

**Haverhill School Committee
FY11 Budget Review Session
Special Meeting of May 17, 2010**

Mayor James Fiorentini, Chairperson, called the Special Meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Present were: Attorney Paul Magliocchetti; Mr. Raymond Sierpina; Mrs. Susan Danehy; Mr. Scott Wood; Mr. Joseph Bevilacqua, Vice President; Mr. Shaun Toohey, President; Dr. Raleigh Buchanan, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Steven O'Brien, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction and Ms. Kara Kosmes, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations.

Mayor Fiorentini welcomed everyone to the budget review session.

The committee members acknowledged receipt of the FY11 budget document.

Dr. Buchanan read the following statement:

Per the committee's directive, tonight you are in receipt of a nearly balanced FY11 budget. The budget preparation focused on student achievement as the overarching goal. Classroom instruction is the main focus of our budget development. In tandem with this premise decisions were made to preserve class size as much as possible and not totally eliminate any programs. Faced with such a monumental challenge, the District Leadership Team met for several days to bridge the funding gap. While it is the opinion of the District Leadership Team that resources are not adequate to maintain level service this proposed budget does accomplish several things:

Efforts were made to preserve current class size.

169 of the 174 elementary teachers and 12 of the 14 kindergarten teachers have been retained;

The principals will explain in more detail how class sizes will look next year.

This budget maintains art, music and physical education as offerings in the elementary and middle schools. It also adds technology and library instruction to our curriculum via adoption of an innovative five-day encore schedule.

The principals will describe how these services will be delivered to our students.

This budget maintains all current offerings at Haverhill High School.

The High School Principal, Mr. Nangle will outline his recommendations during his presentation.

This budget maintains significant funding for mandated programs such as Special Education and the English Language Learner Program although some adjustments have been made in order to achieve this outcome.

This budget level funds cost center expenses.

This budget increases efficiencies in the operations of our school buildings.

This budget offers the opportunity for job sharing and/or part-time job opportunities to help alleviate the escalating health care costs.

In preparing this budget we used all known sources of available funds including ARRA monies. Please note that these funds are \$800,000 less than in FY10. Other revenues such as School Choice and Attrition were based on realistic projections and/or Cherry Sheet estimates.

While preparation of this budget was particularly challenging, other cities and towns are in similar or worse situations. Recent news reports have related the following budget shortfalls in school districts: Brockton \$19 million; Quincy \$9 million; Weymouth \$4 million; Taunton \$3 million and Methuen \$2 million.

In conclusion, the proposed budget still requires either savings or additional revenues of approximately \$340,000 in order to balance. There are several options available to bridge this gap, including receipt of additional monies from meals tax revenues; outsourcing of night custodial services at the high school; discussions of potential savings recommended by Futures Health; discussions with unions regarding step, class and longevity freezes and movement of employees towards the less costly value option plan.

I thank the committee for its patience as we waited for more accurate funding information from the state and welcome your comments, questions and suggestions as we finalize the FY11 budget.

Dr. McFarland on behalf of the principals indicated that the FY11 budget would negatively effect student achievement.

Mr. Nangle, High School Principal read a statement on the adverse effect the FY11 budget would on high school instruction and programs.

This budget again finds us in a drastic situation here at the high school. Even with having absorbed staff reduction over the last 6 years.

The Administration and staff have worked extremely hard to strengthen curriculum over the last few years to improve student achievement and much of that work will be lost. We have been asked to make cuts where there is nothing left to cut.

We understand the severe financial situation that the economy has placed on the city but also we are charged with providing the best education possible for students of the city of Haverhill. I have attempted to list areas of reduction if needed and impact on our students.

Cuts Proposed	Department	Loss	#Students affected	Savings
1	Science	AP Chem Biochem of foods 2 Earth Science	18 56 60	\$60,000
1	Art	10 sections	240	\$60,000
1	English	Journalism Creative Writing	60 100	\$60,000
1	F L	Spanish	100	\$60,000
				Total \$240,000

Additional Proposals

We will have to fill a Guidance position which has been vacated due to a resignation but we have a request for a leave of absence and can fill as we did this year with a long term sub savings \$25,000.

In addition to the above cuts we are proposing the elimination of all clubs that cannot be self funded. This would be approximately 30,000 dollars.

Imposition of a fee for Art materials above the basic level of \$25.00 for the 250 + students would generate an additional \$6,000.

Ramifications of above

1. This will increase our study Hall participation by 700 students. With the loss of these electives for juniors and seniors, college admissions officers will look at transcripts and see no difficult offerings for junior and senior year, this will reflect badly on these students and this institution as a whole.
2. Core curriculum offerings in Honors levels will average 32 students per class. We currently have 900 students sitting in study halls on a daily basis. With the loss of additional electives this number will go much higher. Every student at HHS will be in at least 1 study
3. Possibly a look at the graduation requirement of 20 credits to 19 credits this would require a vote of the School Committee.
4. Improvements in English and Mathematics on the MCAS scores could be in jeopardy as we may have to look into cutting our excellent MCAS remediation program.
5. Art History as well as our AP art course and our Connections classes in the Classical Academy will be affected.
6. To maximize the utilization of teachers, the cafeteria will be used as a study hall when not in use for lunch.

I would like to make it perfectly clear I do not condone any of these cuts but understand the budget shortfall.

Bernie Nangle

A discussion of the FY11 was conducted; among some of the topics that were referred to were:

- Virtual High School courses providing academic instruction for students in under-enrolled courses;
- Northern Essex Community College (dual enrollment program) assisting high school students with course work for post-secondary education;
- Classroom instruction being a predominant factor in the development of the budget;
- No program eliminated in this budget; however, services have been diminished;
- Utilities have not been level-funded;
- Five day schedule will preserve programming but in a different manner. Mrs. Gilman presented a brief overview of how this proposal was implemented successfully at the Silver Hill Horace Mann Charter School;
- Reorganization of buildings will provide some substantial savings (closing of Crowell School)

Moved by Mr. Bevilacqua and seconded by Mr. Toohey to ask each bargaining unit for a step and longevity freeze.

A roll call vote was held and the results were the following:

Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Sierpina	Yes
Mrs. Danehy	Yes	Mr. Wood	Abstained
Mr. Bevilacqua	Yes	Mr. Toohey	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini	Abstained		

Motion passes.

Moved by Mr. Bevilacqua and seconded by Mr. Toohey to suspend the rules to discuss the Superintendent Search.

The Committee briefly discussed the need to move forward with the posting of an Interim Superintendent's position since Dr. Buchanan has accepted the position of Superintendent of Schools in Hamilton-Wenham.

Moved by Mr. Bevilacqua and seconded by Attorney Magliocchetti to post the position of Interim Superintendent of Schools immediately; to establish a subcommittee chaired by Mayor Fiorentini and composed of Mrs. Danehy and Mr. Toohey to work on the selection process for this position; to post and advertise for the position immediately and to file for a critical shortage waiver (if the selected candidate is a retired superintendent).

The committee stated that the posting should be provided to Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) and Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) to distribute to their extensive membership lists so that maximum exposure would be provided for this posting.

A roll call vote was held and the results were the following:

Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Sierpina	Yes
Mrs. Danehy	Yes	Mr. Wood	Yes
Mr. Bevilacqua	Yes	Mr. Toohey	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini	Yes		

Motion passes.

Moved by Mr. Bevilacqua and seconded by Mr. Toohey to suspend the rules to discuss the position of Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction.

A roll call vote was held and the results were the following:

Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Sierpina	Yes
Mrs. Danehy	Yes	Mr. Wood	Yes
Mr. Bevilacqua	Yes	Mr. Toohey	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini	Yes		

Motion passes.

A brief discussion was conducted regarding this other critical vacancy in the District Office. Some members believed the new full-time superintendent should make this appointment and not the outgoing superintendent. However, another solution was presented that the position should be for a two-year term in order that the permanent superintendent would be able to hire the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction.

Moved by Mrs. Danehy and seconded by Mr. Sierpina that the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction (newly hired) should be granted a two-year contract.

A roll call vote was held and the results were the following:

Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Sierpina	Yes
Mrs. Danehy	Yes	Mr. Wood	No
Mr. Bevilacqua	No	Mr. Toohey	No
Mayor Fiorentini	Yes		

Motion passes.

Moved by Mr. Wood and seconded by Mr. Bevilacqua to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m.

Motion was unanimous.