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DATE: March 9, 2022
TIME: 9:31 AM

**Warrant Committee Education Subcommittee
Joint Meeting with the School Committee Finance Subcommittee
April 13, 2021 8:00 AM
Remote Meeting via Zoom**

Meeting Minutes

Members in Attendance

Warrant Committee Education Subcommittee: Liz Goss, Anne Helgen, Geoff Lubien, Paul Rickter, Jack Weis, Laurie Slap

School Committee: Kate Bowen, Amy Checkoway, Mike Crowley, Meg Moriarty, Jamal Saeh

School Department Administration: Superintendent John Phelan, Assistant Superintendent Janice Darias, Finance Director Tony DiCologero, Director of Human Capital Mike McAllister

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 AM.

FY 22 Budget Planning and Preparation

John started the meeting by sharing a presentation on where the School Department is recommending that cuts be made in order to reduce the budget to meet the current budget parameters. The department needs to reduce the budget by \$2.07 million versus the previous draft budget. Some of the key points included:

- The revised budget shows no new hires. This is the second year of no planned additions to staffing.
- ESSER II and ESSER III funds are being reserved to cover COVID-related expenses. At some point, the department may be able to use those funds for other operating expenses.
- Based on initial discussions with the department's leadership council, the administration is proposing the following possible cuts to teaching (Unit A) positions:
 - Four staff cuts at the elementary level (two kindergarten and two first grade teachers).
 - Four positions representing three FTEs at the middle school.
 - Four positions representing three FTEs at the high school.
- John noted that the foregoing list of eliminated positions includes one more eliminated position at each level beyond what is presented in the table enumerating the \$2.07 million reduction. That was done intentionally in order to provide the department with flexibility on where to make the cuts as the department moves forward.
- The revised budget also includes three FTE reductions in administrative support and aide (Unit D) positions. The administration has not yet had any discussions as to where those specific cuts will be made.
- The revised budget also includes \$418,00 in cuts to athletics and activities. There have been no discussions yet on how and where to make those cuts specifically.

Jamal suggested that rather than presenting a single plan to the School Committee, that the administration present various alternatives to the School Committee to consider. John did not respond directly, but did note that the reductions in staff versus cuts to non-staff expenditures roughly mirror the percentage of the total School Department budget that those expenditures represent.

In addition to the discussion on the budget, we also discussed a few organizational matters at the end of the meeting. Specifically:

- The Education Subcommittee will join the next Finance Subcommittee meeting on April 27th. We will continue the budget discussion at that time as well as plan to discuss the latest three-year plan/projections for out-of-district special education tuitions.
- We thanked Tony for his replies to our initial questions regarding the FY 22 budget. We noted that the Education Subcommittee will be meeting amongst ourselves before the next joint meeting on April 27th. We will compile any follow-up questions that we have regarding the School Department budget and send them to Tony prior to April 27th.
- We briefly discussed the Ed Subcommittee's recommended enhancements to the School Department budget presentation that we previously presented to the Finance Subcommittee and the administration. That report will be distributed to the full School Committee and will be discussed at a future joint meeting. Jack observed that even though the priority at this point is finalizing the FY 22 budget itself, he felt that there is still time to incorporate the recommended enhancements into the budget materials that will be sent to Town Meeting members in advance of the June Town Meeting. And, if not, the Education Subcommittee's recommendations can still provide a framework for future years.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 AM.