

Concord School District Board of Education  
**Board Work Session #3**  
**February 20, 2019**

**Board members** Jennifer Patterson, *President*, Tom Croteau, Chuck Crush, Barb Higgins, Jim Richards, Pam Wicks, Danielle Smith, Nancy Kane, Liza Poinier

**Administration:** *Superintendent* Terri L. Forsten, *Assistant Superintendent* Donna Palley, *Business Administrator* Jack Dunn, *Director of Facilities and Planning* Matt Cashman, *Director of Human Resources* Larry Prince, *Director of Student Services* Bob Belmont

Board President Jennifer Patterson called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m., noting that this work session was a review of Student Services and special education costs in the FY19-20 budget. Superintendent Terri Forsten reviewed the meeting agenda:

- Budget goals 2019 – 2020
- Overview of Student Services
- Student Services enrollment
- Student Services staffing
- New positions
- Budget
- Revenues – grants
- Upcoming budget meetings

Superintendent Forsten briefly reviewed the 2019-2020 budget goals presented at previous meetings:

Regular education: keeping class sizes within policy guidelines, and developing extended learning opportunities

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment: providing new materials for reading instruction, and purchasing new competency grading and reporting software

Student Services: adding 5 new Assistant Principals at the elementary level, and program development for 3R elementary

Technology: providing one-to-one devices for all students, and replacing the telephone system

Capital purchases, debt service: maintaining 5% in the operating budget for debt service, including new proposed debt for roof replacements

Community relations: sharing success stories in the schools, and continuing work on the middle school facility plan

Director of Student Services Robert Belmont provided an overview of the role of Student Services throughout the District, explaining that the three main principles of

Student Services are the partnerships among educators; data-driven decisions; and targeted utilization of staff and resources.

Assistant Superintendent Donna Palley provided an overview of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), a framework defining how the District provides educational equity for all students of all abilities:

- Provides educational equity for all students
- Includes high quality instruction and assessment
- Focuses on fidelity to instruction and support
- Driven by assessment data

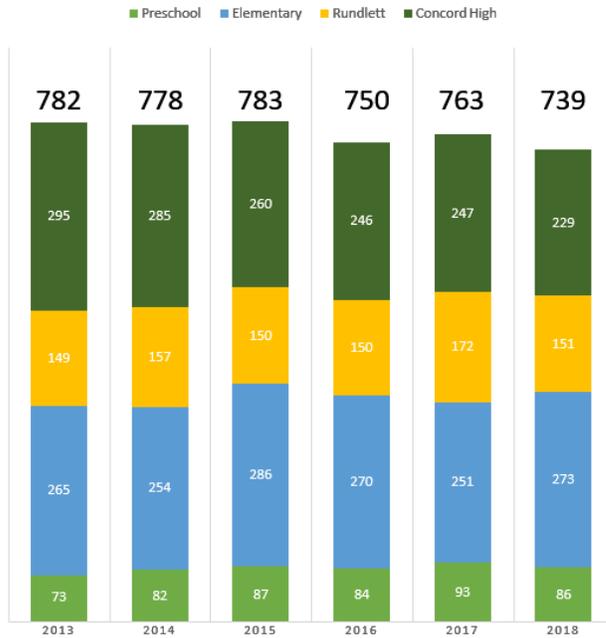
MTSS in the District:

- Universal screening
- Data-based decision making, problem solving
- Continuous progress monitoring
- Continuum of evidence-based practices:
  - Core curriculum provided for all students
  - Modification of the core curriculum for students who need targeted instruction
  - Specialized and intensive curriculum for students who need intensive support

This is supported by specialized teams of staff in each school who provide and modify curricula for students who require targeted or intensive intervention. Tom Croteau asked if the District is still using the data collection process PBIS has previously provided. Ms. Palley explained that the PBIS program SWIS is currently in use, and that students are entered into this system if they require intervention. She added that this information is the core of what MTSS teams use when looking at student needs and monitoring progress. Chuck Crush asked if there is a District-wide QA committee that reviews this data. Ms. Palley explained that the District hires outside consultants who perform regular fidelity inventories.

Mr. Belmont reviewed the special education process in New Hampshire, emphasizing the role and importance of inclusion in the classroom. He explained that students have a legal right to a free and appropriate public education, which includes special accommodations and regular progress reports. He added that it is also critically important to include special education students in special activities and extracurricular groups, and to assist with transitioning these students into post-secondary opportunities.

Mr. Belmont reviewed the components of special education and enrollment over the last five years, noting a slight decrease in numbers.



- Preschool = 86 (Light Green)
- Elementary = 273 (Blue)
- Middle School = 151 (Orange)
- High School = 229 (Dark Green)
- Total = 739

Mr. Crush asked why the number of special education students in middle school was lower compared to those at the elementary and high school levels. Mr. Belmont explained that several factors affect those numbers, including the fact that not all students graduate in the standard four years of high school, and that the middle school contains only three grade levels vs. the four grade levels at the high school, as well as students over the age of 18. Jim Richards asked about enrollment trends and how out-of-district and charter school placements affect these numbers. Mr. Belmont explained that charter school enrollment seems to be based on the number of charter schools currently in the area. Mr. Richards asked if the declining enrollment trend is due to a decrease in need or an increase in out-of-district placement. Mr. Belmont explained that he regularly works with staff to accurately classify students who need 504 plans vs. individual educational plans (IEPs), and that special education staff is becoming increasingly adept in determining and addressing student needs to more accurately categorize them. Ms. Palley reminded the Board that overall District enrollment is also declining.

Mr. Croteau asked what the District does at preschool and kindergarten levels to ensure students with special needs do not “fall through the cracks.” Mr. Belmont explained that the District has made significant advances in kindergarten screening and also employs social-emotional programming and assessment, class tools, and activities with parents and families, including child-check clinics. He emphasized the social skills curriculum. Ms. Palley discussed several family centers throughout Concord, which provide children, parents and caregivers additional therapeutic services, including home visits and psychotherapy for young children. Mr. Belmont added that the District is piloting a grandparents’ group to provide additional, specialized support for grandparents who serve in primary caregiver capacities for their grandchildren. Mr. Crush asked about next steps and follow-up when a student

has been identified as being at social-emotional risk. Ms. Palley explained that this is performed by therapeutic staff such as school psychologists or counselors, through early intervention programs in the case of young children. Mr. Crush asked who the local partner providers are. Ms. Palley noted that Riverbend, Waypoint, Ascentria, and Child & Family Services are partners with the District, adding that these are primarily supported by grants. Mr. Belmont and Superintendent Forsten reviewed the frequency and array of identified educational disabilities throughout the District, noting that students could be represented multiple times on the chart if they have multiple disabilities.

DISABILITY	PRESCHOOL			ELEMENTARY					MIDDLE	HIGH	Total #	Out of District Charter School
	BMS	MBS	*CP	ADS	BGS	BMS	CMS	MBS	RMS	CHS		
Autism	2	7	0	4	10	6	11	9	21	45	115	9
Deaf-Blindness	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Deafness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Developmental Delay	19	25	11	16	2	18	12	24	0	0	127	2
Emotional Disturbance	0	0	0	0	0	7	2	0	16	33	58	11
Hearing Impairment	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	3	1	7	1
Intellectual Disabilities	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	5	13	22	2
Multiple Disabilities	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	2	6	1
Orthopedic Impairment	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
Other Health Impaired	2	2	0	12	10	11	13	7	56	83	196	18
Specific Learning Disability	0	0	0	10	30	5	17	3	71	59	195	11
Speech-Language Impairment	3	4	18	13	12	8	9	7	28	36	138	7
Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	1
Visual Impairment – Blindness	0	1	0	1	2	0	2	2	2	1	11	0

Mr. Belmont reviewed English Language Learner (ELL) enrollment and trends, noting a steady increase over the last five years. He noted that 40 languages are spoken within the District. Students originate primarily from Nepal and several African countries, with the highest populations at MBS and BGS; these students represent 8% of the overall student population. He complimented District-wide commitment to these students, specifically noting CHS social worker Anna Marie DiPasquale for her ongoing work and support assisting ELL students with college placements.

Mr. Belmont reviewed the Section 504 program in schools, which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities who receive federal funding assistance. He explained that currently 73 students in the District are homeless. The McKinney-Vento Act ensures students' access to their schools of origin, with a 50/50 cost share program with other Districts if they need to be transported to and from school. Mr. Crush asked how the District identifies homeless students. Mr. Belmont and Superintendent Forsten explained that this typically happens during the student registration process. Specific staff are trained to focus on sensitivity and support for these families. Mr. Richards asked if transportation is provided for summer programming for these students. Mr. Belmont explained that it is.

Following up on questions posed at previous Board work sessions, Mr. Belmont reviewed several slides that provided three specific examples of costs associated with an inclusive, in-District education vs. out-of-district placement and transportation.

Firstly, he reviewed the annual cost of a CHS student with an IEP in the District “prep” program vs. an out-of-district program and transportation, noting that the latter would cost nearly twice as much – approximately \$41,000 vs. \$71,000 per year.

Secondly, he reviewed the annual cost of a CHS student with an IEP in the “Advance” program, demonstrating a difference of approximately \$28,000 vs. \$71,000 per year for an out-of-district placement. Mr. Crush asked if the Advance program was similar to the 3R program, and Mr. Belmont said it was, and explained that many of these students are included in general education programs.

Finally, Mr. Belmont reviewed the annual cost of a CHS student with an IEP in the District “ACCESS” program, which costs approximately \$88,000 per year, noting that an out-of-district placement and transportation for the same student would cost approximately \$194,000 per year.

Mr. Richards noted that the state adequacy annual payment per student is about \$3,600 and asked what the state gives the District per student over and above that \$3,600. Mr. Belmont stated that this might be an additional \$1,100 at most. Ms. Palley and Mr. Belmont explained that the District might be able to bill Medicaid for some services, but that the District is not reimbursed at 100% and that these reimbursements provide insubstantial relief and are not hugely significant. Mr. Crushed asked for the Medicaid revenue amount. Mr. Dunn explained that the budgeted amount is \$1,125,000.

Mr. Belmont reviewed the percentage of students on IEPs included in general education classrooms, noting that a majority of students are in regular classrooms most of the day, with appropriate staff supports.

Superintendent Forsten reviewed elementary student enrollment and staffing, focusing on Student Services. She noted that these numbers do not include Speech-Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, or Guidance Counselors.

SCHOOL	ALL STUDENTS	CLASSROOM TEACHERS	SPECIAL ED STUDENTS	SPECIAL ED TEACHERS	EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS	ELL STUDENTS	ELL TEACHER TUTOR	TITLE I STUDENTS	TITLE I TUTORS
ABBOT-DOWNING	371	19	51	3	11	9	0.5	86	4
BEAVER MEADOW	353*	17	73	7	23	23	1	105	3
BROKEN GROUND	349	16	63	3	20	58	1.5	109	4
CHRISTA MCAULIFFE	417	20	59	3	24	14	1	90	3
MILL BROOK	407*	19	82	5	30	79	1	74	3
TOTAL	1,897	91	328	21	108	183	5	464	17

She provided a summary of Student Services staff positions and their responsibilities, including Educational Assistants, special education Teachers, special education Coordinators, and the proposed new Assistant Principals. She explained that currently, a half-time coordinator works at each elementary school and full-time coordinators or directors work at the middle and high schools. She reviewed the proposed new elementary Assistant Principal positions and special education Coordinator positions, noting the costs associated with both, and outlining the major responsibilities for both roles. Mr. Crush asked for measurable outcomes or the impact of keeping current

staffing as is, versus hiring new Assistant Principals, and what would happen with the current special education Coordinators. Superintendent Forsten explained that the Coordinators are aware of these proposed new roles and two are qualified and interested in applying. The third person is working to gain an administrator credential. She added that the District is moving toward being less reliant on outside consulting services. Barb Higgins suggested that a clause in the CEA contract may require CEA approval before changing Coordinator roles into Assistant Principal roles. Superintendent Forsten stated that she would research this and get back to the Board. Mr. Croteau asked about the benefit of adding Assistant Principals, and wondered what is not happening as easily right now that would happen more easily with Assistant Principals. Ms. Patterson suggested that Board members should wait for further information from the administration before making decisions.

Superintendent Forsten reviewed the 3R program special education Teacher position, which is designed to meet the needs of young students who have serious social, emotional and behavioral disabilities. She recommended adding a second special education teacher to this program, as the breadth of learning needs warrants such a position.

Mr. Dunn reviewed the proposed Student Services budget, which totals \$21,548,643.55, an increase of 4.36% over last year.

EXPENDITURE OBJECT	FY19 - BUDGET	FY20 - PROPOSED	CHANGE (\$)	CHANGE (%)
[610000] - SALARIES	12,336,157.00	12,595,720.00	259,563.00	2.10
[620000] - BENEFITS	4,844,425.00	5,181,294.00	336,869.00	6.95
[630000] - PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	1,469,815.00	1,482,498.00	12,683.00	0.86
[640000] - PURCHASED PROPERTY	3,703.00	6,001.00	2,298.00	62.06
[650000] - PURCHASED SERVICES	1,894,987.66	2,177,061.24	282,073.58	14.89
[660000] - SUPPLIES, BOOKS AND UTILITIES	84,966.74	86,148.67	1,181.93	1.39
[670000] - EQUIPMENT	13,440.93	18,330.64	4,889.71	36.38
[680000] - DUES, FEES & INTEREST	1,590.00	1,590.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL SPECIAL EDUCATION AND PUPIL SERVICES	20,649,085.33	21,548,643.55	899,558.22	4.36

He provided an overview of contracted services provided by William J. White consulting staff, which includes behaviorists, autism support staff and extended-year consultation services for students with emotional disabilities and autism, at a total of \$859,748.25 for the year.

Mr. Dunn provided a summary of out-of-district placements, noting that 22 students are projected to be placed out-of-district in the coming school year, representing just over 3% of District students with educational disabilities, and that related expenditures include tuition, related services, and transportation. He provided a breakdown of these 22 students:

- 22 students placed out-of-district
  - 10 students placed by the District (2 middle school, 9 high school)
  - 11 students placed by the courts (1 elementary, 3 middle school, 7 high school)

- 1 student placed by parents
- 0 student in foster care

He explained that four students have returned to the District recently from out-of-district placements, which accounts for projected lower costs for the coming year. Some related costs to the budget increase in other areas, however; for example, behavior specialists and related services to support placement within the District will increase. This will also result in transportation savings, as students return to their home district.

Mr. Dunn reviewed the District’s state and federal funding sources, noting a significant decrease or elimination of several grants.

SOURCE	NAME OF GRANT	DESCRIPTION – FOCUS FOR FUNDING	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	PROJECTED 2019-2020
Federal	IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	\$1,105,005	\$1,162,558	\$1,168,304	\$1,177,261	\$1,195,454
Federal	Title I	Improving The Academic Achievement Of The Disadvantaged	\$1,109,514	\$1,130,324	\$1,224,970	\$1,104,460	-
Federal	Title III	Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students	\$83,685	\$89,972	\$80,197	\$64,580	-
Federal	SS/HS - SAMHSA	Safe Schools/Healthy Students	\$524,710	\$520,141	\$533,000	*	No Budget
Federal	Medicaid	Billing for Medicaid reimbursable services	\$1,132,438	\$1,030,172	\$1,075,000	\$1,050,000	\$1,125,000
Federal	iSocial	Preschool Special Education	\$4,549	\$9,906	\$10,000	\$10,000	No Budget
State	Special Education Aid (formerly Catastrophic Aid)	To defray costs of those whose costs are more than 3 ½ times the state average cost per pupil	\$395,945	\$376,697	\$232,215	\$300,000	\$165,258
State	Differentiated Aid	Charter Schools	\$29,114	\$25,998	\$17,358	\$17,358	\$17,358
State	Adequacy	\$1,956 for a special education student who has an individualized educational plan (IEP)	\$1,348,114	\$1,343,056	\$1,322,102	\$1,322,102	\$1,352,327

Ms. Patterson called for a motion to adjourn.

**The Board voted 9-0 to adjourn (motioned by Mr. Croteau, seconded by Ms. Poinier).**

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Richards, *Secretary*  
 Lauren Hynds, *Recorder*