

**Salem Public Schools  
Salem School Committee  
FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE  
Meeting Minutes  
March 20, 2023**

On March 20, 2023, the Finance Subcommittee for Salem Public Schools met at 4:33 p.m.in person at 29 Highland Avenue, Rm. 227, Salem MA

**Members Present:** Ms. Mary Manning, Ms. Beth Anne Cornell

**Members Absent:** Ms. Amanda Campbell

**Others in Attendance:** Acting Mayor Robert McCarthy, Superintendent Stephen Zrike, Deputy Superintendent Kate Carbone, Ms. Elizabeth Pauley, Ms. Linda Farinelli

**Call of Meeting to Order**

Ms. Manning called the meeting to order at 4:33p.m and took attendance.

Ms. Cornell Yes

Ms. Campbell Yes

Ms. Manning Yes

**Approval of the meeting minutes held on January 17, 2023 and March 13, 2023.** Ms. Manning motions to approve the meeting minutes from 1/17/23 and 3/13/23. Ms. Cornell seconded.

Ms. Cornell Yes

Ms. Manning Yes

Motion carries 2-0

**Review and discuss anticipated FY24 budget requests from department heads and principals**

Mary Manning explains the purpose of tonight's meeting is to allow each department head or principal 15 minutes to present to the committee the plans for school budgets for FY24.

**Special Education Budget presented by Ms. Linda Farinelli**

Ms. Farinelli notes the budget priorities such as unified sports provides, inclusive and welcoming opportunities for students, special education transportation in district provides, out of district tuition. DIP goals focus on developing independent learners, allocate resources strategically and operate efficiently, allocate resources strategically and operate efficiently, program alignment developmental program K-5.

Due to complex educational, behavioral, and/or medical needs as documented in Individualized Education Plans (IEPS), some students require out-of-district placements. Predicting which students will be out-placed and the associated budget resources needed is often a difficult process and has wide variations from the budget.

Ms. Farinelli notes less transition for kids and uses resources in one building and is budget neutral. Opportunities for unified sports include transportation and support staff, reallocate a special education teacher and a para from WHES to HMLS, create expanded programming.

Ms. Farinelli notes the challenges are state mandated increases in tuition costs for out of district placements, increased

FY24 Community Engagement. Stakeholders - SEPAC, Principals - planning around equitable school based resource allocation based on student needs.

Dr. Zrike notes adaptive physical education. We are looking to free up the phys ed teachers.

Cost Savings District wide - looking to reduce one leadership position, occupational therapist and an occupational therapist assistant. Savings of \$137 on staffing side.

Unified Sports, Medical Contracted Services, Transportations In District, Tuition Non-collaborative, Collaborative

Ms. Cornell asks whose budget the playspace comes from.

Dr. Zrike notes the funding for updated playgrounds comes from the capital requests.

Ms. Manning asks for kids who do not want to participate in sports perhaps they can participate in arts, crafts or music class.

### **Bates Elementary School Budget presented by Mr. Gavin Softic and Ms. Sue Smith**

Ms. Sue Smith and Mr. Gavin Softic notes the school enrollment and demographic trends. Therapeutic support program is a non-traditional substantially separate special education program, flexible inclusion model, program enrollment impacts space available in Gen ED classrooms - not reflected in date, two seats per HR.

Ms. Sue Smith notes the stakeholders felt that lack of family engagement and connection to the school community is likely a driving factor behind our chronic absenteeism. Communication during the summer months and school vacations alleviate. Steps necessary to create a feeling of belonging and engagement include phone calls, community based events, notes to families, planning for family-based events for the coming school year.

Mr. Softic feels this role is for a family engagement facilitator. Student Attendance - current chronic absenteeism rate is 29.4%, students with disabilities - 37.4%, ML students 28.6%, hispanic students 34%, and white students 27.2% - Bates has made significant progress on academic achievement using STAR reading and math assessment data even considering the chronic absenteeism rate.

Pre-K and Kindergarten data is not calculated by DESE.

Proposed staffing - family engagement facilitator a full year position, possibly decreasing 1.0 FTE as a result of enrollment trends. Budget request would be to move current budget money from above expense lines to personnel lines. This is a lateral financial move.

Ms. Cornell asks if any other schools in the district have a family facilitator - Bentley and Collins.

Ms. Cornell asks if Bates has a city connections coordinator - they do but do not work full year.

### **Bentley Academy Innovation School Dual Language Program Overview presented by Ms. Elizabeth Rogers**

Ms. Rogers notes continuing shift to wall-to-wall Dual Language School, hiring/staff retention, curriculum writing, and professional development.

Ms. Rogers notes the challenges are student social emotional needs and behaviors, shifting wall to wall DL school, continued academic growth is a priority, and continued attendance improvement. The dual language school challenges are tracking student progress, building a dual language curriculum, and building collective expertise.

SEL Behavior Anti-Racism. Continue to use money in contracted services allocated for Friday Enrichment Blocks, focusing on local organizations run by POC. Community engagement started with the panorama data, academic data, and school quality review. PTA/BAB via March meeting and the Family Newsletter. Reduction/Shifts in Classrooms/Positions and Level Funding for Expense Lines. Shift some funding.

Budget Priority is to increase and track achievement in dual language classes. Proposed funding source is to reallocate "contracted services" previously used for STEP reading assessment. Also, reduce dual language class sizes to be on par with other schools. Proposed funding source is to reallocate an ESSER position.

### **Carlton Innovation School Budget presented by Ms. Bethann Jellison**

Ms. Jellison notes the school enrollment and demographic trends - hard to keep track of the attendance due to the transitions. There are 52 students in E1 and changes. Students with disabilities have grown significantly.

Steady increase of special education numbers at Carlton in the last 2 years. During the pandemic, Carlton lost many students who moved to other cities and states. Our younger grades are now starting to be at capacity. By 2024-2025, we anticipate being at 100% capacity.

Four Budget priorities, we would like a special education teacher to help with our numbers. We would also like to do some curriculum work over the summer in order to be better equipped to use the curriculum My View - multi-grades are difficult without careful planning. \$70,000 - special education department. We would like to create an equity team that meets, observes and trains teachers on making sure academics are taught through the lens of equity. We would also like to conduct home visits over the summer in order to build relationships with families; especially those with attendance difficulties.

Chronic absenteeism is 18.4% - like to get back to 12% - we feel home visits bring the community together and relationship building. School council met and discussed staff, teacher, and family needs. Final meeting was held February 28th. School admin team met and discussed.

Challenges - Math continues to be a challenge. We are hoping to work over the summer to incorporate new ways to work over the summer to incorporate new ways to work with fluency. Opportunities have been teachers and students are building wonderful relationships, students are taking ownership of their own learning. We need to capitalize on this and provide students with what they need. Proposed staffing remains the same but adds a special ed teacher. The goal - adding a 3rd Special Education teacher. MyView needs to be modified to account for the students who have already seen..

School Budget Requests is a third Special Education teacher, My View needs to be modified to account for students who have already seen the mentor texts and assessments, the equity team work outside of student learning and teaching time, and family engagement home visits over the summer.

### **Early Childhood Center Budget presented by Ms. Leanne Smith**

Ms. Smith notes the School Community Engagement. Some challenges are chronic absenteeism. While we have done a great deal of work in this area, we are still struggling to increase our attendance rate.

Challenges in the speech and language therapist. There are 70 referrals in process. Referrals come to us through Early Intervention and parent referrals, often through pediatrician's advice. Adding an SLPA would

help in service delivery and capacity as well as support students in the classroom for instructional intervention in the area of language development and skills.

While we celebrate the progress our students have made, we would like to note that if we reach our EOY goal, still just above half of our students will be on benchmark. We celebrate the progress, but see that moving our students to closer to 100% on benchmark will be a challenge.

Ms. Cornell asks Dr. Zrike if these therapists should come out of the district budget.

Currently staff we have comes from the Special education budget.

Adding an SLPA would help in service delivery and capacity as well as support students in the classroom for instructional intervention in the area of language development and skills.

The Family Engagement Facilitator - adding this position will be able to increase our family outreach in regards to attendance and tardies.

Ms. Carbone notes the additional requests for the interventionist and the 70 referrals are community based and we may be able to use them .

#### **Horace Mann Laboratory School Budget presented by Ms. Jennifer Winsor**

Ms. Jennifer Winsor notes the community engagement - discussing capital improvements with the Parent Teacher Committee in Oct & Nov 2022. There is a strong desire to have buildings be spared from summer programming this year to allow for the improvements. On February 1, 2023 - Ms. Windsor went over the 2024 budget with the School Site Council and the council was in favor of principal recommendations.

Areas of opportunities are the family engagement and adopting the house system. Additional opportunities include improved student panorama data, high EW early literacy scores K-2, challenges include low growth in 3rd and 5th graders. Attendance among the younger grades, reading interventions. Comprehensive interventions in math by more effectively utilizing paraprofessionals.

Winsor also notes improved student Panorama data High EW early literacy scores (K-2), the highest in the district. Additional challenges include a persistently high chronic absenteeism rate, and insufficient resources to meet our students' reading intervention needs as a building. Our task is for one additional reading specialist and decrease our fellows from 5 to 3. Ms. Winsor notes there are no changes requested to line items, except for a decrease in stipends potentially (due to fewer Fellows).

#### **Witchcraft Heights presented by Ms. Susan Carmona**

Ms. Susan Carmona notes the intentional and culturally responsive planning and instruction focused on improved student outcomes. Clear and engaged communication between all community stakeholders. Also, to continue to build an anti-racist community. Moving ahead, where we are is limited targeted interventions due to scheduling conflicts and lack of rigorous ELA instruction in grades 3-5. Where we are going is developing Data Driven Instruction and Weekly Data Meetings, reinforced small group instruction for all learners, and added additional tutoring (catapult and TAG "bootcamp")

Ms. Carmona notes the four challenges and opportunities: improve academic outcomes for all students and continue to build our Data Driven Instruction model. Challenge #2 building stronger systems that support language and literacy growth for our Multilingual Learners and the opportunity to re-align our ML programming that integrates content learning. Challenge #3 projected lower enrollment and reduction in staffing for FY 23-24. Opportunity to prioritize time and staff for small group instruction and aligning our

schedule to maximize learning time (shortest school day). Lower Enrollment in grades K & 3 to move from 4 to 3 classrooms. Average class size is 22 students. ML group represents 20% of our total student body.

Lastly, challenge #4 - building partnerships with our WHES families. Opportunity to increase community engagement through WHES Family Education Circles and a new playground. Also to collaborate with the city to bring the city bus stop closer to WHES. School data points used to create SIP goals and SIP mid-year stepback to determine next steps in meeting goals. SIP goals and “Big Rocks” shared with all stakeholders (staff, families, community members) via staff meetings, Principal Newsletter, and SSC meetings.

SSC trained on budget process and opportunities (in-person and survey) to give feedback for FY 24 budget requests.

Ms. Manning makes a motion to adjourn and Ms. Cornell seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6:43pm.

Ms. Cornell	Yes
Ms. Manning	Yes
Motion carries	2-0

Respectfully submitted by,

*Krista Perry*

Executive Administrative Assistant to the School Committee and Superintendent