

Triboard Meeting
Board of Selectmen/School Committee/Finance Committee
Wednesday, March 6, 2019

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairman Vispoli called the Triboard Meeting to order at 7:02 P.M. in the School Committee Meeting Room in the School Administration Building. Present from the Board of Selectmen: Annie Gilbert, Chris Huntress, Laura Gregory, and Alex Vispoli.

Finance Committee Chair Eugenie (Janie) Moffitt called the Finance Committee to order. Members present from the Finance Committee: Bojay Taylor, Bonnie Zahorik, Janie Moffitt, John Barry, Linn Anderson, Paul Monticello, Spiro Christopoulos.

School Committee Chair Shannon Scully called the School Committee to order. Present from the School Committee: Joel Blumstein, Tracey Spruce, Paul Murphy, Susan McCready, and Shannon Scully.

Others Present: Town Manager Andrew Flanagan, Superintendent Dr. Sheldon Berman, Deputy Town Manager Michael Lindstrom, Finance Director Donna Walsh, and Paul Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration. The meeting was duly posted and cablecast live.

II. Opening Ceremonies/Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting began with a Moment of Silence followed by a Salute to the Flag.

III. FY20 School Department Budget/CIP Presentations and discussion

Dr. Berman began the presentation of the School Department FY-20 Budget with a review of the strategic investments made since FY-17 which included but not limited to: Reducing English Language Learner class size, addressing needs of students with dyslexia and language based learning challenges, adding resources to support a new AHS Schedule, and moving textbook expenditures from the CIP to the School Operating Budget.

The investment in reducing elementary class size has made a real difference. Currently average class sizes range from 20-21 students per class which is of benefit to students. Unfortunately, there has been no focused effort to address the recent increase in the size of the kindergarten classes. This year there are 406 students enrolled in kindergarten with class sizes of 22-25 students, which is high for Kindergarten.

The investment of funds was also used to address Dyslexia and Language-based learning challenges, implementation of the screening processes, progress monitoring and improved interventions. The return on this investment has been significant, with increases in reading scores and moving the bar for students with disabilities substantially for those not meeting expectations. AHS investments in the cultural climate and the H-Block Schedule reduced anxiety and stress, and yearlong courses have shown good results in test scores. There has been a decrease in out of district placements because of interventions.

District Demographics are relatively stable. Enrollment is projecting to be stable at 6,062 students for Oct 1, 2018 and they are projecting 6,055 for October 1, 2019. The percentage of students on free/reduce lunch is still in the 10% range. This is the first year the district has seen a decrease in English Language Learners.

Dr. Berman’s presentation included information on the costs of textbook purchases and replacements for K-8 Math from 2014-2018 and K-12 Science texts for a total of \$799,494. The FY-19 budget for K-5 Literacy curriculum and implementation was \$580,587.00 and for FY-20 budgeted at \$594,893.00.

Budget proposal for FY2020 includes these important elements:

Annual salary increases per negotiated agreements

Addition of time to the school day, which is reflected in an increased in FTEs for employees paid hourly (including IAs, PT/OTs etc.), though headcount does not increase.

Contractual and other requirements.

Moving remaining \$220,000 for the cost of textbooks out of the CIP into the operating budget.

Budget Drivers include: Annual salary increases, costs for the addition of time to the school day, contractual and other requirements, nursing coverage due to the loss of the Health Grant, piloting the Learning Management System, addition of Special Education staffing (1.0) for the BRIDGE autism program, and expansion of AHS Programs (AVID 0.2 and 0.2 VHS), increase in substitute per diem at \$10,000, stipends for the Performing Arts Programs, and moving the remaining \$220,000 for the cost of textbooks into the Operating Budget.

An FY2020 school budget that aligns with the Town Manager’s budget recommendation has unmet needs not included in the budget proposal: Psychological services and testing; reduction in Kindergarten class size; positions in grants, data, Human Resources, and Finance Department; expansion of AHS Programs; Math instruction and support for elementary and middle school levels; leasing computers for middle schools; elimination of second bus runs; maintaining individual school budgets; furniture replacement; and further reductions in full-day Kindergarten tuition.

Chapter 70 Aid – FY19

FY2019 \$10,595,662

FY2020 \$11,454,144

Increase of \$858,482

Projected FY 2020 Chapter 70: \$211,913

Increase above projection: \$646,569

This is an unusual situation based on historical data, and we were pleasantly surprised to see such an increase. This is the first year of a multi-year effort statewide to increase Chapter 70 Aid to districts, having updated the funding formula updated for the first time in more than 20 years. The projected Chapter 70 aid increase in Andover equates to \$147 per student. Factors in the increase is due to a formula change based on demographics and enrollment characterizations.

Circuit Breaker, revenue plays a major role for Andover Schools

FY 2020 Reimbursement	\$1,773,642	(68.7%)
Use of CB Reserve	\$ 239,813	
Total CB Offset to Budget	\$2,013,455	
Remaining Reserve	\$ 500,000	

The Superintendent and Town Manager recently discussed a potential budget compromise that adds \$325,000 to the school budget. The School Committee has not yet had an opportunity to discuss the new proposal. The two budget proposals are:

<u>As voted by SC on 2/28/19</u>		<u>As proposed by TM on 3/5/19</u>	
Personnel	\$69,871,040	Personnel	\$69,871,040
General Expense	\$15,733,768	General Expense	\$15,733,768
Add'l Chapter 70	\$ 533,569	Add'l Chapter 70	<u>\$250,000</u>
<u>Total Budget</u>	<u>\$86,158,377</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>\$85,854,808</u>
		Plus Kindergarten	\$75,000

Each option includes use of \$239,813 from the Circuit Breaker reserve, adds \$220,000 to the operating budget for textbooks, and transfers \$313,000 of IT salary from the school budget to the town budget.

Dr. Berman would like to have the School Committee and town to work towards tuition-free full-day Kindergarten for 2021.

The School Committee will discuss how to approach the use of additional Chapter 70 funds and the Town Manager's recent budget proposal at their meeting on March 7th.

Discussion on FTE changes for the coming year due to additional time added to the school day which includes an increase in FTE time for hourly employees including Instructional Assistants to accommodate the lengthened school day; however, for this class of employee the School Department is not hiring additional personnel, just increasing their FTE time.

*This is the first year that School by School Budgets are shown in the Budget Book, and Janie Moffitt suggested they include the enrollment of each school.

**The Finance Committee approved the March 6, 2019 Minutes of the Triboard on a vote of 7-0 with the notation that they remembered this statement to be true.*

FY20 brings higher than usual COLA adjustments for some employees. The 2.85% increase was negotiated along with the addition of student learning time to each school day and change of healthcare contribution split. In general, school employees with annual salaries will receive 2.85% COLA for FY20 and hourly employees will receive 2.0% COLA plus an opportunity to work additional hours. When hourly employees increase hours worked, their FTE increases.

The Town Manager explained the rationale for consolidating IT employees in a single town department by organizationally moving resources out from under the school department. Under the overarching IT umbrella there are different employment agreements (school/town) and now is the appropriate time to have all members of the IT Department managed under one department creating more efficiencies and as requested by Paul Puzzanghera, CIO of Technology.

Status of Consolidation of Custodians: Andrew said they are working on it; however, it won't happen in FY2020.

Fees for Athletics & Club Fees: Increase up to \$450 (@ \$75K increase in overall fees) Shelley will provide Chris Huntress with information. Chris suggested the School Committee consider using some of the additional funds from Chapter 70 to reduce activity fees.

IV. Adjournment

At 8:25 P.M. on a motion by Laura Gregory and seconded by Annie Gilbert, the Board of Selectmen adjourned.

On a motion by Linn Anderson and seconded by Spiro Christopoulos, the Finance Committee adjourned.

On a motion by Joel Blumstein, and seconded by Susan McCready, the School Committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary

Documents: FY-2020 School Department Budget Proposal