer of 2007, such as summer programming for ASD and social emotional populations; specialized programming for students pre and post hospitalization at the middle and high school levels; and development of specialized instructional support/programs for the learning disabled, many of these placements can be avoided in the future. The district needs to determine and prioritize what programs should be administered within our own schools and which ones should not. The district is currently reviewing the scope of in-house programs to determine educational and cost-effectiveness.

Recommended New or Expanded Programs

HIGH PRIORITY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT (2007-2010)

In order to reduce the number of students placed in out-of-district schools, we are recommending five new or expanded programs next year and, potentially, five new or expanded programs starting in FY 09 or FY 10 (see list below). These programs will increase our capacity to educate more students within the Lexington Public Schools, thus eliminating some new out-of-district costs. These programs will reduce the overall cost of special education by making it possible to bring some students back from outside placements and keep more students in-district.

A full explanation of each new/expanded program is described in the accompanying Power Point presentation.

Programs Recommended for FY 08

BUDGET PRIORITY 1

1. District-wide Intensive Learning Program (ILP) @ Clarke Middle School (Expanded Program)
2. Intensive Learning Program (ILP) @ Lexington High School (Expanded Program)
3. Multidisciplinary Support Team (MST) expansion at Lexington High School (Expanded Program)

BUDGET PRIORITY 2

4. Development Learning Program (DLP) @ Clarke Middle School (New Program)
5. Language Learning Program (LLP) @ Lexington High School (Expanded Program)

Potential Programs for FY 09

1. Elementary Language Learning Program (LLP), K-1 (Expanded Program)
2. Development Learning Program (DLP) @ Lexington High School (New Program)
3. Transition Program @ Lexington High School (Expanded Program)

Potential Programs for FY 10

1. Multidisciplinary Support Program (MST) @ middle school level (New Program)
2. Language Learning Program (LLP) into Grade 5 (Expanded Program)



Lexington Public Schools

Student Services

Report on Special Education Services

November 28, 2006

Presented to the LPS School Committee by:

LPS Student Services Department

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Barbara Bennett-Fortier, Out of District Liaison

Kathy Meagher, Director, Multidisciplinary Support Team

Marianne McKenna, Interim Director of Technology

Priority 1 - District-wide Middle School Intensive Learning Program (ILP- 2) FY08

Proposed Program

1 Teacher	\$52,000
3 Assistants	\$72,000
.5 Speech and Language-	\$26,000
.2 OT	\$10,400
.2 Social Worker	\$10,400
Consultants	\$10,000
Extended Day (2x week)	\$5,400
Supplies	\$8,000
Summer	\$7,375
Benefits	<u>\$42,140</u>
Cost of New Program	\$243,715

Likely Out of District Costs, if the Proposed Program is not funded

No students are expected to return to LPS in 2007-2008 (\$0 saved from tuition budget)

Likely Out-of-District Costs we should be able to avoid

8 Students @ Gifford School

\$44,588= \$356,704

Summer 8 @ \$4,250 = \$34,000

Transportation \$26,250

Total \$416,954

Cost Avoidance = \$173,239

(\$416,954-\$243,715=\$173,239)

Location: Lexington High School

Projected Need: 16 Students

Priority 1 - High School Intensive Learning Program (ILP)

Existing ILP 11 Students

1 Teacher	\$52,000
3 Assistants	\$72,000
3 1:1 Assistants	\$72,000
.2 OT	\$10,400
Benefits	<u>\$60,200</u>

Cost of Program \$266,600

Proposed Expansion 16 Students

Cost of Program \$266,600

Expanded Staffing:

1.0 Teacher	\$52,000
.5 Speech & Language	\$26,000
.5 OT	\$26,000
2 Assistants	\$48,000
Summer	\$19,849
Benefits	<u>\$34,400</u>

Additional Cost \$189,049

Likely Out of District Costs, if the Proposed Program is not funded in FY 08
5 students

No students are expected to return to LPS in 2007-2008
(\$0 saved from tuition budget)

Likely Out-of-District Costs we should be able to avoid

3 students at Corwin Russell

3 @ \$35,000 \$105,000

1 @ Pathways \$84,154

1 @ Victor \$45,655

Transportation \$71,100

Summer@ Spotlight \$52,000

Transportation Summer \$4250

Total Out \$362,159

Cost Avoidance \$173,110

(\$362,159-\$189,049=\$173,110)

Priority 1 - High School Multi-Disciplinary Support Team

FY08

Existing MST FY07

Serving 37-40 Students

5 Teachers and Director \$344,000

1.5 Social Workers \$78,000

2 Assistants \$48,000

Benefits \$73,100

Cost of Existing Program

\$543,100

Proposed Expansion

FY08

Includes Summer

Serving 40-60 Students

Cost of Existing Program

\$543,100

1.5 Therapist \$79,000

.5 Math/Sped Teacher \$26,000

2 Assistants \$48,000

Benefits \$33,600

Training \$5,000

Supplies \$3,000

Group Transportation \$1,500

Cost of New Program

\$196,100

Likely Out of District Costs, if the Proposed Program is not funded in FY 08

3 Students Potentially returning:

Tuition/Transportation Reduction:

 $\$108,717 + \$9,000 = \$117,717$

Proposed Net Cost:

 $\$196,100 - \$117,717 = \$78,383$

In Addition:

Likely Out-of-District Costs we should be able to avoid:

5 @ Beacon High School \$211,285

2 @ Arlington School/McLean \$115,878

1 @ Out-of-State/Residential HS \$144,000

2 @ Dearborn Academy \$99,188

Transportation \$27,000

Students: 2 MS, 5 New, 3 Current

Total Potential OOD Costs: **\$597,341**

Cost Avoidance (\$597,341 - \$78,383)

\$518,958

Priority 2 - District-wide Middle School Developmental Learning Program (DLP) FY08

Proposed Program

.5 Teacher	\$26,000
2 Assistants	\$48,000
.2 Speech and Lang.	\$10,400
.2 OT	\$10,400
Extended Day (2x week)	\$5,400
Supplies	\$8,000
Summer	\$7,375
Benefits	<u>\$29,240</u>
Cost of New Program	\$144,815

Likely Out of District Costs, if the
Proposed Program is not funded in FY 08

No students are expected to return to LPS
in 2007-2008 (\$0 saved from tuition
budget)

4 Students @ \$32,532	\$130,128
Transportation	<u>\$15,300</u>
Total	\$145,428

FY 08 Cost Avoidance = \$673
(\$145,428 - 144,815 = \$673)

In FY 09, the program will save money due to
4 more 6th grade students staying in district

Location: Lexington High School

Projected Need: 16 Students

Priority 2 - High School Language Learning Program (LLP)

Existing Program, FY07
9 Students

1.0 Teacher	\$ 52,000
.25 Reading	\$13,000

Benefits	\$8,600
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Cost of Current Program
\$73,600

Proposed Expansion, FY08
16 students

Cost of Current Program
\$73,600

Expanded Staffing:

1.0 Teacher	\$52,000
1.0 Reading/SPED	\$52,000
4 Assistants	\$96,000
Summer	\$24,300
Training/Consultant	\$ 6,000
Benefits	<u>\$51,600</u>
New Costs	\$281,900

Additional Cost **\$281,900**

Likely Out of District Costs, if the Proposed Program is not funded in FY 08

1 student is expected to return to LPS in 2007-2008 (\$39,100 saved from tuition budget)

Proposed net new cost:
(\$281,900-\$39,100) \$242,800

Likely Out-of-District Costs we should be able to avoid 7 @
Landmark or Clearway

	\$266,000
Summer	\$26,000
Transportation	\$27,000
Summer Trans.	<u>\$4,500</u>
Total	\$323,500

Cost Avoidance \$ 80,700
(\$323,500-\$242,800=\$80,700)



Lexington Public Schools

Student Services

Summary of FY 08 Costs (without state circuit breaker funds*)

	<u>Program</u> <u>Cost Increase</u>	<u>Potential</u> <u>Out-of-District</u>	<u>Cost Avoidance</u>
BUDGET PRIORITY 1			
Middle School Intensive Learning Program	\$243,715	\$416,954	\$173,239
High School Intensive Learning Program	\$189,049	\$362,159	\$173,110
High School Multidisciplinary Support Team	\$78,383	\$597,341	\$518,958
TOTALS	\$511,147	\$1,376,454	\$865,307
BUDGET PRIORITY 2			
Middle School Developmental Learning Program	\$144,815	\$145,428	\$673
High School Language Learning Program	\$242,800	\$323,500	\$80,700
TOTALS	\$387,615	\$468,928	\$81,373
GRAND TOTAL (BUDGET PRIORITIES 1 + 2)	\$898,762	\$1,845,382	\$946,680

*Communities receive State circuit breaker funds in the next fiscal year



Lexington Public Schools

Student Services

Summary of FY 09 Costs (with state circuit breaker funds)

	<u>Program</u> <u>Cost Increase</u>	<u>Potential</u> <u>Out-of-District</u>	<u>Cost Avoidance</u>
BUDGET PRIORITY 1			
Middle School Intensive Learning Program	\$243,715	\$352,396	\$108,681
High School Intensive Learning Program	\$189,049	\$312,833	\$123,784
High School Multidisciplinary Support Team	\$78,383	\$427,025	\$348,642
TOTALS	\$511,147	\$1,092,254	\$581,107
BUDGET PRIORITY 2			
Middle School Developmental Learning Program	\$144,815	\$145,428	\$673
High School Language Learning Program	\$242,800	\$300,215	\$57,415
TOTALS	\$387,615	\$445,643	\$58,028
GRAND TOTAL (BUDGET PRIORITIES 1 + 2)	\$898,762	\$1,537,897	\$639,135



Lexington Public Schools

Student Services

Possible FY 09 and FY10 Programs

FY09

Elementary Language Learning Program
K-1 (Expanded)

High School Developmental Learning Program (New)

High School Transition Program (Expanded Program)

FY10

Multidisciplinary Support Team (MST) @ Middle School
level (New Program)

Language Learning Program (LLP) Expansion into
Grade 5 (Expanded Program)