

**Minutes from the East Bridgewater School Committee  
Public Hearing on Tuesday, February 4, 2020,  
on the FY21 School Department Budget**

A Public Hearing on the FY21 School Department Budget was held on February 4, 2020, at 7:00 PM in the Dr. Judith A. Riordan Performing Arts Center in the East Bridgewater Jr/Sr High School. Members present were: Chairperson Ellen Pennington, Vice-Chairperson Gordon McKinnon, Secretary Robert Rhuda, Trista Higgins, Theresa Maltz, Tim McLaughlin, Superintendent Elizabeth Legault, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Gina Williams, School Business Administrator John Shea, Recording Clerk Joanne Benner took the minutes remotely.

Also in attendance were: staff and community members

Chairperson Ellen Pennington opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Motion: Higgin/McKinnon

Vote: 6 in favor

**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY21 SCHOOL DEPARTMENT BUDGET**

Chair Pennington thanked those in attendance, the administrative team for all the hard work put into the budget presentation. She thanked the budget subcommittee time for all of their time and effort, and the town for their continued support.

Superintendent Legault thanked those that attended for coming. This is an important night and the community needs to be involved in this very important decision. They have been working with the budget subcommittee and Town Manager Brian Noble throughout this process. We are a PK-12 system that is doing well. We are still in mediation with the EBEA and hope to have this wrapped up this year so we can move forward together. The Superintendent thanked School Business Administrator for the hours and work he put into figuring this out for us. Dr. Williams has been working with the principals to determine their schools needs so they can be supported.

**Strategic Plan at a Glance**

Each year we look at the Strategic Plan and use it to develop the budget. The four pillars are Curriculum/Instruction, Social Emotional Wellness, Professional Development, and Technology.

**Where we are Today; FY2020 Budget**

The current salary is 17,699,604, non-salary is 3,180,291 for a school budget of 20,879,895. Add in the regular busing of 912,600 and the total is 21,792,495.

**2019 District Report Card Enrollment & Teachers/Staff**

School enrollment has dropped slightly over the last few years. In PK-12 we have a total enrollment of 2,252 students. There are 154.7 teachers and 100% of them are licensed. The total number of teachers and staff is 278.5.

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### 2019 District Report Card Attendance Rates

The attendance rate is for students who missed more than 10% of the school year. In a typical 180 day school year, this represents the percentage of students who miss 18 or more day of school. In our district the rate in 2018 was 13.5% and in 2019 it dropped to 9.4%; the state rate for 2019 is 12.9% so we are well below that. The average number of days a student misses school has dropped from 8.9% in 2018 to 8.7% in 2019. The state average for 2019 is 9.6 days. We put this slide up all on district website being in school is extremely important for academic success. We are not doing badly but there is quite a bit of flu in the schools at this time. Kids like our schools our children like their teachers, the programming, and they are coming to school.

### 2019 District Report Card Graduation Rates

Our graduation rate is 94.6% in 2018. This is the latest data we have; 2019 will come out a little bit later. We do not have a lot of students that drop out. We want to push our graduated to continue with post-secondary education, to join the armed forces, or vocational.

### 2019 District Report Card Accountability

Dr. Williams said the image you are looking at is the district accountability report card. This is the second year of the new model and it is part of the “Every Student Succeeds Act.” It is about not just testing data and is about the whole child taking into account attendance and discipline to close achievement gaps between high achieving students and those at risk. We were put at 45% on the scale as a reset by the state and it is up to the district to go to the right. Our district has moved to 49% indicating moderate progress. One note she wanted to share is that the information we is what goes to the state. Attendance, discipline, and teacher licensing must be correctly reported as the data is pulled from SchoolBrains. Once the information is submitted the state can come back with areas of correction but we are not allowed to correct and resubmit it. We still do have areas of focus where we want to see progress go up.

### What we did with our Funding

Funding focus for this current school was done on our rotation and with being mindful that some courses are more costly than others so we try to stagger them so we do not have consecutive years of high cost. Additionally the rotation is six years because many of the licensures we have are for that time frame. This year we needed to be more strategic because the health and PE standards still have not been finalized at the state level. Because of this we jumped ahead to social studies spending \$50,000 knowing we needed to fill in some gaps this year for PE and Wellness and then finish of social studies. The PD Academy is comprised of teachers and administrators at all three buildings. We have spent \$59,000 on Ready Math, UDL with 25 members being trained that will come back and train staff, and online book clubs. There were 175 workshops and offerings that took place outside the district. Every year there are replacements that need to be filled due to retirements and resignations and all positions were filled. Our lead nurse was spending the majority of her time supporting the nurses or filling in so we hire a floater nurse that is available to help with medications and other needs to ensure we are in compliance. We have been fortunate to partner with a collaborative on getting adjustment/social worker interns that are ready to reach their master level and it is a cost savings for us in not having to pay their full salary. The data team meets regularly to talk about the information gathered on students and how to use it and where to focus

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our efforts and attention. We brought in Panorama that pulls all of the data into one platform where we can look at a screen shot to see how a student is doing academically, socially, and to see how they are trending.

#### New Accomplishments

The establishment of a SPED reserve account is a new accomplishment. There was \$6000.00 left in our budget last year that was put into the new account. We are potentially going to have \$100,000.00 put in by Town Manager Noble because he recognizes and understands the costs associated with SPED. The Central School boiler project, through the MSBA, is very close to being commissioned, and it came in under budget. We have been approved, in 2021, to have a new roof put on the Central School. It will be brought to Town Meeting. The Mitchell School security upgrade is complete and the teachers and staff will all enter using fobs; there are new security cameras as well. There is robotics at this school, STEAM labs at the Mitchell School, and flexible seating at the Central and Mitchell Schools.

#### EBPS Curriculum Review Cycle

The curriculum review for 2021 will be implementation of social studies, piloting ELA, and a needs assessment for art, music, and tech ed.

#### Professional Development

Some of the offerings were: MASSCUE, SPED Summit, TEC Conference, Frameworks on Tour, Data Team UDL, ALICE Recertification. There were many more and the slide can be requested.

#### FY21 Increase What and Why

One of the reasons we are increasing the budget for next year is because we have had an increase in out of district students that cannot be supported in our classrooms due to their significant needs. We need to enhance our support for students with social/emotional needs with additional adjustment counselors and nurses. Technology needs to be maintained and upgraded for both students and teachers. Support of the NEASC accreditation 5 year success plan is necessary. We want to hire a security guard for the JSBS, a Mitchell School behavioral specialist, and an ESL teacher. To date the school nurse visits totaled 8,322 and there was 2,798 medication visits. The NRC social work program has had 19 referrals to date with the #1 reason being behavior management. There have been 69 scheduled visits, 54 crisis visits, and 67 staff consultations. This is only at the JSBS; she did not pull data from the other schools.

#### Where we are Going Tomorrow

The budget request for FY21 is for: 18,178,122 in salary, 3,324,101 in non-salary, 292,000\* new positions for a total school budget of 21,794,223. There is an \* for the new positions because the Superintendent is asking permission to use school revolving accounts for a one time funding of positions. Regular busing will be 924,300; we are in a new five year contract with them and this number will not be increasing. This brings the total to 22,718,523.

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Budget Change

The budget changes will be an increase of 478,518 in salary, 143,810 in non-salary, and 292,000 for new positions bringing the school budget to an increase of 914,328. The increase in regular busing is 11,700 for a total of 926,028.

New Positions

The kindergarten census is not complete at this time and a new teacher may need to be added there. We need a SPED teacher in grade 3, a grade 5 teacher; we are waiting to hear from the JSHS principal to determine if we need a JSHS Math/Science teacher, we want to add 2 adjustment counselors, and a nurse.

FY21 Budget Assumptions

1. Increase support for Social and Emotional needs
2. Special Education Out of District
3. Maintains current class sizes
4. Meets contractual obligations
5. EBEA (Teacher) Collective Bargaining Agreement currently in mediation

Chapter 70 Funding

Last week we were notified that the FY21 amount for Chapter 70 Funding will be 266,587 which is an increase of 28,701 over last year. This money goes directly to the town and then we work with the town administrator to develop a plan on where the funding goes. The money from the Student Opportunities Act will be going to the Big 5 and then we will fill out a short form detailing where we would use the money allocated to us.

Thinking Ahead

It is important that we recognize the needs of students and staff. We need to do a feasibility study on the Central School. It is antiquated and the town administrator has put a push on to her to get this done. We would like to start a special needs program to keep students that are transitioning from high school and need programming until they reach the age of 22. Currently we send these students out of district.

Student Centered

We are student centered because it is the right thing to do. What do the students need? What support can we give them? The social and emotional needs in our community are growing. The number one support is academics; we want our students to thrive. They need to be able to communicate and feel strong enough to communicate with us. At some point we may need an override. We can't continue to just get by.

The PowerPoint will go onto the website tomorrow. We are all available to ask questions of any component on the presentation. There were not any questions asked at the meeting.

A motion to adjourn was made at 7:54: Higgins/Maltz      Vote: 6 in favor

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Respectfully submitted by,

Joanne M. Benner  
Recording Clerk

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