

Cape Schools Open Minds and Open Doors

Community • Academics • Passion • Ethics

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“Cape Elizabeth School Department: Open Minds and Open Doors”

Cape Elizabeth School Department School Board Budget Goals FY21

1. *Maintain and improve the high quality of education for every student.*
2. *Careful examination of line items and consideration of the success and effectiveness of the expenditures in order to provide a fiscally responsible budget.*
3. *Support the current strategic plan goals.*
4. *Clear and continual communication throughout the budget process.*

Cape Elizabeth School Department Strategic Plan Goals

1. ***Health and Well-Being:*** *Our schools will provide a supportive learning environment in which physical, social, and emotional well-being are valued and promoted.*
2. ***Global Competency:*** *Our students will be personally responsible, aware, empathetic, and engaged local and global citizens.*
3. ***Multiple Pathways and Definitions of Success:*** *Our schools will value, promote, and celebrate multiple pathways and definitions of success.*
4. ***Safe, Sustainable, and Effective Facilities:*** *Our schools will be safe and effective facilities. They will be updated and maintained to meet the needs of students and staff in accordance with long-term financial planning.*
5. ***Environmental Responsibility:*** *The school department will prioritize environmental responsibility, including stewardship and sustainability.*

Budget Update #4

Minutes

March 9, 2020

The Cape Elizabeth School Board held a Budget Workshop on March 3, 2020 to continue work on the FY21 School Budget. The meeting began with a review of District Strategic Goals as well as School Board Budget Goals for FY21. During the meeting district administrators presented answers to questions that the School Board had posed. The answers to the questions appear in written form on the district website (use the FY21 Budget Information button on the district home page and then go to the FY21 Questions and Answers folder).

Del Peavey, Director of Special Services, spoke about the federal and state mandates regarding Special Education, the staff required to provide the mandated services, and the space needed for those staff to provide the services. As we reviewed the history of state and federal mandates it is evident that our schools were built before the many requirements we have for individual and small group work with students, and that we are struggling to find space within our schools for that work.

Perry Schwarz, Director of Facilities and Transportation confirmed that “full town” position proposals have been directed to the Town Manager for consideration in the town budget, and that budget impacts of positions are clearly delineated between, town, school, and shared.

Jason Manjourides, Principal at Pond Cove Elementary School had previously answered the question about the purpose of the new office space at Pond Cove. This will serve as a space for some of the many staff at Pond Cove who need to meet individually or in small groups with students as required by their learning needs.

Cathy Stankard reported that English Learners are identified by registration information when they enroll in our schools. In addition, progress for current EL students is assessed by using the state required WIDA assessment. Students are required to receive services until they reach the state benchmark for language proficiency. Recent changes in the law require students who test at lower levels to receive additional hours of support.

The needs of individual Gifted and Talented students are determined by teams who approve individualized learning plans for each student. Progress is tracked and data is reported to the state. This data is monitored and impacts our Gifted and Talented grant that we apply for yearly.

Peter Esposito, Director of Nutrition Services addressed the questions posed to him by the School Board regarding the high school withdrawal from the National School Lunch Program. Peter reported that all students at the high school who qualify for Free and Reduced meals are provided with meals at no cost. While this has resulted in a \$4,221 loss in subsidy, we have seen an increase of \$39,374.55 in revenues since we withdrew from the program and been able to provide more interesting, yet nutritionally sound meals. Approximately 50% of Free and Reduced status students are eating meals in the high school cafeteria.

Jeff Thoreck described the need to add an additional part time assistant to his budget, and the many tasks that his job entails. When asked what has changed in the past years, he described the movement of athletic events to Saturdays due to bussing limited availability during the week, longer sporting event seasons, and the increased expectations of grounds and facilities staff. Jeff also reported that a new middle school track coach would be evaluated by the middle school liaison and the Athletic Director.

I reported the actual cost of the .5 FTE LPN that would serve as an assistant to our nursing staff. Salaries and benefits for this position would cost approximately \$27,247 depending on the experience of the person hired.

Following a discussion of these answers, the School Board reviewed information on RTI (Response to Intervention) that was provided by Principal Jason Manjourides. RTI is a state required program in which students are screened three times a year. We use NWEA as the universal screener. Students who are not meeting benchmarks are identified, and support plans for those students are developed and implemented.

Troy Eastman, Principal of Cape Elizabeth Middle School presented on social-emotional supports that are available at the middle school as we focus on the whole child. We are fortunate to have both general education and special education social workers who support all students, as well as school counselors who work with individuals and small groups of students to support their needs.

Finally, Jeff Shedd spoke about EPS (Essential Programs and Services), the funding formula that is designed to determine the financial funding for school districts. This formula was developed in order to support education for students to meet state benchmarks. Jeff spoke about the expectations in Cape Elizabeth to provide an education where student performance will reach much higher standards than just

meeting state benchmarks, and the additional funding needed to meet that expectation. He outlined the cuts that the district would need to make if we strictly followed EPS guidelines.

For further information, please watch the video of this meeting which is available on the district web site via the FY21 link on our home page.

The next School Board Budget Workshop will be held at 6:30 pm in the library at Cape Elizabeth Middle School on Wednesday, March 11, 2020. There will be two opportunities for public input, as well as a discussion on fund balance and guidance for revised budget work. I would like to invite community members to this important discussion.

Sincerely,

Donna H. Wolfrom