

Budget Workshop – Approved Minutes

March 14, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

Central Services

Present Board Members: Jenny Emery, Lynn Guelzow, Melissa Migliaccio, Sarah Thrall, Brandon Webster, and Rosemarie Weber.

Absent Board Members: Mark Fiorentino and Maddie Attianese and Sarah Cusano (Student Representatives)

Melissa Migliaccio called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

I. Budget Workshop

The Board continued to discuss the FY19 Administrative Budget presented on March 8th. Dr. Addley reviewed questions that were sent to him from the Board. The first question was to provide a status of the recommendations from the arts audit. Dr. Addley informed the Board all of the items are in progress, such as, expanding course electives, adding curricular and extra-curricular programs, and providing additional opportunities for collaboration between students and the community. He also stated that instituting a strings program was the first order of business for the Assistant Superintendent, Christopher Tranberg.

A question regarding moving Kindergarten teachers out of the Q&D Fund into the Operating Budget and the cost to do so was discussed. Dr. Addley presented the figures for moving 1, 2 or 3 teachers out and the percentage is based on the current teachers' salaries. Melissa Migliaccio inquired what would the budget increase be if one Kindergarten teacher was moved out. Dr. Addley stated it would be a 3.7% increase instead of 3.49% and would also free up funds in Q&D. Another question was raised about the loss of teacher positions. Dr. Addley explained there is a total loss of 1.9 FTEs (which includes a 1.0 FTE leave-of-absence request) but, ultimately, two teachers will lose their positions (0.5 FTE Spanish and 0.4 FTE Physical Education).

Questions were raised regarding class sizes. Dr. Addley stated the budget is predicated on two issues: the instructional coaches and class sizes. He shared research of a study called *Student Teacher Achievement Ratio* and stated the research is very clear...there is no reason to expect consistent improved student performance under a class size reduction policy. He stated his general conclusion is to work with the class sizes presented in the budget. With regard to Kindergarten class sizes, in particular, Dr. Addley stated the projected Kindergarten class sizes in the budget are within BOE guidelines, the new enrollment projection of 91 students and a full-time teaching assistant in every Kindergarten class. Sarah Thrall inquired if the research based on K-12 and Dr. Addley said he would get back to her. Lynn Guelzow stated she is not comfortable with the 91-student projection. Brandon Webster inquired what the option would be if enrollment rises over the summer and an additional Kindergarten teacher is needed. Dr. Addley stated he would need to come back to the Board and also present a way to add another section. The cost of a new teacher could be approximately \$60K. With regard to class sizes at the high school and the reduction of 0.2 FTE in each core academic area, a question was raised about how would this impact scheduling and availability of classes. Dr. Addley stated there is plenty of flexibility with the class size projections that are budgeted and he is comfortable with those projections.

A question regarding the change in the coaching model was discussed. Dr. Addley stated there are currently 8 coaches and the District is reducing to 5 coaches. One Enrichment Coach at the middle school and one Reading Interventionist at the intermediate school will be added. This can be done due to the savings of a \$90K position. Dr. Addley stated he is comfortable changing this model because of the reasons to do so including: one less school; student performance is not where it should be; teacher practices are not changing; greater vertical articulation; greater content area focus (more time working with students, teams (PLC, etc.) and administrative tasks); and, a need to focus on Tier I instructional practices. Dr. Addley informed the Board he believes this model is best for the school system. Brandon Webster inquired if the Enrichment Coach would spend any time with underachieving students. Dr. Addley stated, no, students would get help from resource teachers, special education and interventionists.

A question about SBAC was discussed and, in particular, student achievement in Grades 3 and 4 and what is the plan to improve performance. Dr. Addley stated that the Wells Road Principal, Dr. Forlenza-Bailey, went to content area

teaching at Wells Road this year where teachers focus on Math and Science and Language Arts and Social Studies. The teachers are pleased with this model. Additionally, Dr. Addley stated there would be closer supervision and progress monitoring by the Principal. The District will also be increasing content-specific professional development opportunities for teachers; prioritize coaching for Tier 1 instruction; provide additional reading intervention support; increase use of interim practice assessments; and, revisit SRBI best practices and structures for student intervention teams.

Summer school revenue and expenditures were reviewed. Dr. Addley explained the Robotics Program was designed as a feeder program for the high school to build up the program and, consequently, there is no cost. The YMCA expenditure is for our Hartford students who attend the summer school program for a half day then spend the remainder of the day at the YMCA. He stated this is well worth the money and the funds are designated for this through the Q&D Fund and the Sheff Academic Support Grant. Melissa Migliaccio inquired what the breakdown is of special education students vs. regular education and it is 75% special education/25% regular education.

Dr. Addley spoke about the increase in pay-for-participation and rental fees because this is included in the budget and is revenue for the town. This was not a question asked by the Board.

Jenny Emery inquired what would you spend \$50K on if you could get it. Dr. Addley stated he would request the Maintenance Worker and the Instructional Coach at Kelly Lane for the 1-to-1 program.

Melissa Migliaccio stated the Board of Finance (BOF) guideline is 3.85% and the current budget is at 3.49% and inquired what the stand still budget increase would be if nothing was instituted. Dr. Addley stated it would be approximately 2.73%. Ms. Migliaccio asked for any thoughts by the Board. Jenny Emery stated she would like some more information on the Maintenance Worker that is not in the budget. Dr. Addley stated his honest answer is that there is a new leader in the Facilities Department and he would like his professional opinion as to whether or not this position is necessary.

Brandon Webster inquired if the Strings Program can be introduced at a higher level in lieu of K-2. Christopher Tranberg stated developmentally speaking, there is methodology developed for young students to play a violin (which is a half-sized instrument) without having to read music. It is something innovative and different and no other schools in the area are doing.

Lynn Guelzow commented this is a very good budget and she is impressed with the repurposing of positions. Her biggest concern is decreasing a section in Kindergarten and sections at the high school.

Melissa Migliaccio commended the administration on the budget and stated over the past 10 years the BOE budgets have been less than 1%, closed a school and responded to declining enrollment. This budget moves the District forward adding strings, an Enrichment Coach at the middle school and a late bus for Granby students. Dr. Addley stated the budget also addresses equity issues by adding a Social Worker and bus monitors on the Open Choice buses.

Rosemarie Weber stated the budget is extremely reflective, addresses the needs of the district and is responsive to the community. It is a very thoughtful product.

Brandon Webster inquired about the cost of the Strings Program particularly in Year 3. Dr. Addley stated the cost of teacher would be an additional \$30K. Additionally, he inquired about the addition of iPad carts and if there is really a need for them. Dr. Addley stated he is not so convinced of having 1-to-1 at the primary level and especially telling the Board that every student needs a computer. Melissa Migliaccio inquired what the breakout cost is for the i-Pad carts and Chrombook replacements. The i-pad carts cost is \$19K.

Public Comment: Gordie Bischoff, Granby, stated he viewed Dr. Addley's testimony to the Energy Committee and that it was very well done. Hopefully it will help Granby in the future. Mr. Bischoff stated the BOF initially had a guideline of 2.5%-3% and, based on input from Dr. Addley and the BOE, they supported having an initial guideline of 3.85% recognizing some things are driven by special education costs. He stated he would advise against looking for an opportunity to increase the budget because he does not think this would be supported by the BOF and his sense is that this budget would be supported.

A motion was made by Lynn Guelzow and seconded by Rosemarie Weber to enter into an Executive Session. This motion passed unanimously at 8:12 p.m.

In Executive Session a motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by Lynn Guelzow that the Granby Board of Education approve the funding under the 2017 School Security Competitive Grant Program for state funding totaling \$476,329 and local funding totaling \$518,926, consistent with the funding obligations and timing of the grant. This motion passed unanimously at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Weber
Board Secretary