

# GREATER LOWELL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

## FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

### Minutes of March 8, 2022 Meeting

#### CALL TO ORDER

Sub-Committee Chairman Bahou called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

#### ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mr. Bahou, Mr. Gitschier, Mr. Giggey, Mr. Sheehan

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Jill Davis, Superintendent-Director  
Michael Barton, Assistant Superintendent/Principal  
Michael Knight, School Business Administrator  
Paul Morin, School Committee Member  
George Tatseos, School Committee Member (arrived @ 5:25 p.m.)  
Gregory Haas, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment  
Kathryn Palladino, ELA, ELE & Social Studies Cluster Chair  
Alison Rihani, Director of Special Education  
Carol Chisolm, Math & Science Cluster Chair  
Mark White, Physical Education Cluster Chair/Athletic Director  
Dan Hamel, Construction Technology CTE  
Recording Secretary

Chairman Bahou stated the purpose of the meeting was to continue with the discussion of the FY23 budget. He requested Ms. Davis provide a brief recap of the Personnel Expenditure positions already discussed to bring all the members present up to date before continuing on.

The Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment (Mr. Haas), Director of Special Education (Mrs. Rihani), Math/Science Cluster Chair (Ms. Chisolm), ELA/ELE/Social Studies Cluster Chair (Mrs. Palladino), Physical Education Cluster Chair/Athletic Director (Mr. White), and Construction Technology CTE (Mr. Hamel) were present to answer questions by the committee.

Superintendent Davis reviewed the previously proposed staff additions, which included one (1) Coordinator of Talent Acquisition and HR Systems, three (3) Special Education instructors, two (2) Special Education Worksite Aides, one (1) School Psychologist, two (2) daily Special Education substitutes, two (2) ELE instructors, one (1) ELE Paraprofessional.

Superintendent Davis continued with her recommendation of the addition of a Director of Language Acquisition. Ms. Davis asked Mrs. Palladino to join the discussion and provide the members with an overview of the ELE compliance and her daily responsibilities for that department. Ms. Davis also

noted, in addition to ELE, Mrs. Palladino currently supervises ELA, Reading, and Social Studies with approximately 50 staff. Mrs. Palladino spoke in detail, highlighting several key supporting aspects including a 10% increase in current student ELE population, increased number of dual identified students as EL and Special Education, and state compliance and monitoring requirements including ACCESS testing, benchmark development and progress reporting. Superintendent Davis noted that all of these directly tie into the school-wide accountability report. In addition to these requirements, Mrs. Palladino also spoke about the increased number of translation requirements, including various new languages due to the increased immigrant population, as well as the recent requirement to create and oversee an EL PAC (EL Parent Advisory Council).

Committeeman Giggey re-noted his concern over the need for an additional administrator and inquired if there were other options available or looked at in place of this requested position. Ms. Davis responded that based on the detailed information provided, a Director of Language Acquisition is highly needed in order to support this growing special population. She compared the state compliance and monitoring requirements to that similar of the Special Education Department, adding several area schools currently staff an administrator position that oversees their EL population.

Committeeman inquiries regarding alternative options were discussed, along with questions of financial drawbacks and accountability of position if added. Committeeman Giggey sought input from Assistant Superintendent Barton of any drawbacks with adding the position. Assistant Superintendent Barton informed the members that their concerns were valid; however, in his opinion the position is justifiable. Mr. Barton also included input regarding alternative options discussed with reassigning the History department. He informed the members that because English and History are somewhat connected curriculum-wise, it would be beneficial and his recommendation to keep those departments together. Ms. Davis also included that it would not be beneficial to reassign the History department in place of adding the new position, as the History department does not have the compliance and reporting regulations that the EL department has.

School Business Administrator Mr. Knight provided input regarding the question of financial drawbacks. He informed the members that he did not currently see any financial drawbacks in adding this position and would be sustainable with the projected increases in the budget over the next four (4) years. Superintendent Davis included that, in the future, should there be budget cutbacks, reorganization of positions would be an available option. Committeeman Giggey requested, that should the position be approved, the members would like accountability and productivity updates. Superintendent Davis informed the members that accountability of the position could be determined by the data provided on the school-wide accountability data.

Superintendent Davis continued with the following academic-related personnel expenditures: two (2) Social Studies instructors, one (1) Title I Paraprofessional, one (1) Biology Instructor, two (2) Math instructors, one (1) Health instructors, and one (1) PE instructor. Ms. Davis provided the committee with supportive information, including reducing class size, creating humanities course, providing targeted reading/writing assistance to close gaps, increase inclusion/co-teaching sections to lower classroom ratios, and assist with instructional improvement/working with teacher (math coach).

After a brief question and answer period, Superintendent Davis continued with one (1) School Nurse due to the increase of students requiring health services and the COVID-19 protocols; one (1)

Adjustment Counselor due to increased students with social emotional learning needs requiring more counselors to work individually and in groups; one (1) Hospitality Management instructor which would increase from a 2-person program to a 3-person program to allow for additional off-site work site experiences for students to practice/build their technical skills; one (1) HVAC instructor which would increase from a 3-person program to a 4-person program to reduce student-teacher ratio.

Superintendent Davis followed with athletic coach and maintenance/security personnel expenditures. Recommendations were made for the addition of one (1) Asst. Cheer Coach (winter/fall), one (1) Asst. Cross Country Coach, one (1) Asst. Indoor-Track Coach, and one (1) Freshman Volleyball Coach. Ms. Davis asked the Athletic Director Mr. White to provide supporting data to the committee. Mr. White informed the members that the participation in these sports have increased significantly and the additional coaches were needed for support and safety purposes. He included that Cross Country currently had 60+ participants, Indoor Track with 80+ participants, and Freshman Volleyball is a new addition being piloted this year and being recommended to continue due to interest. Superintendent Davis continued on to the maintenance/security personnel. She informed the committee that, based on the Director of Plant Services recommendations, she is looking to add one (1) full-time groundskeeper and one (1) 12-month Security Guard (currently 10 months). The groundskeeper position would increase a 2-person program to a 3-person program to maintain 60-plus acres of school grounds. Ms. Davis included that this would also include the removal of a current part-time position that was recently vacated due to retirement. The Security position is needed to cover the summer months and increased activity during the summer and would move to two (2) full-time staff.

Chairman Bahou noted his concern for classroom space for the additional personnel and if there are any plans for an addition or modular classrooms. School Business Administrator Mr. Knight informed the members that we were looking at a few options and were currently working on a feasibility plan for an addition that would support approximately sixteen (16) classrooms with the ability to use ESSER funding (approximately \$4 million left for the project). Mr. Knight added that Excess and Deficiency funds could be used for any overage on the project if needed and would provide the members with an update when he receives further information.

**MOTION:** by Mr. Gitschier, seconded by Mr. Sheehan to approve the proposed FY23 Budget as presented.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** 4 Yes

Chairman Giggey, on behalf of the sub-committee, made a request for next year's budget to be presented in separate priority lists to assist the members with identifying areas of greatest need.

**MOTION:** by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Gitschier to adjourn at 7:31 p.m.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** 4 Yes

Respectfully submitted,

  
Colette Edmonds

Recording Secretary