

**School Committee Meeting
FY21 Budget Public Hearing
January 27, 2020 - Approved
King Philip Regional High School – Library
201 Franklin Street, Wrentham, MA 02093**

OPENING OF MEETING:

Mr. Gee, Chair, opened the meeting at 7:00pm.

ROLL CALL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Members Present:

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| Norfolk: | Michael Gee, Jeff Curry |
| Plainville: | Amy Abrams, Bruce Cates |
| Wrentham: | Jim Killion, Trevor Knott |

Members Absent:

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| Norfolk: | Ken Dow |
| Plainville: | Mr. Khan (arrived at 7:06pm) |
| Wrentham: | Erin DeStefano |

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Gee reviewed the updated procedure on Public Comment and announced that this meeting is being televised by both *Wrentham Cable* and *NorthTV* for Plainville and provided details about how to access school committee information and documents on the King Philip Website at: www.Kingphilip.org

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Gee opened the FY21 King Philip Regional School District Budget Public Hearing at 7:02pm. He introduced Mr. Zinni, Superintendent, to present the budget along with Mr. Azer, Director of Finance & Operations.

(Mr. Khan arrived at 7:06pm.)

Mr. Zinni explained that since the Governor’s budget came in late last week and therefore caused the budget not to be posted to the KP website until a final review was completed today.

Mr. Azer reviewed the budget principles and process along with a review of the FY21 budget calendar. Other important district plans linked to the budget are the school improvement plan, the capital improvement plan, the technology plan and professional development. The final KP budget adoption will take place at the School Committee meeting to be held on March 2, 2020. Town meeting dates are as follows:

Norfolk – May 12, 2020

Plainville and Wrentham – June 1, 2020

Mr. Zinni reviewed the Mission and Vision Statement and Guiding Belief of the District as well as the Strategic Plan that was approved for 2019-2024, that contains 5 goals, in which all the district’s work is guided by this comprehensive plan.

Accomplishments:

Mr. Zinni indicated that the district tries to find other revenue sources to move the district forward. Grants have been awarded to improve student social and emotional behavior and a technology infrastructure in the technology department. Staff and school-based recognition at both the High School and the Middle School were reviewed. Academic accomplishments in MCAS (scoring above the state level) and AP (exceeded state and national averages) and SAT performance 2019 (outperforming the state and national scores), National Merit, Boston Globe Scholastic Art, DECA and Special Olympics, along with other prestigious student, and student-athlete awards at both the state and national levels were presented.

Enrollment:

Mr. Azer explained that enrollment is based upon October 1, 2019 enrollment presented by grade. The percentages are used to allocate costs that are above the requirement minimum contribution used to calculate town assessments from the individual towns of Norfolk, Plainville and Wrentham. This, along with the elementary enrollment, helps to calculate the three-year projection at King Philip. The projection at KP is going down in the short term; however, these levels will be rising during the next 3-5 years based upon these projections.

Data Comparisons:

Mr. Azer explained that based upon In-District per-pupil expenditures with MS/HS only regions, KP is in the lower third among Hockomock League districts and 12% below the state average. Other data comparison with the Hockomock League and other regional school districts with only MS and HS with total per-pupil expenditures were reviewed. Mr. Azer noted that all of the districts in the regional group have a superintendent union, (a district may have multiple districts with 1 superintendent for each entity, each with its own school committee). KP is unique that it has a MS and HS only and is not part of a superintendent's union.

Chapter 70 Funding:

Mr. Azer reviewed Chapter 70 funding and aid per student and net school spending over requirement and how the state has based its calculations on grade level and special characteristics such as property values. There has been a total decrease of -7.5% since 2009, which means that more is being asked of the member towns. Scenarios were provided for net school spending over requirement, if KP was the same percentage over required net school spending as this group, it would be this much more compared to the comparison group.

Budget Process:

Mr. Azer explained that the District's revenue comes from member town assessments, state aid, district revenue and Excess & Deficiency (E&D), and provided details on each of these revenue sources. State Aid comes from Chapter 70, transportation reimbursement, charter tuition reimbursement. Chapter 70 increased only the minimum aid amount of \$30 per pupil or \$61,740 in total. Transportation reimbursement was 77.26%. Excess & Deficiency, for the current year has not yet been certified. The state has a cap that E&D cannot exceed 5% of the total budget. KP does not have a lot of reserves to be used toward the operating budget.

As an example, if the total KP budget were to increase by 3%, the member town assessments would then go up 3.3%. This assessment increase of 3.3% is the amount needed to result in the total operating budget increasing by 3% overall.

Expenses:

Mr. Azer gave an overview of expenses, with the majority of the budget going toward instruction, or 62.24%. Another large component is health insurance, which is included in a regional school district budget, equaling 16.56%. For this presentation, Mr. Azer assumed an estimated 12% increase to health insurance, which itself would account for an overall increase of nearly 2% to the entire operating budget.

Mr. Zinni reviewed the unbudgeted personnel and other needs from some of the departments that the district would like to implement and look for funding of these positions. Currently the Wellness Coordinator position is funded by a grant. Mr. Zinni referred to user fees for parking, athletics, music and drama as well as other co-curricular activities. He indicated we will continue to try to build into the budget a way to reduce the burden of these fees for families.

Mr. Azer also indicated that they are working with the town of Wrentham and the state, along with engineers, to establish a school traffic zone on roads around the high school.

Continuing with the budget process, Mr. Azer explained that the district is seeking a Level Service budget, which means continuing to provide all services we are doing now, plus inflation.

Special Education Adjustments:

Mr. Zinni reviewed the special education adjustments, and how the District is seeing a dramatic reduction in the higher level of services from out of district placements based upon various factors, such as tuition and transportation costs.

The District is building new programs to keep students in-district and repurposing these funds saved by building new programs, which would include the hiring of special education teachers, teacher assistants and other positions such as adjustment counselors to service our students in-house.

Discussion ensued on school choice trends and how virtual schools are considered out-of-district schools, so the tuition we are assessed of \$8,265 is more than 50% higher than other schools. Mr. Zinni pointed out that there is no cost to the district for a home-schooled student.

Operating Assessments:

Upon a review of operating assessments, Mr. Azer indicated that the District is seeking \$24,856,736 net budget balance to fund the District. The total assessment percentage increase required to balance the FY2021 budget is 5.89%.

This concluded the presentation by Mr. Zinni and Mr. Azer.

Mr. Gee asked for comments or questions for the audience.

Mr. Kevin Sweet, Wrentham Town Administrator asked about the 12% health insurance increase and what you have looked at other options and who the carrier is? Mr. Azer responded that we are not locked in, just obtained guidance with meetings we had with our broker from Harvard Pilgrim that based on our claims history there may be an increase of 10-15% increase. Mr Azer pointed out that premiums for each of the groups that the towns have are in are higher than what KP has with the main reason is our employee demographics and there is low risk of health issues. The towns have police, fire, DPW in high-risk jobs who may get injured, that is the main reason why our premiums are typically lower. KP did implement plan design changes to lower costs three years ago that was very messy. He indicated we are looking at offering a higher deductible plan as an option, so some employees may opt for that.

Mr. Jeff Johnson of Plainville asked questions regarding in-district special education enrollment and Chapter 70 aid per student.

Mr. Joe Botaish, Wrentham, questioned the projected 12% increase in health insurance, referring to slide 78, asking if we have looked at another carrier to look at fixed costs and assess them. Mr. Azer replied that we should receive the final number the next week, which may be lower, but because we are our own unit, our claims have gone up.

Discussion ensued on the high insurance number and the high assessment that is hitting Wrentham. Mr. Azer indicated that this a preliminary budget hearing that we are required to give, and his expectation is that the numbers will end up more favorable. He also noted that although the governor and state legislatures reinvented educational funding, we only got a fraction of it and our percentage of state aid is falling way behind. The district can't control the money that is coming in, it's not coming from the state, so he encouraged all to lobby on our behalf.

Mr. Zinni indicated that Mr. Azer has been working with the insurance companies and is giving you the reality of what we have been told and trying to mitigate and we will work our best and continue best effort. Other departments we have looked to trim back significantly, and we need to be sure we are lean in areas and look internally first before we would ever go to the towns.

Mr. Kevin Kalkut of Norfolk asked for clarification on a couple of positions on the slide of unrestored positions cut in 2018 and whether they are in the or out of this proposed budget. Mr Zinni indicated that the engineering and instructional technology positions are not included in the level service budget.

Mr. Jeff Johnson, Plainville asked whether anyone has looked at the impact of not funding all 10 special education positions, fund maybe 5? Mr. Zinni replied that we know the numbers coming up from the elementaries and looking at our programs to meet students' needs. Ms. Moy has been exceptional in going through all the departments and seeing what our needs are. This is what we need to have the appropriate programming and keep students in their neighborhood schools rather than out of district. Our neighborhood schools are where our children belong

Mr. Azer said that we are responsible for special education students both in out of district and in district supports through the age of 22.

Mr. Trevor Knott asked what is the difference of member town assessment and operating assessment, referring to slide 52 level service budget? Discussion ensued on how each elementary district builds their own budget. Mr. Knott suggested an alignment; it is all education.

Mr. Michael Gee clarified that the main driver for the health insurance increase is mainly claims experience. He also asked for clarification on the special education adjustment, to save \$800K in out of district, we need to spend about \$500K, for a savings of \$300K. Mr. Zinni indicated that in order to maintain we need to do some program building and cost avoidance. There is a variety of positions, not just teachers. Based on reviewing the IEPs the current estimate is that 10 positions are needed.

Mr. Gee indicated that this is the beginning of the process and expressed appreciation for the transparency in putting all the numbers are out there, and thanked everyone for coming.

Mr. Gee closed the Budget hearing 8:45PM.

Mr. Gee declared a 5-minute recess.

The School Committee Meeting reconvened at 8:54pm to continue with the regular agenda.

Communication (taken out of order):

HS and MS Student Council Report:

Ms. Linde read the HS and MS Student Council Report.

CONSENT AGENDA

All items listed with an asterisk () are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion if action is required. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so request, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence:*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

✦ A Motion was made by Mr. Knott, seconded by Mrs. Abrams to approve the Minutes of January 6, 2020 as presented. All in favor: Yes (7); No (0); Abstentions (2): Mr. Curry and Mr. Killion. Motion carried.

PAYMENT OF BILLS, FINANCIAL REPORT:

Warrants/Budget Report/Budget Transfers

COMMUNICATION:

Appointments, Resignations, Retirements, etc.

AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

None

DELEGATIONS AND VISITORS

Mr. Zinni, Dr. Gilson, Mr. Azer

PUBLIC COMMENT

Anyone interested in commenting on an agenda item during the meeting or making a statement during the public comment period is asked to complete an information card available on the librarian's desk and hand it to Mrs. Lisa Witkus, School Committee Secretary.

COMMUNICATION:

- Ethics and Disclosure Statement Forms Distribution
- MA Music Educators Association – *Advocacy Award*

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Late Start Advisory Committee Update

Mr. Zinni had been charged with meeting with the elementary districts on the status of bus transportation. To-date he has met with Norfolk, Mr. Curry was also present at this meeting which was a productive meeting. Norfolk will think about this further and get back to him with their decision. He has also met with Wrentham, Ms. DeStefano was also present at that meeting and he is scheduled to meet with Plainville tomorrow night. We have been moving forward with this, according to Mr. Zinni.

Longitudinal Review of Advanced Placement Results:

In response to Mr. Knott's request for long-term data on the Advanced Placement testing and scores, Mr. Zinni provided information from DESE on long-term trajectory to show some basic data to give an idea of what data is available on the DESE Website. Mr. Zinni reviewed AP trends from 2010 until 2019, which reflects the most current data available. In 2010, 312 AP exams were taken by students at KP high school with 65% of those exams scoring between a 3 and a 5. In 2019, over 800 exams were taken with approximately 80% of those exams scoring between a 3 and a 5.

Mr. Knott commented that this increase is out pacing the increase overall. Need to keep an eye on the scores or have we hit a top out level off the last 4 years. Mr. Zinni indicated that we are encouraging students to see their success rate and recognizing trends and continue to look at the data, the teachers, and other factors.

(Mrs. Abrams left the meeting at 9:09PM.)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Review of School Committee Goals (2nd Reading)

- ✚ A Motion was made by Mr., Khan, seconded by Mr. Curry, to approve the 2020 School Committee Goals, as presented. All in favor: Yes (6); No (0). Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS (continued):

HS Overnight Field Trip: Wrestling

A Motion was made by Mr. Knott, seconded by Mr. Cates, to approve the attendance of King Philip Regional High School wrestling student/athletes to attend post-season competitions, according to Policy JJH and IJOA. The dates of the competitions are:

Division 2 State Tournament – February 21-22, 2020

All-State Wrestling Championship – February 28-29, 2020

New England Wrestling Championship – March 7-8, 2020

As additional information becomes available Mr. Brown will update the committee.

All in favor: Yes (6); No (0). Motion carried.

POLICY REVIEW:

Mr. Gee explained that the first grouping of policy revisions is based mostly upon grammatical changes and all of the changes in this section are subtle and there is no change to the content. All of the policies have been reviewed and language changes have been made according to MASC recommendations and reviewed by the Policy Subcommittee.

POLICY REVIEW: POLICY FILE (1st reading):

- JB EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
- BA SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS
- BBAA SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY
- BCA SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS
- BDD SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP
- BEE SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS
- BG SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT
- BGE POLICY DISSEMINATION

✚ A Motion was made by Mr. Khan, seconded by Mr. Curry, to waive the 2nd reading and to approve the following policies as presented by the Policy Subcommittee:

- JB EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**
- BA SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS**
- BBAA SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY**
- BCA SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS**
- BDD SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP**
- BEE SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS**
- BG SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT**
- BGE POLICY DISSEMINATION**

All in favor: Yes (6); No (0). Motion carried.

Mr. Gee explained that the second grouping of policies have more substantive changes and are presented as a 1st reading. All of the policies have been reviewed and language changes have been made according to MASC recommendations and reviewed by the Policy Subcommittee.

Mr. Gee added that he has additional comments on the following policies:

Policy File BEC – Executive Session, to have further review of this policy.

Policy File BDF – Advisory Committees to School Committee, referring to clarification on the late start advisory Committee

Policy File BEDF – Voting Method. Discussion ensued on a review of the regional agreement and DESE regulations to ensure compliance for a regional school district.

Upon discussion, the following policies will be presented for a 2nd reading at the next meeting to be held on Monday, February 3, 2020:

POLICY REVIEW – SECTION J – POLICY FILE – (1st Reading):

JFABD: HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS & SERVICES

POLICY REVIEW – SECTION B: BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS (1st Reading):

BAA: EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE

BB: SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

BBA: SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

BBBA/ SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS

BBBB: OATH OF OFFICE

BBBC: SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION

BDA: SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

BDB: SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

BDE: SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

BDF: ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

B DFA-E-1: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

B DFA-E-2: SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

B DFA-E-3: CONDUCT OF SCHOOL COUNCIL BUSINESS

BDG: SCHOOL ATTORNEY

BEC: EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

BEDA: NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
BEDB: AGENDA FORMAT
BEDF: VOTING METHOD
BEDG: MINUTES
BGB: POLICY ADOPTION
BGD: SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES
BHE: USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS
BIA: NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

POLICY REVIEW - NEW POLICIES – POLICY FILE – (1ST Reading):

JFABE: EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITARY CHILDREN
JFABF: EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE
BIBA: SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS I.O.
BDC: APPOINTED COMMITTEE OFFICIALS

REPORTS FROM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Norfolk School Committee Representative: Mr. Curry – The last meeting was held on January 14, 2020 with discussions on late start time, a budget update, and meeting with the Norfolk Selectboard on a zero-based budget for all departments.
- Plainville School Committee Representative: Mrs. Abrams - None
- Wrentham School Committee Representative: Mrs. DeStefano - None

LATE COMMUNICATIONS

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

RECOMMENDATIONS OR QUESTIONS FROM INDIVIDUAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

ADJOURNMENT:

- ✚ A Motion was made by Mr. Curry, seconded by Mr. Cates, to adjourn the School Committee meeting at 9:35pm. All in favor by roll call vote: Mr. Gee, Mr. Curry, Mr. Killion, Mr. Khan, Mr. Cates, Mr. Knott: Yes (6); No (0). Motion carried.

Mr. Gee adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

*Elisa Barrett Witkus
Secretary to the School Committee*

Documents presented on January 27, 2020:

FY21 King Philip Regional School District Budget
Draft Minutes of January 6, 2020
Appointments, Resignations, Retirements, etc.
Finance Subcommittee Approved Minutes dated 11/25/19
HS & MS Student Council Report: Miss Linde
Ethics and Disclosure Statement Forms Distribution
MA Music Educators Association – *Advocacy Award*
Late Start Advisory Committee Update
Longitudinal Review of Advanced Placement Results
Review of School Committee Goals (2nd Reading)
HS Overnight Field Trip: Wrestling

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BDC: APPOINTED COMMITTEE OFFICIALS

The items listed on this agenda are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be