**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday, February 28, 2019**

The bi-monthly meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held on Thursday, February 28, 2019, in the cafeteria of Mt. Hope High School, 199 Chestnut Street, Bristol, RI. Chairperson, Erin Schofield, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:16 PM.

Present: Erin Schofield, Chairperson; Adam Ramos, Vice-Chairperson; Brian Bradshaw, Treasurer; John P. Saviano, Secretary; John C. Bento, Victor Cabral, Sheila O. Ellsworth, Marjorie J. McBride, and Carly Reich, ; Mario J. Andrade, Superintendent; Diane Sanna, Assistant Superintendent; Mary Almeida, Director of Literacy and Title 1; Leslie Anderson, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; and Raquel Pellerin, Director of Finance and Operations

**OPENING BUSINESS**

All present were invited to join in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Donna Razza, Warren RI*

Ms. Razza thanked the School Committee for hearing the community regarding their concerns about cutting teachers. Ms. Razza asked the School Committee to look at the budget for cuts in areas that won’t impact children. Ms. Razza closed by stating that the Towns can’t afford increases.

*Michelle Way DaSilva, BWEA Co-President, 7th Grade Math Teacher and parent*

Ms. DaSilva stated that she wanted to make sure that the light that is currently shining on social and emotional learning continues. She commented that she acknowledges and hears that there will be a focus on social and emotional supports, but expressed concern that there is nothing built into the proposed budget for an alternative learning program at KMS and Hugh Cole. Ms. DaSilva reiterated the importance of getting those programs back in place for the success of all of our students.

Ms. DaSilva stated that she understands research is being done, but that the BWEA is concerned because the timing of the budget is coinciding with continued research. She wants to ensure that those programs that the research finds won’t be shortchanged.

Ms. DaSilva expressed concern over the needs of students who struggle in math. She commented that there currently is not a math interventionist in place. She feels it is imperative that the children get the extra math instruction that they need. Ms. DaSilva stated that the students need a math specialist and a math interventionist as it is a dire need. Ms. DaSilva asked the School Committee to look at those when considering the budget.

*Brian Chidester, BWEA, teacher and parent*

Mr. Chidester stated that at the last School Committee meeting a number of parents and teachers came forward to speak with concerns about social and emotional supports at the elementary level. He added that he is concerned that the budget does not address the needs at the elementary school level.

Mr. Chidester stated that he believes the budget requests need to be much bolder. He feels, in the past, the budget requests have been too modest. Mr. Chidester stated that he feels the towns need to “up their game” to help the schools. He added that if the District ever hopes to have the State push more for our schools, it needs to start at the Town level.

Mr. Chidester asked the School Committee to consider the budget request carefully with an emphasis on needs and funding of the schools as fully as possible.

*Victor Cabral, School Committee Member*

Mr. Cabral came forward to acknowledge celebrations within the schools. He mentioned a recent high school basketball team who scored a big win; the gymnastics team who just won the States; one wrestler who won the States, another who came in second and another who came in third; the girls and boys hockey teams who are in the playoffs, and the boys and girls basketball teams who are in the playoffs.

Mr. Cabral closed by saying that we have great kids and great teams.

**SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS AND ISSUES**Recommendation #S2019-27 - That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, and supported by the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee, approve the FY20 bottom line budget request

MOTION: Mrs. McBride made a motion to approve the FY20 bottom line budget request; seconded by Mr. Bradshaw.

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Schofield thanked Dr. Andrade and Ms. Pellerin for coming to present the FY20 budget request.

Dr. Andrade stated that since a majority of those present were at the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee meeting that just concluded where an in-depth conversation was held, that they would do an abbreviated presentation during the School Committee meeting.

Dr. Andrade described the FY20 budget process.

Dr. Andrade highlighted the following preliminary budget discussions which have taken place:

* Preliminary document presented for discussion
* Collected feedback from subcommittee, School Committee and public
* Follow-up meetings - Central Administration, principals, directors and school staff
* Developed reduction plan and adjustments to proposed FY20 budget

Dr. Andrade highlighted the proposed budget reductions.

Dr. Andrade highlighted the proposed revenue and shared the proposed revenue breakdown.

Dr. Andrade clarified that there is not a line item for social and emotional supports because it is a priority. He further clarified that social and emotional supports must be funded and that the District must find the money to do so. Dr. Andrade would not want to go to the JFC with a specific dollar amount for social and emotional supports when the District could end up needing more. Dr. Andrade emphasized to the School Committee and the Public that the District is committed to students especially in the area of social and emotional needs. Dr. Andrade stated that this commitment is reflected in the FY20 budget.

Dr. Andrade stated that a majority of the budget goes to the educators and support staff. He thanked all for their valued need to the District.

Dr. Andrade shared a slide highlighting a breakdown of the proposed expenditures.

Dr. Andrade shared a slide listing budget priorities by category.

Chairperson Schofield thanked Dr. Andrade and Ms. Pellerin for their hard work.

Mrs. McBride asked for clarification on the percentage of the budget increase from last year to this year. Dr. Andrade responded that there is a 3.57% increase from last year’s budget request to this years.

Chairperson Schofield asked for clarification regarding social and emotional supports. Dr. Andrade clarified that social and emotional supports are already embedded within the FY20 budget, but as the KMS Safety & Security Subcommittee proceeds, it will look at what the need is and will be committed to putting those supports in place on top of what has been embedded in the FY20 budget.

Chairperson Schofield stated that tonight the School Committee is voting on the FY20 bottom line budget request number. She added that the School Committee and the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee will still consider to work to identify needs at all schools including social and emotional supports. The District can reallocate funds once a determination has been made for the best way to fit social and emotional supports into those schools. Chairperson Schofield stated that the budget document is a living document and that student needs are ever changing.

Mr. Ramos asked what the process would be if a program is identified that the District wants to prioritize for social and emotional needs that isn’t budgeted for.

Dr. Andrade responded that anything over $5000 goes to the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee with a proposal for line item adjustments. Dr. Andrade added that the research prior to that decision is important looking for ownership and building a culture that is going to be a worthy investment for stakeholders.

Ms. Ellsworth thanked Ms. Pellerin, the school administrators, the department heads and everyone who worked hard to close the gap to figure out what was needed in the schools to make them successful.

Ms. Ellsworth stated that “we all rise and fall together”. “If we fall, we have failed our kids.” She commented that money does not equal success. She stated that leadership does and that we are all leaders. Ms. Ellsworth stated that she is happy that the District is looking to be innovative. She commented that it is important to look inside the District’s budget to ensure money is being spent efficiently. She challenged the District to do an internal audit of building headcounts, technology, etc. to look for efficiencies.

Mr. Bradshaw stated that he supports the FY20 budget. He agreed with Ms. Ellsworth that there are still some areas to look at for further cuts. Mr. Bradshaw stated that teachers are our number one resource, and that it is important to do everything to support the children. He thanked everyone for their hard work on the budget.

Mr. Ramos asked what the expected role of the math interventionist will be and where that person will be placed.

Dr. Andrade stated that the math interventionist has been allocated for KMS where math scores have not been “spectacular”. The KMS specialist will work with Tier 3 students in the RTI model. Dr. Andrade stated that the District has incredible math teachers, but that math coaches are a critical aspect. He stressed the important aspect of the instructional core. Dr. Andrade stated that the math interventionist will work with students and teachers.

Mrs. Sanna further explained the role and focus of the math coaches and math interventionists.

Mr. Cabral asked what the role of a reading specialist is. Mrs. Almeida responded and described the roles of the reading specialist at each of the grade levels and who they serve. She also explained the certification requirements.

Mr. Cabral asked what the background is of a math coach and math interventionist.

Mrs. Sanna described the background of a math coach and math interventionist. Dr. Andrade further explained the difference between the role of a math coach and a math interventionist.

Dr. Andrade further clarified that students are assessed to determine how best to work with them. It is not a directive from the Superintendent’s office. A student who is identified as needing a math coach or math interventionist is chosen on a very individualized basis.

Mr. Bento reiterated thanks to the public and the teachers for their input into the FY20 budget. Mr. Bento commended the administrators who took decreases in increases. He offered a special thanks to Mr. Bradshaw for his leadership of the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee and thanked Ms. Ellsworth for doing a deep dive into the District’s numbers. Mr. Bento closed by saying that he feels the District is going in a great direction.

The motion passed with a 6-2 vote; Mr. Cabral and Ms. Ellsworth dissenting.

**ADJOURNMENT – 8:02 PM**

MOTION: There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Ramos motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 PM; seconded by Mr. Bento. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

John P. Saviano, Secretary

/kd