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**Triboard Meeting**  
**Select Board/School Committee/Finance Committee**  
**Wednesday, April 28, 2021**

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**1. Call to Order/Roll Call**

Chairwoman Annie Gilbert called the Triboard Meeting to order at 7:03 P.M. Members present from the Select Board: Roll call: D. Howe-Y, Laura Gregory-Y, Alex Vispoli-Y. D. Howe-Y.

Finance Committee Chair Eugenie (Janie) Moffitt called the Finance Committee to order. Members present from the Finance Committee: Roll call: Linn Anderson-Y, Paul Russo-Y, Paul Monticciolo-Y, Spiro Christopoulos-Y, John Barry-Y, Andrew Betts-Y, Mary Ellen Logee-Y, Kevin O’Handley-Y.

School Committee Chair Shannon Scully called the School Committee to order. Present from the School Committee: Roll call: Lauren Conoscenti-Y, Susan McCready-Y. Paul Murphy-Y, Tracey Spruce-Y.

Others Present: Town Manager Andrew Flanagan, Deputy Town Manager Michael Lindstrom, Asst. Town Manager Patrick Lawlor. Interim Superintendent Claudia Bach, COO Steve Nembirkow, Asst. Superintendent Sandra Trach, Human Resources Director Jessica Porter.

**2. Opening Ceremonies/Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance**

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

**3. Andover Public Schools 2021 Budget Presentation Projections, Overview of CIP, Integrated Financial Plan-Major Obligations**

Dr. Claudia Back reviewed the APS FY 20-22 School Year Budget. Just over a year ago, the Governor announced that the schools would shut down in two weeks; and remained closed for the remainder of the school year. Going to a totally new full-remote model was a major change for Andover’s teachers and they have become ever more skilled in this radical new way of teaching. While difficult and challenging, this has been a year of impressive achievements of our schools, many we will want to keep. All teachers want to see our students back in-person full-time, but no one wants to be back entirely with the way they teach. The changes reflected in the budget will meet the needs better than before. We are here tonight with a budget that the SC has already approved and (she believes) the Finance Committee has also approved and is aligned with the Town Manager’s 3.75% increase over this current budget. This FY-22 budget is a level-service budget and less of an increase than the prior year. Steve Nembirkow and Claudia will co-present tonight.

SC-FY-22 Budget

Personnel	\$75,632,187 (81.6%)
General Expense	<u>\$16,961,265 (18.3%)</u>
Total:	\$92,593,452 (3.75%)

## **FY-2022 Initiatives**

This budget allows us to improve student performance in math and the learning gap, and to implement a new middle school schedule to provide additional time for academics, support for social emotional learning and behavioral needs for students. It will also improve our operational effectiveness in Human Resources to support the goal of educational diversity.

Staffing is critical this year and we are not sure what our class sizes will be in the coming year. We want to provide staffing flexibility so that we can address a variable enrollment level and for hybrid instruction in case the pandemic continues. We want to make sure that we can meet that challenge if that possibility occurs.

October 1 enrollment projected enrollment is unknown. The October 2020 enrollment projections will continue to be used at this time. At AHS, we have had over 1,700 students and a school over-enrolled for a school built for less than 1,400 students. Total APS enrollment shown for October of 2020 was 5,574 students.

Steve Nembirkow talked about Free and Reduced Lunch for kids whose family income level is above poverty but meet state guidelines for low income. There has been a steady increase in the number of needy students this year at 10.3%. The Federal Government has been providing free meals for the past year, seven days a week.

Out-of-District costs as a percent of the total budget, has decreased to 6.7% due to bringing students back and fewer out-of-district placements during Covid.

Covid related expenses paid out of grants are broken out by category; included but not limited to, PPE, plexiglass, remote learning equipment and licenses, tents, custodial overtime, moving expenses, desks, tutoring services, food service, police detail, storage, etc. that were required to bring kids back to school under the DESE guidelines. There will be additional expenses incurred when AHS students come back in May. The majority of the expenses were covered through ESSER relief grants of \$2,227,943. We are expecting an ESSER III Grant in the estimated amount of \$1,256,000. You can only spend the funds when you receive them and used for issues related to the timing of the grant only. A lot of the funding has been slow to come in.

## **Other General Fund expenses related to Covid reopening:**

Custodial Overtime \$167,350 (O/T will continue into the next school year)

Rental of Freezers for Food Service \$20,500

Electric Utilities \$280,000 to date with an additional estimate of \$120,000.

Long term subs for Hybrid Learning

Town Maintenance: HVAC, Negative Air Isolation Rooms, Plexiglass Install, etc.

Even though the heat and lights were off, we experienced phenomenal costs prior to receiving grant funding, having to use the General Fund to cover these expenses.

Chapter 70 Aid for FY22 was reduced due to funding being based on last year's enrollment projections.

Budget increases from FY-2013-FY-2022 is about .1/4 point off of the 5-year average.

## **FTE Review**

### **FY-22 Staff**

9.85 FTE's Much of the increase is due to the full-day kindergarten shift.

Two elementary secretarial positions increased from .82 from .59

1.0 FTE Sped Nurse for a 1:1 student

.4 FTE BCBA increase

5.7 FTE's for All-day Kindergarten (ADK)

1.5 FTE ADK Teachers

.2 FTE Digital Learning Specialist shifted to .2 FTE Library Media

Special Education Social worker increased to 1.0 from .9

1.0 FTE Custodial Supervisor

## **Superintendent's' Priorities**

These are items that would make the biggest difference in the educational inequities that we need to serve students. This is the final list that is hoped will be building blocks going forward. We were able to stay within the Town Manager's recommended 3.75% increase by making slight reductions and using funds from the Circuit Breaker that has to be applied anyway. This list was approved by the School Committee on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

1.0 HR Generalist

0.4 AHS Guidance

1.0 Elementary Math Coach

3.0 Music Teachers

1.0 Nurse for West Elementary

Total cost of \$457,342 for a potential FTE headcount of 6.4.

## **Areas of Cost increases / Budget Drivers**

1. Contract negotiations with 8 units
2. Step & Track changes \$1,300,000
3. Legal costs for negotiations and complaint resolution \$145,000
4. Utility Costs for Health & Safety Measures \$470,150 (run the HAVAC Systems)  
Custodial Services – need time to clean and disinfect)
5. Athletic Program lost revenue as a result of not receiving gate receipts of \$59,281
6. Full-Day Kindergarten \$306,098

## **FY-22 Investment**

Dr. Bach said their goal is to maintain current funding for staffing that we feel are critical to going forward. By the addition of adding 3 music teachers, we are able to have scheduling changes at the middle school that will allow for more time-on-learning and serve all three levels. We are also seeing an investment in health and safety by adding to a very thin nursing staff and bringing back staff to a formal level of support in the HR Office, and to recruit more diverse candidates to have a positive effect on our diverse student population.

Questions:

For all of the equipment that was needed to purchase is there a plan for removal, or repurpose? *Yes, we plan to repurpose a large majority of what was purchased. We found that staff and students enjoy being outside in the better weather under the tents (less expensive to purchase than rent). Plexiglass is more of a one-time cost, will continue to keep setup in the cafeteria serving lines, but it does create a hindrance in the elementary classrooms. We will re-use as much of the items purchased as possible.*

Chapter 70 Funding and impacts from full-day kindergarten, shouldn't those two things have directly been offset by Chapter 70 funding? *Unfortunately, we lost enough students due to decreased enrollment this past year. About 85% of districts received the minimum in Chapter 70 funding and did not allow us to regain the Chapter 70 money we expected. To balance that loss, we spent money out of the operating funds in FY-2021 and will continue to do so in FY-22. Kindergarten – 84% of districts received the absolute minimum of \$30 per student. The focus of Chapter 70 was on a very few number of districts.*

What is the Town Contributing? *Andrew Flanagan said the Town is not contributing additional funds, the funds of \$75,000 are part of the 3.7% recommended budget.*

Do you have any sense of what will happen for FY-23 and do we have a plan B if enrollment might level off? *We expect 2/3 of the students to return. We will continue to send out surveys to parents as we go along to try to get a better sense of student's returning to APS.*

It is commendable on the number of OOD students who have returned to APS. *Steve Nembirkow will send the Finance Committee the spreadsheet they use to determine the OOD expenses as a percent of the budget. Sara Stetson said we have not done a specific overall cost analysis over the past 5-years, but the reductions in costs clearly exceeds the expenditures.*

Head count for next year: The Sped Nurse identified as a headcount addition, why is that categorized under teachers and not health services? *Nurses are certified by DESE so that is why they are categorized as such; the nurse hired is a 1:1 nurse.*

Are there restrictions on the grant funds? *In the beginning, there was very little restrictions and guidance (Covid and making the environment better for kids). In the new ESSER Grant, they are allowing funds to be used for capital.*

How are they managing the funding with the restrictions on use? *We wait until the last possible moment before purchasing anything. To meet the distancing requirements, we have had to put desks where they were never placed before.*

Have you made some budget assumptions for a 2-3-year projection for adding staff and what is the organizational structure for budget managers? *Our budget managers are our administrators at Central Office and the principals at each of our schools, they are not additional staff.*

Do we have FY-21 Actual FTE's for FY-21? *Information can be found onn page 34 of the 80 page School Budget Book and provides details.*

Music teachers are shared among levels, and locks the scheduling at other schools. Having the additional music teachers, from a resource perspective, allows for better resourcing of our core subjects and increases the time on learning on core subjects.

A large part of the Pension Obligation Bond discussion is about pension reform. We are continuing to have multiple discussions about this list of additional personnel. This discussion has been going on for many months and we need to let the public know where we stand. *The School Committee has voted in support of Article 6 as has the Select Board.*

7. **Adjournment**

Alex Vispoli moved for the Select Board to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Laura Gregory. Roll call: L. Gregory-Y, D. Howe-Y, A. Vispoli-Y, A. Gilbert-Y. Motion passes 4-0.

Linn Anderson moved for the Finance Committee to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Andy Betts. Roll call: J. Moffitt-Y, L. Anderson-Y, M.E. Logee-Y, K. O'Handley-Y, J. Barry-Y, A. Betts-Y, Paul Russo-Y, P. Monticciolo-Y, Spiro Christopoulos-Y. Motion passes 9-0.

Paul Muprhy moved for the School Committee to adjourn, Motion seconded by Susan McCready. Roll call: T. Spruce-Y, P. Murphy-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, S. McCready-Y, S. Scully-Y. Motion passes 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:34 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dee DeLorenzo