

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BUDGET & FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING  
DRAFT MINUTES: February 8, 2019**

Greenfield Public Schools Central Office, 195 Federal Street, Greenfield, MA 01301

**Present:** Cameron Ward (CW), Chair; Susan Hollins (SH); William Martin (WM)

**Absent:** None

**Also present:** Jordana Harper, Superintendent; Matt Holloway, Director of Pupil Services; Lisa McGuinness, Registrar; Steve Nembirkow, Business Manager; Chris Nosel, Grants Coordinator

**I. Call to Order**

With a quorum present (CW, SH), CW opened the meeting at 12:38 p.m. (WM arrived after opening)

**II. Public Comment**

None.

**III. Draft 2020 Budget Review**

Superintendent Harper asked that the subcommittee provide the administration with broad recommendations. Her understanding is that there will be a public hearing on February 25th and a vote on March 7th, allowing for the budget to be submitted to the mayor's office by the target deadline of March 8th.

Grant Funding

Business Manager Nembirkow and Coordinator Nosel answered questions regarding grant funding for the district. Though the budget summary distributed by Business Manager Nembirkow for this meeting does not reflect line items, both this year's budget and last year's budget show exactly who was paid out of which grants.

- For certain grants providing salary funds, nine percent of the total must be set aside for employee benefits
- SH will submit grant report format suggestion to Business Manager Nembirkow
- School Choice funds are not a grant, and therefore do not have the same restrictions as grants
- Entitlement grants run from September to August
- There are grants in which though GPS is not the fiscal agent, it still receives funds (e.g., Title III and Safe Schools Safe Streets Coalition)
- No significant change in grant funding anticipated for next year

**WM moved to request that the school administration provide source documents for all grants received by the school district as to whether they are required or not to pay fringe benefits for all municipal employees in the school department. SH 2nd.** Superintendent Harper suggested that an MOU be in place between the GPS Business Manager and Greenfield's Finance Director for clarity as to if/when the school department must pay for fringe benefits out of a grant. WM agreed that this this suggestion can be looked at during a meeting of the two parties. **Motion passed unanimously.**

ELL Update

Director Holloway answered questions regarding ELL.

- ELL total is 106 students
- Superintendent Harper: though students may level out of ELL, they may remain in the caseload, as certain protections are still in place for them

- Upgraded the curriculum with Title III funds
- ELL teacher at each school now; these teachers can be shifted around if needed (based on enrollment)
- The LOOK act is now in effect, with new requirements surrounding ELL

**WM moved to request that the school administration provide a report on the total sum of stipends paid out of grants and the total sum of stipends paid out of the operating budget. SH 2nd.** SH agreed that this is an important topic, but suggested that it does not need to be fast-tracked, necessarily. **Motion passed unanimously.**

#### Enrollment

Registrar McGuiness explained the enrollment information she provided, including how she calculates her projections every year.

- Enrollment report updated weekly noting number of children in each level at each school
- 1707 students enrolled at the end of June, 2018 (number does not include out of district or services-only students)
- There has been a net gain of 56 students so far this year
- Superintendent Harper did reach out to neighboring school districts regarding possible regionalization
- The possible closing of schools in surrounding districts may add to future enrollments
- SH: Can we allow more students to choice in to GPS, especially if GPS can benefit financially?
- Physical space in a school does not necessarily mean there is enough staffing to accommodate additional students
- Superintendent Harper: Registrar's enrollment estimates have been very close from year to year

**SH moved to encourage flexibility in the number of GPS School Choice seats, particularly encouraging filling available seats at Greenfield High School. CW 2nd.** CW recalled flexibility in the original School Committee vote on this issue. WM is hesitant to micromanage in this way. SH believes such a vote may help to eliminate such rigid standards in the event the numbers change and more seats become available. WM suggested tabling this discussion for another time. **Motion withdrawn.** *[WM/CW final comments unclear on recording; not sure if SH officially withdrew her motion.]*

Business Manager Nembirkow presented budget numbers, including cost saving ideas totaling around \$400,000. *[Unclear on specific numbers stated.]*

- 1.5% increase over last year for level-service budget
- If level-funding the budget, there will be a cut in services
- Superintendent Harper: about \$400,000 of priority additions are necessary, including contractual obligations, mandated services, etc.
- SH presented a list of ten cost-saving ideas. CW asked that these be submitted in writing.

**WM moved to reduce principalship (defined as one principal and two associate principals) at Greenfield Middle School. CW 2nd.** Superintendent Harper noted that GMS absolutely needs this administrator support, as GMS is in a critical phase, with lots of good work taking place. In the past, requests had been made for an increase in administrators. *[Recording ended.]*

#### VII. Adjournment

*[Recording ended.]*

#### Meeting Documents

1. Enrollment Packet
2. Summary Information from Business Manager (including grant report)