

SCHOOL COMMITTEE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES
JOINT WITH WARRANT COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION

REMOTE MEETING
MARCH 8, 2022

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: April 13, 2022
TIME: 2:30 PM

Present: Mr. Michael Crowley, FSC Chair
Ms. Meghan Moriarty
Mr. Jamal Saeh
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations

1. Mike Crowley called the FSC to order at 8:00 am
 - o This is a working session so the Chair will not take Public Comment
2. Approval of Minutes
 - o Minutes from February 23, 2021 (3-0)
3. FY23 Budget Discussion

Superintendent Phelan notes that he and Tony will present a set of proposals for cost savings in the FY23 budget. His goal for today is to respond to the concerns of the WC.

Total reductions of \$2M which include:

- SPED contracted services by \$50,000
- Restoration of supplies by \$150,000
- Use of \$400,000 from Staff exchange
- General Fund SPED tuition by \$1.3M
- LABBB credits by \$100,000

John noted the LABBB credit is a placeholder until the district hears from LABBB.

Mike Crowley noted that these are proposed reductions and they have not come before the full SC for a vote.

Jack Weiss acknowledged the proposed reductions address some of what the WC hoped to address in this meeting and thanked the schools for making these reductions. He noted the major concerns of the WC include the year over year increase in the school budget in light of large returns to the town, the seeming underutilizations of Circuit Breaker funds for OOD tuitions, and over-reliance on one time funds for recurring items.

Anne Helgen asked how the addition of 46 FTEs (24 permanent positions and 22 temporary 2 year positions) are meeting students' needs. John Phelan noted that the positions are support positions and do not impact the student:teacher ratio given enrollment reductions. Jack Weiss requested justifications for any additions as they look ahead to FY25.

John agreed with Anne that the OOD tuition projections may be outdated and should be a conversation every year. SPED Costs in the FY23 budget total \$20M and \$8M of those are ODD tuition costs. These lines are the only ones that have non-town revenues attached.

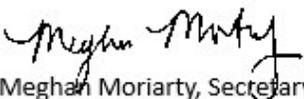
John Phelan requested that all WC questions come directly to the SD via email in the future. He then presented the questions and responses to the questions that came up during the WC meeting, noting that some of these were reviewed in the FSC meeting on March 2.

In going through these questions and responses, the SD acknowledged unemployment claims are potential costs to be incurred in the future for the 1 and 2 year temporary hires. Anne Helgen questioned whether this is the time to be hiring behavioral specialists when we are trying to tighten the budget. John Phelan noted this is a question of quality of services versus balancing finances.

Prior to adjournment the group agreed that, in future years, these discussions of the budget should happen sooner.

Mike Crowley adjourned the FSC at 9:30 AM

Respectfully Submitted by:


Meghan Moriarty, Secretary