FY21 Budget Questions
From
School Committee Members
January 7, 2021

1) Do we expect there to be additional unspent funds for FY 20 that are yet to be reallocated? The FY20 Budget is closed. Depending on how the FY21 School year unfolds, there may be some unexpended funds that could be reallocated.

High-Level Questions

2) In a year where some of our peers experienced decreased enrollment, we still had an increase. What do you see as the driver of that increase relative to our peers? The FY21 Chapter 70 increases were mainly based upon increased enrollments. The Department of Education used the October 1, 2019 enrollment numbers. Lynn had the largest increase in enrollment (+489) compared to similar districts who either had a small increase or decrease in enrollments. (New Bedford +216, Brockton – 232, Worcester – 358, Lawrence - 61)

3) Mr. McHugh explained one of the themes in the operating budget being the reallocation of certain lines from grants to budget based on grant parameters. I thought that would be good to share at some point in the meeting for the public. These grants are designed to assist districts with providing additional funds to service students. Therefore, over a period of time we need to move some of the staffing positions that were being funded by these grants transferred to the School Department’s appropriation budget. In the FY21 budget 20.4 positions (Sped 240 (10.0), Title One (10.4)) were transferred to the school appropriation budget.

CARES Grant Expenditures

4) For the $100,000 on student internet access to Comcast – how many students does that represent? 182 students. Is that for all of FY21 or will that number increase? If needed we can still enroll additional students.

5) Who is the vendor for firewall protection? Smooth Wall.

Budget Questions

6) Please provide additional context for the Classical PASS program increase from $40K to $50K. Increase requested to serve additional students.

7) Please provide additional context for the Life Skills increase at English. This year we had to increase the number of Life Skills programs at Lynn English from 2 to 4 due to the number of students that need that program. These students were moved up from the life skills programs at Breed, Marshall, and Discovery 8th grade program at Tech.
8) Please provide additional context for the SPED Coach Extended Learning expenditure of $110,000.
DESE stated that high needs students with disabilities and PreK students should be given priority for in-person learning. The learning support centers were a way for us to provide some in-person learning after school to some of our high need students. We had programs at Shoemaker, Tech (TEAMs program), and Harrington (PreK). We paid teachers after hours for this additional support.

9) For the SPEC PAC expenses, is the PAC meeting remotely?
Yes, we had one PAC meeting this year. I am waiting on access to create a Webinar. We plan to send out the flyer out in early January.

10) Please provide additional context for the Welcome Center software $50K increase.
Purchased an online registration software system which will allow parents to start the registration process online.

11) Please provide additional context for the Curriculum & Instruction Siemer Case Manager and Coord Family Comm positions.
The Curriculum & Instruction Siemer Case Manager position at inception was within the Curriculum Department overseen by Tina Hoofnagle when she was the Parent and Family Engagement Specialist. Tina, in her new role as Assistant Director of Social and Emotional Learning, is now helping to lead the SEL Department and this position transitioned with her to SEL. This position is fully funded by the Siemer Grant. This grant is written in collaboration with the Lynn Housing Authority and has been in existence for many years. Both LPS and LHA each have a social worker focused on servicing homeless families. The grant is multifaceted and looks first and foremost to help families secure housing, but other foci include job/employment counseling, budget counseling, educational advocacy, and social/emotional referrals and assistance. The current case manager for LPS is Jarry Barrios, a bi-lingual case manager. Prior to Jarry, Jennifer Arias held this position. Jennifer was hired as the bilingual social worker for LEHS for SY 2018-19. This grant and position have been highly successful in servicing many of LPSs neediest families.

12) Please provide additional context for the Compliance Student Study Teams $30K increase.
During the budget process we received a request to increase the stipends. If this does not happen it will most likely be used to fund the translation contractual services since last year we exceeded the budgeted amount.
13) Under Security, are we still using Blackboard connect? Yes until June 30, 2021. We will be moving to the new system “School Messenger System”

14) Please provide additional context for the increase in Transportation costs for homeless students. In FY20, from September through February, we expended $645,625 on Homeless Transportation and were on pace to expend approximately $1.1 million. This is due to the increased amount of homeless students. Therefore we budgeted $1.2 million in the FY21 budget.

15) Where can I find the line for non-salary food expenses? The non-salary food expenses are charged to the food service revolving account.

16) Please provide additional context for the increase in unemployment under Benefits. From July through October (4 months) we have received invoices totaling over $600,000. We are in the process of disputing some of these claims due to staff who were not eligible and a rash of fraudulent claims.

17) The Lynn Evening Enrichment Program is level-funded, can you please provide an update on the program’s FY20 status? This program was level funded. We anticipate this program to continue once we are able to bring Students back to in person learning.

18) Aborn School’s principal salary is substantially lower than all others, why? I double checked and this salary is correct. Some other principals may have had Longevity and or Educational Stipend increases which would skew the increase amount.

19) ELL – This position was changed from Director of Language Support to Executive Director of English Language Learner, but the budget does not reflect that name. The name needs to be updated, however, the salary is correct.

20) Curriculum – Textbooks, were the figures just pooled together with “Adoption”? We do not have any plans for a textbook adoption this year. Therefore, we did not fund this line.

21) Welcome Center – Is the Postage amount for this department or the entire district? The postage is for just this department.