

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM. Present: School Board Members Joseph Saulnier, Cindy Bennett, Dawn Leamer, Tony Clements, and John Harmon; Superintendent of Schools Terry Leatherman; Business Administrator Marjorie Whitmore; Director of Youth Services Patrick Arsenault; Lamprey River Elementary School Principal Laura Yacek; School Nutrition Services Director Tasha Ball; Safety & Facilities Director Todd Ledoux.

Proof of Posting: It was noted that the meeting was properly posted.

Pledge of Allegiance: All those in attendance stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Input: Public Input was opened at 6:01 PM. Public input is open for 30 minutes. If anyone arrives within that timeframe and would like to speak, they will be allowed to do so. There was no public input forthcoming at this time.

Department Budget Presentations: Administrators presented the 2023-24 proposed budgets:

Before School Program: Director of Youth Services Patrick Arsenault presented the proposed budget for the Before School Program. During discussion:

- The Before School Program brings in more than what is spent each year; it sustains itself.
- There are 40 students attending now, which is about the same as last year.
- The cost is \$150 per month.
- There is no grant for the Before School Program.
- Mr. Arsenault receives a stipend for the Before School Program.
- In 2021-22, the Before School Program took in \$60,823 in revenue.

After School Program: Mr. Arsenault presented the proposed budget for the After School Program. During discussion:

- The proposed budget shows a significant decrease since the District learned that we have received the grant, so the After School Program is now funded through the grant.
- \$30,000 remains budgeted for contracted services because they do need that staff and, because the program is collecting revenue, the State is expecting that revenue will be offset with spending.
- The cost at the elementary school is \$100/quarter, no more than \$200 per quarter per family. The cost is \$50 if they qualify for free and reduced lunch. There is a sliding scale for cost, which is required by the grant.
- The middle school program is free (formerly \$50/year). Average daily attendance at the middle school this year is 50-55 students.

Nutrition Services: School Nutrition Services Director Tasha Ball reviewed the proposed Nutrition Services budget. During discussion:

- Mr. Harmon asked for more specific information on the cost for refrigerator maintenance.

- Food costs and paper goods costs are higher than in the past. They are looking to do more cooking from scratch when possible in order to keep costs down, but some other student favorites and paper goods have increased in cost.
- Mr. Harmon stated that it looks like food costs are going up \$140,000. He wondered if getting another employee instead would reduce that food cost. Ms. Ball stated she can run a calculation to see if the hours of labor per person would reduce that cost. Right now she would hesitate to add another person, but she can investigate it further.
- Ms. Leamer asked if SST culinary students could help prepare foods. Ms. Ball stated she's been working with the LEAP program to coordinate something like that, and they are exploring that. One obstacle is transportation to other buildings.
- Mr. Saulnier asked if there should be a larger increase for the propane line. Mrs. Whitmore stated she hasn't heard back yet from the propane company to provide updated costs.
- Ms. Ball stated that she is hoping for an increase to the revenue line. The beverage machine at the high school has already generated \$872 gross sales, and some other new items for a la carte are seeing large increases in a short amount of time.
- Mr. Harmon stated that the difference between the 22-23 budget and the 23-24 budget is an anticipated increase of \$180,000 and asked if we still plan for a \$65,000 transfer to food service - will that be enough? Mrs. Whitmore stated that they haven't started looking at revenue yet, as typically they start doing that after getting numbers from the State in November. So far, there is only a month of real numbers.

Safety & Facilities: Safety & Facilities Director Todd Ledoux reviewed the proposed Safety & Facilities budget. During discussion:

- Increased cost for doors at the middle school will result in an office for a school counselor.
- The sewer line is increasing now that we are back to two pumpings a year instead of one during the pandemic.
- Oil is the three year average usage by gallons and the budgeted cost is 75 cents higher than currently paying.
- Mr. Ledoux discussed how the heating is managed in the buildings: there's a daytime temperature and a night setback.
- Mr. Saulnier suggested going out to bid for sewer maintenance.
- Electricity is budgeted at 3% for 23-24 rather than the 2% increase budgeted for this year. Mr. Harmon questioned if 3% is enough, and asked for a number reflective of the rates we're paying today.
- The elementary school maintenance software line has dropped quite a bit because another company does it now, so the cost has been moved over to contracted services.
- The high school software line also has a decrease for switching to companies. They're not getting charged next year for the technical side of the switch. All the HVAC wiring and piping are being done later in the school year/summer. It was noted that because payment isn't required for that work next year there is a decrease in cost that will be reflected in the contracted services line in 23-24 and then that line will increase again in 24-25.
- Mr. Clements asked about the cost to the Town for emptying dumpsters. Mr. Harmon reviewed the arrangement that the District has with the Town: the Town provides the SRO, plowing, middle school lawncare, and trash pickup. The District allows the Recreation Department use of the buildings and town

meetings at the high school. (It was noted that RCTV is a separate entity in itself.) These agreements with the Town are not in writing.

- Ms. Leamer suggested that the District consider funding its own School Resource Officer.
- Insurance costs for the initiatives for the maintenance employee are factored in already.
- Mr. Harmon asked, with the additional \$23,000 for the part time maintenance position to go to full time, what would the anticipated savings be? Mr. Ledoux stated that there's not necessarily a direct and tangible correlation, but it's more of the idea of getting more preventative maintenance done and speed of service.

Lamprey River Elementary School: LRES Principal Laura Yacek reviewed the proposed elementary school budget. During discussion:

- Mr. Saulnier asked about the cost for social workers at LRES (Object code 500113). Ms. Whitmore stated that we have the Project Aware grant, and one of these positions was split between ES, MS, and Project Aware. Now, the HS and MS are fully out of the grant, and the ES is now fully out of the general fund. The second salary is because they reduced the number of school counselors and added a social worker. Ms. Yacek stated that change was made because the social worker can meet more students' needs at the elementary level. Object code 500112 for school counselors was decreased.
- One teaching position is moving from the elementary school to the middle school due to the large class size moving up to 4th grade next year. Ms. Yacek stated she will update the enrollment projections to reflect this change.
- Object code 500733 furniture can be decreased to \$500 because of the teacher moving to the middle school - a table at the elementary school is not needed for that teacher.
- Mr. Harmon asked for a breakout of the cocurricular activity stipends at the elementary school.
- Mr. Harmon asked why the amount for the communication stipend at the elementary and middle schools is higher than at the high school. Ms. Whitmore stated that it's due to the track for cocurricular stipends. Mr. Harmon stated that the social media positions started at \$1,000 and that those positions were not added to the track. Ms. Yacek stated that at the elementary school, their social media coordinator attends events, provides photos for newsletters, and updates Facebook.
- Mr. Harmon asked about the participation level in each of the cocurricular programs, at all schools, and was there participation in all of them.
- Ms. Saulnier stated that the increase for the social media stipend was due to the School Board, and adding website updates to their duties.

Student Services: Mr. Leatherman reviewed the proposed Student Services budget. During discussion:

- The Deans are reflected in the salary line for administration for special education. Mr. Harmon stated that in the current budget, the three deans are reflected differently, as the Executive Director and two other administrators. Where are those lines in the 22-23 budget? Ms. Whitmore stated that the Assistant Director is in Object Code 500111, and the other position of Special Education Coordinator is under 500112.
- Mr. Harmon asked for a rundown on where we are on staff being trained in ABA and if we are on track to have all staff trained by the end of our contract with Constellations.
- Mr. Harmon asked if \$10,000 is enough of an increase for legal services.

- Mr. Leatherman stated that he's not sure if the increase in special education transportation will be enough, that they have to bid out for it. Mr. Harmon asked how we arrived at the proposed 23-24 number. Ms. Whitmore stated every year we are significantly under budget in that line. While we are under contract with Durham School Services, ridesharing and transportation locations make it difficult to calculate cost expectations. The proposed budget is an increase to the actual expenditures.
- Mr. Harmon stated he had asked about ridesharing with other districts - do we still do that? He stated that we, the District, should be managing that as opposed to Durham School Services.
- Ms. Whitmore noted that we don't yet have the current year tuition rates for out of district students, so the 8% increase reflects an expected increase both this year and next year. Mr. Saulnier asked if we underestimated the current budget, and Mr. Leatherman stated yes, due to some move-ins.
- Mr. Harmon asked about the difference between "tuition in state" and "private out of district." Ms. Whitmore stated the "tuition in state" is public school tuition.
- Mr. Saulnier asked if there has been a significant increase in the number of private out of district students since they last looked at this. Ms. Whitmore noted that the law has changed so that students do not age out until 22 years now, as opposed to 21 years.
- Mr. Harmon asked if the District is confident in the increase proposed to special education tuition. Ms. Whitmore stated she was confident at the time that former Executive Director of Student Services Michael Hatfield left the District.
- Ms. Whitmore stated Medicaid administrative costs are lowered because the District has been receiving less Medicaid revenue. If more is received and that expense for administrative services is increased, they will balance each other out. Mr. Leatherman stated they've recently learned that social workers may be able to sign off on those Medicaid reimbursements, so we may see an increase in revenue.

Curriculum: Mr. Leatherman reviewed the proposed Curriculum budget. During discussion:

- Mr. Harmon inquired if a stipend of \$5,000 per building is enough. Mr. Leatherman stated that it's not needed yet and he wants to see where we're at. Mr. Harmon stated he'd like to see more budgeted now.
- Contracted services at the top of page 3 for \$20,000 can now be \$0 because iReady is now out of ESSERS funds. Mr. Saulnier asked if the Board could be provided with what the costs will be if/when iReady comes back out of the budget.
- Ms. Leamer asked if we had an idea of what the Tier I reading program would be. Mr. Leatherman stated that the teachers are researching programs, to include an online portion as well as physical text.
- Mr. Harmon stated that we're looking at \$60,000 to implement a new reading program at the elementary level and he assumes that includes up to 5th grade. Mr. Leatherman stated yes, but he's not confident that \$60,000 could get us up to grade 5, but definitely up to grade 3 and then they can come back next year for grades 4 and 5. Mr. Harmon asked for startup costs for both K-3 and K-5.
- Mr. Harmon asked if we would not be spending some of the elementary school or middle school proposed budget if we implement this reading program - is there any offset from our current reading techniques that would no longer be used with a new reading program.

District Expenditure: Mrs. Whitmore reviewed the proposed District Expenditures. During discussion:

- Ms. Whitmore stated that there is an increase to fingerprint reimbursements due to high employee turnover.

It was noted that because revenues will not be available until after November 15th, that the Board may have to submit a budget to the Budget Committee without revenues and then update that information after the first School Board meeting in December.

Ms. Whitmore noted that she's received the information for health insurance, and though it's not added to tonight's documents, it does increase the budget by \$28,587. Administration had budgeted 10% but the Guaranteed Maximum Rate received from HealthTrust is 12.3%. She stated she can have the default budget to the Board by the first meeting in November.

Adjournment: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to adjourn the meeting. Voted unanimously in the affirmative. Meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Heywood,
Raymond School Board Clerk