

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE
WHOLE MEETING HELD IN HUMISTON BOARD ROOM
ON JUNE 10, 2021 AT 6:30 PM**

Finance Committee Members Present: Adam Grippo, Chair; Faith Ham

Finance Committee Members Absent: Kathryn Hallen

Other Board Members Present: Anthony Perugini, Andrew Martelli, Tim White (7:30 pm)

Administrators Present: Jeffrey F. Solan, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools;
Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent of Schools;
Vincent Masciana, Chief Operating Officer

Public access made available through live streaming the Cheshire Public School's YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/cheshirepublicschools . Public comments were accepted at CPSCovid19@cheshire.k12.ct.us .
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1. CALL TO ORDER – 6:30 P.M.

- A. Roll for Quorum. The roll was called and a quorum determined.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.
Mr. Grippo led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

2. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING 2021/2022 BUDGET

Dr. Solan reviewed that the Board of Education approved a budget of \$74,593,926. The Town Council reduced the budget amount 3.23% for a total budget of \$77,001,052, a reduction of \$1,486,000. He said the Town Council added funds to the budget to help offset the Medical Benefits Account. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to discuss where the reductions should be made to meet the Town's budget and hopefully adopt a budget for the 20201-22 year.

Dr. Solan and Mr. Masciana reviewed a spreadsheet (on file) containing the recommended budget adjustments.

The Certified Salaries account has a reduction of \$280,000 which is based on seven teacher retirements.

There are no reductions being recommended for Non-Certified Salaries.

The Medical Benefits account is being reduced by \$1,037,542. This amount includes savings of \$37,542 from a lower than expected stop-loss insurance renewal. A \$1 million reduction by the Town Council will be offset by a direct contribution of \$1.5 million into the medical benefits reserve fund. There is an increase of \$130,549 for the pension account, based on an update that was received after the budget was established. Regarding Unemployment Compensation, we are reducing that account by \$50,000. Mr. Masciana

explained that when they budgeted this account, they were not sure if the state would provide reimbursement, but because they did, we were able to reduce this line item.

The Instructional Expense account is being reduced by a total of \$68,166. This includes reductions to staff training (\$10,000), Instructional Supply (\$23,166), Textbooks (\$22,500), replacement equipment (\$6,250) and new equipment (\$6,250). Dr. Solan said, even with these reductions, this account is still adequately funded.

The Support Services account will be reduced by \$73,395. This includes reductions to Rentals/Fees (\$20,000), Communications (\$3,116), Travel/Conference (\$3,214), Office Supply (\$4,500) and Transportation Supply (\$17,565) are each being reduced by 5 percent. Capital Equipment (\$25,000) can be reduced because we were able to purchase some of next year's equipment with funding from the current year's budget.

A \$107,446 reduction is recommended to Operations & Maintenance. This reduction comes from a 5% reduction to Building Repairs (\$93,896) and Maintenance Supplies (\$13,550). This is not a drastic reduction and maintains an increase over last year's budget.

Dr. Solan noted that Kelly Lenz will be retiring in October. He explained that Kelly has a diverse set of responsibilities. He said that he, Ms. Silano and Mr. Masciana met to review what Kelly does and also look at the needs of the school system. He reviewed his proposed new position "Family and Community Engagement Coordinator." He explained that this is an evolution of Kelly's position. The position would be responsible for each of Kelly's responsibilities plus some additional responsibilities. New responsibilities would include acting as a liaison for the Open Choice Program, performing some teacher evaluations, coordinating parent involvement and engagement programs, managing summer school and also serving in a Title IX capacity. An additional retirement that was received after the budget was finalized would help to pay for this position. Board members expressed some concerns and suggestions regarding this new administrative position. Dr. Solan said no decision has to be made this evening and the dialogue has been helpful. Dr. Solan noted he wanted to discuss this tonight as it requires Board approval to add a new administrative position. He, Mr. Masciana and Ms. Silano will further discuss the specifics of this position and report back to the Board.

Dr. Solan next reviewed the ACES Teacher Residency Program with the Board. ACES is participating in a cohort of the CREC Teacher Residency Program (TRP), which is an alternate route to elementary certification program that embraces a different approach to attract, certify and retain teachers of color (residents) in which residents:

- Participate in courses for 18 months (summer, Saturdays and evenings);
- Work for one school year side-by-side with a mentor teacher while receiving pay and benefits; and
- Are guaranteed a full-time teaching position upon completion of the program and certification requirements.

The cost is \$65,000, but grant money has become available which would bring the amount to \$59,000 and additional grant money being through the ACES Open Choice program,

could also be used for this position. The Board and Superintendent discussed this program in more detail.

MOTION by Mr. Grippo, seconded by Ms. Ham.

***MOVED** that the Cheshire Board of Education Finance Committee recommend to the full Board of Education a Budget for the fiscal year 2021/22 of \$77,001,052 as appropriated by the Cheshire Town Council. Further, the Board of Education reduces its 2021/22 Budget Recommendation by \$1,486,000 as follows:*

1. Certified Salaries	\$ 280,000
2. Non-Certified Salaries	\$ 0
3. Employee Benefits	\$ 956,993
4. Instructional Expense	\$ 68,166
5. Support Services	\$ 73,395
6. Operations & Maintenance	<u>\$ 107,446</u>
Total Reductions	\$ 1,486,000

VOTE: The Motion passed unanimously by those present.

3. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Ms. Ham and seconded by Mr. Grippo, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Grippo, Finance Committee Chair

Attest:

Carol K. Jesensky, Board of Education Clerk

Filed at the Town Clerk’s Office, Town Hall, Cheshire: July 29, 2021.