

Board of Education Regular Meeting
via Zoom Webinar
January 16, 2024

Call to Order

Board Chair Sattan called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Present: Board members Tracy Cloyd, Debra Dudack, Melissa Finnigan, Brian Fry, Glenn Gazdik, James Mol, Sam Toskin and Maureen Sattan; and Superintendent Timothy Van Tassel, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent Michelle Zawawi and Business Manager Eric Remington

Absent: Josh Barrows

Discussion/Action Item

- Discussion and Possible Approval of FY25 Capital Project Requests
Superintendent Van Tassel shared the Capital Improvement Plan with the Board of Education. Larry Plano, Director of Facilities, reviewed the priority lists for each school. Board members discussed the process of prioritizing projects and the plan for moving some items out of the school operating budget and into the Capital budget.

MOTION #24-27: Glenn Gazdik moved, James Mol seconded to approve the FY25 Capital Project Requests as presented. All members voted in favor. The motion passed **8-0-0**.

Board of Education Workshop - Proposed 2024-2025 Budget Presentations

- Curriculum and Instruction

Michelle Zawawi, Assistant Superintendent, reviewed the Curriculum and Instruction proposed budget. Current year program highlights included the English Language Program that reaches 65 English Language students, the K-12 Community Connections for continued growth, textbook and curriculum revision, the Suffield High School Math Intervention Program and the continuation of Multi-tiered Systems of Support at the secondary level. Advancement Planning Initiatives for the 2024-25 school year were reviewed and discussed. Assistant Superintendent Zawawi would like to implement a new math program for grades 3-5 in 2024-25, and phase in grades K-2 in 2025-26. She would like to implement a new reading program for grades K-2 in 2024-25, and phase in grades 3-5 in 2025-26. A reading interventionist to support elementary English Language and Special Education students is being requested, as well as new textbooks for high school Chemistry, AP Psychology and Modern World History.

- A. Ward Spaulding School

Gina Olearczyk, A. Ward Spaulding School Principal, reviewed A. Ward Spaulding School's proposed budget. Current year program highlights included how Reading Interventionists are currently supporting 24 identified English Language Learners, the Multi-tiered Systems of Support process focusing on Tier 2 interventions, using Professional Learning Communities to review and analyze data and student outcomes regularly and how Instructional Coaches are continuing to support curriculum development. Principal Olearczyk reviewed the Advancement Planning Initiatives for the 2024-25 school year. Principal Olearczyk said a new reading program K-2 will need to be implemented in response to the requirements associated with the Right to

Read Act legislation that was recently passed. She is requesting a .5 FTE Reading Interventionist to help support English Language Learners and provide Tier 2 support for teachers within the classroom. Board members discussed the roles and responsibilities of reading interventionists, the positions that were not included in the budget requests, and the cost of piloting a reading program. Board members discussed possible grants or programs for ELL students.

- **McAlister Intermediate School**

Kris Pryce, McAlister Intermediate School Principal, reviewed McAlister Intermediate School's proposed budget. Current year program highlights included the increase in service to students with Tier 3 literacy needs, the Multi-tiered Systems of Support process continuing to provide targeted support to struggling students, and using Professional Learning Communities to review and analyze data and student outcomes. The continued role of Instructional Coaches supporting curriculum development and implementing coaching cycles for teachers, the realignment of Academic Support to focus on the increase of English Language learners, and the installation of a new fully accessible playground were also highlighted. Principal Pryce reviewed the Advancement Planning Initiatives for the 2024-25 school year. Principal Pryce is requesting a .5 FTE Reading Interventionist to help support diagnostic reading assessments and support the increase in English Language Learners. She is requesting the implementation of a new math program grades 3-5. She said two programs are at the top of the list and visits to districts utilizing those programs will occur. A new math program will require significant professional development to support the implementation. Board members discussed how the new math program will be rolled out and what the measure of success will be. Board members discussed the transition from McAlister Intermediate School to Suffield Middle School and questioned if students are prepared to enter 6th grade.

- **Suffield Middle School**

Ken Smith, Suffield Middle School Principal, reviewed Suffield Middle School's proposed budget. Current year program highlights included the new core team model, enhancements to Multi-tiered Systems of Support to increase student achievement of identified grade-level standards, consistently measuring teaching practices and strengthening alignment of the written, taught, and learned curricula. Principal Smith reviewed the Advancement Planning Initiatives for the 2024-25 school year. He would like to continue professional growth and support for staff concerning assessment data analysis and data-driven decision-making. He would like to continue to enhance Multi-tiered Systems of Support systems, procedures and practices. He would like to continue evaluating and potentially adjust programming for the fine arts and unified arts courses. He would like to continue the process of enhancing the Student Support Team to meet the growing social and emotional needs of the students. Board members discussed standardized test scores, the feasibility of providing a double-block of math, what would be lost in providing a double-block of math, and how many students would be impacted. Board members discussed students needing more math instructional time to cover the depth and breadth of the curriculum if the district is looking to take an aggressive approach. Teacher adjustment to the new team model was discussed and why the request for a third school counselor was not put in the SMS budget. Board members discussed thinking outside of the box concerning middle school math scores.

- **Suffield High School**

Carrie Apanovitch, Suffield High School Principal, reviewed Suffield High School's proposed budget. Current year program highlights included staff alignment and scheduling to allow for

common planning time for departments, programming to support a wide range of defined pathways, 100% of Agriscience students meeting program requirements, AP course offerings, and the Transition Coordinator programming. She reviewed the Advancement Planning Initiatives for the 2024-25 school year. Suffield High School will continue to improve targeted use of Tier 1 instructional strategies to improve student outcomes, Professional Learning Communities will continue to be utilized to identify problems of practice, and systems that address student engagement will be enhanced. Principal Apanovitch said the Career Technical Education (CTE) candidate pool did not produce a viable candidate, but she would like to see the program expand. Shannon Inero, Suffield High School Assistant Principal, said she will have a better gauge on the number of students wishing to take CTE courses by mid-February. Board members discussed their concern over removing the CTE position from the budget and whether course selection for next year is based on having two CTE teachers.

Board Chair Sattan encouraged BOE members to populate the budget question page within the BOE Budget Studio. Superintendent Van Tasel said the next BOE Budget Workshop will be on January 29 and reminded BOE members of the Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures (ACCE) walkthroughs scheduled for January 25. Board member Finnigan said the ACCE walkthroughs, the Finance and Facilities Subcommittee, and the Calendar Committee are all scheduled to meet on January 25.

Adjournment

James Mol moved, Melissa Finnigan seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 p.m. All members voted in favor.

Minutes are subject to approval at the regular meeting of February 5, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Dudack
Secretary