

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUDGET MEETING  
FEBRUARY 1, 2017  
MS/HS ENSEMBLE ROOM**

**I. OPEN SESSION**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Nylen called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Present were J. Bauman, C. Whitten, H. O'Flynn, B. Hopping, and S. Player. Also present was Superintendent Hart, Finance Director J. Cuff, Director of Teaching/Learning Wagner, Principals Conley, McAdams, Fabrizio, and Dalton, and SPED Director Hegedus.

**MISSION STATEMENT READING**

Mr. Whitten read the District's Mission Statement.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Nylen read the following announcements:

February 7 – Policy Subcommittee, 7 p.m., Payne School

February 9 – Operations Subcommittee, 6 p.m, Payne School

February 16 – School Committee, 7 p.m., M/HS Ensemble Room

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

**SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Mr. Nylen reviewed the meeting with MSBA and members of the committees and faculty as part of the next step to review the submitted preference schematic design of the new elementary school. Mr. Hopping and Mr. Nylen of the School Committee, SBC Chair Murphy, Town Manager, consulting and design teams attended. The program got rave reviews from MSBA. Everybody did a terrific job; everybody on MSBA was really impressed with how well linked the educational plan was to the building design itself. There were no questions asked. Mr. Hopping gave kudos to Mr. Nylen, to Bob Bell (architect), and to Ms. McAdams, exclaiming that we have hit a homerun with MSBA! A vote on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February then means that the push goes forward with the schematic design phase.

**II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS**

**A. FY18 BUDGET PRESENTATIONS**

Dr. Hart began by thanking all the Principals and Directors sitting with him at the table and in the audience who put together a solid budget that aligns with the district goals and vision and focuses on finances to stay that way. He complimented his team who are working together better and better and thanked the Central office staff for putting the budget together.

The presentation began with an overall summation of the budget, then a video of the manifestation of all four years of work together with the year's theme "Mobilizing Thinkers." The first two years were foundation work with highly successful people and Successful Habits of Mind, infrastructure and support systems. The second two years have been focused on thinking, critical thinking, and

next year on mobilizing thinkers. Administration is reflecting on the themes that the SC asked for: (1) strategy for budgeting leverage, (2) continuing the leverage in extending the override, and (3) hearing about programming which is not in the budget.

The video presentation exhibited makerspaces (elementary), technology (MS), and sustainability (HS) covering social issues and student leadership and the robotics program. Co-teaching has extended all the way into the high school with highly needy students. Dr. Hart thanked John Stafford (MS) and Chris Burke, Technology Specialist, who worked on the video.

Five-year Budget Plan Priorities. Doyon and Winthrop, Central Office, Middle School, and High School categories outlined reasonable class sizes, the Fine Arts, teacher leadership, the MS model, social/emotional support, varied course offerings and Pathways (HS), Birth to 3, and building maintenance.

Technology budget information showed \$65,000 for software; \$139,457 for hardware (projection and printer replacements as well as laptops, tablets, Chromebooks, etc.); service, \$25,000; professional development, \$10,000; other supplies, \$10,000; for a total budget of \$249,457, a commitment for every year now to remain on the cutting edge of technology in the schools. Mr. Nylén reminded of Tech Director Frash's previous painstaking analysis of every year's needs for technology at about \$400,000.

Director of Teaching and Learning Tracy Wagner presented her budget areas of Teacher Leader Positions: Compass at \$32,500; PLC (Professional Learning Community) at \$19,500, reduced from 25 to 15 positions because of the success of the trainees, and Technology Specialists, \$32,500, totaling \$84,500. FY18 District-led Professional Development projected a total of \$131,730 for course reimbursement, workshops, summer PD (over 90 teachers last summer), STEAM team (a celebration to come on April 11), and district-wide professional development. Interest-based PLCs currently have produced three areas: one at Winthrop in the Makerspace area, one at the MS in the Socratic method, and one at Winthrop/Doyon in math. Dr. O'Flynn gave Ms. Wagner some pointers in expectation of FinCom/BOS presentations. Mr. Whitten asked if there might be an opportunity to ask Feoffees for a grant.

Mr. Nylén asked Ms. Wagner for comparison with last year and impact measurement of professional development. She cited standardized test results, and frameworks changes in Massachusetts, and stated that the district has systems in place now to keep the curriculum wheel in place as an aligned district (her role) no matter what changes come from the State.

Operational Audit Impact. Dr. Hart's overall conclusion which came from the Operational Audit is that "we need to spend and invest (\$948,034) more than we can find in savings (\$777,044). Areas launched after the audit were curriculum development, food-service fee increase, special education staffing, technology consolidation with the Town, attention to building maintenance, and contracted routes in transportation. Some audit suggestions—field maintenance and

transportation—simply wouldn't work. Dr. O'Flynn spoke of professional people in place of 13 SPED TAs. Mr. Nysten suggested a collaboration opportunity with the Town Cemetery and Parks on field maintenance as a result of the new purchase of Pony Express property. Mr. Whitten asked and Dr. Hart answered that study of declining enrollment and staff reduction is being done.

Budget Drivers. Dr. Hart quickly reviewed charts depicting 7 years of increases in health insurance costs, fixed costs including fuel and electricity, and SPED expense growth (6.7% increase partially because of cutbacks in State and Federal funding and added fulltime personnel in the shift as mentioned above from TAs), Choice funding declining because of moving away from an aggressive approach, downsizing staffing, and a shift in practice the last couple of years, and Circuit Breaker funding/expending up and down depending on the student population and getting reimbursements.

Mr. Hopping asked if the 35% of grant funding lost in the past 6 years is due to Title I and kindergarten grants. Ms. McAdams, answering in the affirmative, explained that the challenge this coming year is because of the poverty numbers. The loss figure maximum with the State is 25%, and the State is readjusting and recalculating, trending toward more competitive-type grants. She is trying Head Start with an eye to pick up something. Mr. Hopping commented that Ipswich has lost more and FinCom isn't fully aware that more money is going into the Operating Budget. To Mr. Nysten's question of finding other outside funds, Dr. Hart replied, that as a model school system (technology, project-based learning, etc.), it is possible to obtain grant funding in a type of partnership with other districts. Ipswich is close to being able to do this with real potential, like charging people to come to Ipswich's professional development sessions.

Mrs. Krason joined the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Mobilizing Thinkers. Each of the four areas (SPED, High, Middle, and Elementary) delineated their programs in Access for All, Powerful Learning, and Aspirations, Realizations, and Challenges.

Special Education. Dr. Hegedus began with SPED, completing her segment with information that 3 SPED students will be tuitioned-in in FY18, two will return from outside placements, and one has been able to get college exposure. She emphasized that "the right thing to do" (new legal mandates) costs money, but connection to the community and acquiring social skills is a plus factor.

Dr. O'Flynn asked if there are more students or more needy students, and she replied that there are both because of a broader eligibility and autism is up. There were 8 "high needs" students last year and there are now 13. Dr. O'Flynn and Mr. Hopping suggested that Dr. Hart and she explain these factors to the FinCom along with identification of the roles of SPED personnel.

Mr. Nylen asked for identification of the FY18 budgeted number of \$6.7 million. The answers came: transportation, the outplacement tuitions, and the different agendas of the co-teaching within the IPS (the ongoing embedded analysis process). Dr. Hart stated that the objective is autonomy—trying to move with co-teaching to develop an overall curriculum where all students have access. Mr. Nylen suggested that it would help to break down the budget costs to help support the narrative as appropriate as possible without betraying confidentiality and also to offer correction to the audit which was misinterpreted and not valid in Ipswich staffing levels relative to other districts.

High School. Principal Dalton began by pointing out the High School's challenges: new schedule, utilizing the Aspen program (managing software), the use of the "R" block in the schedule, and the self-study for accreditation. He outlined co-teaching practices as data driven and offered in ELA and math and for the SPED population which is failing in the growth desired for them. In RTI (Response to Intervention) social, emotional, and academic growth is successful. Advanced Placement has produced an all-time high of 3 or better with more AP courses offered the last two years. Pathways have not advanced too well because of fewer interests. Design-thinking pathways in sustainability, robotics, and student/global leadership are doing well.

Accreditation has no money appropriated. Decreasing enrollments, two retirements, and math/science sections are coming out. Mr. Dalton called the virtual high school program very successful for a variety of reasons. Mrs. Krason asked if there is one to one on technology devices; Mr. Dalton said that, while it may be short, the school is close to that. SC members asked questions about line items. Ms. Wagner explained that fairs, showcases, art, and music allow focus on the rest of education beyond STEAM and there is need to publicize. While there are challenges this year, the High School is in a great place and all its population has all the cultural bases.

Middle School. Mr. Fabrizio feels that the MS is in a really good place with co-teaching in ELA and math in all grades, full inclusion, targeted interventions, project-based learning, integrated technology, co-curricular activities for the whole child, and targeted professional development. He gave examples of "powerful learning" in projects with a goal to continue to mobilize thinkers by moving away from the traditional model of education. The MS is developing reflective learners (thinking about what they did—could it have been better?) The challenges are keeping the momentum going with decreasing enrollments and rising special education costs.

Mrs. Bauman asked about morale issues; Mr. Fabrizio said his staff, not worrying about cuts, comes up with new ideas, and he described the "pineapple on the classroom door" as invitations to share the class' learning activities. Discussion took place re leveling of math courses among the MS grades.

Doyon and Winthrop. Mrs. McAdams and Ms. Conley shared discussion of access for all with applying skill sets across levels and subject matter, with technology and STEAM integration and social emotional well-being for all students.

Ms. Conley described Doyon's new SPED programmer and six SPED teachers in the co-teaching model. Mrs. McAdams has apprentices who help with RTI, industrial arts in the OT and PT areas, mindfulness in the classrooms, and nutrition classes in the budget. Their challenges come with the future planning with the elementary building project, and ELL class numbers which are skyrocketing, and meeting the demands of excited teachers.

Mr. Whitten remarked about the pitiful situation with boilers and the energy bill and the cost of a new Doyon roof.

Abigail Gold was introduced as the new Director of Birth to Three. Ms. Cuff explained the way her budget is being handled with three sources of revenue.

Dr. Hart mentioned the establishment of a Stabilization account for SPED to handle the valleys and spikes so that the Operational Budget isn't increased. Mr. Hopping questioned the substitute-expense line; Mrs. McAdams explained her use of apprentices.

Mr. Nylen asked each principal to give his/her need which is not included. Mrs. McAdams mentioned a STEAM integration person and a language person. Ms. Conley wants a STEAM person and more support/an assistant principal. Mr. Fabrizio wished for a next-level technology person, a TV studio, makerspace. Mr. Dalton asked for a time machine—time for staff to work together—time for kids to share their thoughts—a media center assistant. Dr. Hegedus would like a psychology or social counselor for triage. Ms. Wagner would like a team of STEAM integration specialists and financial resources for a during-the-year course that focuses on project-based learning.

Mr. Nylen moved, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn, to take the Winthrop School, Doyon School, Middle School, High School, SPED, and Central Office FY18 budgets under advisement. UNANIMOUS.

## **V. CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Nylen moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to accept the Consent Agenda as follows: Acceptance of Minutes of 1/19/17 Open Session School Committee  
Acceptance of donation of \$600 from the Buletza family to be deposited in the Winthrop School Student Activity Account. UNANIMOUS.

## **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Player moved, seconded by Mrs. Bauman, to adjourn at 11:29 p.m. UNANIMOUS.

