

Concord School District Board of Education
Special Board meeting
March 27, 2019

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

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

Board President Jennifer Patterson called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m., noting that the special Board meeting was for final Board member discussion and to vote on the proposed budget. Superintendent Forsten reviewed the agenda:

- Budget 2019 – 2020 goals
- Budget summary
- Expenditures
- Revenues
- Tax impact
- Other considerations – unknowns
- Public comment
- Vote on FY20 budget
- Vote on introduction of first reading – bond for CHS and BGS roofs (\$5 million)
- Public information
- Public comment

Superintendent Forsten briefly reviewed the 2019-2020 budget goals:

- Regular education
 - Class sizes within policy guidelines
 - Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs)
- Curriculum, instruction, and assessment
 - New materials for reading instruction
 - Competency grading and reporting
- Student Services
 - Elementary Assistant Principal positions
 - Program development for 3R elementary
- Technology
 - One-to-one devices for all students
 - Telephone replacement
- Capital purchases and debt service
 - 5% operating budget for debt service, including new proposed debt for roof replacements
- Community relations

- Success stories in Concord public schools
- Middle school facility plan

Superintendent Forsten discussed the increasing special education budget. Business Administrator Jack Dunn presented the adjusted special education budget, which factored in the Bill White Associates contracted service reductions. He noted a percentage change of 3.63%, a decrease from the originally-proposed increase of 4.36%.

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	1,332,498.00	(137,317.00)	(9.34)
[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 STUDENT SERVICES	20,649,085.33	21,398,643.55	749,558.22	3.63

Mr. Dunn delineated the difference between special education and pupil services from an accounting perspective, explaining that the increase from FY16 to FY20 was just over \$3 million, not the \$7 million mentioned in a previous Board meeting.

ACCOUNTING FUNCTIONS

SPECIAL EDUCATION	PUPIL SERVICES
(1200) Special Education Programs	(2120) Guidance Services
(1210) Students with Disabilities	(2134) Health and Nursing Services
(1260) Bilingual/ELL	(2140) Psychological Services
	(2150) Speech and Audiology Services
	(2153) Audiology Services
	(2160) Physical/Occupational Therapy Services
	(2191) Vision Services

Note: Accounting Function Codes follow the [1999 NH Financial Accounting Handbook for Local Educations Agencies](#)

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND PUPIL SERVICES FY16 -vs- FY20 – EXPENDITURES ONLY

	FY16 BUDGET	FY20 BUDGET	CHANGE (\$)	CHANGE (%)
Special Education (1200 series)	13,051,421.00	15,000,406.00	1,948,985.00	14.93
Pupil Services (2100 series)	5,321,472.00	6,398,237.00	1,076,765.00	20.23
TOTALS	18,372,893.00	21,398,643.00	3,025,750.00	16.47

Mr. Dunn provided a detailed breakdown of the special education and pupil services line items and changes.

[610000] - Salaries

- 1200 – Special education
 - (0.28) PreSchool Instructional Assistant – BMS
 - (0.47) PreSchool Special Education Teacher – BMS

- (0.30) PreSchool Special Education Teacher - BMS
- (3.95) Instructional Assistants – CMS
- 2100 – Pupil Services
 - (1.0) ELO Coordinator - CHS
 - (1.0) 3R Teacher – BMS
 - (0.6) – Family Literacy
 - (0.18) – Family Literacy – MBS
- Ins/outs
- Budget change: \$259,563

[620000] - Benefits

- New positions
- Ins/outs
- Budget change: \$336,869

[630000] – Professional services

- Medicaid billing and psychology services
- Reduction of \$150,000 Bill White Associates services
- Budget change: (\$137,317)

[640000] – Purchased property

- Copy machine lease – White Farm
- Budget change: \$2,298

[650000] – Purchased services

- Placements (out of district, Second Start, community)
 - Elementary - \$181,511 (2 court, 1 District)
 - Middle School - \$223,344 (3 court, 0 District)
 - High School - \$1,705,341 (8 court, 8 District)
 - Placements total: \$2,110,196 or \$281,649
- Budget change: \$282,073.58

[660000] – Supplies, books and utilities

- General supplies
- Budget change: \$1,181.93

[670000] - Equipment

- (1) Adaptive tricycle
- (7) Rifton chairs for Kindergarten students
- Budget change: \$4,889.71

[680000] – Dues, fees, and interest

- Covers Advance extended year program, association dues
- Budget change: \$0

Chuck Crush asked if the District had any say in court-mandated out-of-district placements. Assistant Superintendent Donna Palley explained that while the District generally has a representative present at these hearings, this is ultimately the court's decision.

Superintendent Forsten explained the expectations for Assistant Principal candidates' certifications. She expects that candidates would attain special education administration certification within one year if they do not already have it. Ms. Palley added that the emphasis would be on special education experience and, ideally, special education administration certification.

- Expectation that candidates are certified in special education administration
 - Critical shortage in special education administration
 - Second option would be someone with Associate Principal certification
 - Absolute expectation that candidates seek special education administration certification as soon as possible
- How would the success of these positions be measured?
 - Improved student skill development and performance in all subgroups
- These positions would provide leadership for early intervention
- Principals reported hearing positive support for these positions from staff
- Parents had been supportive after hearing additional information that the positions would be focused on special education, be year-round, and be full-time in each school
- Demographic report indicated that elementary enrollments will be stable (not declining) over the next ten years

Superintendent Forsten reviewed the proposed Director of Communications role and provided alternative options, including a reduced salary and several contracted service models. She reminded Board members that the role would provide an opportunity for increased revenue in the form of state adequacy corresponding with increasing enrollment.

- Options to consider
 - Reduce the salary to \$50,000; total cost with all benefits: \$82,765
 - Reduce the request to \$50,000; contracted services
 - Reduce the request to \$25,000; contracted services
- Related revenue
 - Impact on enrollment would impact revenue – state adequacy
 - Grant writing – information gathering
- Building revenue
- Would support every school
 - Communications within schools
 - Communications with the Concord Monitor, WMURTV, radio

Mr. Dunn reviewed recommended reductions to the proposed budget, adding several additional items to the previously-presented list, bringing the total reduction to \$251,673. He reminded Board members of the PILOT and unreserved fund balance of \$130,000.

EXPENDITURES

DESCRIPTION	SUPERINTENDENT'S BUDGET
Superintendent's Contingency	13,929.00
Bill White Contracted Services	150,000.00
CRTC – Extra PayScreen Error, salary & FICA	22,945.00
Transmitter - Transportation	8,500.00
Airphone	2,500.00
Wrestling Mats	7,000
RMS Projector – Auxiliary Gym	15,000
Turn-It-In – Online Subscription	8,035
Director of Communications	23,764
TOTAL	251,673

REVENUES

DESCRIPTION	SUPERINTENDENT'S BUDGET
PILOT	30,000
Unreserved Fund Balance	100,000
TOTAL	130,000

Superintendent's Contingency

- This fund is made up of the following positions:

FTE	POSITION	AMOUNT
1	Teacher's	96,591
1	Teacher's	96,591
1	Program Assistant	36,577
1	Instructional Assistant	34,980
1	Tutor	41,332
5		306,071

Bill White Contracted Services

- Through the work of the high school Special Education Director, we are able to move from contracting for three behavior specialists from BW to employing three of our staff who have gained expertise to support students.

Mr. Dunn summarized expenditures by group and by object, including the proposed reductions.

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTION GROUP

EXPENDITURE FUNCTION	FY19 – BUDGET 10/29/18	FY20 – PROPOSED BUDGET	CHANGE (\$)	CHANGE (%)
[1100] - Regular Education	29,606,781.45	30,038,567.12	431,785.67	1.46
[1200 2100] - Special Ed and Pupil Services	20,649,085.33	21,398,643.55	749,558.22	3.63
[1300] - Vocational Education	1,485,095.00	1,586,654.00	101,559.00	6.84
[1400] - Co-Curricular Activities	1,127,160.00	1,131,823.00	4,663.00	0.41
[1600] - Adult Education/Community Ed	126,760.00	144,700.00	17,940.00	14.15
[2200] - Support Services	3,927,806.43	3,552,595.28	(375,211.15)	(9.55)
[2300 2400 2500 2800] - Administration	6,911,141.79	7,967,559.35	1,056,417.56	15.29
[2600 4600 5100] - Building, Grounds, Construction, Principal & Interest	11,977,647.00	12,565,118.70	587,471.70	4.90
[2700] - Transportation	3,375,533.00	3,456,448.00	80,915.00	2.40
[2900] - Benefits	1,875,050.00	1,577,590.00	(297,460.00)	(15.86)
[5200] - Transfers	2,373,623.00	1,634,775.00	(738,848.00)	(31.13)
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	83,435,683.00	85,054,474.00	1,618,791.00	1.94

SUMMARY BY EXPENDITURES BY OBJECT

EXPENDITURE OBJECT	FY19 – BUDGET 10/29/18	FY20 – REVISED	CHANGE (\$)	CHANGE (%)
[610000] - SALARIES	43,433,831.00	44,559,228.00	1,125,397.00	2.59
[620000] - BENEFITS	20,066,787.00	20,669,047.00	602,260.00	3.00
[630000] - PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	2,563,182.00	2,392,580.70	(170,601.30)	(6.66)
[640000] - PURCHASED PROPERTY	2,086,556.00	1,713,767.40	(372,788.60)	(17.87)
[650000] - PURCHASED SERVICES	2,829,910.66	3,145,252.24	315,341.58	11.14
[660000] - SUPPLIES, BOOKS AND UTILITIES	3,293,909.90	3,523,067.51	229,157.61	6.96
[670000] - EQUIPMENT	423,395.47	448,198.15	24,802.68	5.86
[680000] - DUES, FEES & INTEREST	3,399,487.97	3,408,558.00	9,070.03	0.27
[690000] - PRINCIPAL AND TRANSFERS	5,338,623.00	5,194,775.00	(143,848.00)	(2.69)
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	83,435,683.00	85,054,474.00	1,618,791.00	1.94

Mr. Dunn provided a General Fund budget summary and reviewed the overall tax impact, noting a change from \$.39 to \$.29 with the proposed reductions.

BUDGET SUMMARY – GENERAL FUND ONLY

DESCRIPTION	FY19 – FINALIZED 10/29/18	FY20 – PROPOSED BUDGET	CHANGE (\$)	CHANGE (%)
EXPENDITURES				
Total Appropriation	83,435,683	85,054,474	1,618,791.00	1.94%
				-
REVENUES				
Local	4,169,279	4,785,722	586,443.00	14.07%
State	16,365,816	16,021,243	(344,573.00)	-2.11%
Federal	1,927,396	1,943,347	15,951.00	0.83%
Transfers	195,930	550,788	354,858.00	181.11%
Unreserved Fund Balance	2,121,834	1,700,000	(421,834.00)	-19.88%
State Education Tax	7,786,367	7,730,534	(55,833.00)	-0.72%
<i>Local Education Tax*</i>	50,869,061	52,322,840	1,453,779.00	2.86%
TOTAL REVENUES	83,435,683	85,054,474	1,618,791.00	1.94%

* - Affects Tax Rate

Mr. Dunn reviewed other considerations and unknowns.

Board

- Negotiations 2019-2020: one collective bargaining group (CEAA), and unaffiliated
- Special education aid (formerly known as catastrophic aid)
- Adequacy – current year: \$3,636.08 for full-time students, and \$2,918.04 full-day kindergarteners
- Capital improvements (CHS and BGS roofing projects, Rundlett Middle School, other facility improvements)

- Declining enrollment (predicted to be 1% annually) – impact on revenue (\$3,636 per student as of current year)

City

- Budget
- Commercial and residential real growth

Current status of state legislation

- HB 357, relative to the public-school infrastructure fund
 - The school district infrastructure fund is an allotment of state money that has supported school districts in the last year by funding security and safety upgrades. This bill modifies the fund by making all moneys non-lapsing. A motion was made, ought to pass and carried unanimously.
- HB 175, relative to the requirements for school building aid grants
 - An amendment to the original bill was offered providing a clearer pathway for the submission of requests for school building aid as well as a requirement of guidelines to be received by the requesting district. A motion was made, ought to pass on the amendment, the amendment passed unanimously. A motion was made ought to pass as amended, the motion carried unanimously.
- HB 176-FN-A, relative to grants for school building aid and making an appropriation therefor
 - Would require the state to fully fund school building aid at no less than 50 million dollars. HB 176 would offer relief to many districts in addressing old and outdated school infrastructure. A motion was made, ought to pass. The motion carried unanimously.
- State adequacy funding – four bills
 - HB 678-FN, relative to state funding of the cost of an opportunity for an adequate education for all New Hampshire students.
 - HB 709-FN-A-LOCAL, relative to the funding formula for determining funding for an adequate education.
 - HB 711-FN-Local, relative to funding an adequate education.
 - HB 713-FN-Local, relative to education funding
- SB 303-FN, relative to state aid to school districts
 - Addresses state aid relating to special education funding. It takes three actions. One, the bill deletes the requirement that state aid for special education be prorated if the amount appropriated is insufficient. Two, it requires the NHDOE to distribute one hundred percent of a district's entitlement for special education aid beginning in 2021. Last, it clarifies reimbursement procedures for school districts or SAUs enrolled as Medicaid providers.
- HB184 – relative to funding full-day kindergarten
 - Moving full-day kindergarten to equal status with all other students in ADM count and removing Keno as sole funding source

Federal

- Medicaid funding (\$1,000,000+)
- Grant funding – Title IA, Title IIA, Title III, Title IVA
- After school program funding
- Infrastructure funding

Ms. Patterson opened the meeting for public comment.

Concord resident Carl Sargent emphasized that staff and programs were most important to education, not buildings. He stated that Concord is an economically poor city and that spending on buildings was an unnecessary expense. He suggested that the elementary Assistant Principals be half-time teachers and half-time administrators. He said that roofs should last at least 50 years and that the District should use a less expensive architecture firm that could save \$20-\$30 million. He was concerned about assessed property values and tax rates.

Concord resident and special education Teacher Mike Macri stated that he emailed a letter to Board members expressing opposition to the Assistant Principal positions as the plan was expensive and would not affect day-to-day student service and experience. He stated that special education is not staffed adequately. He implored Board members to listen to classroom teachers and staff rather than school administration.

Concord resident David Parker expressed concerns about several staff members. He strongly stated that speakers should not be held to a time limit. He strongly opposed the Assistant Principal positions and believed students will be negatively impacted.

Ms. Patterson suggested that Board members discuss specific budget items. She expressed appreciation for the additional options to decrease the budget and wondered if there were opportunities to further trim it. She asked for additional discussion about the ELO Coordinator position and what the tax impact would be if the Director of Communications position was eliminated completely. Mr. Dunn explained that, if the position was eliminated, the tax rate would decrease from 2.11% to 2.01%.

Mr. Crush asked if job descriptions were prepared for all proposed positions. Superintendent Forsten responded that drafts of job descriptions existed and that elements of these have appeared in presentations at previous Board meetings. Mr. Crush asked for clarification regarding the Superintendent's reference to speaking with small groups of parents. Superintendent Forsten explained that she had informally spoken with people while in the schools and with Public Hearing attendees after the sessions. She clarified that these were not formal, scheduled meetings. Mr. Crush asked about HB 1499, related to establishing play-based kindergartens, mentioned by a parent speaker at a previous Board meeting. He wondered whether it might impact staffing levels. Ms. Palley noted that Concord's kindergartens were established as play-based, and she did not anticipate any staffing changes related to the legislation.

Tom Croteau noted that there have been many discussions about how to benchmark success for the Assistant Principal positions and that it was very important to provide these answers to parents. He explained that there would be an expectation to demonstrate

that this had been money well-spent and that there would need to be benchmarks along the way to monitor progress. Superintendent Forsten noted that she and Ms. Palley met with the elementary school Principals earlier in the week to obtain feedback about the Assistant Principal positions and their thoughts about ways to measure success. Ms. Palley explained that they would look at specific student outcomes, specifically with assessment results for regular education, special education and other student subgroups. She explained that benchmarks for IEP compliance were currently done in the schools. She noted that systems would need to be put in place to monitor other outcomes such as “school climate” and “feelings about student experience and support,” and that it would be possible to create feedback systems for parents and staff. Mr. Croteau noted that there would also need to be benchmarks related to staff outcomes, as supervision is part of the job description. Ms. Patterson suggested that the Assistant Principals would not have to be permanent positions if success measures were not met, and asked for a reasonable timeframe to determine their success. Ms. Palley noted that some success timeframes would be shorter, such as compliance deadlines that are currently measured and reported. She added that parent input was an ongoing feedback system and that student outcomes would vary throughout the year. She explained that two to three years might be a more useful metric than a single year, as the position would start in September along with the students.

Barb Higgins expressed dismay about the emphasis on easing Principals’ workload versus directly impacting students. She was concerned about converting Coordinator positions to Assistant Principal positions and believed this would constitute a grievable offense based on terms in the teachers’ contract. She emphasized her support of additional support positions but that the job of the Board was to ensure administration does their jobs properly. She suggested adding full-time Special Education Coordinators to each school rather than Assistant Principals.

Mr. Crush asked how success outcomes could be measured for 3R and similar programs and what those outcomes might be. He asked how the Assistant Principals would impact students affected by social-behavioral issues, trauma or the opioid crisis. Ms. Palley noted that this role was not meant to be a universal fix for all issues and that the District’s emphasis on trauma-sensitive schools would continue. She referred to the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support model (MTSS), noted that these roles would be working at Tier 3 and that all staff were regularly working hard at Tiers 1 and 2. She added that the 3R program required significant management and support and that that was difficult with only part-time Coordinators. She emphasized that full-time, year-round staff would have a significant impact on those programs, other staff and students. She added that RMS and CHS have 3R and similar programs as well as the added benefit of additional administrative support.

Jim Richards noted a line in the special education budget labeled as “not applicable” in the amount of \$104,000 and asked for clarification. Mr. Dunn explained that this was likely a missing title in the spreadsheet and that he would update and fix it.

The conversation turned to a discussion of the proposed Director of Communications position. Liza Poinier noted that she was in favor of a full-time Director of

Communications position and was opposed to contracted services. She asked if a part-time option has been considered for the position. Mr. Dunn agreed that a part-time employee without benefits could be an option.

Ms. Higgins asked if the District would be willing to consider creating a class at CHS or adding District communications-related responsibilities into the current Media Literacy class. She suggested building on the current social media work being done by members of the technology department as a way to promote the District. Ms. Patterson explained that she liked the idea of a Director of Communications and saw need for these services but did not feel this was the right year for it. She explained that she had seen an increase in social media activity and community engagement in her years on the Board. She suggested that perhaps the District could coordinate with the City of Concord and their marketing and communications efforts, as the District is an important part of the community. Ms. Higgins suggested that perhaps a part-time teacher could perform some of these tasks. Pam Wicks echoed Ms. Patterson's sentiments and stated that she felt this position could be piloted either part-time or as a college internship. She said that contracted services were not ideal as they would not have the understanding and buy-in of an internal employee. She agreed that the District should coordinate with the City, but not necessarily rely on it. Mr. Croteau noted that he was unclear on the exact nature and scope of this role and its expectations. He said more time would be needed to develop goals and outcomes for the role, including long-term benefits.

Mr. Richards explained that he believed the Director of Communications position had some value but that he would want to know what business, partnerships and funds it would bring in to determine return on investment. He noted that what the Board prioritizes sends an important message to the community about the District's priorities and that he would rather put more money toward the upcoming middle school project.

Mr. Crush echoed previous sentiments and stated that he felt this was not the right year for a Director of Communications position as a clear directive and objectives were absent. He noted that several alternatives aside from a full-time employee would be worth exploring.

Ms. Wicks explained that a Communications professional could help craft the District's messaging when discussing adequacy funding formula issues with the state and that a non-professional person might not have the capacity for this.

Danielle Smith echoed previous comments about it not being the right time for a full-time Director of Communications and added that she liked the idea of having a part-time teacher perform some of these tasks.

Nancy Kane stated that she felt this was a professional position, and that while the opportunity for students or interns was great, this should be a smaller piece of the role. She explained that if this position was to have a tangible measurable impact, it should be done by an experienced professional, not a student or teachers.

Ms. Poinier and Ms. Wicks echoed Ms. Kane's comments about the professional nature of the job. Ms. Wicks suggested that student work on this could be a pilot program to

demonstrate the value of a full-time position, and that ultimately a leader would be needed for this role. She suggested setting aside funds for contracted services as a way to complete some of the position's tasks, such as completing the District brochure and producing other informational materials.

Ms. Higgins recommended that the Board table the Director of Communications position to allow for more research into how to best fund the position and define it more clearly. Mr. Richards echoed Ms. Higgins' sentiment and recommend removing the position from the budget, explaining that the Board would vote on an updated version of the budget with the position omitted. Board members agreed to not hold a vote on the position as the consensus was in favor of removing it.

Ms. Patterson introduced discussion of the proposed ELO Coordinator position. Mr. Dunn explained that the ELO Coordinator would be a full-year position with a salary of \$70,000, roughly equaling pay step 8 for a teacher. Director of Human Resources Larry Prince explained that it would take a teacher approximately eight years to get to this pay step. Mr. Richards expressed that he was unclear on the exact tasks of this position and the scale of student impact, and that he was concerned about decreasing vocational revenue. He recommended removing the position from this budget and obtaining more information for next year.

Mr. Croteau agreed with previous comments about not funding the ELO Coordinator position this year. He said these roles are already being fulfilled, in part, by teaching staff, and did not feel students would be shortchanged by not having it this year.

Ms. Wicks disagreed with Mr. Richards' and Mr. Croteau's sentiments and stated that she believed the position would be valuable and allow more students to have access to alternative learning opportunities.

Ms. Higgins shared that her daughter had two excellent ELO experiences at CHS. She suggested talking with teachers who currently perform these roles to best inform a possible position in the future.

Ms. Kane noted that the compressed budget process has not allowed enough time to build detailed descriptions and visions for the proposed new positions.

Ms. Patterson expressed ambivalence about this role. She felt it was important to support more students and enable them to have access to ELO opportunities. She said she was impressed with the variety of student clubs and organizations at CHS and wanted to ensure there were comparable learning opportunities available to students of all backgrounds and needs. She explained that she felt an ELO Coordinator could be a step in the right direction to meet this need and that she would like to explore a part-time or incremental option as a way to test the benefit of having a dedicated position.

Mr. Crush echoed Ms. Patterson's uncertainty and added that while he thought there likely was a benefit to students, the specifics of those benefits were unclear. He said an incremental approach was best and could perhaps lead to a future full-time position.

Superintendent Forsten explained that a .6 vacancy at CHS would likely become available in April and asked if the Board might consider using that vacancy as funding for a .6 ELO

Coordinator. She added that the intent was for the position to be unaffiliated and that it would be budget-neutral, as the .6 position was already factored into the budget. She encouraged Board members to review the job description from the February 20 work session and reminded them that Concord was one of few districts in the state without a dedicated ELO Coordinator in place.

Ms. Patterson moved to create a part-time ELO Coordinator to replace the .6 vacancy at CHS. The motion was seconded by Ms. Higgins.

Ms. Wicks stated that she felt this was a step in the right direction and that students would see an immediate benefit. She noted that the Instructional Committee has an upcoming discussion about the growing trend of ELOs and their benefit to students. She encouraged other Board members attend this meeting to learn more about the position. Mr. Croteau echoed Ms. Wicks' comments and emphasized the need to ensure that extended learning activities are both meaningful and relevant.

The Board voted 8-1 (nay – Mr. Richards) to create a part-time ELO Coordinator position to replace the .6 vacancy at CHS (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Ms. Higgins).

Mr. Richards stated that he was in favor of roof replacements at CHS and BGS, upgrading the District phone system and purchasing new grading software. He clarified that he would like to see separate systems for grading elementary versus high school students as these were very different student populations.

Ms. Patterson asked for the tax rate with both the Director of Communications and ELO Coordinator positions eliminated. Mr. Dunn noted that this would result in a 1.79% or \$58 increase on the local rate, with a combined rate of 1.48%.

Mr. Richards noted that he was in support of the Technology Trust Fund and appreciated features that would increase teacher and staff productivity.

Ms. Poinier pointed out that the roof replacement project was very expensive and that Director of Facilities Matt Cashman had previously expressed optimism that actual costs would come in lower than estimated. She suggested that, if the costs did come in lower, the extra amount could be added into the Facilities Trust Fund. Mr. Dunn explained that this would not be possible as those funds are bonded. Ms. Poinier reminded Board and community members that, if the state was shouldering any of its responsibility for the New Hampshire Retirement System liability, the District could have funded all the proposed positions and moved more quickly on the middle school and other large facilities projects. She encouraged everyone to contact their legislators to encourage them to provide these funds, because as the state budget is cut, more costs are put on the District and consequently on local taxpayers.

Mr. Croteau encouraged Mr. Cashman to pursue the longest warranty possible on the new roofs. Mr. Cashman explained that he has done research into the best options and that the warranty was 40 years, with an option at the 40-year mark to add a polymer to address wear and tear.

Ms. Patterson suggested discussion about the proposed Assistant Principal for Student Services positions. She noted that the vote would be by roll call. She made a motion to retain the five Assistant Principal for Student Services positions in the budget as proposed. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wicks.

Ms. Patterson reflected on intense discussions about class size brought up during last year's budget process and how challenging larger sizes were for teachers, students and administration, especially when factoring in new challenges brought into classrooms year after year. She explained that she saw this proposal as evolving from those discussions and that it was important to have the ability to deliver services most effectively and make the most of the District's resources. She explained that two elements were critically important – having a full-time person in every school, and that this person be an administrator. She noted that while it was important to be cautious and mindful of the role and ensure sufficient benchmarks are in place, that did not mean holding off on these critically-important positions.

Ms. Higgins emphasized that these positions would need to be instituted correctly. She expressed concern about conflicts in the teachers' collective bargaining agreement and felt more steps were required before the positions could be approved. She suggested instead making the current part-time Special Education Coordinators into full-time roles, as those positions were parallel to teachers and would result in more direct student impact. She suggested an alternative option of hiring 25 new aides or paraprofessionals with the money suggested for the Assistant Principals.

Mr. Crush explained that, as an administrator himself, he took these roles very seriously. He received significant feedback opposed to these positions for various reasons and was concerned about their tax impact, particularly for people on fixed incomes. He felt the positions were not the right thing to do at this time and that the Board should take a step back this year. He noted he would be voting against the motion.

Ms. Wicks explained that she had actively volunteered in the elementary schools for years and that good leaders bring value to school climate. She added that she served on the hiring committee for the Special Education Director at CHS, and heard positive feedback from staff wanting that leadership role. She added that Coordinators would not be year-round and would not be able to offer leadership or help develop programming and best practices.

Mr. Croteau explained that it was never the intention of the Board or the administration to force families involved with special education to choose one thing over another. He said he felt this would be a continuation of special education service while adding more leadership and guidance. He emphasized that these would be tough jobs and that removing the part-time Coordinator positions would not detract from students' experience, and their benefits outweighed the financial cost, and that the current proposed cuts were responsible to taxpayers while still providing needed services and support in the schools. He asked the Board to hold the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent accountable for benchmarks of success.

Ms. Smith explained that while she sees value in these positions, she was concerned about the scope of the positions. She noted that their focus would be on the highest-need student populations, those who need more intervention and support than average. She added that, as a classroom teacher, she frequently relied on the assistance and support of aides and paraprofessionals rather than administration. She said more classroom staff is needed rather than administration.

Mr. Richards explained that he did significant research when reviewing the budget and felt Board members need to be thoughtful and considerate on this issue. He noted that his constituents expressed concern about the cost, and worried about losing student services. He explained that, irrespective of these positions, the District would spend an almost additional \$900,000 on special education services in the coming year and that there was increased spending for all needy subgroups. He noted that student services funding is increasing at a rate double that proposed for the Assistant Principal positions. He said he was worried about finding five excellent candidates for these positions and advised the administration not to compromise standards for the sake of filling the positions. He explained that the position was not a 100% special education position, and that the percentage was likely closer to 60% as the rest of the role would be dedicated to other student services and to regular education, as well as teacher support and development. He noted that his previous concerns about the cost of these positions was somewhat offset after reviewing the amount being put into student services.

Ms. Poinier thanked the principals in attendance for the thoughtful letter they submitted to Board members. She added that she spoke with a special education staff member this week who expressed excitement about the possibility of Assistant Principals as this would allow staff to be more streamlined and improve student outcomes and communication with families. She explained that she felt this was a priority and not a new idea, as it has been quietly under discussion for years. She added that the proposal was thoughtfully put together and that she would vote yes.

Ms. Kane explained that it would be beneficial to have more in-class hands-on support, but in talking with special education staff at CHS, one thing this role would bring is the invaluable cohesiveness of services. The role would have a larger view of all programs, with a focus on special education. She felt strongly that people hired should have not just special education certification, but special education experience. She felt strongly that the role could not be learned on the job and had potential for great positive impact, but only if candidates possess both knowledge and firsthand experience managing special populations. She noted that she would vote yes on the proposal.

Ms. Higgins reminded Board members that they were not spending their own money and that the majority of public response has not been in favor of these positions. She advised Board members to take this into consideration.

Ms. Wicks clarified that while some emails might reflect opposition to the roles, the people she had spoken to in person had been in favor. She noted that, once people understand the position is both full-time and year-round, they started to understand and were more in favor of it. She added that she received a letter from both a retired and a

current Occupational Therapist within the District, both of whom felt this was a good move in the right direction.

Mr. Croteau expressed that he was proud of the work of the Board in discussing and talking through difficult issues respectfully and productively. Ms. Patterson restated the language of her previously-made motion. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wicks.

Ms. Wicks reminded Board members that Board members are typically involved with search and hiring committees for administrative positions.

The Board voted 6-3 by roll call (yea: Nancy Kane, Liza Poinier, Pam Wicks, Tom Croteau, Jennifer Patterson, Jim Richards. Nay: Barb Higgins, Chuck Crush, Danielle Smith) to move forward with the five elementary Assistant Principals for Student Services and that, having determined that it is necessary for the effective operation of the District, the District modify its organizational structure to eliminate the positions of Special Education Coordinator in the elementary schools and add the positions of elementary Assistant Principals for Student Services at each of the five elementary schools (motioned by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Ms. Wicks).

Mr. Richards asked Mr. Dunn for a summary of financial implications before voting on the full budget. Mr. Dunn explained that the local rate would be \$13.64, or a \$.24 increase, 1.79% on the local tax rate. Including state rate, the total would be \$15.77, or 1.48% increase, making a total increase of \$.22.

Ms. Patterson opened the meeting for public comment.

Concord taxpayer and 58-year-resident Betty Hoadley expressed opposition to the hiring of five Assistant Principals. She said she felt this would kill teacher morale and that in-class support to help reduce interruptions and distractions was the best way to support and improve education quality. She said she did not understand how this program would enable peaceful classrooms. She said the way to make a difference in teaching and learning in a classroom was to provide an atmosphere in which it could be fostered.

Mr. Croteau made a motion to adopt the budget for fiscal year 2019-2020. Ms. Wicks seconded the motion.

Mr. Richards expressed concern that only \$729,000 was going into the Facilities and Renovation Trust Fund. He said it was prudent to save for the RMS building, and that while the administration had done an excellent job trimming the budget, he would recommend increasing that \$729,000 to a slightly higher amount with the goal of not raising taxes higher than the increase of cost of living, which is around 2.4%. Ms. Wicks expressed support for the idea, but noted that it would be better done in October when valuations are available. Mr. Richards asked for the tax impact if the amount into the Trust Fund was increased to \$850,000. Mr. Dunn explained that he might request in June that the Board put money away before the end of the year if the unreserved fund balance was better. He added that bonding and discussion of what bond funds can be used for would be discussed at the Capital Facilities meeting on April 8. Mr. Richards said that he is amenable to that, and that his goal was to be as prudent as possible with savings to

mitigate the tax increase when a middle school plan is in place. Mr. Dunn explained that, relative to Mr. Richards' question about the tax impact of increasing the Facilities and Renovation Trust Fund, the local rate would go from 1.79% to 2.09%. Mr. Richards stated that he was willing to wait until June or October. Mr. Richards and Ms. Patterson noted that they were pleased with the tax rate coming in under 2%. Ms. Wicks encouraged the public to ask their state representatives to support the reinstatement of Building Aid.

The Board voted 7-2 by roll call (Yea: Danielle Smith, Jim Richards, Jennifer Patterson, Tom Croteau, Pam Wicks, Nancy Kane, Liza Poinier. Nay: Chuck Crush, Barb Higgins) adopt a budget for fiscal year 2019-2020 in the amount of \$87,218,775, with a general fund budget of \$81,791,950 appropriating \$50,131,828 in local taxes and \$7,786,367 in state taxes inclusive of the following, deposits, and withdrawals to existing funds or expendable trust funds:

DEPOSITS

- Vocational Capital Reserve fund for an amount up to \$157,804
- Facilities and Renovation Trust Fund for an amount up to \$729,170
- Food Service Fund for an amount up to \$50,000
- Renovation and Maintenance Trust Fund for an amount up to \$85,000
- Technology Innovation Expendable Trust Fund for an amount up to \$250,000
- Special Education Expendable Trust Fund for an amount up to \$362,801;
- and also inclusive of the following

WITHDRAWALS from expendable trust funds to fund appropriations:

- Special Education Expendable Trust Fund for an amount up to \$383,065;
- Vocational Capital Reserve for an amount up to \$110,000;
- Instructional Trust for an amount up to \$100,000 (motioned by Mr. Croteau, seconded by Ms. Wicks).

[NOTE: these minutes were amended by vote of the Board at its regular monthly meeting on May 6, 2019 to correct the vote above as follows:

The Board voted 8-0 to amend the minutes of the March 27, 2019 Special Board meeting to reflect a budget for the fiscal year 2019-2020 in the amount of \$90,316,083, with a general fund budget of \$84,868,002 appropriating \$52,136,368 in local taxes and \$7,730,534 in state taxes (moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. Higgins).]

Ms. Higgins left the meeting.

Mr. Dunn noted that he had reviewed the draft document from bond counsel and asked that the Board have a first reading to begin the bonding process.

Mr. Richards made a motion to introduce the loan resolution for a first reading. Mr. Croteau seconded the motion.

The Board voted 8-0 by roll call (Yea: Jennifer Patterson, Tom Croteau, Chuck Crush, Jim Richards, Pam Wicks, Danielle Smith, Liza Poinier, Nancy Kane) to introduce the loan resolution for a first reading.

Ms. Patterson read the draft text.

Voted: (1) That under and pursuant to the Municipal Finance Act, Chapter 33, N.H.R.S.A., as amended, and any other enabling authority, there be and hereby is appropriated the sum of \$5,000,000 in order to finance the costs of repairing and replacing the roofs at the District's High School and Broken Ground School buildings, including the payment of costs incidental or related thereto (collectively, the "Projects").

(2) To meet this appropriation, the District Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Education, is authorized to borrow \$5,000,000 under the Municipal Finance Act, as amended, and any other enabling authority and issue Bonds of the District (and notes in anticipation thereof) (the "Bond") in the principal amount of \$5,000,000, and notes in anticipation thereof.

(3) That the Clerk of the School Board and the signers of the Bond are each hereby authorized to take any and all actions necessary or convenient to carry out the provisions of this vote, including delivering the Bond against payment therefor.

(4) That all things heretofore done and all action heretofore taken by the School Board and its officers and agents in its authorization of the Projects and their financing are hereby ratified, approved and confirmed.

(5) That the expected useful life of the Projects being financed by the Bond is hereby determined to be as follows:

- High school roof repair and replacement – useful life 40 years
- Broken Ground School roof repair and replacement – useful life 40 years

(6) This vote shall take effect upon its passage.

Set date: Public Hearing – no earlier than 15 days from posting and no later than 60 days from this vote.

Mr. Dunn suggested Wednesday, April 17 for a public hearing. Mr. Richards made a motion to set the date, time and place for the public hearing on the loan resolution. Ms. Poinier seconded the motion.

The Board voted 8-0 to schedule a public hearing on the bond language above for Wednesday, April 17, 2019 at 38 Liberty Street, Concord NH (Central Office) (motioned by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. Poinier).

Ms. Wicks made a motion to adjourn.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Richards, *Secretary*

Lauren Hynds, *Recorder*