

Weston Board of Education Workshop
January 13, 2020 9:00 AM
Central Office Annex Conference Room

Attendance Taken at 9:04 AM:

Present Board Members:

Anthony Pesco
Melissa Walker
Ruby Hedge
Gina Albert
Hillary Koyner
Taffy Miller
Victor Escandon

1. CALL TO ORDER, VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. FY 21 BUDGET REQUEST WORKSHOP

Discussion:

Dr. Pesco began the meeting by reviewing the agenda for the workshop. At the start of the meeting, Mr. Cross handed out a multi-year budget and Mr. Brey reviewed DRG-A comparisons that were sent to the Board. He also handed out a superintendent salary comparison that was compiled by CES.

Ms. Albert asked for a description of what the teaming model looks like at WMS and given the small district, knowing it is more expensive to run, what are the overall benefits of our administration to the district and students. It was answered that we have greater personalization for staff and students as well as an ability to be more responsive to questions and issues than a larger district. The meeting continued to review other tabs within the FY 21 Recommended Budget.

Athletics: In Mr. Berkowitz' review of the Athletics Budget, he noted that their supplies line has only increased once in 14 years. The student participation at WHS is between 65-70%. The big drivers in Athletics are insurance, coaches' salaries, officials and transportation. A question was asked if our coaching salaries are in line with other districts. Mr. Berkowitz said that most are on the low side of the comps over the last 10 years. We have woven in some critical assistant coaches for our contact sports.

Special Education (SPED): Mr. Rizzo reviewed with the Board the SPED budget for FY 21, with no changes to the number of paraeducators going into next year. There is a slight decrease in contracted educational costs and consulting. The investments that were made within the SPED department have had a tremendous impact on the staff and students. With regard to Effective School Solutions, consistency in staff is the most critical component for our students who benefit from their services. Questions were asked about the excess cost reimbursement and Medicaid revenue.

Pupil Personnel Services (PPS): PPS was discussed at an earlier meeting but the differences of psychologists versus counselors was brought up. By having psychologists at the elementary level, they are not only able to provide the

same services a counselor would provide, but also has the ability to test children as well.

Curriculum & Instruction: Dr. Craw provided a handout regarding conference and travel, discussed previously in an earlier meeting. Due to the use of a Town trust, less was spent overall in conference and travel. A Board Member questioned math enrichment versus math intervention.

Facilities: Mr. Cross and Mr. DelMastro updated the Board on the VNM purchase and credits received from Eversource. They also spoke in detail regarding the request for an additional groundskeeper, the history of the position and the Revson Field issues from last year. Mr. DelMastro is concerned about pushing off work at WMS, mainly surrounding the HVAC systems.

Technology: The Board questioned Dr. Tunks as to if we could find efficiencies surrounding the software budget line item. Another question brought up was devices used within each of the schools.

The Board asked specific questions on the overall FY 21 Recommended Budget. Ms. Walker asked to see an organizational chart of the district with salaries included. She would also like to see a class size comparison for DRG-A. She questioned the Milone and MacBroom slide where they state the growth in Weston despite rest of the area declining. Ms. Hedge would like to see the key budget drivers for each tab in the FY 21 Recommended Budget as well as total enrollment for SPED (504s, IEP, outplacement). Ms. Albert wanted to see the parity around athletics and performing arts at WIS, WMS, and WHS. Mr. Escandon would like to see the context of the budget lines against the needs of the district.

Dr. Pesco wrapped up the meeting by asking how the Board would like to approach the budget and its impact on our students. He then scheduled an additional Board Workshop for Wednesday, January 15 at 9:00 a.m.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Discussion:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m., with a motion by Dr. Pesco, and a second by Ms. Walker.

Chairperson

Superintendent