

Special Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes

January 9, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

Central Services

Present Board Members: Jenny Emery (via telephone), Mark Fiorentino, Lynn Guelzow, Melissa Migliaccio, Sarah Thrall, Rosemarie Weber, and Brandon Webster.

Melissa Migliaccio called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

I. FY19 Plus One Budget

The Board continued their discussion on the FY19 Plus One Budget. Melissa Migliaccio explained to new Board members that the Plus One Budget is a tool for the Board of Finance. The Board will present the Plus One Budget and our big picture goals as a starting point to the Board of Finance on Tuesday, January 16th. The Board will have an opportunity to further discuss the budget during budget meetings and budget workshops. Mark Fiorentino also informed new Board members that nothing the Board does tonight commits them to anything and nothing prevents the Board from changing the budget as we go forward.

Dr. Addley reviewed the questions asked by the Board.

New Personnel: A question was raised about the bus monitor positions. He stated the positions were requested for behaviors, control distractibility for bus drivers and increased communication between Open Choice and Choice liaisons/principals. This would be a contracted service position through CREC and will be funded through Q&D. Dr. Addley discussed the new personnel requested which includes all new positions less the reduction in FTEs for enrollment. Coaches at the middle school were discussed. The district currently has three coaches at the middle school for Language Arts, Math and Special Education. As far as coaches working with students, the current model is 60/40 but the new model of 50% includes working with students in enrichment clusters, with students who compact out of curriculum, with students in an after-school club setting, and with talented and gifted students. The addition of a maintenance worker was also discussed. Dr. Addley stated administrators are in favor of adding this position. A question was raised about paying current staff overtime and Dr. Addley stated it is not efficient to do so.

Health Benefits: A question was asked about the health benefit line item and if the changes are due to the new teachers' contract for the high deductible health plan. Jenny Emery inquired if it would be better to align it with the health line item. Anna Robbins stated the way the town looks at the budget is the town assumes that what goes in the health line comes from the health plan and that it is handled differently from an accounting standpoint. Dr. Addley agreed that perhaps we could make a change in the language on the Plus One Memo stating a negative overall savings of -4.3%.

Chinese Program: The Chinese Program currently runs for Grades 9-12 and Dr. Addley noted the program once ran for Grade 8 students from Hartland and Granby. Granby last evaluated the world language program in 2010 and a consultant is currently looking at the rigor of the world language program with a focus on the Chinese program.

1-to-1 Computing: Wells Road has approximately 420 devices and the cost is \$425/device for i-pads and \$420 for Chromebooks. Studies to support more i-pad/computer use for the 1-to-1 program were discussed. Dr. Addley stated there is a lot of material available and shared references from a recent district report on 1-to-1 computing.

Strings Program: Dr. Addley stated a strings program has been in the Plus One Budget for a long time. He has approached the GEF and a member of the community who is interested in helping to support the program. The source is currently in the operating budget/Q&D/grant/ community support. The FTEs requested do not equate to a new FTE for every year; rather, 0.5 FTE for next year with an additional 0.5 FTE in FY23. Mark Fiorentino inquired if the estimated annual cost of the program is +/- \$83K per year. Dr. Addley stated, yes, that is correct. Mr. Fiorentino also inquired if there were other recommendations from the arts audit. Dr. Addley stated some new courses were also recommended. Lynn Guelzow commented she could not imagine

one person instructing all of the students. Christopher Tranberg, Assistant Superintendent, stated current staff will assist in teaching. One teacher has the experience and other teachers will need training.

Professional Development: Dr. Addley stated this line item consists of conferences and travel; tuition reimbursement; curriculum writers; and curriculum presenters. The district does not spend a lot of money on professional development. The increase in Curriculum Writing is due to a structural change to bring on four curriculum leaders to monitor and audit curriculum development. Art, music and PE curriculum needs attention as well as some singleton classes. A question was asked if the Eureka Math professional development will address math performance and the answer is, yes, and it will include professional consultants from Great Minds, publishers of Eureka. Professional development for equity practices will include specific actions based on recommendations from the task force. The group will be meeting again in February and by the end of February/early March, there will be some formalized recommendations. Lynn Guelzow expressed concern over not getting the professional development necessary if the task force makes a recommendation and it is not in time to make the budget process. Dr. Addley stated he might have to make some compensation. Christopher Tranberg stated if the Sheff Support Grant comes through, there is \$5K slated for professional development as well as funds from the Graustein Fund. Ms. Guelzow inquired about the ability to tap into the Q&D fund. Dr. Addley stated that is possible. Professional development for Language Arts will focus on refining practices with reader and writer workshops.

Melissa Migliaccio asked if the Board had any further comments.

Mark Fiorentino stated he is comfortable with this version of the Plus One Budget as it aligns with goals and objectives of the Board.

Brandon Webster inquired if there were any grant applications in process for string instruments. Dr. Addley stated, yes, and he has spoken to the GEF and submitted a proposal.

Lynn Guelzow had three comments: There is no clear idea of the status of state funding; she is uncomfortable with how far we are above the BOF guidelines at almost two times over the guideline; and, she sees no educational benefit for 1-to-1 in the primary school and it is a huge expenditure.

Melissa Migliaccio stated she agrees on the state funding issue. With regard to the 2% guideline, the district would just be standing still at 2.6% increase and the district would not be able to meet contractual guidelines within 2% guideline. As far as 1-to-1, she anticipates a robust discussion in the budget workshops.

Brandon Webster stated his concerns are with the 1-to-1 program, strings program and decrease in classroom teachers. Dr. Addley stated he wanted to clarify that the reduction of staff is solely due to declining enrollment. Lynn Guelzow stated she would like to revisit class sizes.

Edits will be made to the document as follows: Change BOF "Assumption" to BOF "Model" on Page 1; change health benefit language to reflect a 4.3% reduction in employee benefits; and remove the position of 0.5 FTE Strings Teacher in the 2020-21 school year.

Melissa Migliaccio requested that the BOF model be forwarded to BOE members

A motion was made by Mark Fiorentino and seconded by Jenny Emery to approve the Plus One Budget to be presented at the Three-Board Meeting on Tuesday, January 16, 2018, with the edits discussed this evening. This motion passed unanimously 8:09 p.m. A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Brandon Webster to adjourn the meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Weber, Board Secretary