



**Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee**  
**FY25 Budget Workshop Minutes of March 7, 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, Attorney Richard Rosa, Dr. Thomas Grannemann, Ms. Gail Sullivan, Present  
Mrs. Mikaela Lalumiere, Attorney Paul Magliocchetti, Vice Chairperson, Mayor Melinda Barrett,  
Superintendent Margaret Marotta, Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Michael Pfifferling.  
Absent members were: Ms. Erica Diaz, Ms. Cheryl Ferguson, Mrs. Maura Ryan-Ciardiello, and Dr. Jill Story.

Superintendent Marotta reported that the district was anticipating \$10M in cuts for the next fiscal year and that these reductions would involve teaching positions.

A representative from WHAV asked for permission to tape the workshop and approval was granted to record the meeting.

Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling began with an overview of the current funding sources, level service budget assumptions, and changes by category.

In response to Attorneys Magliocchetti and Rosa's inquiry on where unsettled contract funding was found on the list, Mr. Pfifferling answered that it was included in offsets and reserves.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked where the \$1.2M transportation deficit was located in the listing.

Mr. Pfifferling clarified that there were three (3) line items for transportation.

The following listing was presented to the committee:

Level Service Budget	\$136,486,433
Chapter 70 Funds (State)	-\$87,836,388
City Contribution (FY24)	-\$36,548,274
City Contribution (Strike Agreement)	-\$1,400,000
Total Level Service Deficit	\$10,701,771
Add K-2 Wit & Wisdom	\$283,198
Add K-2 Wit & Wisdom	\$138,214
Total Deficit with Literacy Curriculum	\$11,123,183

Mr. Pfifferling reviewed a graph showing dollars by category and percentages by category.

The assistant superintendent showed changes by DESE code by FY25, FY25, Difference and Difference Percentage: 1000 Administration; 2000 Instructional; 3000 Pupil Services; 4000 Operations and Maintenance; 5000 Benefits and Fixed Charges; 7000 Fixed Assets; 9000 Tuitions and Offsets.

Dr. Marotta added that the average percentage increase for teachers including percentage and step was 7%.

In terms of tuition, Dr. Marotta stated both she and Ms. Ibanez were comfortable with the figure. She added it was factored on level service.

Mr. Pfifferling provided the biggest budget drivers (largest increases by amount). At Attorney Rosa's recommendation, he reviewed the calculation for salaries.

The assistant superintendent reported that based on meetings, the principals were asked to cut their budgets by 10% with the designation of: green = can cut; yellow = middle of the road (could cut) and red = cannot operate my building without these people/services.

Superintendent Marotta commented that the school committee needed to make a series of difficult decisions during this budget development process.

The superintendent noted that over her tenure, monies had been reserved over the past several years to offset a special education deficit. Dr. Marotta added it was rainy day money (circuit breaker) and it was raining.

Mr. Pfifferling reiterated that the district was currently in a spending freeze.

In terms of summer school, Dr. Marotta related that there had been a robust summer school program the past several years with half-day of academics and half-day of enrichment, however, hard choices needed to be implemented for this year's programs.

Dr. Grannemann asked what other areas that had been built up during the duration of ESSER funding that could be reversed next year.

The superintendent commented that school adjustment counselors and interventions had been added during COVID and post-COVID to assist with learning loss.

Attorney Rosa reported that last year's summer program enrollment had increased to 2,000 students.

There was discussion regarding the utilization of school adjustment counselors in the district.

Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling presented the potential round 1 budget cuts/offsets totaling \$6,365,835.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked about the instructional salaries (vacant positions) totaling \$478,322.

Superintendent Marotta stated that teaching positions were not included in tonight's presentation.

Attorney Magliocchetti did not want to see any teaching cuts.

Dr. Marotta responded that if the district went to yellow or red; there would be teaching cuts. She asked for direction before meeting in two (2) weeks.

There was a discussion on teaching positions and class sizes.

Attorney Rosa asked about the importance of coaches in the buildings.

Both Mr. Betty and Mrs. Antkowiak advocated for the necessity of coaches in the classrooms.

The superintendent reported on the class sizes within the schools: K = under 20; grades 1-2 = under 22; and grades 3-8 = mostly under 25.

Ms. Sullivan cautioned against escalating the mental health crisis and asked about more information on the effectiveness of the school adjustment counselors.

Mrs. Antkowiak believed that the significant mental health issues were prevalent in the district and impacted learning.

Attorney Rosa suggested a reduction in all areas so that one area does not bear the brunt of the cuts.

In terms of the community budget survey, Superintendent Marotta reported that 50% of the survey respondents were teachers. She asked if the recommendation was for cuts to be dispersed among all areas.

The committee asked for the superintendent's best judgment in making the cuts.

Dr. Marotta indicated that there was a certain level of infrastructure required to educate 8,000 students.

Mrs. Lalumiere proposed framing the discussion on the budget.

Ms. Sullivan asked about the uncontrolled building within the city and its resulting crisis. She suggested going before the council.

The mayor had asked the school department to be included in the comments on special permits.

Dr. Grannemann spoke with two (2) legislators today and there was not much optimism regarding state funding solutions.

Mayor Barrett would also be sending a letter to the legislature.

Dr. Grannemann indicated that the lower state revenues were a result of the business sector.

Mr. Pfifferling presented the FY24 Capital Projects, On-going Capital Projects, Future Capital Needs and 5-year Capital Needs.

The committee agreed that any safety issues needed to be upgraded on the capital needs list.

Attorney Magliocchetti suggested the turf at the stadium be added to the list.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to adjourn the budget workshop, which concluded at 9:07 pm. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. All were in favor.