

Budget Committee Meeting (Tuesday, February 6, 2024)

Generated by Minnie Kamarata on Friday, February 9, 2024

1. Meeting Agenda

1.1 Call to Order

Dr. Monroe, Superintendent, called the Priority Interest Budget Meeting to order at 4:32 p.m. Committee members present were: Sara Schaefer, Holly Murray, Stephanie McCorkle, Lynzee Booras, Jennifer Crandall, Connie Crowley, Julie Haut, Dr. Stephanie Mohorne, Kay Hamrick, Ashley Brune, America Yurgayev, Natasha Camp, Ericka Daniel, Susan Matteson, Bob Young, Robert Reinhard, Crystal Mosher, Dr. Cort Monroe, Beth Strickler, Minnie Kamarata, and Peter Smith. Non-committee members present were: Board Member Paul Bixler, Board Vice President Bryan Parks, Board President Michael Todd, Board Member Kris Kenyon, and Amanda Loveless in the audience.

1.2 Welcome & Introductions

Dr. Monroe, Superintendent, welcomed all the budget committee members, mentioned this meeting is a public meeting governed by Open Meeting Law where the public is welcomed to attend. He welcomed Governing Board President Michael Todd, Board Vice President Bryan Parks, Board Member Paul Bixler, Board Member Kris Kenyon, and Amanda Loveless sitting in the audience. Mentioned agendas will be posted publicly along with the meeting minutes taken and made public.

1.3 Purpose

Dr. Monroe, Superintendent, gave the purpose of the Budget Interest Committee Meeting. To provide input and feedback from information received from solicited stakeholders to consider the best priority interests of the entire District. Prior to going to the next agenda item of 1.4, Dr. Monroe, brought up the Reading Interventionist position and how this topic had been discussed before and was a high priority. He mentioned that Dr. Mohorne and Natasha Camp are having staffing conversations with principals for the SY24-25 and have discovered staffing model efficiencies that will allow us to be able to fund our Reading Interventionists for next year out of Maintenance and Operations. More details will be presented at the Monday night Governing Board meeting. Looking at reading proficiency numbers, we have identified that we need these positions even more at each campus. Every school will get a minimum of one Reading Interventionist next year, plus other campuses may get more, according to the student data and according to the formula that has been created. This will be a flexible plan that may include the possibility of movement to different campuses. Keeping in mind to maintain low classroom sizes from the last override. Dr. Monroe asked if the Reading Interventionists could be removed from the prioritization list because new monies will now not be required for these positions. Math will be discussed in the future and mentioned wanting to stay focused on the priorities.

1.4 Priority Discussion

Beth Strickler, Executive Director of Business Services, opened the discussion for Budget Interest Form responses and the spreadsheet slide presentation. She mentioned that the Reading Interventionist position had been added to the bottom of the spreadsheet and that conversations had already taken place between the Reading Interventionist. Instructional Coaches and Grounds can also be moved at this time. Dr. Monroe mentioned these positions are being paid and funded for already so these positions do not have to be taken to the Board. These positions are already currently in the budget. Bob Young, Executive Director of Operations, touched on the Grounds position and how it would likely be a cost savings and not having to contract these positions out anymore through repurposing, thus replacing Yellowstone. Beth Strickler mentioned that today's goal is to have conversations of each single line item and if the person is present who submitted that line item, can discuss, explain and speak to it, then a prioritization could take place starting at the top. Discussion started with transportation asking for three additional bus drivers for added routes. Bob explained that transportation has added bus drivers due to an increase in students and other additional staff having to help with bus routes. Holly Murray, mentioned the permanent guest substitute and that position on her campus being used 95% of the time. (Daily rate being \$175). A discussion was had and maybe the possibility of sharing this position between campuses. Westar has two permanent guest substitutes. Behavior Interventionist oversees the Behavior Specialist positions, Behavior Specialist positions are pivotal for student behaviors, they create individual plans, help with classroom discipline, peer mentoring/mediations, etc. Those Behavior Specialists were funded from ESSER funding Dr. Monroe mentioned. Julie Haut asked how many Behavior Specialists are at each campus? (1 each) Lynzee Booras mentioned that having this position has allowed her to be in the classrooms for teacher support, etc. Natasha Camp, explained the Director of Research position and that it is currently funded through Project Momentum, this position helps with surveys, data (DAP), research, boundaries with school with our demographer, etc. Dr. Monroe mentioned that these are hard decisions and that we will be submitting these priorities to the Board for consideration. Holly Murray mentioned their part-time school secretary and asked for this position to be full-time. Crystal mentioned it to be an additional \$11K. Dr. Monroe explained the Salary Study results with the assistance of an accounting firm, Heinfeld Meech, they have compared our positions with comparable districts on the westside. He also mentioned that the Salary Study will be presented to the Board for approval. The asking of Phase 1 could be approximately \$50K-75K, he is not sure, and thus bringing some employee pay groups up to the market rate. Julie Haut asked if we brought staff to competitive pay, what that dollar amount would be? Dr. Monroe mentioned that we didn't have that answer as of yet. A further discussion was held in regards to staff salary. Dr. Monroe mentioned increasing raises for all staff to include the 2%. Julie Haut mentioned strategizing which group(s) could get a salary study adjustment but not provide the 2% raise or somehow get creative? Kay Hamrick explained within her related salary scale (per her hardcopy) of years of service and experience for OT/PT wanting to add another step to the related services scale that would make special services more competitive. Leaving a difference of only \$40K. Adding a step of 6-7, 8-9, 10+ for years of experience. Kay further explained her thoughts of contracted services. Susan Matteson mentioned the additional duties being added to support/teaching staff, such as lunch duties, and those positions wanting to be compensated for those additional duties. It was mentioned that in staff contracts it states other duties as assigned. It was brought up that the increase in salary would help in this situation. Ashley mentioned Reading Paras and how only Title 1 schools have these positions and wanting to bring them up to the next level of pay. Holly Murray mentioned growing the Ag program by adding an Ag teacher and the .5 shared position for music/PE. Kay Hamrick mentioned medical billing and this not being completed due to lack of time and going from 5 days to a 4 day work week. It was also mentioned that teachers don't have time to train their paras. It was brought up that a paras work time is bell to bell. It was also mentioned that if their time is extended, is that teacher going to be present when the para is there. Kay mentioned the possibility of giving a stipend. Further discussion was had. Connie Crowley mentioned the MAG program and the seventeen students being in her (4-8 grade) class and wanting to grow the program. 2 FTE are currently assigned but only 1 filled. Westar houses this program because of

the higher ratio of identified students. Julie Haut asked if kindergarten and first graders who have been screened, if they could be included in small groups? Connie mentioned it would change in class sizes and the grouping may change for intervention. Class sizes were discussed for the MAG program. Natasha mentioned there are 179 students classified as Gifted that have been identified and some are portfolio students. Dr. Monroe mentioned the planning principal and the benefits for having one for the new school that is being built and the benefits for being the point person for that school. Bob Young, Executive Director of Operations, further explained the position of the planning principal and the benefits for hiring them early on. Connie Crowley asked if there is a possibility of maybe hiring and growing from within the district. Stephanie McCorkle mentioned a new teacher mentor and resource allocations. Ericka Daniel mentioned currently writing a grant. Kay mentioned looking at minutes and numbers and giving Rainbow and Westar another half position to help with that. Susan Matteson mentioned that one person had mentioned in 5th grade, having no textbooks. Natasha mentioned this being on the adoption cycle and giving her Discovery materials and that her and Susan can touch base. It was also mentioned that the math teacher has worked many hours because of the need for inputting required data. Connie Crowley mentioned being in that specific group and some of it being redundant. A stipend was mentioned. Sara Schaefer mentioned bringing this up at the next Admin meeting and finding adjustments, streamlining, etc. Natasha mentioned adding it to the agenda for Thursday. Ashley mentioned the nurse assistant and being pulled for lunch duties. Natasha mentioned the possibility of training a nurse's assistant to go to the new school, size of the school, etc. Dr. Monroe mentioned lunch aides and this being the first district he has seen where there is no help. Julie Haut mentioned a robust volunteer program. Math Interventionist was mentioned. Natasha shared and using the same calculations and the data from AASA as well as T1, we would need 27.5 math interventionists. Ashley mentioned having additional support in ELA to have small groups, etc. Julie Haut mentioned the math interventionist and being focused on K-3 students to make them proficient in math and placing one at each school. Lynzee Booras mentioned and gave her feedback from her campus from upper grades and would prefer a reverse model because students are behind in grades 4-8. Dr. Monroe mentioned priorities and started the discussion on priorities to start adding them to the work sheet in order of importance. Ericka Daniel mentioned related services. Drivers/Aides was mentioned. Connie Crowley asked to look at the current efficiencies of the bus routes and the number of students riding. Dr. Monroe mentioned what else stands out. Lynzee mentioned she would like the option to choose between the permanent guest teacher and the behavior specialist and that on her campus the permanent guest teacher is not a necessity. A discussion was held in regards to the behavior specialist. Westar/Blue/Rainbow have two guest teachers. Both of these positions were placed on the same line. Sara Schaefer mentioned moving research up. Reading paras were mentioned. Holly Murray mentioned the full-time school secretary at Liberty, \$11K. Julie Haut mentioned math interventionists even if it's one or two and to collect the data. MAG teacher for second and third grades. A discussion was held on what else was a priority. Natasha mentioned us taking this to the Board for them to come up with their own ideas. Julie Haut asked if she could as a question since the Board Members were in the room. The question was, is having a ranking from the committee and if it's helpful to them, is our conversation enough to evaluate what is above the green line? (as we have been doing in this budget meetings). Dr. Monroe mentioned and answered on behalf of the Board, that we could give the Board an indication of what is important. A discussion was held among the committee members on some line items. Dr. Monroe mentioned we have special education, employee raises, behavior support or permanent substitute, increase of hours for secretary at Liberty, math interventionist, director of research. He mentioned not rushing the process and the possibility of adding another meeting and what else we were looking at. Salary study was mentioned. Beth Strickler mentioned maybe having more answers from Prop 123. Dr. Monroe asked if everyone is ok with coming back and if asked about the process that no recommendations have been made to the Board.

1.5 Committee Schedule

Dr. Cort Monroe, Superintendent, mentioned having an additional meeting in a couple of weeks.

1.6 Overview Presentation

Dr. Cort Monroe, Superintendent, mentioned to Beth Strickler, once the numbers are updated, if an email can be sent out with an overview update of rankings made by the budget committees recommended prioritizations.

1.7 Adjournment of Meeting

Dr. Cort Monroe, Superintendent, adjourned the Budget Interest Committee Meeting at 6:51 p.m.