

Ipswich School Committee
Thursday, February 8, 2018
7:00 PM
MS/HS Ensemble Room

Minutes

I. OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Sarah Player, School Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM with the following members present: N. Zito, B. Hopping, P. Kneedler, C. Whitten and H. O'Flynn. Also present were Superintendent Dr. Blake and Director of Finance and Operations J. Cuff.

READING OF THE DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

N. Zito read the Mission Statement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. There will be a combined School Committee Meeting/School Building Committee meeting on Monday, February 12th at 7:00pm in the MS/HS Ensemble Room.
2. There will be a School Committee meeting on Tuesday, February 13, 2018 at 7:00pm in the MS/HS Ensemble Room.
3. February Vacation for all Ipswich schools is Monday, February 19-Friday, February 23, 2018. All school offices will be closed on Monday, February 19th in observance of President's Day.

CITIZENS' QUERIES

None.

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

None.

II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

B. FY19 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Dr. Blake, with the administrative team in the audience, presented the full FY19 School Budget. He began by stating the School Committee Budget Goal, "To identify, secure, and responsibly manage District financial resources to effectively and adequately support educational objectives of the District." He went on to explain that the District was currently in year 4 of 5 of the Five Year Budget Plan Priorities-a list that was created in 2015. Those priorities included focusing on :

- Reasonable class sizes
- Art and music programs
- Library and media
- The Middle School model

- Social and emotional support
- World languages
- Varied course offerings
- Technology and steam
- Teacher leadership
- The Birth to Three program
- Building maintenance

At this time, the District is in a good position and is maintaining these priorities. Dr. Blake then explained that it is time to shift gears due to the increase in needs of the student population and presented a list of new priorities to meet changing student needs. These included:

- Social/emotional support
- Digital literacy/computer science
- Project based learning opportunities
- Standards based work
- Co-teaching model
- Social studies curriculum changes
- Student supports for academic success

The total budget for FY19 is \$32,329,091:

- 9.42% of that budget, or \$3,045,498, is debt.
- 14.75%, or \$4,771,223 is expenses
- 75.82% or \$24,512,370 is salary and benefits
- \$63,637 will be put into the stabilization fund

The District also used outside funds, however there are special rules and guidelines to determine how those funds can be used. Outside funds include:

- SPED tuition
- Bus pass revenue
- Tiger tots
- Extended program
- Pre-school tuition
- Athletic revolving fund
- Choice
- Educatius
- Circuit breaker
- Capital plan

As was evident by the slide, Federal and State grant funding have been on a steady decline and the District must then absorb those losses within the budget. Dr. Blake explained that Ipswich is not eligible for a lot of grants and there is no grant writer in the District specifically looking for and writing grant proposals. Because of the steady decline, the District has had to make the decision to either absorb the loss or reduce the programming that was once funded by these grants.

Choice funds are also on a steady decline. Because a large population of Choice students are now aging out, the revenue intake vs. expenditure is widening.

The next slide presented was on Circuit Breaker funds and Dr. Blake explained that they plan to have \$460,000 carry over to FY19. Special Education is currently maintaining their budget, but have two placeholders at Town Meeting if they need circuit breaker funds to support two possible outplacements.

The next slide showed the Fixed Cost Expense from 2015-2019. The fixed cost expenses include benefits, property, retirement, casualty/ life insurance, Medicare, workman's compensation and unemployment. The calculations shown were provided by the Town. In FY19, there will be a 1.2% increase. Dr. Blake further discussed costs associated with health insurance and explained that health insurance is a major budget driver.

Dr. Blake then discussed the Special Education Appropriated Budget. A major budget driver for this budget is the tuition for out of district placements. At the fall STM, they voted to create a Special Education Stabilization Fund and in the spring, any unreserved funds leftover will be placed into that stabilization fund.

Before discussing each individual school budget, he explained what a FTE is and who makes up FTE's (full time equivalents). Although reported together, they each serve a different purpose based on different needs. Those individuals who make up this category include:

- Teachers
- Support staff
- Clerical staff
- Custodial staff
- Specialists

The Paul F. Doyon School Budget was presented first. The Committee was shown a slide that included current and projected enrollment statistics. Dr. Blake explained that although it appears that class sizes will remain the same, the needs of the students are drastically increasing. Highlights of the Doyon budget include:

- Budget increase of 3.89%
- Changes in FTEs due to changing student needs
- Level or slight decreases in other funding lines
- Shifting resources to meet the needs of students
- Maintaining social/emotional learning
- Maintaining co-teaching model
- STEAM interwoven in the curriculum

The School Committee did address the decrease in the budget for materials, but was told that decrease was due to more online resources becoming available, a shift in resources and simply because the school had enough at this time. The School Committee also addressed the two teaching assistants in Kindergarten. Ms. Halloran explained that the two teaching assistants were in Special Education, but were moved to Kindergarten. They could be also be moved back to Special Education if the needs arises.

The Winthrop Elementary School was the second individual school budget presented. Again, the Committee was presented with current and projected enrollment numbers and it was explained that Winthrop is seeing a slight increase in enrollment. Winthrop budget highlights include:

- Overall 2.41% increase to budget
- Expands supports for social/emotional learning with .5 additional FTE for School Psychologist
- Decrease of .25 FTE in office staff
- Two veteran teachers returning from sabbatical years
- Consistent with school improvement plan and strengthening RTI
- Maintained funding for programmatic support
- Maintaining co-teaching commitment

The School Committee addressed the need for a School Psychologist and Ms. McAdams explained that both elementary schools are currently sharing one. With the increase in student needs, she felt it would be best to have someone in the building who could not only assess these children, but also address their IEP goals and that essentially, it would be a “better bang for the buck”.

The Ipswich Middle School budget was the next to be presented. The enrollment slide showed a declining enrollment trend. The large population of Choice students that once attended the middle school have now aged out and there are not Choice kids replacing them. The question now is do you fill the middle school with Choice students again or do you begin to right size. Middle School budget highlights include:

- Overall budget decrease of .28%
- Decrease of 2.0 FTE due to declining enrollment, yet maintained the Middle School model
- Moving to a humanities/STEAM model that continues to support teaching
- Additional professional development funding to support teachers in this shift
- Continuing the co-teaching model

It was explained that with the declining enrollment, adjustments will be made in the grade configurations, but that the middle school model will still be supported. This model gets away from the more traditional learning style and focuses more on project-based learning.

The Ipswich High School budget was presented next, with the current and projected enrollment numbers shown first. The High School budget highlights include:

- Overall decrease of 1.4%
- Decrease in FTE of 1.14
- Decrease of .8 Tech/Math Professional
- Maintain support for students with social/emotional learning
- Maintain co-teaching model
- Expands elective offerings and pathway opportunities

The District Wide/Central Office budget was the next to be presented. Dr. Blake explained that NESDEC came in and did a workflow study in the spring to address the inefficiencies within Central Office.

Central Office budget highlights include:

- Reorganization of Central Office
- 9.5% increase in health insurance

- Decrease of 1.0 FTE Integrated Technology Specialist by attrition
- Membership in North Shore Education Consortium

It was further explained by Dr. Blake that the 9.5% increase in health insurance was a placeholder until the final number was presented in the upcoming weeks. The membership in the North Shore Education Consortium is effective July 1, 2018 and will provide us with tuition and professional development savings. The Integrated Technology Specialist position is not going to be refilled because the needs of the position changed.

The technology budget was presented and highlights include:

- Hardware: maintaining and updating of support hardware (chromebooks, switches, projectors)
- Software: educational and productivity software (Adobe, Destiny, Aspen)
- Services: service contracts and support agreements (Firewall, backup software, security certificates)
- Supplies: general supplies (video cables, keyboards, laptops)
- Salary: two help desk, one data specialist, one director

The Professional Development budget was presented with the following highlights:

- Adjust stipend positions for Compass, PLC and Tech Committees to reflect participation
- Maintain summer professional development
- Maintain school year interest based PLC's
- Increased reliance on Federal, State, and Payne grants to support PD efforts

The Building Operations budget was presented with the following highlights:

- 1.0 FTE increase for an Assistant Facilities Director
- Increased funding for building repair and purchased services costs
- Decreased budget for utilities expenses
- Increase of \$15,000 for building improvement at the Payne building

Dr. Blake explained that this department is grossly understaffed and was reflected in the most recent NEASC report. The increase in FTE would be onsite, provide adequate supervision, carry out preventative measures and contribute as part of the custodial team.

Overall, Dr. Blake explained commended the administrative team in their efforts to come in at the target budget and for all the work put into the preparation of the budget. School Committee members acknowledged the new format, stating that it worked much better and if presented to the Finance Committee the same way, there may not be a need for a third night. They were happy to hear that the budget came in at target with no significant changes and that the explanation of FTE's was great.

III. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. VOUCHERS AND BILLS

B. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- ATHLETIC SUBCOMMITTEE**- did not meet
- BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE**- did not meet

- c. **GRANT SUBCOMMITTEE-** Ms. Kneedler met with the Bandi who is going to continue as chair for another year. They are working to coordinate a meeting soon.
- d. **OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE-** did not meet
- e. **POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE-** met on 2/6/18 and discussed part of policy G
- f. **TURF FIELD SUBCOMMITTEE-**did not meet
- g. **SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE-** the SBC/SC will be meeting to vote on look at the cost estimate and to vote to submit the cost estimate with the schematic design to the MSBA
- h. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - i. **Principal Search Update-** Dr. O’Flynn and Mr. Hopping both agreed to be part of the search committee. There is a need for one more parent to participate in the search group. The plan going forward is to look at dates to schedule a search committee meeting.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Ms Player moved the Committee to accept the minutes of the February 1, 2018 Open Session Meeting. Dr. O’Flynn seconded. UNANIMOUS.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Dr. O’Flynn moved, seconded by Ms. Kneedler to adjourn at 9:51 PM. UNANIMOUS.