

Board of Education Special Meeting Minutes--- February 11, 2014

6:17 Open Budget Workshop

Present: Katherine Gallé, Ron Rousseau, Matthew Giuffre, Karen Bergin, Julie Begin, Rich Hayes and Kristin Heckt.

Donna Balskus (community member) with a current Grade 3 student, indicated that she is very concerned about the class size in the current Grade 3 (next year's Grade 4). She would like to see another teacher hired for the 2014-2015 school year. Ms. Gallé indicated that she received telephone calls from two other parents of Grade 3 students (as well as a letter from a current Grade 3 student) expressing the same concern. Mrs. Heckt and Mrs. Bergin indicated that it is not possible to fund an additional teacher due to the tight budget.

Discussed Ms. Heckt's responses to BOE questions from the 2/4/14 meeting. Mr. Giuffre indicated that he was interested in a 5-year picture of revenue that comes into town for education and the cost of education during this time. Also interested in the delta between the two.

The CHOICE Information sheet was discussed with current numbers and projections. BOE agreed unanimously to open up CHOICE seats as recommended by the Superintendent with the understanding that at a later date the Superintendent will come back to the BOE to seek approval of her recommendation to hire a Dean of Students.

Appendix D (Page 59) Open Choice Program and Sheff Settlement numbers are listed under State Grants. This year we have 41 students and therefore the Sheff money should increase. The numbers on page 59 reflect old numbers. Superintendent Heckt has been advised that they will allow us to use Sheff monies to fund the proposed Dean of Students. This could, in theory, equate to an additional \$64,064 for 2014-2015 school year. We do not know what the formula is yet. Will have to wait until our October 1, 2014 filing.

Superintendent Heckt thinks that it is unlikely that we will get the additional 34 students as recommended on the CHOICE Information sheet.

We do not have numbers regarding the number of Columbia students who will be coming. We will have an idea around May. This is with the understanding that the numbers can change at any time.

Mrs. Heckt believes that Dean of Students is more fiscally responsible than hiring an Assistant Principal and that there is a need for two administrators at BHS. She indicated that there is a need whether or not we take in more CHOICE students. However, the Sheff funds may work in our favor.

Discussed the new teacher evaluations. Mrs. Heckt indicated that we can de-couple the student testing from the teacher evaluation for next year. We can limit the number of smart goals for teachers to only 1 and reduce the number of formal vs. informal teacher evaluations. Teacher evaluations are not going away. We do not know whether we can tie test scores to teacher evaluations.

There have been some changes to the original Superintendent's Budget Letter as recommended by the BOE at the 2/4/14 meeting.

Discussed Changes to Budget and Budget Letter Since the 2/4/14 Meeting:

Page 7	Under "Salaries and Wages", personnel benefits are adjusted down to 9.48% with a new subtotal of 5.85% Total Education budget is now 4.53% based on reduction of personnel benefits.
Page 8	Under "Employee Benefits" for Health Insurance, the number has been adjusted down to 10.5%
Page 10	Under "Summary" for "Employee benefits", the number has been adjusted down to an increase of 9.4% with a total education budget proposed increase of 4.53%
Page 14	"World Languages" is used throughout the document
Page 20	The words "putters" and "birdie balls" have been substituted.
Page 32	Explanatory information added
Page 47	Explanatory information added
Page 48	Adjustment under Personnel Benefits under "Health insurance"
Page 55	Explanatory information added. NEED TO FURTHER CHANGE THIS: Recommend a further change. Take out "apply for grant" Change it to "Town would provide funding for this project".
Page 56	You will see a decrease under Salaries and Benefits
Page 57	Total proposed budget increase is now changed to 4.53%
Page 58	Minor changes (increase) due to governor's recommended budget under ECS, Transportation Grant & Adult Education.

If we want to add in bleachers, the increase will be 4.58% as opposed to the current 4.53%

Superintendent Heckt and BOE members met with Ovation and we now have a reduction in the cost of Personnel Benefits. We went out to bid and are continuing to negotiate. Personnel benefits are now down to 9.48% and there could be a further adjustment. **This brings us down to the current proposed budget increase of 4.53% Current proposed budget is \$13, 789,460**

We have one van that is designated for student transportation. We have another van that Mr. Boyd uses but it is outfitted with seats and safety belts. It can also be

used for student transportation. We primarily transport lunches with it and for Mr. Boyd to perform his job duties. (One van is 2004 and the other is 2006. Normally replace after 10 years).

Request: Mr. Giuffre asked Superintendent Heckt to provide the Pay to Play Revenue and information regarding how much we charge individuals to play. What do we take in and how do we charge for it? Please break out the “pay to park” from the “pay to play” that is under Line 5930 on Page 29. Matt Giuffre would like a reduction in what we charge the students for Pay to Play. He would like to see it at possibly \$50 per student per sport.

Request: Mr. Hayes asked Superintendent Heckt to provide contract step information for Bolton Public Schools employees. Will identify how many employees are on each step for this year and will identify how many for each grouping for insurance.

Request: Mr. Hayes asked Superintendent Heckt for a Cafeteria update.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Katherine Gallé, Acting Board Secretary