

Meeting of the Budget Sub-Committee (Committee of the Whole)
Budget Workshop
Thursday, March 21, 2017

CRLS Attles Room
Immediately following the Regular Meeting

Called for the purpose of a Budget Workshop for review and discussion of the proposed FY2018 School Department Budget.

Members Present: Mr. Harding and Ms. Kelly, Co-Chairs; Ms. Bowman, Ms. Dexter, Mr. Fantini, Ms. Nolan and Mayor Simmons

Also Present: Dr. Salim, Superintendent; Dr. Turk, Deputy Superintendent; Dr. Greer, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Dr. Adams, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Dr. Likis, Chief District Planning Officer; Ms. MacDonald, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education; Ms. Spinner, Chief Financial Officer; Mr. Maloney, Chief Operating Officer; Ms. Allen, Executive Director of Human Resources, Mr. Clark, Educational Liaison to the Mayor; Mr. Monahan, CEA President

Mr. Harding and Ms. Kelly, Budget Sub-Committee Co-Chairs, in the chair.

A quorum of the Sub-Committee (Committee of the Whole) being present, Mr. Harding called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM and turned the meeting over to Dr. Salim. The Superintendent responded to comments and questions made by School Committee Members with the following updates.

In the first category, the role of outcomes; he highlighted the intersection between the budget development, entry process and multi year district planning.

In the second category, guidance; he shared that the administration is viewing the upcoming FY17-18 year as a bridge year, looking closely at the 6-12 model and making decisions. He tied this second category into the way in which we engage some of our partners, i.e. Cambridge School Volunteers, Enroot, Breakthrough and Workforce. Dr. Salim stated the administration will have conversations to make sure the need to understand what those supports look like are aligned.

In the third category, issues related to health; social emotional learning and curriculum, Dr. Salim mentioned building relationships with programs for 5th graders before they become 6th graders.

In the fourth category, 1:1 technology and teacher development at CRLS; Dr. Salim stated the teachers are starting to engage cultural proficiency and have begun using the tool google classroom, there will also be specific PD for 9th grade Level Up. He stated that Grade 3 Reading was also brought up, and that it has been fed into the district wide planning process. He informed the Members that there will be a roundtable on the issue this Spring. Family Engagement will get \$25,000.00 to support their work. These resources will be leveraged throughout the upper schools and Amigos to engage parents and community.

Dr. Salim's final comment was on the federal budget; which is still being developed, stating it has been released that the total cut for the K-12 portion of the US education budget is 9 billion, which is 13% and is related to school choice privatization. IDA is supposed to be level funded instead of getting the usual annual increase. Title II is being looked at closely, we may lose some federal contributions which will have an impact even though most of our funding is local. He thanked the budget and finance staff for all of their very hard work.

Ms. Kelly opened the floor for comment.

Ms. Nolan stated she appreciates the updates. She has concerns about the following:
Grade 3 Haggerty cohort needs attention; the proposal to eliminate a sustainability coordinator; PAUS summer math support – only 1 student passed the Algebra test.

The Superintendent responded to Putnam Avenue concerns stating they are working on a mapping process of co teaching models compared to Vassal Lane; a Summer program will be running in math for the upper schools and will be located at PAUS.

Dr. Turk stated the program at PAUS will not be exactly the same as last year; they made some changes based on the outcomes and measures.

On concerns raised about the 3rd grade cohort students at the Haggerty; the Superintendent explained that they will be monitoring the needs of the cohorts and they will get additional allocated support. Mr. Maloney responded to concerns regarding sustainability practices stating that Mr. Lane, the Facilities Director, will be the “go to” person. Our sustainability will be imbedded instead of a standalone. Ms. Nolan stated she is concerned about having Mr. Lane add sustainability to his plate because ultimately no one will own it.

Ms. Dexter asked for clarification about cohorts scheduling and wants to know what is happening at Amigos and special needs educators. Dr. Salim stated that as far as the Amigos piece, scheduling services are being provided. With regards to cohorts, Ms. Spinner stated we do not subtract a teacher from a building and combine classes because the enrollment is less than 26 students.

Mr. Fantini stated that we may need to increase the number of reserves in special ed support. Summer schools that are part time should become full time, specifically, Title 1 summer school should be full time. Increase staff in the area of interventionists and coaches, he would like to hear more on how we are supporting math in ELA. He would like an update on what is happening at PAUS. Mr. Fantini thanked the co chairs and Ms. Spinner for a job well done.

Ms. Bowman stated that tiered school support doesn't seem to have enough funding to meet the needs. She suggested putting Know your Body and sanitary hygiene products together since there will be a pilot in the middle grades and one elementary school. Dr. Salim stated \$140,000.00 has been given to the tiered support; as they move forward, they will monitor it closely.

Ms. Kelly commented to the Committee that since we have mentioned IEPs, she cautioned that we be careful about our language and suggested the Members go to trainings on speaking about special needs students.

Ms. Dexter is looking forward to a Roundtable, suggests to scale back and postpone some budget items such as chrome books, wants data to gauge usefulness of certain expenses. In the elementary schools, adding an aid to large class sizes is a small help. She would prefer one full FTE to each of those 4 schools. She stated that adding \$20,000.00 to CSV for afterschool is happening too soon, she suggested it be postponed for a year and see more data. She asked why we are funding Cubs Corner at the Tobin, suggested the parents pay. Ms. Dexter suggested we save more money in HSEP; spending \$23,000.00 per student is too high; and asked if they really need a building sub. She also wants the Dept. of Human Services to pick up the cost of HomeBase and the Housing Authority pick up the tab for Workforce. Ms. Dexter wants to know exactly how school based funding and school improvement funds are spent by having a spreadsheet provided on how each school spends its money. Ms. Spinner responded to the Tobin school Cubs Corner issue stating that after three hours the 3 and 4 year old kindergartenders are no longer in the main classroom, and since a diversity of families have been encouraged to use the program, this is where the aids come in and the school has been using their SIP funds. The program became extremely popular, and now it is up to \$30,000.00 to fund these positions. It is not appropriate for the schools to use their SIP funds for it.

Budget Workshop

March 21, 2017

3

Mr. Harding stated he agrees with Ms. Bowman on the tiered support; regarding the teachers in reserve, we need to be prepared to show numbers. He also agreed with Ms. Dexter that the HSEP has too few children for the amount of money being spent. He also wants to know what are the principals and teams of teachers saying in terms of what the parents are saying. He wants to hear both perspectives. They don't always agree.

Ms. Nolan wants to know what plan B is for reserve teachers. She would like to know when we will get specifics on outcomes. She is asking for clarification about an external review on guidance. She would like an answer on the question of the correct staffing levels in CRLS science staffing. Ms. Nolan stated that Science and Stem is something that needs to be promoted. The number of students that want to do science has gone up and the teachers have not kept pace with that desire.

Ms. Kelly stated that since 2nd and 3rd grade cohorts having a hard time has come up, we need to determine whether it is really the cohort or a developmental stage. In some cases it may be the Administration that is having a hard time. She cautioned not to get into labeling students. We need to decide on how we should address and talk about it.

Ms. Nolan asked Dr. Salim if we can get some of the issues raised tonight in writing as a summary. The Members will take a look at the summary and address the issues at another meeting.

Mr. Fantini motioned, Ms. Bowman seconded to adjourn at 8:55 pm.

Meeting adjourned.

Dosha E. Beard
Interim Executive Secretary to the
School Committee