



Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee
FY25 Budget Workshop Minutes of May 2, 2024
Hunking School Library
480 South Main Street, Haverhill, MA 01835

The FY25 budget workshop began at 7:02 pm with the following members in attendance:

Ms. Yonnie Collins, Dr. Thomas Grannemann, Mrs. Mikaela Lalumiere, Attorney Richard Rosa, Dr. Jill Story, Ms. Gail Sullivan, Attorney Paul Magliocchetti, Vice Chairperson, and Mayor Melinda Barrett, Chairperson. Superintendent Margaret Marotta, Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Michael Pfifferling were also in attendance. Absent members were: Ms. Erica Diaz, Ms. Cheryl Ferguson and Mrs. Maura Ryan-Ciardello.

Agenda

1. Call to Order - Roll Call.
2. FY24 Budget Review.
3. FY25 Budget Projection Discussion.
4. Adjournment.

Superintendent Marotta opened with a statement on the significant impact of budget cuts and the efforts made to lessen the effect on teaching and the classrooms.

The schedule was discussed with the following timeline:

- Thursday, May 9, 2024 (Regular Hybrid Meeting at 7:00 pm) - the superintendent will make a presentation on the recommended budget;
- Monday, May 20, 2024 (Public Hearing May 20, 2024 at 7:30 pm) – comments from the public on the proposed budget;
- Thursday, May 23, 2024 (Regular Hybrid Regular Meeting at 7:00 pm) – Approval of FY25 Budget;
- Thursday, May 30, 2024 - Budget conference with the city council on May 30, 2024 beginning at 6:00 pm in the City Council Chambers.

Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling reviewed the document entitled, “Budget Workshop #3 SY-25 – May 2, 2024). He highlighted the following slides (information requested by Dr. Grannemann on salaries and FTE for Administrator, Clerical, Custodial, ESP, Therapists and Assistants, Nurses, Security, HEA Teachers, All Non-Represented Salaries, Total Salaries, DESE Function Codes, and DESE Object Codes. Mr. Pfifferling emphasized the extensive work done by the assistant business manager and budget analyst to correct the DESE codes. He clarified that DESE Object Code (06) now contained only professional development.

In response to Dr. Grannemann’s question on where Wit and Wisdom would be located in the DESE accounts, Mr. Pfifferling answered it was located in (05) Supplies. He added that a lot of the improperly coded items were now properly in (04) Contracted Services.

Mr. Pfifferling discussed Chapter 70 Historical and noted that this year there should have been a \$3M contribution from the city but the actual amount was \$2.8M. He continued with the HPS Historical LEA Budgets from FY2008 to current budget.

Attorney Rosa was hopeful that inflation would not increase for next fiscal year.

Mr. Pfifferling commented that there was \$8.7M less in ESSER funds this year. Attorney Rosa indicated that next year there would be a potential \$4M deficit for FY26.

Ms. Sullivan asked about teachers' salaries and FTE with an increase of 169.

The assistant superintendent responded some positions were corrected to include FTE and others were additional positions added due to COVID (interventionists, adjustment counselors, etc.).

Ms. Sullivan requested that the teaching FTEs be broken out by type of position with the focus on mental health positions.

Dr. Story asked how many staff would be eliminated in next year's budget, not including vacant positions.

Mr. Pfifferling noted that of the 35.6 total cut positions, 19 were vacant positions. He explained that some of the cuts could be in retirements, and, leaving the district for other reasons. The assistant superintendent expressed concerns regarding the impact in the building.

The superintendent stated that student support non-unit positions (-8) would hurt along with the cut of one (1) guidance counselor.

Dr. Story asked with the absence of the positions, who would fill these gaps.

Dr. Marotta indicated most of the positions were not in the budget pre-COVID and that the principals, assistant principals, and guidance counselors would bear the responsibility of the cuts.

Dr. Story supported the positions before a curriculum program.

Dr. Poor has not been able to fill the IST position for a year, so he valued the benefit of Wit and Wisdom. He indicated that the guidance staff at Consentino had built a solid support system.

Mr. Gage commented that the culture in the building and its development over the years, had benefitted the school.

Ms. Rubera believed that teacher/guidance positions who understood multi-tiered systems of support and interpreting the data were crucial to the improvement of attendance and behavior in the schools. She noted the many students missing school for family vacations outside of designated breaks.

Dr. Poor stated that the district's efforts in attendance was showing improvements.

Dr. Story was worried about long-term effect of cuts in world language.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked why Dr. Poor advocated for curriculum over counselors.

Dr. Poor offered the improvements in classroom instruction with students "doing the heavy lifting" in the

classroom.

Ms. Rubera explained that the ELA goals of: building foundational skills and building background knowledge was the focus of Wit and Wisdom program.

Dr. Poor stated that during this year's MCAS testing, there was more effort, focus and note-taking by students.

The superintendent reported that there were some additional unrestricted funds for literacy had been secured by Representative Vargas.

Dr. Grannemann commented that some of the budget themes.

Dr. Marotta replied some of the themes were protecting the classroom teacher and those services close to the student.

Dr. Grannemann suggested erring on the side to protect the importance of instruction.

Ms. Peterson and Mrs. Antkowiak noted that there were grants from outside agencies to support professional development.

Dr. Grannemann did not want to rely on potential funding.

Superintendent Marotta commented on the struggle with attendance on half-day professional development days and recommended imbedding in the regular work day.

Mrs. Antkowiak stated that family nights (supported by Title I) was an avenue for informing parents of the curriculum changes.

Dr. Story asked what items would be added back into the budget.

In response to Dr. Story's question on the high school schedule and the loop, Dr. Marotta replied that the loop would continue for 4-days instead of 5-days. She added the high school administration would be discussing this matter at an upcoming school committee meeting.

Dr. Story emphasized the importance of world language at the middle school level.

Dr. Marotta noted the need for world language in a bilingual community and the significance of writing in native language.

Attorney Magliocchetti stressed the work of Mayor Barrett regarding increased school funding and noted it was doubtful that Dr. Grannemann's proposal could be passed this year, but possibly next year.

Mayor Barrett explained there might be "one off" money for Haverhill. She stated that the legislature did not want to change Chapter 70 funding.

Ms. Sullivan thanked Dr. Grannemann for developing his proposal and noted that MASC had adopted it.

Mayor Barrett asked what would replace world language coordinator.

Dr. Marotta offered other priorities such as custodial and clerical positions. She explained the challenges in the schools and the need for all the positions. The superintendent asked for any other materials that were needed for next week's meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Sullivan to adjourn the meeting (8:13 pm). Attorney Rosa seconded the motion. All were in favor.