

**Hopedale School Committee
Minutes of the Meeting of
Tuesday, March 21, 2017**

Members Present: Craig Adams, Vice Chair
Grace Pool
Lisa Alberto
Kristen Poisson

Members Absent: Lori Hampsch, Chair

Also Present: Karen Crebase, Superintendent
Donna Hennessy, Memorial Elementary School Assistant Principal
Linda Gross, Interim Pupil Personnel Services Director
Lynne Davis, School Accountant

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Media Center at the Junior-Senior High School, located at 25 Adin Street, Hopedale, Massachusetts, with a quorum present.

FY '18 Budget Workshop – Mr. Adams turned the meeting over to the Superintendent for a review of the Hopedale Public Schools fiscal year 2018 proposed budget. Ms. Crebase reported that the \$12,067,984 budget reflects an increase of 5.59% over last year's appropriated budget. The projected increase, in the amount of \$639,355, is attributable to contractual obligations, program improvements, special education costs, and increased general fund expenses. Mrs. Gross briefly explained her proposal for expanding the positions of adjustment counselor (.4 FTE) and BCBA (.5 FTE) to improve student services district-wide.

Referring to the Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Book, the Superintendent presented an analysis of the school district's funding which includes state aid under chapter 70, local contributions, tuition through the school choice program, and circuit breaker reimbursements. She also reviewed the revolving accounts' anticipated total expenditures and contributions, which include cash receipts, fees and tuition, for food services, transportation, extended day programs, preschool, athletics, and school choice. With regard to the as yet unfunded technology improvements, Ms. Crebase reported that the technology director has assigned priority to the desktop replacements and servers. The required state-testing devices can be phased in over a three to five year period.

Ms. Crebase reported that the Town has requested an increase of no more than 5% for the school budget and recommended that the Committee consider a reduction. A discussion followed regarding using the school choice account to fund the athletic director salary and the prioritized technology purchases. A further discussion involved funding the student agendas. The members, by consensus, agreed to fund the athletic director salary from school choice and the student agendas from the general fund. Budgeting for the technology purchases was postponed until the final school budget is approved by the Town. The Superintendent will let the members know whether the purchase needs to take place earlier and whether a partial purchase of desktops will impact the cost.

Discussions followed regarding the high quality education Hopedale is able to offer with a low per pupil expenditure and the need to analyze current account balances to determine the district's ability to prepay tuition for FY 2018.

Adjournment – The Chair announced the need to enter executive session for the purpose of conducting a strategy sessions in preparation for collective bargaining with the HEA since an open discussion would have a detrimental effect on the Committee's position. Upon a motion by Mrs. Pool which was seconded by Mrs. Alberto, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 pm and to enter executive session for the stated purpose, not to reconvene in public session, as follows: Mr. Adams – yes, Mrs. Pool – yes; Mrs. Hampsch - yes; Mrs. Poisson -yes; and Mrs. Alberto – yes.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne McGuane, Recording Secretary
APPROVED: April 4, 2017