

**Budget Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, March 7, 2024**  
**4:00 p.m., Central Office - Conf. Rm.**

Attendees: Jessica Barnes, Allan Gordon, Stacey Haskell, John Holmes, Will Seavey, Faye Anderson, Nick Raymond, Superintendent, and Trish Hayes, District Accountant, Hampden Town Council member Eric Jarvey.

Article 1 - Regular Education

Superintendent Raymond introduced Article 1, explaining that salary and benefits are the bulk of this article and the other articles we are reviewing today. Salary and benefits make up about 80% of the total budget. One major adjustment to Article 1 today was the inclusion of the Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) tax of 1% which adds \$216,000. Regular Ed, Alternative Ed, Gifted & Talented, English Language Learners, supplies, equipment, dues and fees, postage, telephone, copier lease and paper are some of the items included in Article 1. Superintendent Raymond explained why salaries may fluctuate from year to year. The addition of an art teacher from 40% to full time was discussed.

The secondary and pre-K items were reviewed. The gifted and talented program was reviewed. The plan going forward was to hire a new teacher but after much consideration the decision was made to hire 2.5 ed techs with the director overseeing the lesson plans. The services will increase because we are able to provide services to more students.

Article 2 - Special Education

Resource rooms, self-contained rooms, Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists were reviewed. There is an intent to add five new ed techs in the coming year to service the 10 incoming students from CDS. New - 2 IEP Coordinators are needed to help our case managers so they can better service the students. They are considered a teacher in this role, not administration. Expect one to serve K-6 and the other to service grades 7-12. Also additional increases: .4 increase for OT Weatherbee & McGraw, .4 for speech and language at Wagner.

Article 4 - Other Instruction Athletics/Co-Curricular

Sports and clubs are included in Article 4 along with salaries, benefits, and supplies needed to provide the services. New athletic activity – first team volleyball has reached its two year informal status, as has middle school unified basketball and middle school volleyball. Superintendent Raymond explained facilities rental – tennis, ski, baseball, track, hockey, etc. are some of the sports which require facilities off site.

Article 5 - Staff & Student Support

Superintendent Raymond pointed out the 504 Coordinators on page 7 and explained their role and responsibilities. These are new positions. These students are not in special education. One would be K-8, and the other at Hampden Academy. 10.5% increase for FY25. NWEA testing and EarlyBird are listed on the final page of the report.

### Priorities

No further discussion, except to clarify that the list is in no particular order. The list consists of items that were suggested and listed in the order they were suggested.

### Other

Will Seavey spoke about the FY23 audit and the information contained in the Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) section which explains the fluctuations in revenues and expenditures. Revenue came in higher than expected and expenditures were lower than anticipated. Tuition was the big bump in the revenue excess. Fortunately, we received more tuition students than we had anticipated. The inability to hire staff at all levels was a big reason for lower expenditures. Solar credits on electricity, less repair and maintenance, etc. also contributed to the savings.

Superintendent Raymond suggests that we allow a town rep to be part of the conversation at the budget meetings with some guidelines. If people are invited to the meeting they can speak; otherwise they are only allowed to be spectators. The committee will determine the guidelines before the next meeting. We would prefer a delegate from each town to retain consistency.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

cc: Board of Directors