

RSU # 13 Budget Meeting:

Budget minutes 04-01-2013

Q: Questions asked A: Answer S: Statements made

S: If Thomaston Grammar and Rockland District Middle Schools were to merge and South School closed, there would be an approximate savings of \$550,000 per year in staffing and an additional \$100,000 per year in maintenance

S: The Superintendent will be proposing a separate warrant article to renovate and add onto the Oceanside High School – east cafeteria. As the current space is completely inadequate.

Board questions:

Q: Does the budget contain the merger reductions?

A: No

Q: When will we see the federal programs?

A: Will put together a rough budget for Local Entitlement, Title I and Title II within the next couple of weeks. We do not know what the actual funding will be until mid-summer.

Q: What were the guidelines for the positions that were reduced?

A: Class sizes and enrollments. The positions that were brought forth by the Principals would be proposed cuts regardless of our funding level. They are identified as not needed.

Q: On Page 1 of Oceanside High School – east (OHS-e) there are two people listed at 100% and no notations next to any others, why?

A: The 100% is a carryover from the previous budget year when they went from part time to full time. I will remove the 100% reference as all teachers are 100% unless noted otherwise.

Q: Why would we need keys if we install a swipe card system at OHS-e?

A: The doors still need a locking mechanism and the ability for emergency responders to get into the building and the ability to get into the building if there was a power outage. At OHS-e most exterior doors would not have a key entry, just one or two primary entrances.

S: This budget cuts 10 ½ positions

Q: How many cut from last year's budget?

A: 8 teaching positions and 12.5 full time equivalent support staff positions.

Q: How many teachers are there in the District with 30 plus years who might retire?

A: There are approximately 40 teachers who have been in the District 30 or more years. However, under the current Maine State Retirement guidelines there are significant penalties for early retirements and very significant fines to Districts who create what MSRS deems as excessive retirement incentives.

Q: Why is the student enrollment only 1 student different from last year?

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A: We use the October 1 enrollment to build the budget. That number is only one student different from last year. Enrollments change daily. The Principals are given a per pupil amount to build their budgets on and it would be impossible to manage that process if we keep adjusting the enrollments every month.

S: The Technology lease total does not add up.

A: Correct the formula is not picking up the last entry of \$12,072. I'm correcting as we review and that will bump the budget up an additional \$12,072.

Q: How many Microsoft license would we need it if we went in a different direction?

A: The licenses we currently have include windows and Microsoft office and all of our server platforms. This currently also includes 300 office license that reside on staff apple products.

Unless a Board decision was made to not allow windows and Office as operating platforms, the answer is difficult to come to. The District's mail system is windows based as is the District's accounting system. I am unaware of an Apple based accounting system that will interface with our electronic reporting requirements to the Dept. of Education.

Q: Are there other specific platform driven cost?

A: Bruce Johnson – Nutrikids (the Food Services system), ADS (The District accounting software system), Coreskills, ME! to provide further information.

Q: Why don't we use Open Office?

A: Bruce Johnson- it is not fully compatible with other products we use. The free products are limited and often don't work with certain forms and documents.

S: From the Superintendent we need to focus on the change budget.

Q: From acting Chair: Please summarize what doing over the next 4 meetings?

S: Answer questions, discussions about the changes. And, do not see going through the budget section by section instead will focus on changes and questions.

S: Last year, for example had a building principal sit and review their budget proposal, liked hearing from the principals.

S: Suggest that you include in your questions a request for a presentation by a specific administrator.

S: Feel disoriented

S: Last year we went by cost centers not articles

S: Found errors last year through the press that in the end made for a v very credible budget document.

A: Last year was the first time with an entirely different format to the budget and it did have errors that got flushed out in the process.

S: Suggest we look at each tab and only focus on the changes within the cost center.

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S: Found last year's process very helpful

S: Felt we had agreed to do it the same way back in February when the Finance Committee discussed what the process would be and now we're out of time to do that process.

S; Difficult to discuss parts of budget if person in charge of that are not present

S: Feel need to wind up all the presentations by next Wednesday

S: Will there be a middle school merger presentation

A: There will be Board action on the concept this Thursday at the regular School Board meeting

Q: Why haven't the answers to the questions asked at forum been posted?

A: We heard right after the forum that the majority of the board was supporting tabling the merger for a year so we set the questions aside.

No Public comments

Next three meetings to review cost centers

Added April 22nd as a new date and 24th will be back up

S: We will schedule specific cost centers to be covered at each of the next 3 budget meetings

Q: If merger what is the tax impact?

A: We will be unable to look at the specific tax impact until the Department of Education release the ED-279 showing the specific make-up of students and valuations for each community.

S: Like to hear ideas from staff and public

Adjourned 7:51 PM