

Cape Schools Open Minds and Open Doors

Community • Academics • Passion • Ethics

CAPE ELIZABETH SCHOOLS

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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 #6

School Board Budget Workshop

(available via Zoom)

March 24, 2020

School Board members, department heads, district administrations, and community members met via ZOOM to discuss the three scenarios that the School Board directed department heads and district administrators to develop in order to represent a 6% increase in the FY21 budget over the FY20 budget, a 5.5% increase, and a 5% increase. I presented these scenarios which are available on our district website in the FY21 budget materials. In addition, there is a recording of this budget workshop meeting on the website.

I started by revisiting the Original Request Budget which represents \$28,908,534, a 7.5% increase over the FY20 budget and an approximate 8.01% impact on property tax rate increase. This budget included a 10% projected rate in Health Benefit increases, capital improvement projects including painting in one wing each at Pond Cove and Cape Elizabeth Middle School, new carpet in the main office at Cape Elizabeth High School, a new projector in the band room at CEHS, new white boards at Pond Cove. This Original Request budget also included new teaching positions at CEHS to meet the increasing enrollment needs in order to stay within Board Guidelines for class sizes, a new guidance counselor at Pond Cove to meet Essential Programs and Services (EPS) state recommendations, a new classroom teacher to meet

enrollment needs, and several new custodial positions to meet an ever-expanding workload throughout the district and town. After a discussion at the previous meeting and a review of the cost, the proposal for a permanent substitute at Pond Cove was withdrawn, as was the proposal for a Project Manager for the Facilities Department. The elimination of those proposed positions is reflected in the 7.5% increase.

In order to reach a 6.05% increase of the FY21 School Budget over the FY20 budget, several cuts to the Original Request Budget would have to be made. A 6.05% budget represents a \$28,517,008 total expenditure budget and an approximate 6.41% impact to the property rate increase. Several capital improvement projects would need to be cut from the Original Request budget in order to move from a 7.5% increase to a 6.05% increase. CIP cuts would include the stair treads at Pond Cove, carpet in the main office at the high school, whiteboards at Pond Cove and the lease rather than purchase of a van to replace the Facilities van that will not pass inspection again. This reduction also includes a change in the type of laptops to be purchased for computer programming classes, cutting the band room projectors, and creatively changing new staff requests for a combined high school English/Literacy and elective teachers, revising hours for an athletic groundskeeper, and changing a high school ed tech librarian position from an ed. Tec. II to a I and reducing the hours. The reductions in percent of increase also necessitated eliminating a .5 nurse's assistant position and rearranging the volunteer coordinator and extended learning opportunities positions at the high school and eliminating that position. In addition, after receiving information that the state ceiling for health benefit increases we were able to decrease the placeholder to 6%. These changes represent a total reduction of \$391,526.

The second revision to the budget in order to reach a 5.46% increase to the FY21 budget over FY20 includes the above changes to reach a 6% increase as well as some additional changes, and represents a total budget of \$28,359,619 and an approximate 5.78% impact on the property rate increase. In order to reach the 5.46% increase we needed to cut \$15,000 in supplies for each of the three schools, cut the painting projects at Pond Cove and CEMS, and eliminate a proposed facilities custodian. These changes represent a reduction of \$157,389.

To reach a 5% (4.96%) increase in the FY21 budget over the FY20 budget we would need to eliminate an additional proposed custodian and a .75 FTE Science teacher. This would represent a savings of \$134,387 with a total expenditure budget of \$28,225,232 and an impact on the property rate increase of 5.23%.

The School Board asked administrators to explain several of their decisions including plans to cut the proposed ed. Tech. librarian position to .5, the distribution of the Volunteer Coordinator duties to Central Office, and assigning extended learning opportunities supervision to the proposed Teacher Leader. Following this discussion, School Board members weighed in on their scenario preferences and the Board agreed on the importance of adding teachers in order to meet student needs and remain in compliance with Board guidelines for class sizes and EPS recommendations, and, on the importance of the proposed additional custodians and CIP projects in order to continue to maintain our buildings. School Board members agreed to support the 6.05% increase scenario.

An additional discussion focused on the possibility of receiving additional savings when we are assigned our actual health benefit increase. The School Board agreed to use any additional savings to reduce the percentage of increase of the FY21 budget in order to lessen the burden on the taxpayer.

The School Board will continue to discuss the proposed FY21 School Budget at their Budget Workshop meeting on Tuesday, April 7, 2020 via Zoom. The link will be provided and there will be two opportunities for public comment. Please join us for this important meeting!

Sincerely,

Donna H. Wolf from

