

Suffield Board of Education
Budget Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2015
5:30 p.m.
Suffield Middle School Media Center

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

Present: Jeanne Gee, George Beiter, Matt Service, John Richter, Susi Keane, Natalie Semyanko, Lori D'Ostuni, Michael Sepko, Michelle Zawawi, Mel Chafetz, Jim Collin, Bill Hoff and Ryan Anderson (BoF).

Mr. Hoff presented a compressive overview of FTE changes for the current school year and next school year per the attached budget handout. The committee discussed the FTE status and projections.

Mr. Hoff presented an update on substitute teachers, both building substitutes and substitutes provided by Kelly Services, per the attached budget handout.

Mr. Hoff and Dr. Chafetz presented an update to the Superintendent's proposed budget, noting the following changes:

1. Revise health insurance increase to 5% - savings of \$173,960
2. Reduce substitutes to equal 2014-15 Actual – savings of \$66,338
3. Reduce salary level of new hires – savings of \$50,740
4. HSA contribution increase – additional cost of \$23,800
5. Total savings to original Superintendent Proposed Budget - \$267,238

The Superintendent's revised budget was for a total of \$33,952,665 or an increase of 4.2%.

The committee discussed the changes. Board member D'Ostuni noted that she would like to see the budget down to a 3.2% increase to better align with the Board of Finance's intentions.

Board member Beiter noted that the Board of Education should be proposing what it felt was necessary, not what the Board of Finance wanted to see.

Board member Sepko noted that the budget should be able to determine a Return on Investment to show stakeholders how the money was being used.

Board member Beiter asked administrators if they had additions to the budget or a wish list that they would like. Dr. Collin mentioned improvements in Middle School technology programs and world languages.

Board member Zawawi said she felt the budget was cut as much as it could be and that we should support more programming.

The group discussed the possibility of moving the math textbooks and materials to another capital expenditure line outside of the school's operating budget since it will be a one-time expense. Mr. Anderson noted that would help reduce the minimum budget requirement. Board member Beiter cautioned the committee against this, noting that the district already had Chromebooks in the Capital Expenditure funds and they are a \$250, somewhat consumable device, and no other districts are moving funds around like this for curriculum materials. He noted the burden to the taxpayer would remain unaffected.

Board member Service asked about the line item for hosting services. Ms. Osleger noted that was for much more than hosting and included other licensing fees for district notification services and more. She also noted that she was in negotiations to reduce those fees because the district is not using some of the services due to the district's migration to Google Docs.

Dr. Chafetz noted that he would meet with his administrators and evaluate other savings and report back to the Board at the next full board meeting, March 17.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.