

NEWINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Administrative Unit 50
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The special work session of the Newington School Board took place on Tuesday, December 19, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. at the Rye Junior High School in Rye, New Hampshire.

PRESENT:

School Board Members: Dr. Mark Joyce (Chair)
Mr. Jack O'Reilly
Mr. Chris Russo

Administrators: Amy R. Ransom, Business Administrator
Peter Latchaw, Principal

Other Staff Present: Samantha Fuller, Secretary to the Superintendent

Visitors: None

CALL TO ORDER – Dr. Joyce called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

NEWINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL BUDGET FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020

Dr. Joyce opened the meeting by giving others the opportunity to pose questions regarding the proposed budget.

Mr. Russo asked if the Portsmouth High School tuition rate increased and if the increase included Special Education as part of the tuition rate. He noted that in a previous discussion with Mr. Petralia it was his understanding that out of district kids needing general intervention like speech therapy Portsmouth includes in their services.

It was noted that in regard to the AREA Agreement surcharges may include additional cost for extra services for a student on a per visit basis.

Ms. Ransom pointed out in the budget binder the most recent tuition bill from Portsmouth High School. She noted the bill was broken down by program and the Newington cost is affected by the middle and high school student enrollments.

Mr. O'Reilly questioned the future cost of the Lister Program. Ms. Ransom stated that Lister will continue to be paid as a program cost to the high school rather than separately. She noted that Mr. Petralia had met with the Portsmouth Superintendent and school attorneys to discuss the future of the Lister payments for the SAU 50 school districts. It was her opinion that the current agreement does in fact create a benefit for our students as well as a cost value.

Dr. Joyce noted that some community members have concerns about paying the cost for Lister Academy if there are no current Newington students using the program. Ms. Ransom noted that when there is a Newington student that does utilize the Lister program it will cost less.

Mr. Latchaw spoke in regard to Special Education personnel positioning. Currently Speech/Language is a 35% contracted position. Next year it will decrease due to fewer IEPs. Mr. Latchaw requested to keep the current Speech/Language position as a teacher contract position for 2019-2020 and lower the percentage 15%. He noted the Ms. Reinhardt the Special Education Director prefers to make it a "contracted services" position. It is listed in the Preliminary Budget for 2019-2020 as Contracted Services.

Mr. Latchaw stated that it is his opinion that it would be in the best interest for the school (due to its smaller size), the position remain as a teacher contracted position. He noted this would allow for greater flexibility, more support for student needs and the position would have further opportunity to be involved with key areas such as curriculum development.

Mr. Latchaw reiterated that currently the Occupational Therapist is a contracted services position. He stated his belief that the Speech Therapist as a teaching position allows for the ability to spend time with a student and develop a rapport with teachers in order to better collaborate.

It was Mr. Latchaw's opinion that when the Speech position is a contracted teacher it allows for flexibility to adjust the role of the position throughout the year. The speech teacher at Newington has been a teaching position for at least ten years. It is adjusted in percentage each year according to corresponding IEPs.

Dr. Joyce asked if there was any requirement difference. Ms. Ransom stated that the current employee has a license and could be given a teacher certification by the district. Ms. Ransom reiterated that a teaching contract is binding until the end of the school year whereas a contracted service position can be terminated or adjusted at any point.

Mr. Russo, who also has several children that attend NPS, agreed that he could see the value added to the school community by having the position as a teaching contract.

Mr. O'Reilly understands the need of flexibility from a business standpoint.

Ms. Ransom reiterated that she understands the pros & cons of each argument. However, she cautioned the Board that if a teaching contract is in place the school is held to that contract for a year. Noting again that a contracted service position can be released at any point during the year should IEP's decrease further.

Mr. Latchaw stated to the Board that it took time to find the positive fit he feels the current speech employee has with students and staff. Mr. Latchaw indicated a teacher contracted position would also allow for the speech position to assist other students in need of help that may not otherwise classify for an IEP.

Mr. Latchaw indicated that the current speech staff member may leave if the position was continued as contracted service. There has been an issue with payments from the SAU.

Dr. Joyce stated there is an immediate need to find out why the position has not yet been paid for services provided. He stated an answer must be presented at the January 8, 2019 meeting. At that time they would further discuss the topic.

Warrant articles were discussed. Ms. Ransom indicated that the Trust Funds had the following balances: SPED at approximately \$110K, Building & Grounds at \$60K and Tuition at \$54K.

Dr. Joyce suggested that the Board approve that the unreserved balance fund be allotted so that \$20K is put into each of the Trust Funds.

On a motion by Dr. Joyce, seconded by Mr. Russo, to recommend that \$20,000.00 be put into each of the following trust funds; Special Education, Building and Grounds and Tuition. Vote: 3:0

NON PUBLIC - None

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Russo, seconded by Mr. O'Reilly, the Board adjourned their meeting at 6:10 p.m. Roll Call: 3:0

Respectfully Submitted,
Samantha Fuller
Secretary to the Superintendent
December 21, 2018



Chris Russo, School Board Secretary

1/8/19

Date