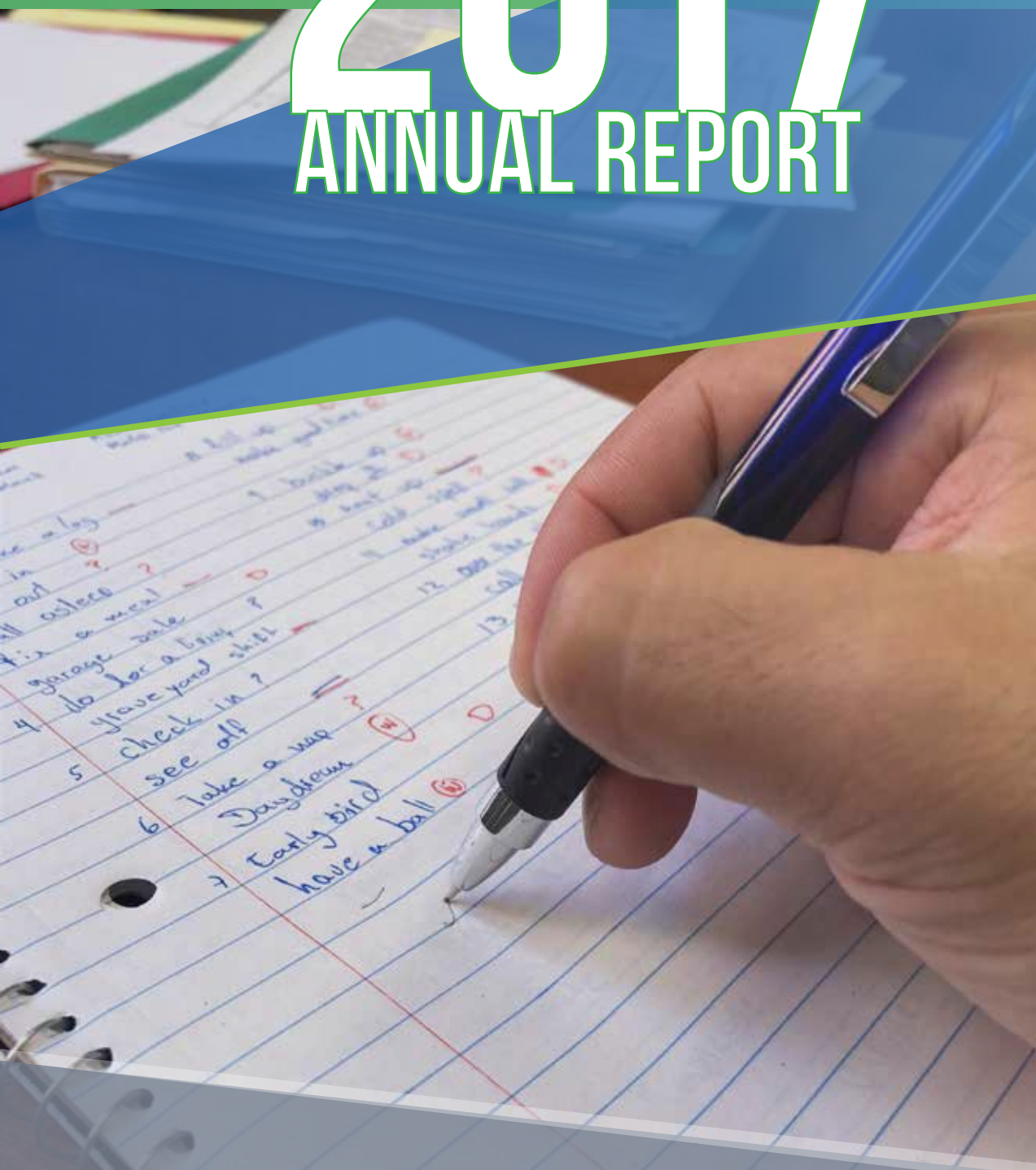


2017

ANNUAL REPORT



LVA
SCHOOL
AMERICAN ENGLISH INSTITUTE

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From the Director

Your Greatest Fear

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine as children do. It's not just in some of us; it is in everyone. And as we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others. "

Marianne Williamson, an American spiritual teacher, author and lecturer.

Courage

What is courage, really? When asked, most people will define "*courage*" in terms of brave men or women standing up against some powerful force – against what is considered perhaps, overwhelming odds. They think about soldiers in battle, or police officers facing a dangerous situation. Those are truly examples of courageous individuals.

Think for a moment about adults in a classroom. Adults are supposed to have all the answers. They are not supposed to be nervous or uncertain. After all, they have been "around the block," as they say. They have seen it all. They have life experience. They handle everyday problems with confidence and aplomb. But, put them in the classroom, which they may have been away from for some time, and they will often retreat into a self-imposed silence.

This phenomena is nothing new. Learning is, after all, a risky business. I often think of it as trying to climb an icy, snow-covered mountain, or trying to navigate a white-water river in a rubber raft, or a flimsy canoe. If you have no experience, no help or guidance, either of those experiences can be dangerous – even deadly.

Not to be overly dramatic, but learning really does involve risk. When he was criticized for

not speaking out in Congress, that everyone thought he must be a buffoon, the young Abraham Lincoln replied that it is better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and "remove all doubt." That thought may well represent the feelings of many adult students.

So, how does one overcome fear?

Here are a few suggestions for the teacher:

- Start with yourself. Admit that you don't know everything and you too are a learner;
- Encourage risk-taking in class. Encourage students to put out ideas, and admit their insecurities;
- Build the team concept – encourage diverse opinions and share insecurities.

Learning is all about risk-taking. When we have the courage to admit that we do not know, we open ourselves to learning. That can be a wild and scary place – a snow covered mountain, or boiling river rapids. But a good guide – a teacher who understands – can be just what is needed to conquer that mountain, or traverse those rapids.

Face the fear. Look it straight in the eye, for we are all teachers and learners. Let's grow together!

Tom

Board of Directors

LVA School Inc.

Gregg Brauneisen, President

Paul Tripi, Vice President

Paul Sutherland, Treasurer

Gary Feola

Clayton Fermino

Erika Sanches

Ray Hastings

As a school, we consider ourselves a community of learners who work in partnership with their teachers, who serve as mentors and colleagues.

Mission

*The mission of the LVA School is to educate a diverse population of adults to improve their English language skills and provide them with a positive American cultural experience.
(rev. 2016)*

Our Vision

We envision a future where the focus of education is to enable all students to achieve their educational and career dreams.

Goals

Passionate commitment to our teachers and students. We are committed to integrity, accountability and excellence in education.

About 2017

Courage is contagious in a supportive learning community, where teachers, tutors and students form a bond, and a commitment to learn together.

Last year we enrolled 398 students, 232 Beginners, 104 Intermediates, 37 Advanced, and 25 tutorials.

Our largest groups came from Ecuador and Brazil, but we received students from other Latin American countries as well. In fact, we received students from all over the world. In this international setting, our courses prepare our students for success in America, as workers, family members, and future citizens.

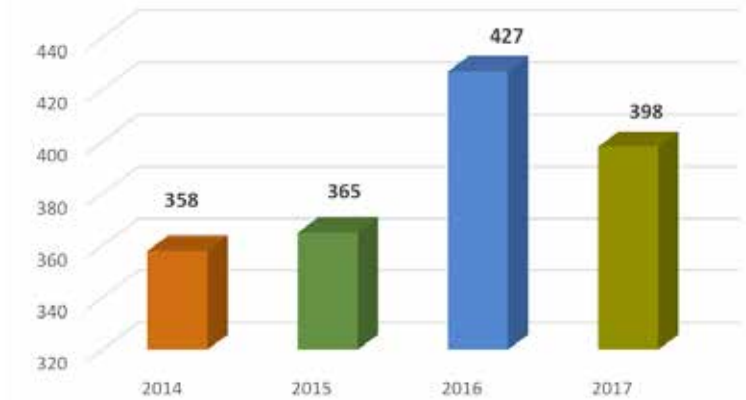
The Support Never Stops

Graduation is not the end of our relationship with our students. Last year we continued to help them with resumes, tests, and college or job applications.

As a nonprofit, we make a commitment to our students – a commitment to his or her success. This includes student counseling and conferences, not just on schoolwork, but on issues concerning life in America, covering the multiple issues that come up for someone unfamiliar with our country. Of course, academic issues are at the center of our counseling.

As friends do, we celebrated birthdays, marriages, and major events like citizenship. We keep in touch, too, via Facebook, email messages and other social media.

Student Registration Increase



About Our Students

They are younger

Most of our students are in the 25 to 34 year old age range. The average age of Danbury residents is 37.9, compared to 49.5 for Connecticut as a whole.

They speak another language at home

About 35% of Danbury residents speak another language at home, led by Spanish and Portuguese. This is reflected in the schools, where 55% of the students speak Spanish and 41% speak Portuguese.

They are better educated

In Danbury as a whole, about 28% of the adult residents have at least a four year college degree. Among our students, 36% have had at least some college education. 40% have 12 years of education, and almost 20% have at least some high school education.

They are staying longer and coming back for more!

Last year our dropout rate improved to the point that only 8.8% of our students dropped out. In addition, almost fifty percent came back for another semester, continuing their education.

They made gains, too

Beginners gained the most on our testing, gaining an average of 26% increase on standard tests.

Intermediates gained as well, an average of about a 16% increase in test scores.

Advanced students gained the least, about 5%.

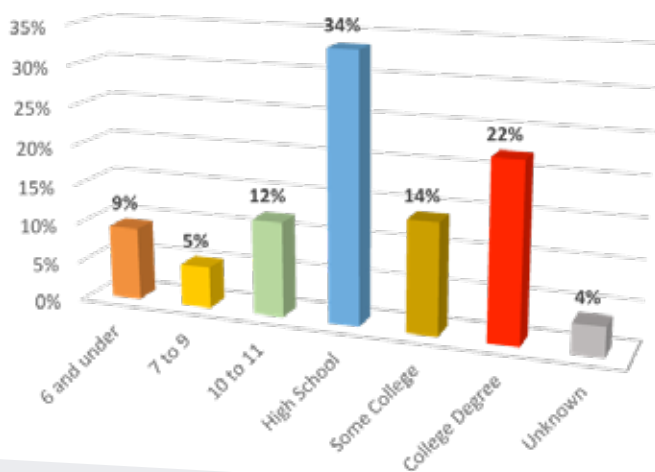
Scholarships

We were happy to award scholarships to deserving students once again.

Last year's winners were:

Olivia Guevara - Desmond Reilly Scholarship,
Edward Taveras- Ventura, Ribeiro & Smith Sc.
Eliane Dewitt - Dr. Harold Burke Scholarship.

Students Level of Education 2017



About Our Teachers

We are lucky to be blessed with a corps of talented, motivated and dedicated teachers and tutors. True to our beginnings, many of our teachers started out as tutors, working with a single student, patiently going over material until that student conquered it.

Some are retired professionals who just want to give back, after a long and satisfying career.

Some of our teachers came to us after completing our courses of study here. In doing so they are often fulfilling a lifetime dream – a dream of help and service to their fellow students. That too, is our tradition.

Others are young adults who think they can serve, with caring and understanding, while helping people close to them in age gain a new skill and a new hope – of learning English.

To this group especially, Chaucer's invocation to "gladly learn and gladly teach" hold a special meaning, for often times these teachers will report that they learned a lot in teaching our young adult students, and that only adds to the satisfaction of helping enlighten their charges.

Teacher Stats

19 Part Time Teachers

- 15 hold at least a Bachelor Degree
- 4 Hold Masters Degrees
- 11 have 2 or more years of experience
- 8 are trainees

12 Tutors

Tutors help with extra help and conversation practice.

They range from little or no experience to more than 5 years' experience.

Let's Get Personal...

...and Have Some Fun!

Yes, it takes a high level of very personal teaching to do it our way.

Teacher Training is Continuous!

Last year we added 21st century learning for our teachers, too. Now they can upgrade their skills through courses from the University of Arizona, given online through Coursera – online learning. Certification is available, too, for those who seek it.

Teachers and Tutors

We are fortunate to have a dedicated corps of teachers and tutors. They come from mixed backgrounds – business, academia, students and retirees. All have talent and desire to serve. All take our extensive training that consists of observation, on-line classes, practice lesson planning and supervised teaching assignment.

Professionalism

Teaching is a special field that requires a complex relationship between teacher and student. At our school, we value that relationship and strive everyday, to help it grow. The best teachers are learners, too, and we encourage our teachers to continue to learn.

Last year we included on-line courses in our basic training program, and we encouraged established teachers to continue their education with more online training. Our “personal” approach requires “mentoring”, which

we demonstrate through the teacher training program, so that new teachers are never left to “sink or swim” alone, by themselves. Further support comes from our frequent teacher meetings, where issues and insights are shared and ideas about curricula and pedagogy are freely exchanged.

Internships

Last year we initiated a formal intern program, with great success. We sought out bright nonnative English speakers from the community college, who had the desire, the determination and the talent to teach others. After extensive training, our interns took on the responsibility of teaching, not only their peers, but often adults much older than they were. The impact of their energy, enthusiasm and sincerity is still being felt.



What our students are saying

Esther's Story 2017

LVA is a fantastic school! Amazing support from the teachers and administration staff. I never felt challenged in other courses. It felt as though I was not reaching my full potential. When I found LVA, I was ecstatic because I finally felt that I would excel and grow in ways that other schools didn't offer. It is a school definitely, that warrants consideration! I love everyone there!"

My name is Esther. I am from a humble family. My parents and my grandparents did not have the opportunity to study. My mother wanted a different life for my sisters and me, so she decided to come to this country and give to us that opportunity. She has been in this country for a long time, and after 12 years we have finally met again.

I was 6 years old when my mother decided to immigrate to the United States. When she came here, she left us with our grandmother. I lived with her for 9 years, and after that I lived some months with my father and then just with my sisters. I talked to my mother every day. One day she told me that there was a possibility that I could come to this country and meet with her again. We had to wait some months until finally that day came. I met with her again after 12 years. That was an unforgettable day. It has been a year already since I came here. When I was in my country, I was studying. Since the first day that I arrived in this country, I knew that I wanted to continue studying. For that reason I needed to learn English. I investigated and asked for good English schools until one day I heard about LVA. LVA has been such a good school. There I have learned English, but also I have known extraordinary people. At LVA I have improved my English a lot, and they have advised me about going to college.

Finally, I'm in the advanced English level. It has been a hard process, but not impossible. Learning English is a process that takes time and dedication. I have worked hard on my English, and it has improved every day. Therefore, now I can go to college, and I think it is not only a great opportunity, but the best opportunity that I can have.

Where are they now?

Professionals

Mario '99 Translator
 Sergio '12 Pilot
 Nick '02 Doctor
 Victor '02 Teacher
 Tony '03 Doctor
 David '03 Doctor
 Fernando '05 Engineer
 Cristiani '05 Accountant
 Idisdro '05 Banker
 Ana '06 Veterinarian
 Carla '08 Dentist
 Yina '09 Teacher
 Teresa '10 Minister
 Valeria '10 Teacher
 Angela '10 Teacher
 Darci '10 Teacher
 Carlos '11 Journalist
 Antra '11 Economist
 Carlos '11 Public Relations
 Brian '11 Doctor
 Rocio '12 Chemist
 Suellen '12 Flight Attendant
 Alessandro '13 Pilot
 Erika '15 IT Manager
 Talles '15 Sales Manager
 Monica '16 Accountant
 Yessenia '16 Pharmacist
 Khalid '16 Physician
 Cleber '16 Accountant
 Catherinne '16 Physician
 Anton '16 Pharmacist
 Laly '17 Lawyer
 Ronald '17 Engineer
 Olivia '17 Engineer
 Sonia '17 Architect

College or University

Daniel '03
 Diana '04
 Perla '04
 Anita '05
 Ana '05
 Ivan '06
 Amanda '06
 Yuri '06
 Jing '06
 Gustavo '06
 Priscilla '06
 Leonardo '08
 Alessandra '08
 Dinara '09
 Grazielle '09
 Andrea '10
 Leonardo '10
 Carlos '10
 Gustavo '10
 Daniela '10
 Julio '11
 Jack '11
 Han '11
 Debora '11
 Gustavo '11
 Anselmo '12
 Fernanda '12
 Anita '12
 Jaekang '12
 Lilliane '12
 Mariana '12
 Vitoria '12
 Michele '12
 Min Ha '12
 Lucas '13
 Daniela '13
 Magdalena '14
 Elizabeth '14
 Taulant '14
 Fernanda '14
 Lays '14
 Kevin '13
 Dolores '14
 Fernanda '15
 Estrella '15
 Maria '15
 Natalia '15
 Rebecca '15
 Marcos '15
 Albertine '16
 Camila '17
 Monika '17
 Jesica '17

Corporate

Toshi '01
 Tien '01
 Samara '02
 Esther '04
 Juan '04
 Michael '05
 Vadim '08
 Alessandro '10
 Ayeda '10
 Larissa '10
 Bernardo '10
 Barbara '12
 Patricia '12
 Carolina '12
 Melanie '12
 Camilia '12
 Vera '12
 Carla '14
 Fabio '15
 Flavia '15
 Heddi '15
 Daniele '17
 Fatima '17

Local Business

Ullyana '12
 Tino '96
 Nadir '01
 Orlando '01
 Carlos '02
 Wilson '03
 Jose '04
 Marisa '04
 George '04
 Linsa '04
 Paula '05
 Felipe '05
 Gilson '05
 Vanessa '05
 Ligia '10
 David '10
 Christian '11
 Vinicius '11
 Nancy '11
 Lisa '13
 Muhammad '13
 Daniela '13
 Jose '13
 Wilson '15
 Joice '15
 Claudenice '15
 Sorreila '15
 Marco '15
 Erika '15
 Mirna '17
 Cleia '17
 Teresa '17

Benefactors 2017

Our deepest appreciation for the support given by:

Business community

Brownstone Management
Caraluzzi Markets
D. J. Ramey and Associates
GE-Foundation
House Call Painting
IBM
La Mitad Del Mundo
Merck
People's Bank
Pepsico Foundation
Pitney Bowes
Savings Bank of Danbury
Taunton Press
Union Savings Bank

Foundations

BJ's Charitable Foundation
Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation
Ellen Knowles Harcourt Foundation
Inner-City Foundation For Charity and Education
Near & Far Aid
Nora Roberts Foundation

Civic organizations

City of Danbury
Danbury Cultural Commission
Housing & Urban Development
Town of Brookfield
Town of New Fairfield
United Way
Woman's Club of Danbury/New Fairfield

Individuals

Mrs. Adriane Berner
Ms. Colleen Bird
Ms. Mary Burke
Mr. Harvey Center
Mr. & Mrs. Emmanuel Crabbe
Mr. Samuel Crocker
Mr. Benjamin Dasilva
Mrs. Lynda DeLuryea
Mr. Ben Doto
Mr. Dwayne Escola
Mr. Robert Feinson
Mr. Rafael Garcia
Ms. Mary Groff
Mr. & Mrs. Hoy Heise
Mr. Jacques Jaeger
Mr. & Mrs. Barry Kaplan
Ms. Mary Kiniry
Mr. John Leopold
Mr. Ward Mazzucco
Mr. John McWeeney
Mr. & Mrs. John Melillo
Ms. Kathy Mosgrove
Mr. & Mrs. Jose Padilla
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Pinkham Sr. & Jr.
Ms. Tyra Proctor
Ms. Lucy Scala
Ms. Ms. Margaret Schneider
Ms. Judith Schwartz
Mrs. Carolyn Settzo
Ms. Millie Siegel
Mr. Paul Sutherland
Anonymous 5

Financials

Most of our students are following a typical, time-honored road to success. They work full-time, as kitchen help in restaurants, lawn mowers for landscape companies, baby sitters and house cleaners. In their spare time, four days a week, they come to class, do homework, and prepare for tests.

As support from public sources (City of Danbury, and surrounding towns) dwindles, other

sources, such as Foundations and Individuals have remained steady or grown.

Student tuition (which is a fraction of community college tuition,) remains central to our funding success.

Student tuition now provides over 70% of the funds needed to operate our school.

Revenue

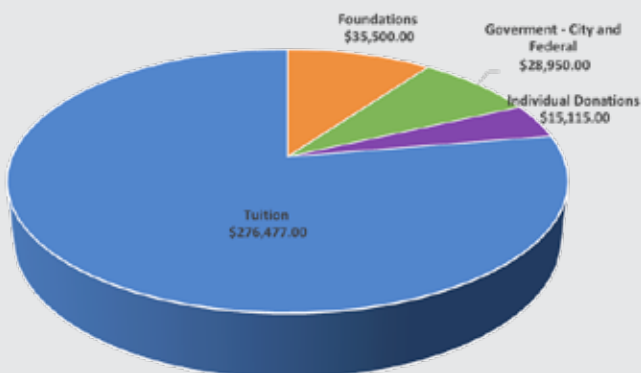
201 United Way- Northern Ffld	616.67
204 Foundations	35,500.00
205 Local Government	28,950.00
207 Civic/ Religious	800.00
208 Individual Donations	15,115.00
209 Student Tuition	276,477.00
212 Donor Choice/ Check off	1,262.08
230 Book Sales	22,157.00
231 Vending Machine	831.00
245 Other	0.00

Total Revenue

\$381,708.75

Gross Profit

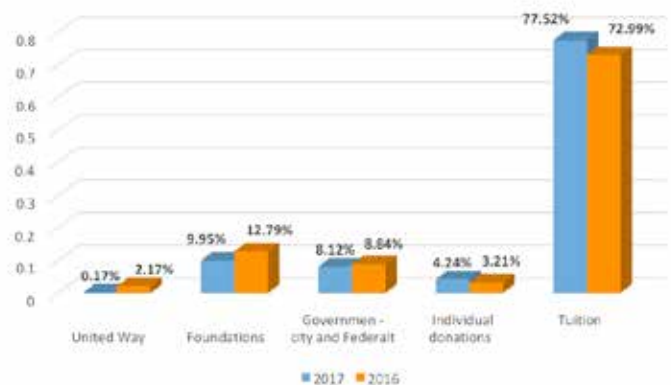
\$381,708.75



Tuition and % of Budget



Income Sources
2017 vs. 2016



Expenses

Expenditures

402 Salary	228,481.33
403 Employee Benefits	14,257.41
404 Payroll Taxes	18,393.58
416 Books	26,081.48
422 Equipment	2,945.52
425 Insurance	2,241.28
426 library	101.50
431 Occupancy Costs	13,511.66
434 (deleted)	1,087.33
434 Supplies	5,190.57
437 Postage	190.62
440 Professional Fees	16,785.61
443 Public Relations	1,562.12
444 Student Refunds	10,195.00
446 Rent	30,717.88
449 Repair/ Maintenance	1,898.19
452 Telephone	4,895.27
464 Other	879.21
Total Expenditures	\$379,415.56

Budget Increase





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