

**Westport School Committee  
Work Session  
DATE: Thursday, January 23, 2020  
TIME: 6:00 p.m.**

**PLACE: Westport Jr./Sr. High School Conference Room**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Melissa Pacheco, Michelle Orlando, Nancy Stanton Cross, Nancy Tavares, Antonio Viveiros

**Also Present:** Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent, Michelle Rapoza, School Business Manager, Melissa Sousa, Business Office

**I. Call to Order** - A quorum being present, Chair Viveiros called the Work Session to order at 6:00 pm.

**II. Comments and Statements from the Public/Citizen's Participation** – There were none.

**III. Informational** – FY21 Budget Discussion-

This Work Session is being held to review the Westport Community Schools FY21 Proposed School Committee Education Budget.

The first topic for discussion was Special Education out of district placements. A comparison sheet was distributed to the members that compare other school districts by enrollment, number of out of district students and the percentage. For Westport with an enrollment of 1,428, there are 9 students placed out of district for a total percentage of 0.63%. Although this figure is lower compared to other districts, it amounts to 25% of the total budget.

Discussion took place on whether the district could service more of these students inhouse. Dr. Reese mentioned space, identifying the programs needed and whether they are available are factors to consider. Students are serviced in house first with the use of adding a TA If needed. Presently the district will be adding a Reading Specialist to service programs like Wilson Reading and Orton Gillingham.

Ms. Stanton Cross recommended reviewing figures for special services and tuition for School Choice.

SPED expenses are at 3.7%, Town wants it at 2.9%.

The following categories of the FY21 Proposed Budget were reviewed by the members. Items listed under each category were discussed by the members.

**DISTRICT**

Discussion was held concerning the copiers. The district is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the contract which includes toners, maintenance and ink, based on the number of copies. Presently a code system is being used. Possible use of a badge system was mentioned. Ms. Pacheco asked Ms. Rapoza to inquire about the average copy cost with her online email group for further information.

Dr. Reese explained that the Landmark System is a beneficial program that provides Professional Development modeling for new teachers and helps working with language-based learning difficulties. This program is important to keep.

Professional Development - Dr. Reese monitors this and looks to see the requests are part of the program they involved with. Mr. Viveiros mentioned a few years ago a cap was placed on professional development.

Civic contracted services – Used for floors, lining fields, cleaning and maintenance of bleachers.

Utilities - Big jumps were noted / possibly shift funds of \$49,000.

Rental/ lease buildings – It will cost \$325,000 to purchase the modulars and almost the same cost to have them removed.

**SC/ SUPER/BUSINESS OFFICE** – There were questions on funding the Recording Secretary for the School Building Committee.

Business Service Assistants are for payroll

Contracted services are for MASC policies

Remove \$4,000 from website development and \$1,350 from MASBO and move to the legal line.

**MAC** – No questions.

**WES** – Use of a long-term substitute is not budgeted. There is no way to know when these substitutes would be needed. This may cause a problem with the budget.

Salary differences for Executive Secretaries

Lunch monitors – Discussion took place about removing this from the budget with the possibility of having teachers do the lunch duty. Amount is \$5,500 and \$7,000 = \$12,500 total. Campus Supervisor is also a lunch monitor.

**WJR.SR.HS** – Added 15 minutes before and after school for TAs to do traffic monitoring

Guidance has 4.5 people

Athletic Coaches' salaries should be raised

Campus Supervisor job description needs to be reviewed

Home tutoring

Athletic supplies, instructional supplies

**CUSTODIAL** – Overtime/Substitutes

**MAINTENANCE** – No questions.

**HEALTH** – No questions.

**TECHNOLOGY** – It was noted there have been many changes.

**CURRICULUM/ELL** – Discussion was held on curriculum development and the need to have an articulated curriculum. This work has a time frame for completion.

**TRANSPORTATION** – Ms. Rapoza mentioned in the next contract they are asking for a 1 year with 2-year-old buses. This was done to keep the price stable; the transportation line did not increase. Ms. Rapoza mentioned there is a risk associated that may increase this item. When the new school opens transportation costs will increase.

**SPED** – Question on the number of TAs, Dr. Reese said they are all are being used and he has looked at IEPs, SPED tuition.

Review of the FY21 Proposed Budget ended.

Dr. Reese reviewed his memorandum dated January 21, 2020 entitled FY21 Budgetary Considerations. Items represented in this memo were discussed with school and district administration but were not captured in the proposed budget. He is sharing the following information for SC consideration.

Transportation – A 1-year contract is being proposed at a cost of \$875,460 which is the same amount as last year.

Food Services - Add \$39,238 into the local budget to cover Food Service Director and Food Service Clerk.

Athletics – Add \$9,360 for tennis facility and transportation (not including away games).

Staffing - Captured and proposed in the FY21 budget is a TA at MAC and a Reading Specialist for WES/WJSHS. Three additional staff that was requested but not placed in the budget is .5 FTE Computer Science Teacher, .5 FTE English Teacher and .5 FTE Social Studies Teacher. These positions would be used with the change to the new schedule. In addition, requested but not placed in the proposed budget was to increase support with an additional School Adjustment Counselor.

Out of district transportation - Under new legislation more monies will be coming down from the state's circuit breaker reimbursement formula for SPED transportation. The changes will be for services in FY21, but will not be reflected until FY22. (25% 1<sup>st</sup> yr., 50% 2<sup>nd</sup> yr., 75% 3<sup>rd</sup> yr.) There is no impact to the proposed budget for this year.

Technology – Chromebook purchase will cost \$91,500 for grades 9-11 or \$120,000 for grades 8-11. Dr. Reese will send a letter to Town Administrator Tim King requesting this to be a one-time purchase outside the school budget and to be placed as a line item for Town meeting.

Extended Day Program – This program continues to see increased enrollment and does not impact the budget at this time. Having the program run at both the MAC and the WES and reassign staff will eliminate bussing between the programs. Increased enrollment is expected. It was recommended to have a sub-committee to be able to work on a vision for the future of the program. The SC requested to see a monthly budget.

WEF School Volunteer Program – Future of a robust parent and community volunteer program for the district may involve a person to oversee and coordinate these efforts. No impact to the budget at this time.

Ms. Pacheco made 2 recommendations on the budget. Make the accreditation work and combine 2 smaller classes to free up space. Places identified to adjust funds are from utilities, copier, heat and monitors.

Dr. Reese mentioned in order to offer diverse course offerings there would be a cost for the hiring of staff.

For the next meeting, Dr. Reese will look at ways he can adjust the proposed budget. He will present these at the Budget Hearing.

January 30 - Next SC Meeting Budget Hearing

February 6 - SC vote on the budget

**IV. Adjourn** – A motion was made to adjourn.

Motion by Orlando, seconded by Stanton Cross

5/0/0

The School Committee Work Session adjourned at 8:24 pm.