



SCHOOL COMMITTEE

BUSINESS MEETING OPEN SESSION MINUTES January 28, 2020

Meeting:	School Committee
Date:	January 28, 2020
Location:	Essex Elementary School Cafeteria
Attendees:	Pamela Beaudoin, Superintendent Avi Urbas, Director of Finance Shannon Erdmann, Chairperson Rachel Fitzgibbon, Vice Chairperson Eric Bourke Sarah Wolf Ken Warnock Caroline Weld Ann Cameron
Absent:	
Guests:	Jason Waldron, Facilities Manager Patricia Puglisi, High School Principal
Recorded by:	Gail Hunter

AGENDA

- A. Call to Order** – Ms. Fitzgibbon called the School Committee Business meeting to order at 5:50 p.m.
- B. Business Meeting Open Session**
 - 1) Public Comment** – There was no public comment this evening.
 - 2) Chairman's Report** – When Ms. Erdmann arrived and stated she did not have a report for this evening. She thanked Studio 1623 for filming the meeting.

3) Consent Agenda

- Acceptance of Warrants
- Minutes – 12/11/2019, 1/7/2020 and 1/14/2020
- Approval of Out of State Travel -- None

Ms. Wolf moved to approve the Warrants; Mr. Bourke seconded the motion. The motion passed with Ms. Fitzgibbon abstaining.

Ms. Cameron moved to approve the minutes of 12/11/2019 and 1/14/2020; Ms. Weld seconded the motion. The motion passed Mr. Warnock abstained from approving the minutes of 12/11/2019.

Ms. Fitzgibbon stated the minutes for 1/7/2020 were inaccurate and requested Ms. Hunter review her recording for accuracy. Ms. Fitzgibbon specifically mentioned a section where Ms. Cameron made a policy point and the motion to approve the Superintendent's salary increase which was not unanimous, Ms. Fitzgibbon had opposed the salary increase.

4) Sub-Committee Reports

- Elementary Facilities/MSBC (Caroline Weld/Ann Cameron) – Report

Neither Ms. Weld nor Ms. Cameron were at the most recent Elementary Facilities/MSBC meeting Superintendent Beaudoin and Mr. Urbas attended and reported. Superintendent Beaudoin stated the Memorial School construction remains on time and on budget. The Playground sub-committee is reviewing all design options and is zeroing in on their final recommendation. Superintendent Beaudoin stated it is difficult to reconcile the budget with wants. Furniture options are being narrowed with the identification of color choices, classroom furniture including desks and chairs. Mr. Urbas stated the sub-committee on the West Stairs has completed part one of their work with a less costly and better solution than originally proposed. The new option provides greater stabilization of the stairs. The second part of the West Stairs is slope stabilization which is still under discussion. Change order will be finalized with completion of slope stabilization.

- Finance Committee (Anne Cameron/Shannon Erdman) – Report

Ms. Cameron reported she, Superintendent Beaudoin, Mr. Urbas and Ms. Erdmann attended the Finance Committee meeting in MBTS on Wednesday 1/15/2020. It was a good meeting – Mr. Urbas discussed the slide deck and plans for where the District budget stood at the time of the meeting. Ms. Cameron understands from Essex BOS they are committed to making the MERSD FY21 budget work. However, other Town departments will move forward with 1-2% increases in their operating budgets which is likely the same for MBTS. Superintendent Beaudoin stated she thought they had a very good dialogue with the MBTS Finance Committee, Ms. Cameron agreed.

- Policy Committee (Eric Bourke/Rachel Fitzgibbon) – NR

Ms. Fitzgibbon stated the Policy Committee has not met this year. Superintendent Beaudoin stated the MASC has released an annual policy review guide and that may be a place for the District to start and follow in identifying areas to review and update.

- Negotiation Team (Sarah Wolf/Ken Warnock) – NR

5) Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Beaudoin reported tomorrow, and Thursday the Yale/Harvard Study Group will be coming in to conduct a series of walk throughs and focus groups. For the next 3-years the District will be part of a study around social emotional health and RULER implementation in the District tying it to Universal Design for Learning. The District will provide feedback on what a roll out and implementation looks like at each of the grade level and the Group will work with the District to develop accessibility tools for students who learn differently and cannot always access tools which are highly language-based. A team from the Middle School is presenting in New Haven in March at the Yale Conference.

The District is starting to look toward the future. We've been organizing the Vision of the Graduate and reviewing with different focus groups including business leaders and parents surveying what kinds of qualities the District wants to see in our graduates. When we get back from February break in partnership with the Creative Education Foundation the plan is to roll out a survey open for 2 weeks hoping to get all stake holders to provide input. The hard part we recognize is getting the survey out beyond the parent group and into the general communities of Essex and MBTS.

Preliminary report will be ready in June to share in the District Improvement meeting. We're developing a 10-year strategic plan with goals and plans for Future Focus in 2033 with changes to the model of education. Superintendent stated it was exciting and there are lots of discussions going on. Superintendent Beaudoin will discuss with the Committee the possibility of combined retreats in the summer working with the Creative Education Foundation, school leadership teams and META Co-Presidents.

- High School Program of Studies – Principal Puglisi

Principal Puglisi stated the High School would like to request School Committee approval for the 2020-2021 program of studies the following changes and updates to the Program.

Art Change: Studio Art can now be taken for a semester or a full year and will run concurrently with Portfolio.

English Change: Updated grade 12 elective course descriptions.

From The Page to the Stage: **Movie Musicals** – 170 Third quarter Honors, Grade 12 and 171 Third Quarter College Prep 1.25 Credits – Do you love musicals? Some of the most popular and iconic musicals not only started as books and plays but have been made into movies. For this course, you'll read texts that sing and dance their way to the stage and the big screen. Selections

include the following movie musicals and their literary inspirations: *Pygmalion/My Fair Lady*, *Wicked*, *The Color Purple*, *Romeo and Juliet/West Side Story* and *Chicago*.

Memoir: 149 First Quarter Honors Grade 12, 150 First Quarter College Prep, 1.25 Credits – In this course, we'll explore contemporary, nonfiction narratives that deal with everything from The Holocaust to surviving adolescence and loss. Poignant and groundbreaking, selected texts such as *Maus* and *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* will both inform and inspire. We'll address literary devices that memoir writers use to really draw us in to their real-life stories. To round out the course, you will have the chance to select a memoir to read and analyze on your interests!

Math-Science Change: Students enrolled in AP Calculus must also be enrolled in AP Physics C. The purpose for this requirement is to allow for greater application of skill and lab-based activities. Students will have access to a double block of learning three times per a cycle. The goal will be for students to apply the Calculus content authentically during physics labs. It is recommended students enroll during junior year prior to enrolling in AP Physics C during senior year.

Foreign Language Addition: SEAL OF BILITERACY – The seal of biliteracy is an award given to graduating seniors who have attained complete proficiency in English and a partner language. The awarded student will have fluency in all four domains of language (reading, writing, speaking and listening, when all exist) of both languages. This program is designed to both motivate and recognize students who have pursued and attained bilingualism during their academic career in the MERSD. Students will need to demonstrate proficiency in English and in a partner language on District-selected standardized tests or submit a portfolio. Students are encouraged to speak with their Foreign Language Teacher or the Foreign Language Department.

STEM: The High School and Middle School STEM programs have been working to align their programs. As a result, the following changes are being proposed: Scratch and Alice is being renamed to Introduction to Coding. Students begin Scratch in grade 8, the name change is more formal to provide a broader indication of the content of the Course. It is recommended that students progress through the Computer Science Pathway by enrolling in Introduction to Coding followed by Introduction to Computer Science and then AP Computer Science. The sequence is suggested because computer science is akin to learning a foreign language, students need to develop basic vocabulary and grammar skills to speak to the computer before they can speak and write with perfect punctuation as required in the AP Computer Science curriculum.

Principal Puglisi shared a copy of *Inkling* a student publication developed through the Creative Writing program. The students developed the publication (magazine style) on their own initiative found a printer, completed their own design, layout and ordering. Principal Puglisi stated *Inkling* is an example of authentic learning and how students are creatively bringing learning to the next level.

Mr. Warnock asked about the Math/Science change and if this was a first step towards co-teaching. Principal Puglisi stated most of the classes would be taught back to back but for 3 days there would be two teachers in the classroom. It is a first step to co-teaching.

Ms. Fitzgibbon asked if there was any movement on Calculus B/C. Principal Puglisi stated it is being discussed, however, at this point the High School does not have a section for B/C Calculus.

Ms. Cameron had a few questions. She asked about Studio Art assuming the courses are all independent study. Principal Puglisi stated in Foundations students learn the different modalities in the arts and from there they move forward. Ms. Burns teaches and challenges the students and by senior year they work independently. The students write a proposal, select a theme, develop and tie their pieces together. This happens in a very structured way and is approved by the Teacher, Department Head and Principal.

Ms. Cameron asked is there any place in the Program of Study that discusses how independent study classes are structured and what the capacity is for teachers? Ms. Cameron stated she understands it is demanding and time consuming for teachers to engage with a number of students in independent study. Principal Puglisi stated teachers are not required to take on independent study, but some teachers enjoy the engagement with students and feel it is a more effective way of teaching. Principal Puglisi stated independent study is hard and can take a toll.

Ms. Cameron asked about Math/Science in 8th grade and how the program works. Principal Puglisi stated in 8th grade if a student is in accelerated math that student moves onto geometry instead of algebra. Some students double up in math in 10th grade to get to calculus. The Math Department is reviewing pathways for students and considering integrated math to assure students have the opportunity to take pre-calculus. Principal Puglisi conceded not all students make it to calculus and that's alright.

Ms. Cameron also asked about biliteracy stating it is great in MA but do other states and colleges recognize the accomplishment? Principal Puglisi stated this is the second year of the program. The award for biliteracy is a Seal on a student's diploma. It is part of the District's SIMS data and is reported to the MA Department of Education. MA is a leader in the program and the program will likely expand.

Ms. Fitzgibbon asked if a student is in an AP Foreign Language do those credits transfer to a university. Principal Puglisi stated if the score on the student's AP exam is high enough the credit will transfer.

Superintendent Beaudoin would like to give a shout out to the STEM Team and mention that the STEM program is number 8 in MA and number 417 nationally according to *News and World Report*.

Ms. Weld thanked Principal Puglisi for the additional Arts courses. Ms. Fitzgibbon requested Principal Puglisi correct the roster of School Committee members, adding Mr. Bourke and deleting Ms. Riordan.

Ms. Cameron moved to approve the changes to the High School Program of Studies; Mr. Warnock seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- Essex Elementary Playground Replacement Plan Discussion

Superintendent Beaudoin introduced the discussion by stating over the Holiday break the District received a report stating the need to shut down Eagle's Nest. The immediate challenge for the School Committee was how quickly could we work to get the playground back up. The most effective way to make this happen in a tight time frame is to utilize the existing Sub-Committee of the School Building Committee. This evening's objective is to establish a Committee and Budget.

Mr. Foster an Essex resident and member of the School Building Committee Sub-Committee on playgrounds reported on a meeting held in Essex last evening. The meeting was attended by 25 people with additional people forwarding letters and emails. Mr. Foster read a letter from himself and Ms. Yurwitz summarizing the conclusions reached at the meeting.

Mr. Foster and Ms. Yurwitz stated in a letter to the School Committee.

"Central to this session was the District's proposed timeline to have a replacement structure by fall 2020.

...While there were a number of unknowns and questions posed, and assumptions made, the general consensus of the group was that this timeline can work. A consistent theme emerged for frequent public input, with early engagement of students in particular.

One specific consideration highlighted by a few people in the discussions over the past two weeks is the need to include the playing field in any site assessment. We respectfully request this scope in order to both understand the nature of the work needed to make the field usable and to ensure that any future work on the field—such as to improve drainage—will not require disturbing the new playground.

...As one attendee noted following the session last night, "people want the new playground to feel truly special, as the Eagle's Nest always has been, and that people feel strongly that community input be widely solicited and used in meaningful ways. Lots of strategies were shared about how to effectively get that input, and I really do believe this process will include purposeful conversation that is valued in the decision-making process." Thank you again for your timely work toward this end and your support for a collaborative process."

Mr. Urbas outlined next steps: vote to remove, timeline agreed to, committee structure and budget this evening, with April 6, 2020 approved design.

Superintendent Beaudoin stated in order to work within the timeline and budget the optimal choice is design build with a contractor.

The Committee selected includes: EES Principal Roberts, MERSD Director of Finance, Mr. Urbas, MERSD Facilities Manager, Mr. Waldron, School Committee Member, Mr. Warnock, Essex PTO Representative (to be named) and Co-Chairs, Mr. Foster and Ms. Yurwitz. Residents

of Essex are invited to participate in meetings of the Essex Elementary Playground Committee and MERSD School Committee meetings.

Mr. Urbas reported Mr. Waldron has researched and gathered information from a number of contractors. During preliminary discussions he reviewed and defined the playground development process including the need to develop access approach, size, style, cost, equipment and surfacing. Mr. Waldron stated surfacing will require excavation and leveling of the existing site, to meet current standards and to be ADA compliant the surface will be a poured in place rubber surface.

Mr. Urbas stated through these discussions the proposed budget for the EES Playground is projected at \$300-\$350K. The estimate is based on information developed for the new Memorial School playgrounds, square footage, site work estimates, installation and numerous conversations with experienced contractors.

Mr. Urbas stated the District had completed some preliminary work on the field, investigating piping and drainage. Comprehensive site surveys require an architect, civil engineers. He is not sure the field work will align with the timeline for the playground. However, drainage will be taken into consideration when preparing the site.

Superintendent Beaudoin stated excavation and wetlands will be reviewed for permitting with the playground project and the District will follow the lead of the selected contractor.

Ms. Cameron stated it is important to identify needs and want on the project. The school needs a playground and wants a field. Ms. Weld asked about the increase in the budget from the initial \$250-\$300K. Mr. Urbas stated additional information developed through conversations with vendors. Superintendent Beaudoin proposed the Committee could approve a budget for \$300K not to exceed \$350K.

Ms. Fitzgibbon asked about the demolition estimate. Superintendent Beaudoin stated the demolition will be covered through the District's maintenance budget.

The Budget and Charge to the Committee will be defined and presented at the next School Committee meeting on Tuesday, February 4, 2020.

C. PUBLIC HEARING

School Committee moved to open the public hearing with a roll call vote: Ms. Erdmann, yes, Ms. Fitzgibbon, yes, Ms. Weld, yes, Ms. Wolf, yes, Mr. Bourke, yes, Mr. Warnock, yes and Ms. Cameron, yes.

Manchester Essex Regional School District Budget for 2020-2021

■ Presentation of Proposed Budget for 2020-2021

Budget Goals

- Develop and deliver a fiscally responsible budget that maintains educational quality, support District goals and aligns with our multi-year budget commitment to work within the confines of proposition 2 ½
- Manage Enrollment
 - Strive to meet School Committee class size guidelines
 - Serve increasingly diverse student education needs
- Exercise fiscal responsibility
 - Seek internal efficiencies to offset growth needs when possible
- Meet local, state and federal responsibilities while controlling growth

Considerations in Developing FY 21 Budget

- Student Needs – Core Curriculum and Instructional Development (materials and instructional technology), Program Development, Training and Support, Staffing – Class Size and Co-Curricular Activities.
- Special Education – In-District Programs, Out-of-District Placement, Transportation and support Personnel.
- Fixed Costs – Personnel Costs, Insurance (Current and Retiree/OPEB), Utilities and Transportation
- Facilities – Routine Custodial and Maintenance, Essex Elementary Maintenance Capital Planning, MSHS Maintenance Capital Planning and Support Memorial Building Project

FY21 Operating Budget Overview

- Initial goal to provide Level Services at a minimum
 - Maintains same level of program currently in place
 - Essential program changes historically funded via efficiencies/restructuring due to funding constraints, but few new reduction options remain
 - Cuts made between FY 18 – FY 20 have not been restored
- Excluding mandated health insurance and special education tuitions, FY 21 Level Services is affordable within confines of Proposition 2 1/2
 - Annual growth excluding these statutory requirements is 3.15%
- Including all expenses, gap between Level Services and sustainable funding in \$375K+, similar to FY20 Tentative Budget. Options include:
 - Cost saving opportunities and program reductions
 - Increased Town contributions
 - Use of one-time reserve funding (short-term solution only)

FY 21 Operating Budget Drivers

- Health insurance: \$425K (35%) of spending growth
 - Initial rate increase estimate of 8.5% (down from 10% in Tentative Budget)

- Slightly above industry inflation trend of (7-8%) due to manual/non-creditable rate, and extended time/unknowns prior to renewal
- Some additional savings possible as MERSD's utilization is strong/better-than-average. Monitoring monthly. Each 1% reduction in rate = \$41K.
- Out-of-District Tuitions: \$136K (11%) of spending growth
 - 15% growth in FY21, following 42% in FY20, due to move-ins and four \$100-\$200K placements
 - Excluding residential placements, OOD at historic low, due to MERSD's in-District programming
 - Savings possible, pending outcome of increased Circuit Breaker (State Aid) funding
- Compensation: \$646K (53%) of spending growth
 - 3.83% growth – in line with multi-year budget model. No new FTE.
 - 2.5% contractual Cost of Living Adjustment (OLA) for FY 20 – FY 22 + 1.6% step/column
 - Limited restructuring opportunities remain.

FY 21 Budget Overview

- FY 21 Tentative Operating Budget = \$27.29 million
 - 4.70 % (\$1.23 million) spending increase from FY20 budget
 - 3.15% growth, excluding health insurance and OOD
 - 5-year average spending increase is 3.51%
- FY 21 Operating Assessment Increase = 3.64%
 - Measures cost increase to Towns after deducting “other revenue” (i.e. State Aid) from spending needs
 - Drop from 3.84% at Tentative Budget due to use of \$375K in reserve funding
 - 5-year average assessment increase is just 3.26% amidst avg. State Aid increase of 2.26%
 - Each \$100K of reserve funding reduces joint Town assessment by 44 basis points (0.44%)
- FY 21 Capital Budget = \$4.2 M (down 1.5%)
 - Second year of Memorial School project debt
 - Potential for modest additional savings pending opportunity to refinance 16% of MSHS debt

Budget Highlights: Revenue

- 3.7% growth in non-assessment revenue, in line with spending rate, reducing pressure on Town Assessments.
 - Recent growth has been much lower, but new State Aid program expected in FY 21
 - Increased Regional Transportation aid to \$175K (25%) to reflect recent trend
 - \$55K estimate for new, phased OOD transportation reimbursement

- Assume only minimum Chapter 70 increase (1.6%) as new aid is targeted to urban districts
- Assume flat School Choice revenue (\$325K) accounting for large number of graduations – assumes replacement of all graduates (12)

Budget Highlights: Spending Detail

	FY20	FY21
Personnel	\$16,859,721	\$17,505,480
Insurance & Pension w/OPEB	\$4,798,859	\$5,236,975
Maintenance	\$1,380,225	\$1,405,776
OOD Tuitions	\$884,863	\$1,020,477
Other	\$1,373,421	1,385,719
Total	\$26,064,944	\$27,290,301

Closing Remaining Budget Gap

Options to close remaining budget gap include:

- Health Insurance – potentially \$60K
Current Assumption 8.5% renewal rate. \$60K savings assumes renewal at industry trend (7%)
Renewal below trend may be possible. Still too early to presume this will materialize.
- Staffing -- \$0
\$60K savings since Tentative Budget based on retirement estimates.
Small restructuring opportunities exist without impact to program. Restructuring to result in reinvestment in high priority staffing needs.
FTE reductions no longer an option.
- Reserves -- \$375K
\$275K Level Services Deficit + \$100K Carry Forward from FY20
- Awaiting Final State Aid formulas and projections (Circuit Breaker and OOD Transportation Reimbursement)

Obstacles

- FY18-FY19 Budgets required 1.5M in staff and program reductions to meet assessment goals and manage 28% Health Care increase.
- FY20 Budget included \$380K in reductions to meet 3.3% annual assessment target and the use of \$100K of reserves to lower assessment for Essex.
- FY21 Budget has a \$375K gap to maintain level services.

- History/Multi-Year Model show annual level Service growth rate averages in the mid-to-high 3s.

Projected Town Assessments

Manchester = 3.38%

Essex = 4.10%

Next Steps

- Finalize Budget
SC Meeting – February 4th 2 6:30pm
- Continue to Monitor Budget Inputs
Check assumptions and projections
State Aid, Health, Staffing, Out-of-District
- Should additional revenue or savings materialize SC will need to determine whether to reduce assessments or amount of reserves used.

■ Public Comment

Mr. Buttrick, Essex Finance Committee – Mr. Buttrick stated the budget is really about Health Insurance and Out-of-District Placements. He stated the District budget is 51% of the Towns total revenue. That make things difficult for the employees of the Town. The Town's infrastructure needs are at the breaking point. He's not asking for a cut in the assessment, but it is difficult to operate under proposition 2 ½. Mr. Buttrick asked if there was any visibility under the ODD?

Superintendent Beaudoin stated the number of ODD is not increasing the student population with needs is level it is the costs of the placements coupled with transportations costs that are increasing. Mr. Buttrick stated it appeared there was noting the District could do and he has no ideas to help.

Mr. Erdmann stated the District's health insurance had been stable until the 28% increase in 2018 and Health Insurance is beginning stabilize again. She also indicated the District's ODD placements had been significantly higher prior to the District's development of in-house programming which is projected to have save the District \$1.2 million in ODD placements.

Mr. Creighton, MBTS Finance Committee – Mr. Creighton thanked Superintendent Beaudoin, Mr. Urbas, Ms. Erdmann and Ms. Cameron for joining the Finance Committee at their recent meeting. It is really helpful for the Finance Committee to get their questions answered. He said he mirrors what Mr. Buttrick had to say and staffing numbers drive the budget. Like Essex the District is half of MBTS' Town budget. The Town has a multi-year model and when the assessment figures for the District remain around 3.2% to 3.4% the model works well. When the number gets up to 3.8% the Town gets into the red zone and the budget impact hits DPW and

Public Safety. Mr. Creighton appreciates how the District and Towns work together for the common goal.

Mr. Buttrick asked if technology in the District had saved on staffing. Superintendent Beaudoin stated Technology is a wonderful resource, but it takes staff and investment to support technology. If anything, the District is understaffed to meet technology needs, ideally there would be a network administrator and technician in each building. The Department of Education has moved to online MCAST testing which required the purchase of new devices.

Ms. Cameron asked where the Committee needed to be at the end of this meeting? Superintendent Beaudoin stated she and Mr. Urbas would continue to watch the numbers with the hope of identifying an additional \$100K in savings. An outstanding question for the School Committee is if there is a reduction in expenses would the savings go to lower the reserves or to the Towns to lower assessments.

Mr. Warnock asked what happens next year when we use \$375K in reserves this year? How sustainable is the plan? Ms. Erdmann stated the situation snowballs. Ms. Cameron reiterated her position that she would prefer the District not use \$375K in reserves and suggested reducing the budget by \$125K.

Ms. Erdmann stated that would result in program cuts and the Committee had voted to maintain Level Services for FY21. Ms. Erdmann also stated if we cut programs, down the road it will cost more to reinstate the programs. Superintendent Beaudoin stated the only way to cut \$125K out of the budget is to cut staffing and that will impact class size and the District's ability to accept School Choice students.

Ms. Fitzgibbon stated it is important to understand how we got here. This year the District added a Dean of Students and hastily brought on a School Resource Officer. The School Committee was informed by the Superintendent she did not require School Committee approval to add the SRO. Ms. Fitzgibbon suggested the District solve some of these needs creatively.

Superintendent Beaudoin stated that is not how we got here. The District had a 28% increase in Health Insurance and the next year had a 16% increase for a total of \$1.5M through cuts to staff and program that's how we got here. The SRO and Dean positions were engaged following full disclosure and discussion with the School Committee. Ms. Fitzgibbon stated in general she would like to solve problems rather than hire.

Superintendent Beaudoin stated the staff was added without adding dollars. The HS had an Assistant Principal/Assistant Director of the athletic program and the model was not working. Additionally taxpayers asked for a solution to the problem. Ms. Erdmann stated the hiring took place after the District took a fresh look in a thoughtful mindful way.

Mr. Warnock stated the decisions were made in the past and the challenge for the District may come with the completion of the new Memorial School. The Committee has reviewed the budget, reserves are stronger than they've been. It is not unreasonable to use the reserves at this time. An increase in enrollment plus the use of reserves may result in a new challenge.

Superintendent Beaudoin stated in the long term the District will need to come to terms with the real rate of growth and stay at level services for that rate of growth. Strategic planning will be different, and we will need to do things differently. Needs will be different additional staff for mental health, kids are in crisis on a daily basis. Ms. Cameron is talking about this year and the reality of the Towns. Waiting for the HS debt to roll off in 2024, can we make it to 2024? Are we asking for an override in 2024?

Ms. Weld pointed out one person is talking about making cuts to the program. The majority of the School Committee is in support of using reserves. We cannot cut program. Ms. Wolf suggested a straw poll to see if any savings would be applied against reserves or against Town assessments.

Superintendent Beaudoin asked how we build a playground and replace a turf field while we're cutting staff and programming. The Capital items might be funded through fundraising.

Mr. Warnock stated he has spoken to residents in Manchester and the people he has spoken to are satisfied, happy and pleased with the services provided by the school. The schools are good for the Towns. He appreciates Ms. Cameron's conservative approach but is not in support of cutting services.

The Straw poll: Ms. Fitzgibbon, Mr. Warnock and Mr. Burke are in favor of any savings realized should be used to cut the assessments to the Towns. Ms. Weld, Ms. Wolf and Ms. Erdmann believe any savings realized should be used to restore reserves. Ms. Cameron remains in favor of reducing the amount of reserves utilized in FY21. The Committee is not voting on this today and will have an opportunity to discuss further on Tuesday, February 4, 2020.

Mr. Foster stated he appreciated the cost of mental health aspects of the work and wondered if we were contributing to the mental health issues with a focus on AP courses. His son a 5th grader has no homework but what will happen next year when he has 4 hours of homework. Ms. Erdmann stated steps had been taken to help reduce the stress students are feeling. The District introduced the Ublock to provide an opportunity for students reorganize and focus on their priorities this year the Ublock is in the middle of the day.

Ms. Wolf pointed out changes to the program Principal Puglisi presented this evening happened to focus on AP classes there have been other years when the School Committee has focused on art and music and a range of other courses and programs.

The School Committee moved to close the Public Hearing with a roll call vote: Ms. Erdmann, yes, Ms. Fitzgibbon, yes, Ms. Cameron, yes, Mr. Warnock, Yes, Mr. Bourke, yes, Ms. Wolf, yes and Ms. Weld, yes.

D. Adjourn

Mr. Warnock moved to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Cameron seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.