

Belmont School Committee Work Session Minutes
School Committee Finance Subcommittee
October 22, 2019
Conference Room of the School Administration Building

SC Members Present: Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox
Ms. Amy Checkoway
Mr. Michael Crowley
Ms. Andrea Prestwich (until 9:15 AM)
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance
Mr. John Phelan, School Superintendent

1. Call to Order

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

2. FY21 Budget Update

The group had a discussion on available funds and spending on costs associated with special education over the last 5 years. Funding for special education comes from a variety of sources including, LABBB credits, IDEA grant funds, state circuit breaker funds and the town general fund. The reimbursement amount in state circuit breaker funds went down this year.

The group noted that there is a large balance in the account associated with circuit breaker reimbursements and discussed the benefits of having these funds available for unexpected costs associated with this vulnerable line item. The group also discussed the possibility of a request to draw down from this account due to upcoming budget constraints of the town and schools.

3. FY20 Budget Update

Superintendent Phelan provided information on staffing needs in the areas of English Language Education (ELE) and special education that were discussed briefly at the FSC meeting on October 15, 2019. The need is due to a growth in enrollment and the additional staff will reduce the burden in both areas of state mandated services. An additional 0.6 FTE ELE teacher at the Wellington will bring a student ratio of 42:1 to 32:1. A 1.0 FTE for special education at the Wellington will serve approximately 23 additional students who are on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Upon a motion by Michael Crowley, seconded by Amy Checkoway, the group voted unanimously to approve these budgetary changes (Andrea Prestwich was not present during the vote).

4. Other Business

Superintendent Phelan noted briefly that the School Committee and administration will contribute to the presentation at the November Town Meeting regarding the article to rescind the town's withdrawal from the Minuteman District. The presentation will likely include information from the task force who studied vocational and technical education opportunities in the area, the summer working group findings as well as the recommendation from the School Committee for the town to rescind its withdrawal from the Minuteman District.

5. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 AM.

Respectfully submitted by



Susan Burgess-Cox