

Regular Session Meetings

February 5, 2020

A meeting of the Swampscott School Committee was held in Room B129 at Swampscott High School commencing at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Ms. Gargi Cooper, School Committee, Ms. Suzanne Wright, Ted Delano and Ms. Carin Marshall. Also Present: Pamela Angelakis, Superintendent of Schools, Martha Sybert, Business Administrator, Jean Bacon, Director of Teaching & Learning, Martha Raymond, Asst. Superintendent of Student Services, Greg Vinitsker, and Max McDonough, Student Reps. Ms. Amy OConnor, School Committee was absent.

Public Comment:

Mr. Joe Douillette, SPS teacher promoted The Blue Big Band performance at First Church on Saturday February 8th, @ 2p.m. He mentioned some of the members and thanked the school department for permitting use of space for rehearsals.

Ms. Lara Goodman, resident asked the SC about the targeted student to teacher ratio. Ms. Cooper advised Ms. Goodman that she may ask her question during public comment.

Community Announcements:

Ms. Wright gave a shout out to the select board for organizing the event honoring the football team, cheerleaders and band.

Max McDonough and Greg Vinitsker mentioned the Interact club food drive was looking for canned goods from the community. There are drop off locations at the HS and MS. Ms. Cooper inquired about the club's activities. They do volunteer and community service projects. Ms. Angelakis asked for a robotics update. Max stated that the robot is up and running as a prototype.

Superintendent's Report: Ms. Angelakis' report will be posted on the Superintendent's Page under the Swampscott Public School's web page.

20-21 SY School Calendar/Early Release Days -first reading: Ms. Angelakis' walked through each month of the 20-21 proposed school calendar. She stated that no vote was required as a first read. It will appear on another agenda for a vote.

Tech Capital Request & Tech Report: Ms. Angelakis stated that in the past Technology (Tech) requests were submitted through Capital as big projects. She is including Technology funding in the recommended budget so the committee may make an informed decision to approve the request or remove it from the budget.

Ms. Mackey discussed the great strides they have made in Tech through Capital funding. She reviewed the Tech Plan goals and the E-Rate program, which gives a 50% rebate on improvements to internet structure. She discussed the MS 1:1 Pilot program.

Ms. Natalie Poverchuck discussed the Upper Lab at SMS which consists of 28 iMacs as part of the library space. Mr. Vlad Akim discussed the infrastructure projects, which are often funded with the 50% reimbursement from E-Rate.

Ms. Mackey reviewed the requested Tech costs: 1:1 Chromebook Program \$90,000, Upper Mac Lab SMS \$40,000 and \$100,000 for fiber. The Tech lines currently within the budget are for repairs, replacements and software, and Tech Ninja summer programs.

Mr. Delano questioned inventory control. Ms. Mackey discussed Incident IQ. Ms. Angelakis is confident that all devices are ticketed and tagged.

Ms. Cooper asked about the long term Tech budget plans. Ms. Mackey noted that 9th graders receive a device that stays with them until graduation. The devices turned in senior year are replenished and passed down. Ms. Sybert stated that historically the Tech Capital request was \$200,000. The previous year request of \$325,000 was a unique situation in order to utilize E-rate.

Mr. Delano asked what happens if devices are not turned in senior year. Ms. Mackey noted that they would not receive their cap/gown until they turn in the device or pay a fee if they are unable to return.

Ms. Cooper asked if our Tech goal was geared toward K-12 or 6-12. Ms. Mackey stated it was geared more toward 8-12 but the older devices from carts move down to lower grades. Ms. Cooper expressed a concern about the amount of screen time at lower grades. Dr. Bacon noted that Tech is used effectively at the elementary level to differentiate a lesson.

Public hearing on School Choice SY 2020-2021:

Ms. Cooper entertained a motion to open the public hearing on School Choice. It was moved by Ms. Wright and seconded by Ms.

Marshall. The motion passed 4 to 0.

Ms. Cooper provided an update on the policy. Ms. Angelakis recommended SPS not participate in school choice.

Ms. Marshall moved to close the public hearing and seconded by Ms. Wright. The motion passed 4 to 0.

Motion: It was moved by Ms. Wright to Not Participate in School Choice and seconded by Ms. Marshall.

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 4 to 0.

School Business Administrator: Ms. Sybert presented the FY21 Budget and Grants and Revolving Funds. The 2021 budget is \$30,690,887 a 3.6% increase or \$1,070,484 over FY20 budget.

Ms. Angelakis reviewed the process to build the budget and the items not funded in the budget. She would like the Literacy Tutors and Kindergarten Educational Support Professionals (ESPs) put back in the budget as an immediate request.

Ms. Sybert reviewed the Tuition Revolving Fund and Special Education. The increase from Town appropriation is \$811,351 or 2.88%. The overall increase after adjusting for the impact of the Non-Resident tuition is 2.9%, or \$870,484. The Unfunded Capital for Technology needs will add \$230,000 to the FY21 Budget resulting in an overall increase of 3.69% or \$1,100,484.

Ms. Wright asked if Tech was off the table or still being requested. Ms. Cooper has reached out to the Chair of the Capital Improvement Team (CIT) to help define the new guidance for requests. Ms. Marshall inquired if we are too far along in the Capital process to make a request. Ms. Sybert noted there may still be potential opportunities to submit the Tech request.

Ms. Sybert reviewed Federal, State, and Private grants. She discussed Circuit Break (CB) funds, dipping into the current funds and the extraordinary relief threshold. Mr. Delano asked about accessing CB funds. Ms. Sybert stated that we would apply in March.

Ms. Sybert reviewed the twenty Special Revolving funds. She reviewed the Athletic Fee Structure and the trend in sports. Mr. Delano asked about the students with economic disadvantage. Ms. Sybert stated that not all of the students are in Athletics or request a waiver.

Ms. Sybert discussed Full Time Equivalents (FTE's) which have remained consistent over the last three budget cycles. The total FTE count is reducing by 2.56 FTE from the FY20 Budget to the FY21 Budgeted positions. Mr. Delano questioned the Facility Director position. Ms. Sybert stated that the position is shared with the town.

Ms. Sybert reviewed the SC questions and responses. Ms. Angelakis mentioned the curriculum review philosophy. Dr. Bacon stated that she worked with the Curriculum Leads to determine textbooks that need to be refreshed. She is creating a longer term plan and requesting what is needed versus the historical amount budgeted.

Mr. Delano brought up the dramatic increase in Special Ed legal fees due to an increase in hearings. He asked about the cost of Unemployment insurance being shared with the town. Ms. Sybert did not feel that was feasible but can ask. Mr. Delano asked for a ballpark amount for the ESPs & Grade K Literacy tutors. The ESPs would be around \$22,000 and Tutors \$23,000.

Public hearing on School Budget 2020-2021:

Ms. Cooper entertained a motion to open the public hearing on the School budget. It was moved by Ms. Wright and seconded by Ms. Marshall. The motion passed 4 to 0.

Ms. Zoll, parent of a Stanley 1st grade student asked for clarification on the breakdown of teacher assignments. Ms. Sybert stated the breakdown was the HS. Ms. Zoll asked for more detail on the CB threshold for extraordinary relief. She asked about the reduction in supplies and materials. Ms. Raymond stated they are not relatable as the CB threshold is related to Out of District students. Ms. Sybert replied that the budget was looked at line by line to determine trends and needs versus what has been historically budgeted. Ms. Zoll talked about the jump in Special Ed legal services. Ms. Raymond replied that parents have a right to request a hearing.

Ms. Lara Goodman asked about the target teacher/student ratio at all levels. Ms. Angelakis responded that the focus is on core instructional groups and how many certified adults are in the classroom. Ms. Raymond added numbers are data driven decisions based on academic and social emotional needs.

Joe Douillette, teacher and parent spoke about the student/teacher ratio and the impact larger classes have on quiet students. He questioned whether a HS class of 25-30 is where we want to be as a community. Ms. Angelakis agreed that as a district we don't want large classes. The schedule study should help resolve issues and change the caseload of teachers. Mr. Douillette asked about IEP trends and larger classes with more student needs. Ms. Cooper noted that the Financial summit addressed some of these issues.

Liz Papalardo asked about the Stabilization fund. Ms. Sybert replied that it is a helpful tool but we are one or two years away. We first need the Non-Resident tuition fund set up. Ms. Papalardo said as a town meeting member she encourages continued work on it.

Sue Comparato, HS teacher asked for clarification on the teacher assignment. Ms. Sybert replied that the 125-130 is a straight calculation. Teachers with semester classes would be an average of the two semesters.

Emily Walger expressed concern about AP Biology and Chemistry courses being offered in alternate years. Mr. Vinitsker didn't feel class size was an issue though there is frustration with alternate years. Mr. McDonough was not aware of any issues. Mr. Kohut replied it was dependent on student interests and need. The current schedule can make it difficult to run both courses in the same year.

Tasia Vasiliou discussed the eight kindergarten sections, equity in classroom support, and 1st grade ESPs. There was a discussion on ESPs and the class numbers at Stanley. Ms. Vasiliou asked if there was a plan to bring ESPs and the librarian back. Ms. Angelakis replied not at this time for ESPs. The elementary librarian is staying in the budget.

Kiki Zoll mentioned the Student Opportunity Act bump in relation to the budget. Ms. Sybert replied that we are given our budget guidance by the town administrator. Ms. Zoll expressed concern with attrition rates. Mr. Calichman stated around 20-30 students apply to private schools yearly. He is constantly meeting with parents that want to come back. Our enrollment has been flat for the last 10 years. Ms. Wright spoke about attracting students, better tech & vocational programs, alternative curriculums, scheduling, and utilizing staff in efficient ways. Ms. Wright commented that it is a personal decision and not necessarily that something is wrong here.

Natalie Poverchuk, MS teacher asked about kindergarten sections. Ms. Angelakis said we won't know enrollment until March. Ms. Poverchuk asked about the elementary & HS library positions. Ms. Sybert responded that the elementary was increased to 1.7. Mr. Kohut stated that they are committed to the HS position. Ms. Poverchuk mentioned the various levels of HS math classes. Ms. Angelakis stated that NEASC asked us to look at the levels and number of classes.

Ms. Marshall moved to close the public hearing and seconded by Ms. Wright. The motion passed 4 to 0.

Sub Committee:

School Building Committee (SBC) Updates: Ms. Wright stated that the SBC met last night. They have worked on their project charter which includes ten bullet points built from statements at the Community forums. They will vote on the charter at their next meeting. The Education Visioning workshops start next week.

Consent Agenda:

Ms. Cooper read the purpose of the consent agenda and the items on the agenda.

- A. Regular Session Minutes – January 29, 2020
- B. WARRANT # 20-31

Motion: It was moved by Ms. Wright to accept the agenda & seconded by Ms. Marshall.

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 4 to 0.

Next meeting to be held on February 12th, 2020

Adjournment:

Motion: At 9:25 p.m. It was moved by Mr. Delano to accept the motion to adjourn & seconded by Ms. Wright.

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela R.H. Angelakis, M.A., M.Ed.

Date: February 13, 2020

Superintendent of Schools

/dmm

Supporting Documentation:

	2017-2022 Technology Plan overview (draft).pdf	
	Agenda February 5, 2020, School Committee Meeting & Public Hearing (1).pdf	
	Approved January 29, 2020 Regular Session Meeting Minutes.pdf	
	DRAFT 20-21 School Calendar & Legend Rev 3 - 5-Feb-2020.pdf	
	January 29, 2020 Regular Session Meeting Minutes.pdf	
	Public Comment Sheet Feb 5.pdf	
	Public Hearing Notice-School Choice & Budget 20-21.pdf	
	SPS FY21 Budget 02.05.2020.pptx	
	Technology Department Report to School Committee Feb 5, 2020	