

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF CENTRAL CONNECTICUT

ol budget costs soar

\$131 M plan set for tonight

for 2010-2011 Monday by school Superintendent Doris Kurtz asks for a 22 percent increase over last year due to rising costs.

Kurtz said the \$24.2 million

increase over last year's authorized budget of \$107.5 million would bring her total budget request to \$131.7 million. The requested budget last year was

\$118 million but was reduced by \$10.5 million when federally funded Education Cost Sharing funds were forwarded directly to the district and not the city.

According to Kurtz, this action shifted 147 teaching positions that were originally funded to grant funding sta-

tus making them appear at this time as locally funded positions until next year's ECS grant is awarded.

"Once that takes place, those positions will again be shifted out of the local budget and into grant funded positions," she said.

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Musician passes talents to others

'Perfect pitch' helps guitarist in teaching role

By JENNIFER ABEL
STAFF WRITER

SOUTHINGTON — How do you describe the concept of "color" to someone who's been blind since birth? With the same difficulty Jamie Sherwood has when describing his perfect pitch to the vast majority of people who have only normal hearing ability.

Sherwood is a musician, producer and music teacher who operates out of his home studio in Southington. In the 1980s and 90s he was a major player in the local/regional music scene, playing with more than a half-dozen different bands including the Seducers, the Sundrops, the Black-Eyed Susans and others.

"All different types of bands," he said, pointing to the row of publicity photos over a wide doorway in his studio. "Mayhem was a heavy metal band. The Commuters — look at the hairstyles. That was New Wave ... The two times I got signed [contracts with record labels] there were like five people in the audi-



Musician Jamie Sherwood plays his Gretsch guitar at his studio in Southington.

Chris Richie | Staff

ence, but even if you're in a dinky club you have to play your heart out, because you never know who's there. I played throughout the northeast. Touring was fun, and when you really believe in your music it's the best. But you really

do live out of the van, eat like crap, your manager takes most of your money ... I miss those years, but it's tough these days to find places to play original music. It's a YouTube/MySpace world now. 'Here I wrote this fantastic

album, you can have it for free.' What is that?"

Playing is his passion, but teaching pays the bills. "I've been teaching the whole time, ever since I got out of college."

See GUITARIST'S, Page 4

Guitarist's own talents influence teaching style

Continued from Page 1

(Sherwood graduated from the Hartt School of Music.) "That's the day job. That pays the bills. That lets me do what I want."

He's known since childhood that we wanted to be a musician, but not until he was much older did he realize his perfect pitch was an extraordinary talent.

"The sheet music you buy is wrong. Kind of there, but part of it's missing."

JAMIE SHERWOOD
Guitarist

"When I was younger, I didn't know — my whole family was that way, so I thought it was natural. My dad played by ear. I didn't realize until I started playing with other musicians."

That play-by-ear method also influences how he teaches his musical students. Standard music lessons start with teaching scales —

do-re-mi-fa — and then the student advances to songs nobody wants to hear, such as "Mary Had A Little Lamb." Sherwood, when teaching guitar or any other stringed instrument, does it differently.

"I still teach fingering with scales and arpeggios, but with those do-re-mi books you lose a student in a month. 'Oh, this sucks.' So my method is more fun."

Sherwood's method entails taking the student into his music studio, one wall of which is lined with CDs organized both by decade — the 1950s through the 2000s — and also by genre — blues, country, and more. "I have them pick a song they like off my shelf, I listen to it, then write it down as I hear it."

His son Ian, 14, learned to play guitar that way.

"About second grade, I told Dad I wanted to play guitar," Ian said. "He started out from a book, he gives you scales, then once you have chords, he lets you pick a song."

Writing the songs out by ear is better than buying the ready-made sheet-music versions, the elder Sherwood said.

"The sheet music you buy is wrong. Kind of there, but part of it's missing," he said.

How would he describe that for someone who's not musically inclined? Is it like, for example, the difference between watching an episode of a TV show versus reading the one-line plot synopsis in the TV listings?

Sherwood thought for a moment, then pointed to the framed print hanging above his sofa. "That's a Monet painting. Impressionistic. You know it's a

pond, but not a detailed version of a pond." Ready-made sheet music is like an impressionistic painting of a pond; Sherwood's version is like a highly detailed photograph of a pond.

His main studio takes up three rooms in his house, and he has another studio in the basement. "That's where I record drums." In his basement studio, next to the drum set, someone had tacked a hand-written set list to the wall.

"That's my kids' set list," he said. "They practice here with their band."

Sherwood has three children.

Julian, who is 15, has a band with his brother Ian.

Sherwood has a younger daughter as well.

Regarding his sons' musical aspirations, "I try not to crack

the whip too much, but they'll be down here and I can't help sticking my head down to call, 'That bridge is off!' or 'Tone the G-string!' ... Out of tune drives me nuts. I can hear — what bothers me is when I go to Wal-Mart, and it's B-flat buzzing in the fluorescent tubes. And the casino, all those machines going off ... it sounds like one note but it's not. It's 100 notes together."

Sherwood gives 60 private music lessons per week, and we had to leave his house because a student was slated to arrive soon.

"I love everything I do," he said. "Anything to stay in music, you get to use your creative juices when you play, when you produce, when you teach, all of it."

See for yourself

Examples of Sherwood's music, teaching style and more can be found online at Jamiesherwood.com

TAX COLLECTOR'S NOTICE MOTOR VEHICLES

To all persons who either: Newly registered a vehicle from October 2, 2008 to July 31, 2009 or registered a vehicle with temporary commercial plates from October 2, 2008 to September 30, 2009, your vehicles are subject to a supplemental tax. If you do not receive a bill, please contact the New Britain Assessor's Office at (860) 826-3323. Failure to receive a bill will not invalidate the tax or any penalty incurred.

This tax is due in one payment during the month of January 2010. Failure to pay on or by February 1, 2010 will invoke an interest penalty of 1 1/2 % per month (or a minimum of \$2.00, whichever is greater) from the January 1, 2010 due date. Payments made in person or by mail (postmarked after February 1, 2009) must be made by cash, certified check or money order. Credit cards are accepted online at: www.new-britain.net/liv_taxcoll.html. (This is a fee based

Southington council to discuss sewer interceptor idea

By **DIANE CHURCH**
STAFF WRITER

SOUTHINGTON — The Town Council will hold a public hearing Monday on whether the town should bond \$300,000 for a sewer interceptor.

The interceptor would be 985 feet long and would run from 139

Mill Street to High Tower Road. It would replace an aerial crossing of the Quinnipiac River that is about 1000 feet north of Mill Street Bridge.

The project would include construction of new PVC sewers, television inspection of new sewers, excavation, disposal of excess material, building connections

and manhole connections, demolition of existing crossing, repaving, cribbing, driveway replacement and related improvements.

The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. in the council's chambers. A regular town council meeting will immediately follow.



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