

**WILLINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**BUDGET WORKSHOP #2**  
**MINUTES**  
**January 24, 2023**  
**6:00 p.m.**  
**Virtual Meeting: Zoom**

[YouTube Recording](#)

**Members Present** (all present remotely through Zoom)

Michelle Doucette Cunningham - Chair  
Ann Grosjean- Vice-Chair  
Herb Arico - Secretary  
Tracey Anderson  
Briana Ross  
Laura Rodriguez  
Donna Cook

**Also Present**

Phil Stevens, Superintendent of Schools; Mary Kay Tshonas, HMS Principal; Lisa Cushing, CES Principal; Marcia McGinley, Director of Pupil Services; Dr. Erin Conley, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; members of the public.

**1. Call to order**

Chair Cunningham called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Cunningham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Present to Speak**

Nick Tella, 49 Mirtl Road, asked if the maintenance amounts match what other towns are spending such as Ashford and Eastford.

**4. Review of Programs Previously Presented and B.O.E. Discussion**

Donna Cook asked for the balance in the non-lapsing fund and for a list of unfunded mandates.

**5. Program 3 Special Education and Related Services, Review and BOE Discussion**

Superintendent Stevens shared the special education program. He noted a decrease in the program despite less grant money being applied. Superintendent Stevens highlighted the model change in staffing from two full-time speech and language teachers to one full-time teacher with the support of two speech and language paraprofessionals.

Donna Cook asked about the Horizons line in the budget. Director McGinley noted the contracted consultation service is to support students with significant needs, and their families.

Donna Cook asked about the telephone service. Superintendent Stevens noted that it is a portion of the phone bill that is distributed across a couple of programs.

Ann Grosjean asked about the distribution of the BCBA service. Director McGinley stated the BCBA service is at both schools, and Superintendent Stevens noted that the service was provided on a needs basis.

Laura Rodriguez asked about the .06 preschool grant. Superintendent Stevens noted that is the full amount of the grant, but it is a full-time position with the remainder covered in the budget.

#### **6. Program 5 Health Services, Review and BOE Discussion**

Superintendent Stevens shared program 5 with a minor increase. He noted that the district contracts a medical advisor as required to oversee medical orders. Briana Ross shared that checking blood sugar for a student with diabetes would be an example of a medical order.

#### **7. Program 6 Curriculum and Staff Development, Review and BOE Discussion**

Superintendent Stevens shared program 6 and stated the funding is directly related to the professional development needed to implement the ongoing curriculum work. He noted staff would receive professional development on NGSX, Illustrative Math, and project-based learning.

Donna Cook asked why Erin's salary is not in program 6. Superintendent Stevens noted that the business manager had placed it in program 2 (Hall School), but that it didn't matter because her entire salary was offset by a grant.

#### **8. Program 7 Utilities, Review and BOE Discussion**

Superintendent Stevens reviewed program 7. He noted a decrease in electric rates, but an increase in the budget because of an increase in usage. Superintendent Stevens shared that they had not locked in the cost of heating fuel yet, but budgeted for \$3.19 per gallon.

Ann Grosjean asked if Siemens does any work still. Superintendent Stevens noted that they were the group that provided oversight for the work that was completed and that the cost of the lease payment was for their work from 10 years ago. He also shared the savings was supposed to cover the cost of the improvements.

#### **9. Program 10 Fringe Benefits/Substitutes, Review and BOE Discussion**

Superintendent Stevens shared information for program 10. He noted that despite the increase in the cost of benefits, the budget decreased because fewer staff are taking insurance. He shared that the ARP ESSER grant covers the cost of insurance for an employee.

Laura Rodriguez asked if the tuition reimbursement was only for classes beyond a master's degree. Superintendent Stevens confirmed that information and Laura Rodriguez suggested that in the future that could be changed during contract negotiations as a marketing tool to recruit new staff members.

Donna Cook suggested reviewing our current contracts to determine if the Board could prepay a portion with savings from the 22-23 budget to offset the 23-24 budget.

#### **10. Adjournment**

Herb Arico made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Ann Grosjean seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously and Chair Cunningham adjourned the meeting at 6:47 pm.

## **Future Budget Workshops**

### **Tuesday, January 31, 2023, 6:00 p.m.**

|                 |           |                        |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------------|
| Program Review: | Program 8 | Operations/Maintenance |
|                 | Program 9 | System-Wide Support    |

### **Tuesday, February 14, 2023, 6:00 p.m. (before regular BOE meeting)**

Final B.O.E. Budget discussion if needed