

Concord School District Board of Education
Board Work Session #4
Technology, Capital Facilities, Student Services (Supplemental)
February 19, 2018

Board members present: Jennifer Patterson, *President*, Chuck Crush, Clint Cogswell, Maureen Redmond-Scura, Pam Wicks, Liza Poinier, Nathan Fennessy, Jim Richards

Board member absent: Tom Croteau

Administration: *Superintendent* Terri L. Forsten, *Assistant Superintendent* Donna Palley, *Business Administrator* Jack Dunn, *Director of Facilities* Matt Cashman, *Director of Technology* Pam McLeod, *Director of Human Resources* Larry Prince

Board President Jennifer Patterson called the meeting to order at 5:43 p.m., noting that the meeting was a Budget Work Session to discuss technology services and their budget impacts, Capital Facilities, and to address questions raised at the previous work session about Student Services. Terri Forsten informed the Board of an administrator meeting planned for February 20 to discuss school safety within the District. Business Administrator Jack Dunn and IT Director Pam McLeod presented the meeting agenda:

Technology

- Budget overview
- Software
- Long-term planning

Capital Facilities – buildings, grounds, and debt service

- Budget overview
- Operating budget
- Summer projects
- Debt Service - bonding
- Future discussion

Student Services (supplemental)

- Presentation #3A – separate presentation

Mr. Dunn presented an overview of the proposed FY19 Technology budget, which would be \$298,590.43 less than last year's budget. Ms. McLeod provided technology highlights for both students and staff:

Student focus

- Student devices – these are now fully 1-to-1 in FY18, Grades 1-12
- iPads – PreK-3

- Chromebooks – for grades 4-12
- STEM grants: robotics, virtual reality, “makerspaces,” coding
- Competency-based report cards at RMS
- Take-home Chromebooks for grades 8-12
- Digital equity – Comcast Internet Essentials Codes

Staff focus

- Teachers: 149 new laptops in FY18, using revenue from sale of iPad2s
- Secure, online IEPs and 504s – linked to PowerSchool
- Staff contracts – electronic signatures instituted
- FAX2Mail
- Production Center / Canon copiers
- Heather Drolet – NHCF Christa McAuliffe Sabbatical Award

Mr. Dunn reviewed technology expenditures in staffing, staff and student devices, and infrastructure. Nathan Fennessy asked if there was now an expectation that the District would be moving away from the use of computer labs, now that the District is 1:1, with each student having a computing device. Ms. McLeod and Mr. Dunn responded that this was the trend and that several more computer labs would be retired as schools moved toward shared “carts” rather than computer lab spaces. Chuck Crush asked if infrastructure was financed, to which Mr. Dunn responded that it was.

Mr. Dunn reviewed contracted services, maintenance, supplies, and equipment, noting an overall decrease in capital lease services in the amount of \$146,157.94. Mr. Fennessy asked what portion of the budget was being spent on security services. Ms. McLeod responded that “a little bit of everything contains a security piece,” and with all the District data work, that security is at the forefront of considerations for technology, adding that the District had added extra email security measures to help deter phishing and information harvesting attempts.

Mr. Dunn then reviewed District software expenditures:

- Budget: \$361,570.51
- Operational
 - PowerSchool – Student management software (~\$29,000)
 - ShoreTel – Telephone system subscription (~\$28,000)
 - MUNIS – ERP System to manage District Human Resources and Finance Department (~\$55,000)
 - VersaTrans – Bus route system (~\$7,200)
 - Lightspeed content filtering (~\$18,000)
 - Microsoft agreement – server and desktop operating system licenses (~\$25,000)
 - PowerSchool online registration (~\$15,000) – new in FY19
 - SWIS/CICO – (~\$3,000)
 - Various monitoring and backup tools – Carbonite, Monitis Server Monitoring, Barcode inventory, SIF agents, Adobe, PaperCut, ManageEngine, PTC Wizard

- Student Learning
 - Dreambox (Math) – (~\$37,500) - fully funded by general fund in FY18
 - Lexia Core 5 (Reading) - (~\$58,000) – fully funded by general fund in FY18
 - BrainPop (~\$1,700)
 - RazKids, (~\$1,700)
 - Apps (\$15,000)
 - Newsela (\$1,500) – new in FY17 (*replaced Read180*)
 - Destiny software – library management system (~\$7,500)

Mr. Dunn reviewed technology’s long-term plans, including new devices and upgrades to existing devices, between FY19 and FY21. Pam Wicks asked if the District would continue getting money back when trading in older devices; Ms. McLeod responded that this would continue to help offset new device costs. She explained that student devices have a typical lifespan of three years, while staff devices last four years. Mr. Dunn reviewed future technology considerations:

- Network infrastructure upgrade
- Classroom projectors – would be 10 years old in 2022
- Security and access control*
- Citywide fiber plan (*est. for 2025-2027*)
- Disaster recovery plan

Mr. Dunn reviewed the FCC’s e-rate program, which makes telecommunications and information services more affordable for schools and libraries. With funding from the Universal Service Fund, e-rate provides discounts for telecommunications, Internet access and internal connections to eligible schools and libraries. Funding for cell, landlines and PRI’s are no longer eligible for a federal reimbursement. Funding declined 20% per year starting in FY16, and only Internet connections are eligible.

Mr. Dunn reviewed Capital Facilities budget items, including buildings, grounds, construction, principal, and interest:

Summary

- This budget covers buildings and grounds, construction, and principal and interest on debt. A budget of \$12,055,647 is proposed, a decrease of (\$175,984) or (.63%).

Highlights

- Elimination of Maintenance Supervisor position (\$96,793)
- Increase in disposal services +\$10,500
- Decrease in capital lease (\$60,348)
- Increase in construction services (aka summer projects) +\$125,000
- Increase in professional services +\$75,218
- Decrease in supplies (\$31,000)
- Utilities – decrease in natural gas (\$37,300)
- Utilities – increase in electricity usage/cost +\$14,400

- Decrease in replacement vehicles (-\$30,000)
- Summer projects +\$135,000 (\$260,000 total)
- Decrease in debt interest (\$109,951)

Mr. Fennessy asked the amount budgeted for summer projects last year; Matt Cashman responded that last year's line was \$125,000, but the amount fluctuates from year to year. Mr. Dunn added that \$250,000-300,000 would be a typical amount for that particular line item. He delineated items that would be considered repairs and maintenance, summer projects, and bonded projects.

Mr. Crush asked the extent of the capital improvement plan; Mr. Cashman explained that this goes out 10 years. Mr. Dunn explained that summer projects are maintenance projects that are difficult to do during the school year when buildings are in constant use.

Mr. Cashman noted that rubber tile has a much longer lifespan and is easier to care for than carpet, so it may be something to consider when looking at flooring maintenance and cleaning within the District. Mr. Fennessy asked how many facilities employees the District employs; Mr. Cashman explained that the District employs 37 custodians and 5 maintenance workers.

Mr. Dunn explained the Buildings and Grounds operating budget, noting an overall budget of \$11,966,647, or a decrease of \$175,984.

Salaries (610000)

- Salaries for Director of Facilities, Custodians, and Maintenance
- Budget: \$1,915,689.00 or (\$21,069) decrease

Benefits (620000)

- Health, Dental, NHRS
- Budget: \$845,977.00 or a (\$100,963.00) decrease

Purchased services (630000) – *aka contracted services*

- HVAC service
- Pest control
- Fire alarm/sprinkler service and monitoring
- Elevator maintenance
- Fire sprinkler maintenance
- Annual fire extinguisher service
- Floor refinishing and repairs
- Roof repairs
- Service agreements
- Budget: \$377,144, or a \$75,218 increase

Purchased property (640000) – *aka repairs and maintenance*

- Service agreement materials
- Capital leases
- Summer project funds
- Budget: \$789,400, or a \$86,350 increase

Purchased services (650000)

- Property and liability insurance
- Cell phones
- Conference and travel
- Budget: \$239,841, or a (\$28,669) decrease

Supplies, books and utilities (660000)

- Consumables – cleaning chemicals, paper products, drywall, paint, plumbing and electrical
- Utilities – electric, natural gas, water/sewer, oil, and gasoline
- Budget: \$1,757,792, or a (\$53,900) decrease

Equipment (670000)

- Floor machines and vacuums
- Budget: \$89,000, or a (\$23,000) decrease

Dues and fees (680000)

- Bond interest
- Contingency
- Budget: \$2,975,804, or a (\$109,951) decrease

Principal and transfers (690000)

- Bond principal
- Budget: \$2,975,000 – no change

Mr. Dunn reviewed a history of summer projects, noting both the amounts budgeted and the actual expenditures (2014 – bathroom at RMS, 2015 – roof over art room). Mr. Cashman noted a plan for a large-scale painting project and Media Center overhaul at RMS, including flooring, painting, lighting, and furniture replacement.

Mr. Dunn and Mr. Cashman reviewed a series of photos of various spaces within BMS, BGS, RMS, and CHS, including painting, ceiling tile, stairwell, and door needs. Many of these repairs are fairly minor cosmetic issues, including new ceiling tiles, fresh paint, refinishing older wooden doors, and refinishing stairwells. They noted the bright and inviting nature of the newer schools (CMS, ADS, MBS) and a desire to help reflect this atmosphere at the older buildings. Mr. Richards asked if asbestos is present in any of the schools, and Mr. Cashman noted that RMS, CHS, BGS, and the Eastman building do contain some asbestos in the flooring and ceiling, given when these buildings were constructed. He explained that this is contained and minor issues like a broken floor tile, which could expose some of this material, would be quickly and easily repaired.

Mr. Dunn reviewed debt service, including bonded projects from 1987-2017. These projects included the RMS renovation and expansion, CHS renovation and expansion, RMS HVAC, elementary consolidation project, and last year's steam-to-natural-gas conversion. He noted that since 2005, the Board has tried to maintain a level capital debt service of 5% of its General Fund Operating Budget to avoid spikes in the tax rate. He noted a decrease in interest on debt of \$109,951. He then reviewed future discussion topics.

Clint Cogswell asked if there was any way the security project could be completed by the end of the summer, and Mr. Richards echoed the sentiment and asked what the Board could do to help facilitate this project. Mr. Cashman explained that some aspects of the plan could be prioritized to be completed over the summer while the rest could be spread over two years. Mr. Fennessy asked if the security, roof, and painting projects are too much to do over the summer. Mr. Cashman explained that ceiling and painting projects can get expensive in a District of this size, and that the other projects mentioned could be bonded over time. Mr. Dunn explained that there would be extra money left over in last year's bond to help fund some of these projects. Mr. Richards noted that coordinating ceiling replacement with the security updates (lighting, cameras) would be much more cost-effective than completing these projects individually. Liza Poinier asked when the Board would start setting money aside for the upcoming RMS building project; Mr. Dunn explained that the Board was already saving money for this and that it was a matter of finding funding partners, via state and/or federal aid. Mr. Fennessy asked about the status of the CHS gym. Mr. Cashman explained that an update should be available by Monday.

Ms. Patterson then noted that the next section would address questions raised at the previous work session regarding Student Services.

Superintendent Forsten discussed the special education process of referral, disposition of the referral, evaluation, determination of eligibility, development and approval of an IEP, placement and monitoring. Mr. Belmont stated there is quarterly tracking done on special education students. Superintendent Forsten referred to the "Supporting Students with Special Education Needs" handout.

Mr. Dunn again reviewed the special education and pupil services budget. He noted that the estimated \$56,000 reduction from the initial proposed budget was due to the reallocation of funding for the Family Literacy program to grants.

Superintendent Forsten reviewed the history of educational assistants. In response to a question from Mr. Crush about whether students could have both a behavior specialist and an educational assistant, Superintendent Forsten noted this was the case. Mr. Crush then asked if each school gets a fixed number of assistants or whether they stay with the student. Superintendent Forsten stated that this situation is a hybrid of both options.

In response to a question from Ms. Redmond-Scura about whether behavior specialists helped reduce the need for out-of-district placements, Mr. Belmont replied that this was demonstrably true.

Ms. Palley discussed how success of District special education programs was assessed and reviewed several metric slides.

Ms. Palley highlighted the use of SWIS, which is used at all schools. Ms. Wicks asked whether SWIS was used at MBS and Ms. Palley said it was.

Mr. Fennessy asked what other benchmarks are used. Ms. Palley highlighted the Smarter Balance test for grades three and eight.

Mr. Crush asked Ms. Palley about the 1-4 ranking, and about how the District receives feedback. Mr. Belmont and Ms. Palley talked about the State Satisfaction Report.

Superintendent Forsten reviewed the Special Education Enrollment slide with the added preschool students.

Mr. Fennessy asked about overall systemic processes. Mr. Belmont talked about the five neighborhood schools and Ms. Palley discussed interventions. Ms. Patterson recommended that the Board consider scheduling an Instructional committee meeting to discuss the various special education processes and interventions.

Mr. Belmont reviewed several years' worth of history as it related to out-of-district placements. He noted that an out-of-district placement could cost as much as \$160,000 and a foster placement as much as \$40,000 per student.

Superintendent Forsten reviewed bidding for consultation services.

Mr. Cogswell then asked if they could see a "day in the life" of a student who uses a behavior specialist. Superintendent Forsten discussed doing a data drop and presenting this information.

Superintendent Forsten highlighted some future developments that include increasing leadership in special education at the elementary level and developing a behavior task force.

Ms. Patterson asked for public comment.

Adrienne Evans, a parent with two children at RMS, stated that her biggest concern was that the District does not solicit requests for proposals (RFP) for behavior specialists and that it may be more financially prudent to do so. She also had concerns about contracted staff not being in the building versus if they were District staff. In addition, she offered the Board the ability to publicly discuss her son's experiences and challenges.

Sara Aiken, a parent of a student, would like to see her son's IEP online, and applications specifically for special education students. She also asked if there was a way to allow her son to email her from his District account. Also, she had never had an experience as described in the meeting or been asked if she had any concerns. She also said she did not believe there were enough paraprofessionals in the District.

Jennifer Pinio stated she also had concerns about the RFP process, and echoed the comments of other parents.

Penny Duffy, a parent of students at RMS and CHS, stated that not all applications are accessible to those students who are blind (ex. RazKids), and Tech Ed Robotics.

Ms. Patterson thanked those members of the public who gave feedback to the Board.

The Board voted 8-0 to adjourn (motioned by Ms. Wicks, seconded by Mr. Crush.)

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Redmond-Scura, *Secretary*