

**The Hamilton Wenham Regional School District
School Committee Budget Workshop #1
Buker Elementary School Multi-Purpose Room
Tuesday, January 14, 2020 5:00 PM**

Present:

Gene Lee (5:40pm arrival)
Michelle Horgan
David Polito, Chairperson (5:15pm arrival)
Stacey Metternick, Secretary
Peter Wolczik

Also Present:

Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent to Finance & Administration
Julie Kukenberger, Interim Superintendent
Thomas Geary, Director of Maintenance, Facilities, and Operations
Ben Schersten, Buker Elementary School Principal
Carolyn Shediak, Winthrop Elementary School Principal
Jennifer Clifford, Cutler Elementary School Principal
Maureen Smith, Elementary Special Education Coordinator
Peggy McElinney, Director of Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction
Susan Stibel, Elementary Language Arts Coordinator
Christine Fichera, Elementary Math Coordinator
Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary
Alan Taupier, Director of Technology
Elizabeth Lovell, Miles River Middle School Assistant Principal
Craig Hovey, Miles River Middle School Principal
Kristin Lazzaro, Director of School Counseling
Bryan Menegoni, High School Assistant Principal
Eric Tracy, High School Principal

1) Call to Order 5:00 PM
Stacey Metternick, School Committee Secretary, calls the meeting to order at 5:10 pm.

2) Pledge of Allegiance
All in attendance rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) Citizens' Comments
Susan Stibel mentions that World Read-Aloud Day is 02/05/2020, and she encourages everyone to participate by reading aloud with families and/or the community.

4) FY21 Leadership Team Tentative Budget Proposal Part #1
A. Intro and Budget Overview (30 Minutes) (Slide 1)
Dr. Kukenberger introduces tonight's budget workshop and provides an overview of the district's tentative budget, approved at the 01/08/2020 School Committee meeting.

Ice Breaker: Tell your budget Emoji story! (Slide 2)
Participants choose 3 emoji stickers to describe how they are feeling about the FY21 budget development process, and then connect with 2-3 other participants to share.

- Review Norms and Workshop Protocol (Slide 3)

- Batching questions, encouraging participants to jot down notes as presentations occur;
- Objectives for Today (Slide 4)
 - FY20 Return on investments, successes, fast facts and research;
 - What the FY21 budget proposal allows district to do/provide;
 - What needs are unmet by this proposal?
 - Talking points and critical messages to be shared with our community;
- July 18, 2019 FY20 Preliminary Budget Forecast (Slide 5)
 - Review of budget deficit and actions taken by district administration;
- October 16, 2019 Preliminary Budget Forecast (Slide 6)
 - Review of changes since forecast was made;
- FY20 Items Still in Motion (Slide 7)
 - Out-of-District Placement;
 - Health Insurance;
 - Employee Leaves (maternity/paternity, medical, etc.);
- Summary (Slide 8)
 - Review key elements of budget process thus far;
- What does this mean? (Slide 9)
 - 2.3% behind due to deficit in FY21 Budget;
- LT Budget Development Process (Slide 10)
 - Strong desire for collaborative process;
 - Increase district transparency;
 - Working to be fiscally responsible, while understanding finite resources/capacity;
 - District Administration will make recommendation this evening, and clearly communicate with and receive feedback from the committee and community;
- FY21 Tentative Budget Overview (Slide 11)
 - Review tentative budget approved at last School Committee meeting;
- FY21 Tentative Budget Goals (Slide 12)
 - Develop a needs-based, student-centered, fiscally-responsible budget;
 - Prioritize PreK-12 resources;
 - Provide required & appropriate services based on student needs, encouraging best educational outcomes for all;
 - Respond to increasing enrollment demands PreK-1;
 - Maintain existing programs & ensure student safety;
 - Expand early intervention supports & services;
 - Support 200+ employees;
- FY21 Budget Challenges (Slide 13)
 - Unbudgeted needs will lead to 2.3% increase over FY20 Budget;
 - Contractual obligations require 4.9% increase over FY20 Budget;
 - Increasing PreK-1 enrollment;
 - Developmental, social-emotional, and behavioral needs of students requiring specialized services & placements;
 - Aging facilities & routine maintenance costs;
 - More needs and investment proposals than able to support;

DAVID POLITO, CHAIRPERSON, CALLS THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER (WITH QUORUM) AT 5:31PM.

- FY21 Preliminary Operating Budget Overview (Slide 14)
- FY21 Preliminary Summary by Site (Slide 15)

- Each site will present what is/is not included in their budgets;
- Review Norms and Workshop Protocol (Slide 16)
 - Dr. Kukenberger reviews the importance of following the norms & protocols.

Hamilton Wenham Regional High School (Slide 17)

Eric Tracy, Principal & Bryan Menegoni, Assistant Principal

- HWRHS- Return on Investment, Celebrating Success, and Fast Facts (Slide 18)
 - RISE Program;
 - Moved all Community Service to online platform, *Naviance*;
 - The SRO, CARE team, and ALICE emergency response program;
- HWRHS- FY21 Budget Allows us to (Slide 19)
 - Add an After-School Program for student academic support;
 - Fund equipment needed for the Biotech class (launch class/startup funds);
 - Expand *Mandarin* to Senior year, possibility of honors program
- HWRHS- Unmet Needs (Slide 20)
 - \$5,500 Biotechnology class equipment (recently covered by EdFund);
 - \$30,000 Media Communication lab/classroom equipment;
 - \$55,000 Health teacher for High School;
 - Inability to meet building and facility needs as outlined in accreditation report:
 - This is the one aspect HWRHS does not meet for accreditation. Mr. Tracy details this issue, noting it has been an ongoing concern, and potential ways to meet guidelines in the future.

Hamilton Wenham Miles River Middle School (Slide 21)

Craig Hovey, Principal & Liz Lovell, Assistant Principal

- MRMS- FY 20 Returns on Investments, Celebrating Success, and Fast Facts (Slide 22)
 - Schoolwide PBIS Rollout:
 - Details regarding PBIS progress made - uniting & allowing for common language, increasing student safety;
 - SRO and ALICE;
 - Arts Learning for All Students;
 - 8th Grade Spanish Exchange;
 - Developmental and Refinement of Curriculum;
 - Expanded After School Activities;
 - Maximizing Learning Spaces;
- MRMS- FY21 Budget Allows us to (Slide 23)
 - The MRMS FY21 Budget heeded to the needs of other schools, and thus does not require funding for a lot;
 - Maintain a team-based model;
 - Continue curriculum development and refinement;
 - Continue Professional Development to Support Innovation;
- MRMS- Unmet Needs (Slide 24)
 - Increase SEL Supports;
 - Expand RISE (Resilience, Independence, Support, Empowerment) program to MS;
 - Develop Long Term MS Student Technology Strategy;
 - Expand Use of Learning Spaces;

- Collaborative Band Room, Outdoor Learning, Flexible Furniture

Questions/Wonderings (Slide 25)

Ms. Metternick notes that the 12 pending OOD placements would bring the district up to 70+ student placements. She asks for explanation about the district's actions to examine this issue. Dr. Kukenberger assures Ms. Metternick of the district's commitment to exploring this in detail, explaining actions already taken, actions anticipated in the future, and research avenues planned to more deeply understand and address the concern.

Ms. Horgan noticed the accreditation report showed HWRSD above the state average. Mr. Tracy explains the report and complexity of OOD placements, noting that the district is attempting to meet the needs of students earlier in their education. Dr. Kukenberger adds that earlier intervention leads to better results, and the current proposed budget reflects some of these efforts.

Ms. Metternick asks for further explanation regarding the 6.9% HWRHS budget increase. Mr. Tracy explains many line items have been combined and/or shifted, so the increase may appear more drastic in some areas. Ms. Metternick states that she understands the reorganization, but reiterates the increase is alarming. Discussion regarding budget increase, possible factors, limitation to understanding the increase, etc.

Ms. Metternick asks if there is an amount projected for meeting the facility requirements set forth in the accreditation report. Mr. Tracy is uncomfortable in providing an answer, as there are a number of renovation projects as well as equipment purchases to consider as factors when providing an estimate.

Ms. Horgan asks how many students are anticipated at the after-school academic support program, with Mr. Menegoni noting there are generally 12-15 students at a time. The most important component, he continues, is to have a fully licensed teacher who not only understands the needs of students, but can also effectively communicate with parents. Continuing to offer this program allows for more equity in student success.

Ms. Metternick asks for further explanation regarding the Professional Development and School Nurse increases in the budget. Dr. Kukenberger states that the school nurse's lane change accounts for the increase, while Mr. Hovey notes that the increase in Professional Development results from the changing curriculum requirements. Dr. Kukenerberger encourages School Committee members to focus on the dollar amount rather than percentage increases, as the amounts initially listed were very low.

Ms. Horgan asks if the Leadership Team would be able to identify budget reductions without compromising the quality of education. Mr. Tracy explains that the Leadership Team spent a great deal of time exploring fiscal responsibility, however, they feel it is crucial for the community to understand the issues the schools face. Further discussion regarding the work done thus far, presenting information to Towns, moral and ethical responsibility to disclose needs of the schools, goal of transparency, etc.

Mr. Polito asks about the potential of working out a deal with HWCAM and the HWRHS Media and Communications Lab. Discussion regarding HWRHS programming, student interest, diminished draw to media/communications, history of relationship with HWCAM, etc. Mr. Tracy

states that though the situation with HWCAM is unfortunate, it allows for some important programmatic changes to take place.

Mr. Wolczik appreciates the creative use of space in the facilities, which encourage the important 21st century skill of collaboration.

Ms. Metternick notes that tonight's agenda was amended without 48 hours notice, and asks to table the *Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction* presentation. Ms. McElhinney offers to keep her presentation on the agenda, and return tomorrow night to answer any questions that arise.

Time for a Break! (Slide 26)

DAVID POLITO, CHAIRPERSON, CALLS A 10 MINUTE RECESS TO THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING AT 6:34PM.

DAVID POLITO CALLS THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6:44 PM.

Hamilton Wenham Regional Elementary Schools: Bessie Buker, Cutler, Winthrop (Slide 27)

Ben Schersten, Buker Principal, Carolyn Shediac, Winthrop Principal, & Jennifer Clifford, Cutler Principal

- Elementary Schools- FY 20 Returns on Investments, Celebrating Success, and Fast Facts (Slide 28) Presented by Carolyn Shediac
 - Support 842 students in 42 PreK-5 classrooms;
 - Student supports provided through Language-Based Classroom, Intensive Learning Program, Center for Academic and Social Learning, Therapeutic and Moderate Programs;
 - Continued Professional Development for Responsive Classroom Investigations 3.0 Mathematics, STEMscopes, Science, and Teacher College Writing Units of Study;
- Elementary Schools- FY21 Budget Allows us to (Slide 29) Presented by Jennifer Clifford
 - Seventh kindergarten teacher maintains class size below 24;
 - Full-time kindergarten teaching assistants follow DESE guidelines of 18:2 student: adult ratios;
 - Literacy funds allow replenishment of K-5 classroom libraries (independent reading, increasing high-interest titles);
 - Additional Special Education Teacher to expand Language-Based Classroom, supporting students with content area language-based needs;
 - New music/performance risers at Buker, increasing student safety;
 - Expand School Resource Officer schedule, more effectively supporting schools;
 - Security update- part of Capital Improvement Plan;
- Elementary Schools- Unmet Needs (Slide 30) Presented by Ben Schersten
 - Facilitating updates- space limitations hinder ability to add programming;
 - LIPS Training for primary classroom teaching assistants;
 - Additional compensation/training for specialized teaching assistants;
 - Advanced Responsive Classroom training;
 - Locally funded TAs to meet the Special Education needs for all students (avoid relying on unpredictable state/federal grants);

Ms. Horgan asks if all elementary school principals agree with safety and security concerns; all agree this is a concern at schools.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction (Slide 31)

Professional Development & Grants, Programs, and Initiatives

Peggy McElhinney, Director of Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction

- Curriculum & Instruction- FY 20 Return on Investments, Celebrating Success, and Fast Facts (Slide 32)
 - District accountability data: met 88% of improvement targets in 2019 (increase 21 percentage points over 2018);
 - Essex County Learning Community Grant: access to high-quality professional development & collaboration with area districts, improving Multi-Tiered Systems of Support;
- Curriculum & Instruction- FY20 Return on Investments, Celebrating Success, and Fast Facts (Slide 33)
 - Mentoring and Induction program: provided new teacher orientation; mentor coordinator training and mentor resources; Studying Skillful Teaching course;
 - Content-specific professional development: AP training, Primary Source membership, SEI, and global studies;
 - Summer Curriculum Development: writing to align with new curriculum frameworks and AP expectations, as well as developing and refining course;
- Curriculum & Instruction- FY20 Return on Investments, Celebrating Success, and Fast Facts (Slide 34)
 - FY20 budget deficit and curtailment led to using the Tide IIA grant (a 2 year grant) for many professional development opportunities. This leaves the district with fewer grant reserves in FY21;
 - Grant-funded PD in FY20:
 - Will Richardson... beliefs about learning discussions;
 - Using Data Solutions consultants for the Literacy Data Team;
 - Illustrative Mathematics curriculum resource training;
 - Teacher College Coaching of Writing Institute;
- Curriculum & Instruction- FY21 Budget Allows us to (Slide 35)
 - Provide TA training supporting Special Education needs;
 - Provide Professional Development related to curriculum frameworks, identified student need, and district goals;
- Curriculum & Instruction- FY21 Budget Allows us to (continued) (Slide 36)
 - Continue to provide high-quality mentoring and induction programs supporting new teachers;
 - Continue memberships supporting curriculum and instruction (Primary Source, CSDN, ASCD, etc);
 - Provide time for curriculum development:
 - Prioritize unit writing at the High School (NEASC);
 - Align to new frameworks in Social Studies, Fine Arts, and Health/Wellness;
 - Develop new courses: *Mandarin 5, Biotechnology*, etc.
- Curriculum & Instruction- Unmet Needs (Slide 37)
 - Advanced Responsive Classroom training (\$20,000);
 - LIPS Training (\$18,000);

- Training Primary and Special Education teachers would better support students in developing phonemic awareness, a critical skill for reading success.

Wonderings and Questions (Slide 38)

Mr. Wolczik comments that the importance of another teacher in the classroom should not be overlooked, and addressing issues earlier will be more cost effective and allow for greater student success. Ms. Clifford agrees, explaining the intention is to address needs earlier to reap long-term benefits.

Ms. Metternick asks the Elementary Leadership Team to identify possible budget reductions, especially given Wenham's unique situation. Ms. Metternick states that she does not feel good about bringing the current budget to the towns. Ms. Clifford explains that this year's collaborative approach to the budget resulted in equity across the elementary schools. Further, she highlights the importance of identifying district-wide cuts as opposed to separating out individual schools. Mr. Schersten adds that the difficult conversation about budget cuts necessitates a fully transparent and collaborative approach involving all stakeholders.

Discussion regarding collaborative approach to identifying district priorities, challenges specific to kindergarten enrollment, challenges emerging during the beginning of the school year, etc. Discussion regarding LIPS approach, benefits, student needs, training required, investment now in order to lower Special Education costs in the future. Discussion regarding presentation to community/towns.

Mr. Lee asks Mr. Tracy to provide an overview of the accreditation process and HWRHS status in that process. Mr. Tracy explains that the self-reflection report was submitted and then in October 2019, 4 volunteers spent 2 days on-site, verifying the claims made in that report.

- **FY21 Preliminary Operating Budget Overview (Slide 39)**

Mr. Leone reviews the FY21 Preliminary Operating Budget:

- Operating Expenses increase 12.48% change from FY20;
- Expense Offset 32.31% change from FY20;
- Revenues 2.63% change from FY20;
- Net Operating Budget 13% change from FY20

Ms. Metternick requests that comparative data is shown in more detail.

B. Next Steps

- **Review Next Steps in FY21 Budget Development Process (Slide 40)**

01/15/2020, 5:00pm-8:00pm Budget Workshop part #2

- SC Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee Meetings
 - Tuesday, January 21, 2020 @ 7:00pm
 - Tuesday, February 4, 2020 @ 7:00pm
- Joint FY21 Budget Meeting (both Towns)
 - January 29, 2020 @ 7:00pm
 - Additional meetings TBD
- Public Hearings @ 6:30pm in Buker Multipurpose Room
 - #1 Wednesday January 22, 2020
 - #2 Wednesday, February 12, 2020
- Town Meeting/Vote

■ April 4, 2020

Ms. Metternick asks if the towns have agreed to the 01/29/2020 date, with Dr. Kukenberger confirming this, explaining further that she previously sent out a Doodle Poll for this purpose. Ms. Metternick believes there may be some confusion around this date. Dr. Kukenberger notes that a timeline was shared in November, and is therefore fairly certain that all concerned parties are aware of the date. However, since there is no harm in overcommunicating, she will confirm this again.

● **How did the Workshop go? (Slide 41)**

Ms. Metternick asks that HWCAM make the recording of workshops live (there was an initial struggle with the Youtube feed, so the intention to broadcast a live feed was unsuccessful).

Ms. Horgan states that it would be helpful to have the costs for unmet needs identified throughout all individual budgets.

Based on School Committee feedback, Mr. Leone will add the 18/19 and 19/20 Budget actuals for comparison. He will also add FY20 projections and FY20 actuals (as projected during forecasts).

Mr. Lee appreciates the work and level of detail included in tonight's presentation, and believes the amount of information is appropriate for public consumption.

Mr. Polito says it is helpful to receive information directly from the Leadership Team and appreciates seeing the big picture to gain a deeper understanding of the schools' needs and their reflection in the Budget.

Dr. Kukenberger thanks the Leadership Team, commending them for stepping up and answering questions with confidence and clear understanding several times throughout the evening

Mr. Polito enjoyed the addition of the Leadership Team presentations to the budget process. He notes that as most people do not necessarily understand how to read through a budget, tonight's presentations broke down complex information in a way that was a lot easier to digest.

5) Adjournment (7:40pm)

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
ADJOURN AT 7:49 PM.**

**MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Peter Wolczik
Unanimously approved by 5 members present.**

Respectfully submitted March 18, 2020 by Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary.