

**Finance Committee Meeting Notes
Crescent Lake School
November 14, 2023 6:00pm**

Present:

GWRSB Finance Committee: Jack Widmer – Team Leader, Tom Bickford, James Pittman, Mary Schillereff

Administration: Superintendent Caroline Arakelian, Business Administrator Kathy O'Blenes, Kerry Hunt, Kathy Tetreault, Paul Famulari, Katey Hills

Other: Dana Streeter, Brodie Deshaies

Subject Matter

Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2025 – General Fund

Budget Overview/Discussion

- Superintendent Arakelian described how the budget was prepared and the process that was followed in considering last year's spending, this year's spending to date, and requests submitted by building administrators. She noted patterns that would show increases in items such as utilities, insurance, and building maintenance as well as highlighting staffing requests that would be presented to the committee. She also reviewed the schedule of presentations and explained that the committee would vote on moving the budget forward at the conclusion of the third meeting.
- Principal Hunt presented the proposed budget for Kingswood Regional Middle School with an increase of .91%. Ms. Hunt projected enrollment for next year to be 350 students, a slight decrease from 365 this year. She shared that the middle school is fully staffed with professional teachers and continues to try to fill 9 open support staff positions. She also shared much appreciation for the value of the presence of the additional SRO this year. She explained that the SRO helps the students and staff to feel safe in the building, advocating for the continuation of the position. She explained that her budget requests focus on those items that will directly impact students, replacement furniture, materials and supplies, a welding simulator, and the creation of a new counseling center. Ms. Hunt answered questions from the committee.
- Principal Tetreault presented the proposed budget for the Lakes Region Technology Center with an increase of 2.04%. Ms. Tetreault reported that LRTC is fully staffed, all programs are being offered once again, and the current student enrollment is 238. She announced new course offerings of Marine Technology, Social Media Marketing, and Allied Health that are currently working towards final approval in the future. She reviewed areas where increases are shown, explaining that many are due to cost increases. Ms. Tetreault answered questions from the committee.
- Principal Famulari presented the proposed budget for Kingswood Regional High School with an increase of 8.51%. Mr. Famulari projected enrollment for next year to be 776 students, an increase from the current enrollment of 744 this year. He reported that the high school is

also fully staffed with professional teachers, but there are still some open support staff positions. He explained budget increases around math department consumables, science equipment, contracted services and the Arts Center. He requested one new full time certified Special Education staff member to support an increasing number of students receiving special education services. Mr. Famulari answered questions from the committee.

- Business Administrator Kathy O'Blenes presented the proposed budget for the School Board/SAU Office with a 6.39% increase. She reported that the HVAC system requires repairs, printing expenses are increasing, and new financial software is planned.
- Director of Curriculum Dr. Katey Hills presented the proposed budget for Curriculum impacted by the expiration of ESSER funding that had previously paid for District testing and screening software like ExactPath, Courseware, and Acadience. She advocated for the extension of the Curriculum Project Manager position for one additional year in order to continue to support the staff with training and to maintain the progress that has been made this year. She also requested to continue with the two math coach positions in order to continue to support competency work. Dr. Hills answered questions from the committee.

Mr. Widmer thanked the administrators for their presentations and said we will be back tomorrow evening at 6:00 pm for the elementary principals to present their budgets.

Adjournment: 7:30 pm

Recorded by,



Kathy Lagace
School Board Secretary

Approved by School Board: **TBD**