

Middletown Public Schools
Middletown, Rhode Island

Monday, June 5, 2017

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Michael S. Pinto Conference Room

Members Present: Theresa Spengler, Chairman
Kellie DiPalma Simeone, Vice-Chairman
Douglas Arnold
Liana Fenton
William O'Connell

Also Present: Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Superintendent of Schools
Linda Savastano, Assistant Superintendent
Raquel Pellerin, Business Manager
David Fontest, Director of Facilities/Safety and Transportation

The Budget Workshop was called to order at 3:02 p.m. All members were present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Administrative staff members present were, Gail Abromitis, Beth Hayes, Linda Beaupre, Donna Chelf, Stephen Ponte, and Michelle Fonseca.

The Budget Reduction Plan includes:

- Opening Early Retirement until August 1st and replacing a teacher who is at a lower step and class, creating a small savings.
- Considering possibly not filling open positions, including custodial, Dean at Gaudet School, teacher assistants, a technology/data position, and the Student Assistance Counselor at Gaudet School. Mrs. Simeone said that if the positions are not filled, she would like to analyze throughout the year what the impact is and see if some positions could be brought back. Mrs. Spengler has concerns about the lack of a Dean at Gaudet School, which puts students at a high risk, especially after cutting a guidance counselor and not filling a teacher assistant position. This adds responsibilities to the Principal and Assistant Principals and is a safety issue for the students.
- Realigning Grant Positions - Positions include Title I, IDEA B, IDEA BEIS, and curriculum resources. Positions currently in the budget with Federal Funds could be moved to the general fund. Grant funds could be used to pay for these positions. We would have to scale back on professional development if funds are used for positions. Reviewing the Regional Special Education Program - Need to look at staffing needs and positions. We could also use Medicaid Funds balance to pay for out of district placements for 3 to 4 years. Mrs. Fenton would like to create a list of what the consequences are if this is done and then meet with the Town. Mr. Arnold asked if there is a limit on how many high cost special education students can enroll in a town. A concern is that there is no way of knowing when new students will arrive in the

district requiring services. The regional special education board meeting will be held on June 8th. There will be adjustments to the budget at that meeting.

- Assessing Staffing Reductions/Layoffs/Programs – Administration is currently reviewing all schedules and enrollment projections. Middletown is locked in for one more year with NMSI. There might be programs that have been looked at previously and could be eliminated. The potential impact is to offer fewer classes and reduce or eliminate some programs. Mrs. Spengler said that the reduction of classes diminishes the marketable value of our district. Mrs. Simeone suggested offering classes every other year, with enough notice to students and parents.
- Reviewing the Athletic Program – Mrs. Kraeger has met with the Athletic Director. Participation rates were discussed. JV Softball and JV Football teams were not fielded this year. Possibly the Athletic Boosters could help with bussing. Also, this was the year that the School Department was supposed to cover the cost of middle school soccer.
- Reviewing all line items in the budget – There will be a meeting with administrators to discuss line item reductions. The impact of this will be the potential reduction of school supplies, custodial/facilities supplies, and School Committee travel to national conferences. All rental and facility use agreements will be reviewed. Mrs. Simeone suggested to look at free ways to market opportunities.
- Reviewing all vendor contracts – The central office team will review all vendor contracts, including copiers.
- “LEAN” Management will be implemented – The Facilities Director will meet with the Town to determine efficiencies that could be achieved through collaboration. He will also work with administrator on the “Lean” Management philosophy.

Mr. O’Connell left at 4:00 p.m.

Middletown resident Ron Heorux spoke about the relationship between the Town Council and Administration/School Committee.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *To adjourn from Budget Workshop at 4:07 p.m. Unanimous vote.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosemarie K. Kraeger
Clerk