

**MINUTES OF CHESHIRE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
HELD AT DODD MIDDLE SCHOOL ON JANUARY 23, 2024 AT 7:00 PM**

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Board Members Present: Samantha Rosenberg, Chair; Anne Harrigan, Vice Chair; Adam Grippo, Secretary; Mark Ecke; Anthony Perugini; Timothy White

Board Members Absent: Anne Marie Cullinan

Administrators Present: Jeffrey F. Solan, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools; Vincent Masciana, Chief Operating Officer; Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Robin-Anne Carey, Director, Pupil Personnel Services; Mary Jocelyn-Gadd, Principal, Cheshire High School; Kelly Grippo, Principal, Dodd Middle School; Diana Burns, Principal, Chapman Elementary School; Katharine Carlucci, Assistant Principal, Chapman & Norton Elementary Schools; Kimberly Dessert, Principal, Darcey School; Jodie Roden, Principal, Norton Elementary School; Scott Jeffrey, Principal, Highland Elementary School; Kevin Hanlon, K-8 Curriculum Coordinator; Marie Broadway, Supervisor of Secondary Special Education; Mike Woods, Community Engagement Coordinator.

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**1. CALL TO ORDER – 7:05 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.

Ms. Rosenberg led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Ms. Rosenberg turned the meeting over to Finance Chair, Ms. Harrigan.

**2. AUDIENCE.**

None.

**3. PUBLIC BUDGET REVIEW AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDED BUDGET.**

Superintendent Solan explained the schedule of the upcoming meetings. He asked Mr. Masciana to begin his presentation. Mr. Masciana began by reviewing the Key Budget Assumptions:

- Projected net enrollment growth of 56 students to 4,224
  - PK-6 increases by 28, 7-8 increases by 21, 9-12 increases by 7
  - 1 net new elementary teacher - Highland +1, Doolittle +1 but Chapman -1
  - Elementary class sizes increase from 18.7 to 18.8 average
- Special Education increasing in line with enrollment growth
  - Special education teacher and a paraprofessional added to accommodate an additional Intensive Education classroom at Norton Elementary School
- Positions being retained post ARP ESSER Funding

- Math Coaches at CHS & Dodd and Assistant Principal for Norton/Chapman
- Increase needed to fund Medical Benefits accounts
  - \$1.06M requested to fund 24-25 expected medical claims rate
- Increase in Operations and Maintenance
  - Driven by higher utility and heating costs plus our aging building needs

Mr. Masciana reviewed mandates, state and federal grants, and projected revenue of \$10,705,508. Mr. Masciana reviewed the Superintendent’s Budget Recommendation:

2023-24 Budget	\$84,993,429
2024-25 Recommendation	\$90,132,265
Increase \$	\$ 5,138,836
Increase %	6.05%

He noted that 80.3% of the budget is for Salaries and Benefits. 95.5% of the budget is for core services-contractual, mandated for facility overhead.

**Employee Salaries:**

Certified Salaries are 47.4 % of the budget. The request for 2024-25 is \$42,753,236, which is a 3.62% increase.

		EXPENDED	BUDGET	PROJECTED	RECOMMENDED	CHANGE	% inc/
		2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	(From BGT)	% dec
110	ADMINISTRATION	\$ 632,965	\$ 648,158	\$ 648,158	\$ 681,854	\$ 33,696	5.20%
111	DIRECTORS/SUPERVISORS	\$ 698,141	\$ 728,572	\$ 728,572	\$ 757,974	\$ 29,402	4.04%
112	PRINCIPALS/ASST PRINCIPALS	\$ 2,095,059	\$ 2,265,221	\$ 2,265,221	\$ 2,413,956	\$ 148,735	6.57%
113	TEACHERS	\$ 34,385,228	\$ 36,047,284	\$ 36,047,284	\$ 37,252,894	\$ 1,205,610	3.34%
114	SUBSTITUTES	\$ 1,079,448	\$ 750,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 800,000	\$ 50,000	6.67%
115	HOMEBOUND	\$ 146,550	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ -	0.00%
117	STUDENT ACTIVITIES	\$ 610,048	\$ 619,806	\$ 619,806	\$ 646,558	\$ 26,752	4.32%
118	ADULT EDUCATION	\$ 100,764	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
	<b>CERTIFIED SALARIES</b>	<b>\$ 39,748,203</b>	<b>\$ 41,259,041</b>	<b>\$ 41,259,041</b>	<b>\$ 42,753,236</b>	<b>\$ 1,494,195</b>	<b>3.62%</b>

Accounts 111 & 112 - Contractual wages increases for 2024-25 are 3.04% for Administrators. The 2024-25 recommended budget includes an Assistant Principal for Chapman/Norton that was previously funded from the ARP ESSER grant.

Account 113 - Based on the mediated contract effective 7-1-2021, Teachers will receive a 1.70% general wage increase and a 1.27% step increase in 2024-25. Recommended budget includes the addition of 1 elementary classroom teacher and 1 special education teacher. The recommendation also includes math coaches at CHS and Dodd and 1 elementary reading and math specialist that were funded previously from the ARP ESSER grant.

Non-Certified Salaries are 13.2 % of the Budget. The Request for 2024-25 is \$11,922,290, which is a 6.41 % increase.

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		EXPENDED	BUDGET	PROJECTED	RECOMMENDED	CHANGE	% inc/
		2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	(From BGT)	% dec
116	PARAEDUCATORS	\$ 3,366,904	\$ 3,552,410	\$ 3,552,410	\$ 3,875,914	\$ 323,504	9.11%
119	MANAGERS/SUPERVISORS	\$ 365,418	\$ 372,755	\$ 372,755	\$ 388,336	\$ 15,581	4.18%
120	SECRETARIES	\$ 2,353,869	\$ 2,418,400	\$ 2,418,400	\$ 2,521,555	\$ 103,155	4.27%
121	CUSTODIANS	\$ 1,060,017	\$ 1,056,710	\$ 1,056,710	\$ 1,162,295	\$ 105,585	9.99%
122	MAINTENANCE	\$ 778,904	\$ 875,608	\$ 875,608	\$ 827,755	-\$ 47,853	-5.47%
123	SUPPORT	\$ 1,832,336	\$ 1,961,723	\$ 1,961,723	\$ 2,102,771	\$ 141,048	7.19%
124	DRIVERS	\$ 390,234	\$ 388,572	\$ 388,572	\$ 447,059	\$ 58,487	15.05%
125	HEALTH SERVICES	\$ 533,353	\$ 578,450	\$ 578,450	\$ 596,605	\$ 18,155	3.14%
	NON-CERTIFIED SALARIES	\$ 10,681,035	\$ 11,204,628	\$ 11,204,628	\$ 11,922,290	\$ 717,662	6.41%

Contractual wages increases for 2024-25 are based on bargaining unit agreements – 2.5% for TA’s and Study Hall Monitors; 2.5% for ABA/DTI Trained Paraeducators; 2.875% for Paraeducators and Hall Monitors, 2.875% for Secretaries, 2.0% for Custodians/Maintenance employees, a 3% wage increase assumption for all others.

Account 116 includes the addition of one new Paraeducator position in 2024-25 for the intensive education program at Norton Elementary and 6.8 positions with varying hours added in 2023-24 that are being carried into 2024-25. Account 124 includes the addition of one new bus driver position needed to provide special education transportation.

**Employee Benefits** – 19.7% of the budget. \$17,714,460, which is a 7.37% increase.

		EXPENDED	BUDGET	PROJECTED	RECOMMENDED	CHANGE	% inc/
		2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	(From BGT)	% dec
201	MEDICAL BENEFITS	\$ 11,761,910	\$ 13,325,836	\$ 13,325,836	\$ 14,385,254	\$ 1,059,418	7.95%
202	LIFE INSURANCE	\$ 74,311	\$ 76,394	\$ 76,394	\$ 77,618	\$ 1,224	1.60%
203	DISABILITY INSURANCE	\$ 41,961	\$ 36,000	\$ 36,000	\$ 36,000	\$ -	0.00%
204	PENSION/RETIREMENT	\$ 1,311,434	\$ 1,318,767	\$ 1,318,767	\$ 1,386,289	\$ 67,522	5.12%
205	WORKER'S COMPENSATION	\$ 316,991	\$ 317,215	\$ 317,215	\$ 384,299	\$ 67,084	21.15%
206	UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION	\$ 10,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ -	0.00%
210	SOCIAL SECURITY	\$ 1,397,269	\$ 1,400,000	\$ 1,400,000	\$ 1,420,000	\$ 20,000	1.43%
	TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$ 14,913,876	\$ 16,499,212	\$ 16,499,212	\$ 17,714,460	\$ 1,215,248	7.37%

The budget request for the Medical Benefits Account of \$1,059,418 is primarily attributable to an 8.0% increase to fund expected medical claims for 24-25, as detailed in the Employee Benefits Section of the budget book. An additional \$226k is budgeted to allow for a 15% expected increase in stop loss insurance premiums. The requested budget will align contributions with expected claims for 23-24 but will not increase the reserve balance. Mr. Masciana reviewed the types of plans and initiatives in place to manage costs.

Salaries and Benefits account for 80.3% of the budget. The 2024-25 request is \$72,389,986, a 4.97% increase.

Mr. Masciana explained that the next budget review meeting will be held on January 25 at 7 pm at Dodd Middle School.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mr. White, and seconded by Mr. Grippo, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Samantha Rosenberg, Board Chair

Attest:

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Carol K. Jesensky, Board of Education Clerk

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