

**FINANCE COMMITTEE/SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUDGET PRESENTATION  
MARCH 16, 2016  
ROOM A, TOWN HALL**

**OPEN SESSION**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Mitch Feldman, Fin Com Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.  
Fin Com members present: M. Schaaf, W. Hartford, I. Miles, J. Clements-Skelton, R. White, R. Howard, K. Murphy.  
School Com members present: C. Nylen, F. Krason, B. Hopping, S. Player, H. O'Flynn, J. Bauman, B. Hopping  
Administrators present: Sup't. W. Hart, PPS Director Hegedus, Director of Teaching and Learning T. Wagner, and Principals Fabrizio, Conley, and Dalton.

**CITIZENS' QUERIES**

**MINUTES APPROVAL**

Minutes were moved, seconded and voted for approval.

**"POETRY OUT LOUD" PRESENTATION**

Mr. Nylen introduced High School English teacher Becky Slawson who explained that the project had all begun with the receipt of a Feoffee mini-grant of flat-line poetry, a national competition. Every English student in the High School chose a poem, memorized it, and presented it out loud. Of the ten finalists chosen to speak their "Poetry Out Loud" in front of the whole school, Maddie Wilson won second place and Tina Gillette won first place. Nina went on to State competition, one of 24 out of 21,000 who participated. The girls received applause, and Mr. Feldman remarked that their skill to perform will carry them throughout life.

Dr. Hart spoke of it as a manifestation of the focus on "critical thinking" one of the Successful Habits of Mind [SHOM] being emphasized this year. He reiterated the theme of "We Are One" and that "we are keeping our promise" with 21<sup>st</sup> Century skill development, Compass people, collaboration, and technology which brings the 21<sup>st</sup> Century classroom to light and supports the Common Core, focus on STEAM and co-teaching and, finally, moving towards project-based learning.

**ELEMENTARY FY17 BUDGET PRESENTATION**

Principal Sheila Conley, in the absence of Sheila McAdams (whose father had passed) presented the joint Doyon and Winthrop budgets because the schools have worked together for five years in Ms. Conley's Ipswich time. She spoke of Grades K, 3, and 5 at Doyon in co-teaching and Winthrop having 5 co-teaching slots. The hope is to be able to increase Doyon's co-teaching to 7 classrooms and Winthrop to 6.

She detailed some of the STEAM initiatives in the "Inquiry Study" model, Grade 4 studying the salt marsh, and two art teachers having taken the embedded writing another step with sculptures made and photos taken by the children. At Winthrop, K is putting subject matter to music with Laurie Fab, robotics are happening in Grade 2, and a science fair was held on March 11. Doyon will have a

STEAM expo on April 13. Coding has been instituted by the library media specialists. In technology, pre K – Grade 2 have Ipads, Grades 3-5 have Chromebooks.

In the areas of social/emotional work, she and Ms. McAdams have spent a great deal of time putting the pieces together to get those kids able to focus on learning. The State has guidelines for pre-school and K called Community Building and in Grades 1-4, how to get along with each other. ACE (Winthrop) and DEEP (Doyon) are five-week programs both in the fall and spring for connecting with the community after school to which over half of the school population participates. Twenty-five high school students are paired once a month to the Doyon children, and she commented that she doesn't know who enjoys it more—the parents, the teachers, or the kids! A student at Doyon thought up the idea!

Sustainability in both schools has composting for the entire 400+ students creating only one garbage bag. She referenced the video the previous evening with Marty Daignault's fourth-grade rainmaking project and of Doyon's Makerspace. She spoke of apprenticeship positions (2) who are substitutes (probably recent graduates) who hold "helper" status as floaters.

With SHOM ("communication" last year and "critical thinking" this year) the hope is that students' entrance into the Middle School will be seamless. High school kids talking to elementary kids makes for a vertical connection as well as horizontal.

Mr. Feldman asked to clarify FTEs and class sizes. Strings, chorus and band have been restored; 2 FTEs replace the TAs who weren't returned; pre-school (3- and 4-year olds) numbers at Winthrop and Doyon are currently at 30; Grade 1 at Winthrop is getting larger, summer professional development work between schools meets on the same date, joint faculty meetings are held, technology provides Google Hangouts.

To Mr. Feldman's question about math and science, Ms. Conley replied that Doyon didn't have the funds last year and is catching up now to Winthrop.

To Mr. Howard's question of how the co-teaching works, Ms. Conley replied that there are 3 SPED teachers who work with regular teachers in math and language arts in three different classrooms one-half of the day.

To Mr. Schaaf's question of developing the "critical thinking" skills, Ms. Conley answered that teachers don't work with a textbook because there might be three ways to get the answer. Ms. Wagner added that the book, Making Thinking Visible, that the whole system is using comes from Harvard.

Ms. Wagner clarified Mr. White's question of reading, writing and math being the same in both schools by using Google Hangout and MCAS 2.0 which includes the Common Core.

Response to Intervention is available for those who are not doing well (Mr. White's question) from K-5 with reading/math specialists and social workers. Mr. Hopping explained the pyramid method with 6-8-week levels of RTI, another intensified level at the next tier, and at the top of the pyramid, the child gets a

referral to SPED. Mr. Howard asked if the occasion arises with the child needing help immediately, does he get it, and Mrs. Conley said yes.

There was discussion about the need for classroom space in the elementary schools. Mr. Murphy quoted preK and K needing 1200 sq. ft. with a bathroom within (Winthrop has 900 -1000 sq. ft.; Doyon has none); Grades 1-5 need 850-950 sq. ft. standard (Winthrop has 740 sq. ft., Doyon has 800 sq. ft.). Cubbies at Winthrop are inside the classroom space, thus taking up more room.

Dr. Hart spoke of State and Federal entitlement grants which he would like to be at a \$500,-600,000 number. There is an \$880,000 balance in the Choice account currently.

Mr. Hartford inquired about class size and Choice student involvement. Dr. Hart replied that, if we choose to keep a static number of students in enrollment (about 1800), then certainly there will be opportunities to keep class sizes reasonable with Choice-In.

There was discussion and clarification of the Circuit Breaker funds. The High School is the most single benefactor of the funds and Foundation allowance is increased each year. Some reserve is essential because of high-cost out placements.

Fin Com members reviewed a distributed sheet of revolving funds within the school system. Feoffee and Manning fund numbers were discussed, and Mr. Feldman asked about restrictions for other donations. Dr. O'Flynn gave an example of an individual who wished to pay for an employee in the system, and he was prevented from doing so.

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.