



Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee
FY25 Budget Workshop Minutes of March 21, 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 (7:10 pm), Ms. Erica Diaz, 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. Cheryl Ferguson and Mrs. Maura Ryan-Ciardello.

FY25 Budget Review.

Superintendent Marotta thanked the staff for attending this evening's budget workshop. She noted that cuts were classified by green (not an ideal cut); yellow (would impact the school but shield day-to-day learning) and red (noticeable difference in education within the schools).

Dr. Marotta began with a review of the ESSER positions added SY-22.

In reference to Attorney Magliocchetti's comment on the hiring of teachers using ESSER funds, Superintendent Marotta responded that teachers were hired under this funding source.

The superintendent referenced the SY-2025 Level Service budget shortfall totaling \$10,701,771; the SY-25 budget offsets/carryover and reductions totaling \$4881,050 and indicated that the district would prepay special education tuition. Continuing with the presentation, Dr. Marotta identified the areas that reflected the total shortfall before cuts totaling \$6,242,133. The superintendent showed the SY-25 budget cuts (green) totaling \$3,595,563 along with the potential cuts (green) displayed by vacant positions in the school district, but clarified that bus monitors (big buses) were removed from the cut list.

It was noted that class sizes were not impacted by the potential "green" cuts.

Superintendent Marotta transitioned to a review of the SY-25 potential "yellow" cuts which resulted in a \$1,810,274 reduction.

Ms. Sullivan asked for an explanation on "yellow" contracted services cuts.

Both the superintendent and assistant superintendent identified the cuts were telephone service, rental (YMCA), and the recalculation of bussing.

Dr. Story asked for information on the bussing reduction.

Mr. Pfifferling answered that the bus routes were examined along with re-quoting out of district transportation (\$49,000 savings with vendor change), big bus transportation (\$42,000 savings), late bus and in-district special education transportation savings (\$122,000).

Superintendent Marotta outlined the staff reductions by positions. She stated that CNA and custodial

positions had been reduced post-pandemic. The superintendent explained some personnel cuts for a total of 32.3 positions (13 current vacancies) along with 6 ESP from 1.0 to .8 at Moody School.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked the mayor about Procopio's property going online and impacting the school population.

Mr. Russell responded that Bradford and Hunking schools would be affected by the new housing.

Ms. Sullivan asked about any new information on research-based curriculum.

The superintendent commented that the grant application would possibly be available in mid-July.

Dr. Marotta noted that today's budget discussion had ended at red options for the remaining \$836,296 to address the deficit. She stated that the superintendent's office had been cut by 11 positions which also included Burnham and the Curriculum office.

Dr. Grannemann asked if red options could be delayed until next year.

Mayor Barrett clarified that the cuts were made as a result of the Governor's budget, while waiting for the senate and house budget versions.

Ms. Sullivan inquired about retirements and if they were reflected in the reductions.

Mr. Pfifferling reported that retirements resulted in \$500,000 in cuts.

The mayor related that some money would be received from the state. She noted it was insanity to let this happen at such a wide scale in the state.

Dr. Grannemann asked if decisions on "yellow" cuts could be deferred for a time.

Superintendent Marotta suggested letting 12-month staff know as soon as possible if they were being laid off from their position.

Ms. Sullivan appreciated the hard work by the superintendent and respect for people.

Dr. Grannemann endorsed delaying, if possible, on staff positions.

Several members noted the collaboration of the staff to address the substantial budget deficit.

Mrs. Lalumiere commented that there was a plan in place.

Ms. Sullivan reminded the school committee of the upcoming "Day on the Hill" to advocate for Haverhill.

Ms. Collins asked about competitive grants deadlines.

Dr. Grannemann noted the result of the inflation rate and pushing the costs from state to city/school.

Dr. Story indicated that green and yellow cuts would be potentially implemented for FY-25. She related

that red cuts would need extensive explanation before approval.

Dr. Grannemann noted the priority of maintaining Wit and Wisdom in the budget.

Dr. Story commented that if students who were not mentally well were not learning or reading.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to adjourn the budget workshop (7:57 pm). Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. All were in favor.