

**Westport School Committee
Work Session
DATE: Tuesday, October 22, 2024
TIME: 4:30 p.m.
PLACE: Hybrid
WMHS 2nd floor Conference Room**

Please click the link below to join the webinar via Zoom

Meeting ID
[840 8133 5198](#)

MINUTES

Members Present: Gloria Cabral (*arrived at 4:50 pm.*), Evan Gendreau, Jason Pacheco Virtual, Christopher Thrasher

Members Absent: Melissa Pacheco

Also Present: Kevin Aguiar Westport Community Schools Principal, Thomas Aubin Superintendent, Stacy Duquette Macomber Principal Virtual (*left at 5:00 p.m.*), Lisa Kaminski Director of Curriculum Instruction and Professional Development Virtual, Lori Melo Administrative Secretary, Sean Persico Westport Community Schools Assistant Principal Virtual, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager

I. Call to Order - Chair Evan Gendreau called the Budget Work Session to order at 4:35 pm. with a quorum of the members present.

Chair Gendreau announced:

On March 29, 2023, Governor Maura Healey signed into law Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, which includes a two-year extension of the option for public bodies to hold remote meetings, effective immediately. This legislation simply extends the current option for remote meetings through March 31, 2025, and does not otherwise affect the ability of public bodies to conduct their meetings remotely through video and/or audio conferencing under Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021.

II. FY26 Budget Discussion - Chair Gendreau announced that committee members received a spreadsheet with a level service budget of \$23,331,207.

There were 6 different budget scenarios created. One of them included \$540,000 from the school/town figure. Also did a comparison of 3% and 3.5%. Without free cash there is a deficit in both. \$400,000 over contractual obligations for a 3%. \$500,000 over contractual obligations for 3.5%

FinCom said the school can expect a decrease of free cash by \$100,000 for each year.

Ms. Duquette went over the budget requests for the Macomber School.

Increase in hours for an Executive Secretary to be year-round. They tried reduced hours however it is not in the best interests for the school, extra support is needed.

Add a .4 Specialist Teacher to align with other schools for common planning purposes.

Increase two 40-hour club positions for a total of \$2,500.

Mr. Pacheco questioned the cost of the clubs? Ms. Duquette reported there was a recent increase.

Ms. Duquette explained how the Specialist Teacher would work to cover classes. This would allow half the team to plan together on a rotating basis.

Chair Gendreau asked if there were any questions?

Mr. Pacheco questioned the cost of the .4 teacher at \$50,000? Ms. Rapoza clarified this figure is \$30,000 - \$35,000 instead.

Chair Gendreau asked if there were any further questions? There were none.

(Ms. Cabral arrived here at 4:50 p.m.)

Mr. Aguiar went over the budget requests for the Westport Elementary School.

Mr. Aguiar passed out a sample of a teacher's schedule for Grades 1,2,3,4. He is requesting 5 Specialist Teachers for the following subjects, Physical Education, Technology, Music, Art, and STEM in order to cover classes so teachers can have common planning time. Teachers are asking for equality among schools.

Increase in funds for school supplies to limit the burden for parents, capped at \$60 per student.

Increase up to 10 clubs. This would be an additional 6 clubs, already have 4 clubs.

Increase in supplies for Art, Physical Education, STEM, and Technology.

Additional Grade 1 teacher, depends on enrollment.

Add an internet filter/monitor system.

Replace library rug.

Add Special Education Teacher.

Add a permanent building teacher assisting substitute.

Increase in funds for copy paper.

There may be 2 additional items with curriculum costs. Mr. Aguiar is working together with Ms. Kaminski.

Chair Gendreau asked Mr. Aguiar to explain the savings by having a teaching assistant sub? Mr. Aguiar said there would be a cost of \$18,720 with savings of about \$6,000 compared to \$25,000 for a regular building substitute.

Chair Gendreau asked if adding the Special Education Teacher is a requirement? Mr. Aguiar explained they are meeting requirements right now, however teachers would like to have more supports and have a co-teaching model.

Chair Gendreau asked if the internet filter cost is an annual fee? Mr. Aguiar said yes and the software goes right on the Chromebooks.

(Ms. Duquette left here at 5:00 p.m.)

Chair Gendreau asked if there were any questions?

Mr. Pacheco questioned why internet monitoring is not district wide. Mr. Aguiar explained they had Go Guardian but due to budget shortfalls it was eliminated. Mr. Pacheco suggested to take a look at all the school buildings and possibly get a district wide price.

Mr. Aguiar explained his internet request is just for filtering.

Mr. Thrasher mentioned the internet request should be a consistent system wide policy. This item should be a policy discussion rather than a budget item.

Mr. Aguiar shared the idea to try a 1-year pilot at smaller school.

Ms. Kaminski clarified there are district wide filters and this would be an additional layer.

Chair Gendreau requested to get a rundown on what the district presently has for security.

Mr. Thrasher asked about the clubs. Mr. Aguiar explained the Start Em Young Program are doing sports related topics for example yoga. The PTO also does programs in 5-week sessions. Presently there are 197 students in the PTO programs 3 days a week. Mr. Aguiar offered to send offerings from the PTO out to committee members.

Mr. Thrasher made a point of information that when looking at a level service budget it will be very hard to meet all these needs.

Mr. Pacheco asked if the teaching assistant substitute would create an equity issue district wide or be tough to fill because of the lesser pay rate? Mr. Aguiar mentioned there is a high rate of 1 to 1 ratio at Westport Elementary. Not sure what the numbers are for the middle high school.

Chair Gendreau asked if there were any questions? There were none.

Mr. Persico added he has gone into reading specialist classrooms and observed great work. Students are buying into the Ignite Program.

Chair Gendreau announced there will be no action taken tonight.

III. Adjourn - A motion was made to adjourn.

Motion by Cabral, seconded by Thrasher

4/0/0

Roll call vote:

Cabral Yes Gendreau Yes JPacheco Yes Thrasher Yes

The Hybrid Westport School Committee Budget Work Session ended at 5:43 pm.