

# CARVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday, March 11, 2019

7:00 p.m. OPEN MEETING

Town Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Meeting Room 1

## **School Committee Present:**

James O'Brien  
Andrew Soliwoda  
Andrew Cardarelli  
Stephanie Clougherty  
Gina Marie Hanlon-Cavicchi

**Absent:** Jenna Sweeney

## **Also Present:**

Scott Knief, Superintendent  
Brad Brothers, Chief Operations and Finance Officer  
Meredith Cargill, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology

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**Meeting Opened:** James O'Brien opened the meeting at **7:05 pm** with Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Recognition:**

On Tuesday February 12th, Torri Dibble, Payton Liddell, Trevor Drakakis, T.J. Booth and Christopher Choi-Harlow represented Carver Middle High School at the 12th annual Massachusetts ProStart Invitational at Gillette Stadium. The invitational was designed to have the students demonstrate their knowledge of the food-service industry through a culinary and management competition. Each portion of the competition was judged by leaders in the food-service industry, and scoring was based on industry standards. The culinary team is judged based upon their dishes in which they have to prepare a three course dinner for two people in one hour using only 2 gas burners whereas the management team is judged on their presented business plan complete with concept, marketing, menu and over all operations.

After all of their hard work Payton Liddell and Trevor Drakakis were awarded third place in the management portion of the competition, while the team of Torri Dibble, Trevor Drakakis, T.J. Booth and Christopher Choi-Harlow was awarded first place in the culinary section. With their first place win, the culinary team will now represent the state of Massachusetts at the 2019 National ProStart Invitational in Washington DC May 8-10.

The students shared how they have been preparing and practicing for the National event and advisor, Dan "Chef" Portelance shared how impressed both he and the judges were are the presentation skills of these Carver students.

## **I. Comments from the General Public:**

Mr. O'Brien began the comment session by reading from the School Committee Policy on Public Comments (BEDH):

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*In order that all citizens who wish to be heard before the committee have a chance and to insure the ability of the committee to conduct the district's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:*

- 1. At the start of each regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, individuals or group representatives will be invited to address the committee. The length of the public participation segment shall be determined by the chairperson.*

In that context, and in order to allow people the best speaking position on the evening's agenda items, in particular, school choice and the school budget proposal, he shared his position on allowing public comment to follow the information presented by the school administration and then following that, the committee would close public comments for their discussion and vote. He believed this to be the best manner in which everyone could speak to a particular topic, rather than opening up the floor at the beginning of the evening when many questions/commentary may be clarified in the presentations given. No members of the school committee objected to that structure.

He continued to read and highlight the listed items in Policy BEDH:

- 2. Speakers will be allowed three minutes to present their material. The presiding chairperson may permit extension of this time limit.*
- 3. Topics for discussion must be limited to those items listed on the School Committee meeting agenda for that evening.*
- 4. Improper conduct and remarks will not be allowed. Defamatory or abusive remarks are always out of order. If a speaker persists in improper conduct or remarks, the chairperson may terminate that individual's privilege of address.*
- 5. All remarks will be addressed through the chairperson of the meeting.*
- 6. Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of the school operations and programs as concern them, but in public session the committee will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor against any member of the school community. Under most circumstances, administrative channels are the proper means for disposition of legitimate complaints involving staff members.*
- 7. Written comments longer than three minutes may be presented to the committee before or after the meeting for the committee members review and consideration at an appropriate time.*

In expounding on the policy he reiterated and asked for speakers to share 3 mins only, for topics not based upon school choice or the budget to be addressed to the committee prior to the other agenda items; if we are here to truly work together, then we are not here to attack; comments will be addressed to the School Committee Chairperson and shall be comments, not an interactive session with the committee; the committee will not hear public complaints of personnel or staff in public hearing; and any written comments longer than 3 minutes can be submitted prior to or after the meeting.

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**Jim Hoffman, 8 Great Meadow Drive:** Mr. Hoffman came forward as a member of recreation committee in and effort to be transparent and to offer an update that the Recreation Committee is not ready to adopt the facility use policy that School Committee approved on February 25, 2019. They are going to meet with the youth teams next week to help them digest the rates and find out how to best support these teams in order to help families incur the additional fees. The Recreation Committee didn't feel comfortable adopting this policy right away..

## II. **Comments from the EAPC:** Tom Pinto, EAPC President, Tammy Johnson, EAPC Representative

Tammy Johnson, EAPC Vice President, submitted written letters to the school committee from various people in the community sharing their comments as asked by the school committee at the last meeting. Her hope is that the school committee would have the opportunity to look and see what is going on in our school district. Many people had expressed their difficulties in connecting to the school committee through email and that is why the written letters were shared through the EAPC

## III. **Approval of Minutes**

Joint Session Minutes

**Motion:** Andrew Soliwoda

**Second:** Andrew Cardarelli

**Vote:** Unanimous (Gina Marie Hanlon-Cavicchi abstained due to her absence)

February 25, 2019 - Open Session Minutes

**Motion:** Andrew Soliwoda

**Second:** Andrew Cardarelli

**Vote:** Unanimous (Gina Marie Hanlon-Cavicchi abstained due to her absence)

## IV. **Reports from the Superintendent:**

### A. **School Choice:**

Last year the Committee voted to approve school choice in K and grades 6-9 with a total of 5 slots at each grade level. In general the district receives \$5,000 per student who school choices in and losses \$5,000 for each student from Carver who choices out. For some special education students we receive additional monies to support their needs. We currently have 36 students who choice into the district. Mr. Knief provided the school committee with a list of number of school choice students by grade level by link ([linked here](#)) Last year we opened an additional 25 slots and as a result we enrolled 16 additional school choice students. The addition of these students has been spread over several grades and had minimal impact on class size. At last meeting the school committee asked for the community to send emails of concerns/comments. The questions sent to the school committee on school choice focused around: What type of students would this attract; would it limit offerings or reduce offerings to our existing students;

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with no guarantee of additional school choice students enrolling should we be relying on that money towards the school's budget deficit; as well the history of school choice students in terms of their being members of the community. Mr. Knief responded to the questions and shared that this year, we had 65% of slots filled and using the same averages, paired with the fact that we had 36 students school choice in and only 8 school choice out of our district, school choice is and will continue to be a positive for the schools in terms of cash flow to supplement our budget. In regards to the types of students attracted by school choice offerings, Mr. Knief reviewed basic data and shared that out of the 36 current school choice students, 31 have had no discipline incidents during the school year. The remaining five students have had some kind of disciplinary infraction this year, but 2 of those 5 have had only 1 minor offense. That information is based on data to address the questions, however, when talking to administration and teachers, the general consensus is that school choice students have had same successes and have blended right into our school community. It has not had a negative impact on school culture and climate. Based on this information, Mr. Knief recommended the expansion of school choice to grades 10-12, which would expand our total available school choice slots by 20 students. Currently, the Kindergarten registration for next year is consistent with past years, so he is comfortable with continuing to offer 5 Kindergarten slots as well. He noted that supporting this expansion would also allow more school choice money to offset the budget.

**Deb Colon, 15 Bradford Blvd.:** Mrs. Colon inquired as to how many students have left the school district and if the schools were intending to supplement that number with school choice offerings. In response Mr. Knief stated that 8 students are school choice out of the school district this year. He also offered that while he didn't have the data with him, at the November school committee meeting a report was presented that displayed the number of students from Carver attending other schools and that information is available and could be requested. Brad Brothers, also commented that the monies from the state under Chapter 70 follow each student and would be deducted from the school's funding right away. Mrs. Colon shared in response, that she hopes the school isn't replacing students that are leaving with school choice options.

Mr. O'Brien, reminded the community and the school administration not to have an interactive question and answer session that in order to follow the open comment policies and maintain the structure of the meeting.

**Austin Bell, 41 Washington Park:** Mr. Bell, a former student and recent graduate, was seeking clarification as to whether or not the CAP and TAP programs and art programs would be affected or limited by offering additional school choice slots.

**Justin Carpenter, 55 Woodhaven Street:** Mr. Carpenter, a former student and recent graduate, shared his belief that without the offering transportation to students in the school choice program, it restricts equal opportunities for students who cannot get to school on their own.

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Mr. O'Brien closed the comment session from the public for school committee discussion and vote. Mr. Cardarelli inquired if the school and committee has ever discussed offering transportation for school choice students. Brad Brothers responded to his question and stated that the schools are not held responsible for transportation, however, there are other school districts that have set money aside to transport students. Carver is not financially in a place to make these arrangements yet, but it is not out of the question. The school does however provide transportation if it is on a student's IEP (Individual Education Plan) and it is billed back to the student's residing district. In addition to transportation, school districts also reimburse for additional special education services as well. Andrew Soliwoda added there may be an incentive for students if they had the opportunity to receive transportation services. Mr. O'Brien agreed sharing this could be a future discussion.

**Motion:** Andrew Soliwoda made a motion to approved 20 additional slots in grades K - 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 - 5 slots in each grade level for the 2019-2020 school year.

**Seconded:** Andrew Cardarelli

**Vote:** Unanimous 5 - 0

## B. Public Hearing School Budget

Brad Brothers began the presentation with a review of the DESE function codes for the clarity of the presentation and then gave a brief overview of each code and how the budget is affected by each.

**1000: District Wide Leadership & Administration:** Decreased by 2.5% due to the reduction of legal services from negotiations, as well as the completion of Mr. Knief's New Superintendent Induction/Mentoring Program (NSIP).

**2000: Instructional Services:** Increased by 2.61% and reflects the addition of .3 Pre-K Teachers, however this addition is offset by the tuition of the additional Pre-K students. While there were no increases in supply lines for the schools, increases were shown in special education, salaries, and tuition reimbursement lines.

**3000: Other Services (includes Transportation, Health and Athletics):** Increased by 2.17% with changes in out of district transportation and homeless students as well as special education contracted rates. These funds are fully allocated without an additional monies for changes that may occur. This is one area of the budget that could change at a moments notice either way by the need to add a route or the option and ability to combine routes if students transfer locations. The combined line for transportation showed an increase, however, a savings of \$10,000 was also reflected by dissolving and combining a regular education bus route.

**4000: Operations:** Increased by 4.18% due to the increase of funds needed for field maintenance and utility accounts for electric and natural gas, which although it is an increase, administration shared that the actuals for utility use at CES, which were considerably higher than projected have come back down to the projected numbers.

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**5000: Fixed Charges:** Increase of 2.53% reflected by a projected increase of 9% for health insurance costs. A savings of \$30,000 was shown for this year from Plymouth County retirement costs, but this number could also change year to year.

Mr. Knief asked for Brad Brothers to address a question submitted to the school committee about health care on the school side of operating budget and also how insurance works into the equation when the town often says they have the highest rates because the school gets 70% of the town monies. Mr. Brothers shared that health insurance is budgeted the same way for the town and school. The master plan adds up all revenue intake and subtracts fixed expenses from the town which leaves the operational budget. This is the number that is divided 70/30 between the school and town. Health insurance for the town is not above the line and it gets subtracted out of their operational budget just like the school making it a level playing field when it comes to insurance costs.

**9000: Out of District Programs:** Increased by 30%, this line includes special, vocational and collaborative education outside of the district and is increased for students we know we are fiscally responsible for. Mr. Brothers highlighted several of the larger items that make up the increase by showing the comparisons of projected costs to actual costs for FY19 which came in at 1.4 million dollars, a roughly \$183,000 addition in costs. Mr. Knief expanded on this change further informing the committee that movement of students in or out can change unexpectedly and as such, this change was not due to poor projecting, but because of unexpected movement in a few students and the costs associated. These kinds of unexpected changes are covered during the year by the reserve accounts established by the town with one time monies, but then must be reflected in the next year's operation budget. Currently a \$208,000 increase is reflected and projected in this line for FY20 and this will come out of the \$580,000 in the new money supplied, meaning over 1/3 will already need to be allocated before looking at additional natural and annual increases in things like utilities and salary increases, health insurance costs, etc.

Mr. Knief pointed out that this is something that has been a larger point in recent meetings and how many groups are coming forward and advocating at the state level. The current funding system at the state level does not properly fund health care and special education costs. These are the school's biggest drivers, not because it is not budgeted properly, but by the reality of the costs increasing at a higher level without the funding to match and encouraged everyone to continue to advocate together at the state level for better funding.

In addition to the increase in costs, Mr. Brothers also outlined in the presentation the various ways in which costs are also offset by grants and fees:

- Grants 240 / 305 at \$650,000 offsets Paraprofessional costs in both schools
- Circuit Breaker at \$400,000 offsets out of district tuitions

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→ PreK Fees	at \$50,000	offsets PreK teacher salaries
→ School Choice	at \$300,000	offsets CES teacher salaries
→ Athletic Fees	at \$63,300	offsets MHS athletics costs
→ Intramural Fees	at \$10,000	offsets salaries and transportation
→ Student Parking	at \$3,000	offsets graduation costs

At the presentation on February 25, there was a projected level service shortfall of \$234,985, as well as the proposal of adding the full-time Technology/Engineering teacher at the Middle High School which would leave a shortfall of \$310,903. Administration presented a new budget number which reflected the removal of the request for the Technology/Engineering teacher at this time and also added an additional offset of \$72,441 based upon a vote to approve the expansion of school choice for grades 10-12, an addition of \$25,000 of school choice monies based upon current enrollment and a reduction of health care expenses to 8%, a savings of \$30,398 bringing the shortfall down to \$107,146. To meet this number administration proposed a restructuring of the Director of Literacy position including adding a .4 Reading Specialist at the Elementary School, which will result in a savings of \$65,622 and the reduction of an Art teacher at CMHS from full time to .5 with a savings of \$41,524. With these restructures the total number of teachers in the district would be reduced by .1 (.5 Art becoming moving to a .4 Reading Specialist) and would not change the services currently offered to students. It does, however, result in the loss of one District-Wide Administrative Position.

The restructure of the Director of Literacy position would shift the district administrator responsibilities as the E.L.L. Director, overseeing the Title I program, and coordinating professional development, as well as general administrative duties such as observations and evaluations, to other administrators in the district including the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology, the Superintendent and the building principals. It would change the program from 3 reading specials to service roughly 160 elementary students to 1 full time reading specialist/coach, 2 full time reading specialists and the addition of a .4 reading specialist to offer additional support.

The art teacher change was born out of the enrollment numbers for the current year at 44 students and the projected number for next year at 68 students. With the removal of the Virtual High School (VHS) responsibility to teachers at the MHS, currently covered by the HS level art teacher, due to the fact that the school felt it was difficult to maintain and harder for teachers to take on, the .5 Art teacher position would teach 6 sections (3 per semester) which could and would cover the projected enrollment.

These proposed changes would have the school budget meet level service, meaning current services for students will not change. With a proposed addition of a .4 specialist to help take on additional needs and maintaining support and removing an administrator, the schools would have the same number of teachers next year with a reduction of .1 from the movement of a .5 Art position to a .4 Reading Specialist position.

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Although the school administration still feels as though the Technology/Engineering teacher addition is an important move in the right direction, it has been removed from the proposed budget in order to maintain current teaching staff. It is however on the wish list if things shift after the budget approval at the town meeting in April.

There are still items in play that could cause shifts in the budget. Vocational tuitions can change one way or the other as they are not confirmed until May and each tuition is roughly \$20,000 per student. There is always the potential for additional staff movement, although the administration shared they are not aware of any, there is always a chance for things to change in that area between now and July 1.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Mr. Knief addressed questions that were submitted to the school committee in reference to the budget and clarified the Board of Selectmen's statement that the town offers more support to the schools as compared to other towns by noting that different towns identify revenues differently. The school administration feels as though a better number to look at is net school spending. Mr. Brothers added that net school spending looks at every town across the board by value of the town and money coming from residents in the town. It is a formula to be looked upon that is a straight DESE equation that looks at everyone the same. We are funded at 23% above average and in regards to school spending, that puts Carver right in the middle as the state average last year was at 26%. Some spend much higher, he noted, and some spend much lower, but Carver is right in the ballpark of our surrounding towns.

Another question posed to the school committee was if the school is looking to eliminate an administrative position, why not look to eliminate assistant principal positions. Mr. Knief noted that any administrative position is important to the district and does not intend to diminish any other position, but that Assistant Principals in particular are vital roles in supports for our students on a daily basis, through crisis intervention, managing discipline, supports to teachers, managing student conflict, addressing bullying concerns and investigations, staff evaluations, program oversight, curriculum support, grant writing, work on site based councils, etc. Assistant principals on a daily basis are working with students and a reduction of an assistant principal position would have a more severe effect on direct student support.

In summary, Mr. Knief shared that he was supporting the the proposed budget at this time because although it is short by .1 it is able to maintain same amount of teachers with the possibility of other changes before the end of the year that could add a program or teacher. Although it results in the elimination of a district administrator position, the supports will remain by adding duties on to the other administrators, and a shift of .5 from program to program which is based on data of student interest.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Mr. O'Brien opened up the floor for public comment on the budget

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presentation.

**Deb Gesualdo, 204 Main Street:** Mrs. Gesualdo, a resident and teacher at Carver Elementary commented that she is coming forward again from a couple of years ago when there were painful cuts made to the schools, to note that although it seems like a minor cut cumulatively, its not. Added to cuts that have been made in the past, Carver schools has lost a lot of staff members. She noted that when she began teaching in the district in 2004, there were 7 teachers per grade level, a spanish teacher at the elementary school and effective and smaller class sizes. She acknowledged that a lot of work and thought went into the proposed budget, but asked the school committee not to accept a budget based on what the Board of Selectmen is offering if it doesn't meet the needs of the students and look to build the district not shrink it. We owe a debt to our students to offer what other students in the commonwealth have, she shared, as our students have to go and compete with other students in the state who have more opportunities both at college and in the workforce. She reminded everyone of the quote, "If you stand for nothing, you will fall for anything" and told the school committee that there were 107 staff members in attendance that will stand with them and encouraged them to stand up for them at the town meeting.

**Gail Nauen - 15 Old Main Street:** Mrs. Nauen displayed paintings she had created and asked the posed the question to the school committee: "If chemistry enrollment was down, would you cut the program? A reading specialist is not a replacement for art." Mrs. Nauen stated that her whole life has been dedicated to art and that there are no statistics needed to display how art affects us all. She believes that art is essential and it would be devastating to cut the art teacher to part time especially as numerous programs are added to support students and lots of money has been spent on recreational facilities when not all students participate in sports. She said the world's greatest people channeled creative outlets and students who want to study art would be lacking development and missing years in the application process for college in their portfolio. The schools would be missing the boat, she said, if they don't understand how beneficial it is to study the arts and asked the school committee not to allow budget cuts to send students to other schools to fulfill this need.

**Emma Gillan 107 Plymouth Street:** Ms. Gillan is a junior at Carver Middle High School and came forward to tell the school committee they would be are cutting a program that is already not represented well. She said she doesn't see anything about the arts at the school and for that reason the school should instead be seeking to build it up. She shared that art shows are few and low attended, not promoted or represented. Cutting the program would be cutting a portion of the school for kids that don't participate in sports and that art is their favorite thing to do. She asked for support for the arts instead of using numbers to cut it and said they would be cutting something that has felt cut down for years.

**Doria Gedraitis, 164 Main Street:** Ms. Gedraitis, a recent graduate of Carver Middle High School noted that the budget reflected \$63,000 allocated for sports which is an elective activity and not a class that offers

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credits. In addition, she noted that it is also not something every kid can do, afford, or choses to do. In the same way, not every kids chooses to participate in art classes but the fact remains, she said, that art should be an option. She believes that by cutting the high school art teacher to a .5 position, the options to participate would also be cut in half and would restrict students from having the variety that colleges seek as well as build a portfolio in order to gain admittance into art classes at the collegiate level and ultimately, everything should be weighed equally when it comes to sports versus the arts.

**Ann Larson, S. Meadow Village:** Mrs. Larson is a retired teacher who taught for 39 years and came forward to the meeting to support students as a senior citizen in the community. The needs and demands on students are much different than we have seen before and noted and the best schools, materials and tech are needed. The most important factor in successfully educating a student at school is the teacher and schools need enough teachers to avoid overcrowding and offer individual attention. She reminded the committee that elective courses like foreign language and art are just as important as core subjects and that students have different areas of strengths, but all have potential to succeed in some area. The school committee's job is to protect student needs, she shared, and asked them to support a full time teacher for art, not be the body that makes the cuts, but do the best job we elected you to do.

**Richard Hughes:** Mr. Hughes is a junior at the Middle High School and was informed that the French program may be facing cuts and wanted to share his views on its importance. He presented his research and data about the french speaking population in Massachusetts, how french class helps students to not only learn the language but also customs, traditions and cultures, as well as data that supports knowledge of a foreign language as a means to becoming a competitive applicant in both college and in the workforce.

**Madelyn Barros, 6 Crystal Lake Drive:** Ms. Barros is a current junior at Carver Middle High Schools and came forward in support of the art program. She shared that art has been a passion of hers as long as she can remember. She is involved in sports and as well, but acknowledged the imbalance for support in athletics versus the arts. She feels that cuts will eliminate options for students' discovery process as they seek to find what they may be passionate about.

**Lilah Murphy, 155 Main Street:** Ms. Murphy is a senior at the Middle High School and is in the process of applying to art colleges. She has taken all of the art classes offered at the high school and it has helped her to work with all kind of mediums and gain experience in order to have a varied portfolio. She shared if cuts to the art program were to happen, students who are more impoverished wouldn't be able to get this experience, because they would have to do private classes and may not be able to afford it. These cuts, she believes, perpetuate the societal idea that art isn't as important as the others, but subjects like engineering, math/geometry and careers in carpentry, architecture, graphic design, marketing, web design are all based upon thinking visually. Students could miss out on a learning opportunity to use arts to excel in other areas and it would prevent children from going towards these industries because they don't see them as

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important as others.

**Lauryn Steed, 15 Myles Standish Drive:** Ms. Steed, a high school student in Carver encouraged the committee to think on cuts in programs in relation to the opening of school choice slots made available as well as current students seeking education outside of the district. The proposed cut to the art program would only allow 3 blocks for students to take art and she noted how important balance is in a student's schedule. A student may have to choose between an AP class and art because there isn't enough flexibility. Her parents asked her if she could go back would she choose to attend to a private school or charter school, and she shared she would have because of the lack of programs, but if the same was asked of her now, she would stay because of the relationships she has built with the teachers as they are they reason students stay and learn.

**Justin Carpenter, 5 Woodhaven Street:** Mr. Carpenter, a recent graduate, reflected upon the proposed changes in the art program based upon enrollment numbers, which he agreed the numbers don't add up, but the display from the students that evening was that art is so important. He posed the question, "Are students really not interested?" He inquired as to why number are down and shared his own experiences at Carver schools in the arts and how he was encouraged in the elementary school by a music presentation which lead him to study an instrument. He said he was given the opportunity and had the school support to do it. He wondered if the schools were encouraging art in the elementary school like music and athletics are and suggested that perhaps the schools start with the younger students and consider instead how to get them excited about these programs.

**Mikayla Hurney, 9 Snappit Road:** Ms. Hurney transferred to Carver a few years ago from Plymouth North and in comparison she recognized that although Plymouth is a bigger school and has more money, they have have many more opportunities as well like DECA, bio-med classes, etc. She is not an art student but came forward in support by stating that Carver schools are already at a disadvantage with their program offerings and shouldn't be making additional cuts in these areas.

**Abigail Earls, 145 Plymouth Street:** As current student at the Middle High School, Ms. Earls shared that cuts in the art program would result in students not being able to fit it into their schedules. When you take away students passions, she said, it makes school that much more miserable to them.

**Stacey Demello:** Mrs. Demello came forward in support of the art program for her daughter who has had portfolios of art since kindergarten. She is an honors student who is also involved in arts through drama and participation in regional music festivals and hopes to attend college to study art. Mrs. Demello is concerned that her competitive schedule with honors classes would limit her ability to take all the art classes she desires should cuts be made.

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**Liam Archer, 21 Wareham Street:** Mr. Archer is a recent graduate who is currently attending UMass Amherst pursuing a degree in trombone performance. He shared that one of the biggest resources was the help that Mr. Teunis was able to provide in the process of applying and auditioning for school. The application for music study in college is a similar application process for art in regards to a portfolio or performance. He believed that without the resources of a full time teacher, he wouldn't have been as prepared for college and that process, and that removing a full time teacher would severely handicap students' ability to get into college for those specific fields.

**Natalie Mosher, 76 Fosdick Road:** Ms. Mosher is a 2017 graduate, and although she was not an art student, she was involved in the arts through theatre and band. There wasn't any support or class for theatre, and she feels that art is on it's way to becoming a self funded after school activity as well. She also shared the perspective that it will be difficult to find a teacher who is willing and able to fill a .5 position with that kind of a rotating schedule which may limit the "talent" base/quality of a teacher. She shared, if half of the math classes were cut, if half of the science classes were cut, she would have missed out on advantages in college and that cuts would cut in half the potential education that students can get from carver high school.

**Austin Bell, 42 Washington Park:** Mr. Bell thanked the administration and committee for answering his question from before through their presentation, but he reflected on school choice and mentioned that art is culture and diversity and if you don't have art, what would entice students to come to carver schools?

**Morgan Brown, 51 Meadow Street:** Ms. Brown, a former graduate, said she believes a .5 teacher position with a rotating block schedule to be counterintuitive as it would be a hard schedule for a part time position to follow and believes there would be issues of implementation.

**Tammy Johnson, EAPC VP for Carver:** Mrs. Johnson shared how overwhelmed and humbled was was by the students who came forward. "They are why I do what I do," she shared, "and I love my job." She complimented the students and shared with the committee they they said almost every point that she wanted to share with the committee. She echoed her statement from the last school committee meeting and asked the committee to have courage. She believes it is overwhelmingly stated how well the town is doing financially and if this is how we treat the schools when we are doing well, what will it look like if we hit a recession again? She begged and pleaded for the school committee to have courage for the students

**Alan Dunham, 11 Rickard Street, Member of the Board of Selectmen, Carver:** Mr. Dunham agreed that the students have been a tremendous advocate for the arts program. He acknowledged the difficult position the committee is in, especially the school administration and reiterated that in addition to the elementary school, the town has supported the schools with a new sports field, a new roof, windows and doors at the middle high school and saved the parents and school department money. As a representative of the Board

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of Selectmen, he said he represents 11,000 people, all of the taxpayers in Carver, and in order to fund a shortfall of the school budget, they would have to make cuts in other ways. He agreed that the problem is that there needs to be more income in the town, but that the school and town must deal with what we have right now. He believes it would be great if the school could keep a full time art teacher, but that a tough choice has to be made to get the most they can out of the proposed budget. He applauded all the staff members of carver public schools for all the work they do.

Mr. O'Brien closed public comment for school committee discussion and vote.

Mr. Brothers took a moment to clarify a point that regardless of whether or not the district approved school choice seats, a student could school choice out to another district who accepts school choice students.

**Motion made to approve the proposed school budget at \$23,840,432:** Andrew Soliwoda

**Seconded:** Andrew Cardarelli

Andrew Soliwoda addressed the community noting how as they got to this point, a lot of you have been here for the last few meetings, and have seen how dramatic things have changed in a short time. He thanked Scott Knief and Brad Brothers for the work they have done to get the numbers this close. He is hoping in the future this process can be a smoother one. He also thanked the students and community for coming to speak so articulately. He acknowledge that the matter at hand is a difficult one, one that is reflects compassion and heart and also one that is done by a careful look at data from numbers, etc. The committee has tried to get the community all the answers to the questions put forward and has looked to gather all information to make sure both the committee and public was the most informed. Either way the vote falls, he hopes everyone recognizes how extremely difficult it is.

Stephanie Clougherty echoed Mr. Soliwoda's sentiments and thanked everyone for the hard work. She was glad to see that the school is trying to level the service in terms of a .1 position. She questioned herself how the reduction of the art teacher would work and sought to gain additional understanding and how it might impact students. The school committee appreciates all the feedback and statements and she also shared how hard decisions these are to make and that neither the school committee or school administration wants to see anyone or any programs cut and we all must vote what we think is best. She also shared that she believes there have been enough cuts and that she hopes they will vote what's on the best interest for staff and students.

Andrew Cardarelli also thanked the community for their comments and feedback and the work done and posed several questions to the administration before moving forward to a vote about how many students per class are enrolled and would be affected by the cuts.

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Mr. Knief clarified that although they don't have the per class data with them at that time, there are 46 students in total enrolled in art classes at the high school level. Preliminary numbers show 68 students enrolled in high school level art classes next year. The art teacher was currently teaching VHS and was only teaching 4 sections per semester, 8 sections total and although the reduction would be of 2 sections of classes, no offerings would be cut. The schedule choices are always an issue that students face and may be amplified with 2 less sessions. The intention is that every student who signed up for the courses being able to still enroll in those classes through the regular process. In terms of staffing, the part time and rotation would potentially cause an issue, although there have been .5 positions at the Middle High School before and they do believe they could staff the position. The reality of rotating and offerings may certainly cause some course conflicts for students.

Mr. Cardarelli stated that no matter what happens with the vote he hopes that art would be more available in future for different pathways. He also sought clarification and reviewed the proposed changes to the budget and shortfall makeup. As a governmental body of the school district, he reminded everyone that the school committee doesn't have the luxury of saying let's do it all, and unfortunately, they have to work within constraints and sometimes that means cuts. The schools have experienced them before and he recalled the the first year he was on the school committee there was a 1.2 million dollar cut and it was awful. He shared that although the students' sentiments resonated with him in regards to the art program and position, the committee still needs to come up with a budget number to make things work. The town has helped the schools a great deal over the past years to support things they couldn't support on their own and Mr. Cardarelli shared he believes they may face worse budget shortfalls in the future and that the schools still need to work together with the town and not pit one against the other as it has been in the past.

Mr. O'Brien thanked all of the students for their bravery in coming forward to express their thoughts and feelings and for feeling passionate enough to speak for what they truly believe in. He noted it was powerful and meaningful. The school committee has met a lot through the process and Mr. O'Brien commended Mr. Knief and Mr. Brothers who he said have worked countless hours to creatively find solutions with the best scenario. He also echoed Mr. Cardarelli's statement about working with the town. He reiterated that the town has created the overdraft fund for healthcare which we may need and the overdraft for special ed that we need. He clarified that if the art position is kept at full time it would \$41,000 and that he doesn't necessarily agree that this vote has to be yes or a no and asked the committee if they could ask the town for the \$41,000 to make it work. He acknowledged that it may make a difficult situation for the schools, but in response to the students' passion, it leaves one to reflect on that fact that once a program is cut it is hard to build it back, and it's part of that pathways and what we are trying to do. He stated he would generously entertain a motion to ask the town for this short townfall.

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**Motion made to amend the budget to add back a full time art teacher at \$23,881,957:** Stephanie Clougherty  
**Seconded:** Gina Marie Hanlon Cavicchi

Mr. Knief responded to Mr. O'Brien's statement about making it difficult for the schools to add back in a full time art teacher and shared that he is happy about that. Mr. O'Brien clarified his statement sharing that his intention was that it may make for a difficult position to work with the town.

Mr. Knief reiterated that he has clearly said from beginning that the last thing he wants to do is cut any positions and that the school needs to offer as many programs as they can in order to move in the direction they are headed in. They aren't considering these pathways and programs because they want to keep students, but because administration believes long term that students need to be better equipped and it is what is best for the kids in Carver. Mr. Knief shared his passion for the community and complimented the those who came forward to speak and the presentations from current and graduate students alike. He reiterated, that his goal was never to cut teachers, although he did share his concern that any additional funding from the town would come from one time money and not changes to a departmental budget which means it would be a short term solution to a larger structural problem. There is a dualism, he said, in working with town to make best decision and supporting students. He doesn't believe the town is holding money and not supplying it to the school, but he does believe there is a greater structural problem that needs to be solved by bringing in more revenue and his fear is that the \$41,000 doesn't solve that issue, and will leave the school with that same problem again moving forward.

Mr. O'Brien agreed with Mr. Knief that the school committee has met with the town to continue to find a better solution and that the \$41,000 is pushing a problem to the next years, but there are even more things that need to be done to move forward and this budget doesn't even offer the technology teacher that they feel they needed. This isn't a stand, he shared, at \$41,000 it is a step. He said with this budget ask, they are still maintaining at a 1.2 million dollar deficit. He acknowledged the work of the school administration again reminding everyone that Scott and Brad were handed over a deficit when they came into their positions and they have done a great job trying to navigate it. The role of the school committee is to represent the passion of the students and staff and he believes it is worth asking for, acknowledging again that there is no guarantee that this won't happen next year because it will be one time money.

Mr. Soliwoda asked how would the \$41,000 change in budget would affect the wish list vision of a technology teacher at the end of the year if budget numbers shift. He wondered if the town voted down the increase to fund a full time art teacher, would the committee seek to use any money that may come available to add that back in the art position before the addition of a technology teacher?

Mr. Knief clarified the process of how this number would go to the town for approval. First, they would seek to speak with the town administrator to see if there was any way this could be solved with existing

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budgets and if the Board of Selectmen would approve a shift in monies. If not, it would go to the town meeting for support. School administration could always come back in May and have shifts from a variety of ways discussed before in the meeting like a staff change or fewer students attending a vocational school, etc. and make another recommendation of where to move that money into the budget whether it be an art teacher or a technology teacher and the school committee would vote on how they would like to see the money allocated, if of course, there are any changes.

Mr. Cardarelli asked for clarification on a number things, that the town already voted their number, if the committee votes a number that doesn't agree with that number then they are going to ask the town administrator for the \$41,000, if he doesn't support the funding then it would go to the town meeting floor?

Mr. Milanoski was invited to respond to these question. He first thanked all those who came forward to speak and be present at the meeting and for their passion for education in the town. Carver has always funded schools as best we can and he acknowledged the tough decision they faced with only so much revenue and how to balance it. In regards to the question on voting budget, there has been times when the school committee has voted a different number than the financial policies and the selectmen are obligated in the informational section to put in the school committees request for town notification. It is the Board of Selectmen's job to set the budget based on the financial policies. Mr. Milanoski encouraged the committee to vote a budget that evening so it can move forward and be presented at the town meeting, as all budgets must be approved 30 days prior to town meeting. He cautioned them with a reminder that here has been a tremendous amount of cooperative work done with town and school to rebuild relationships, etc. and that many projects like buildings and reserve funds, would not happen without cooperation. He shared that the \$41,000 they would be asking for would not be one time money and another area would have it cut out of their operations. He encouraged the community that the finance committee would be looking for representatives from the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen to look at long term ideas to find a solution. He closed by reminding the school committee that asking for additional is their right to do, but he doesn't believe it will solve the problem.

Mrs. Hanlon-Cavicchi shared her opinion that it is wonderful to ask for the \$41,000 and that the school committee's job is to care for the students and the teachers. The Board of Selectmen's job is to operate for the town and the school committee's function is to put forward an approved budget and we should move forward.

Mr. O'Brien agreed that there is so much back and forth and this budget isn't fully funding education, and that there is still so much to be done. The committee does a lot of work to do the back and forths and they are thankful for the new buildings, all of the repairs, and all of the fields, etc. He doesn't want it to appear that the committee and the schools are ungrateful or unappreciative, but that their job as a school committee is to stand up and say that they still need it and he believes although it may be in opposition to

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where they were headed, it seems as though the right thing to do as a citizen, school committee member and parent.

Mr. Cardarelli clarified once more that voting a number tonight means it goes to the town for recommendation and the town would have to approve it.

Mr. Milanoski corrected his statement that three years ago when the school committee voted a different number it was duly noted in the informational section that the school committee voted a different number but it was not offered as a choice to raise the number above what the town financial policies state. Mr. Knief responded that ultimately the town has a voice at the town meeting and anyone can make an amendment to change the policy or the number. If the school committee makes this decision then the school committee will take recourse to make sure the number is heard and voted on at town meeting.

Mr. Cardarelli, explained he wanted to ask as an advocate for transparency so the process is known to the public and for his own knowledge. He wants everyone to know there is an avenue to change things and all of these things need to be considered before voting.

Mr. Dunham approached the committee sharing the the Board of Selectmen had not voted yet and will have a full board meeting at their next meeting on Tuesday, March 19. At which time he invited representatives of the school committee and the school administration to attend and approach the chairmen of the board to seek approval for the addition. The board of selectmen was waiting to approve until they have a full board present. Mr. O'Brien agreed that the school committee would be present at that meeting to appeal to the Board of Selectmen, sharing that it will be difficult especially since there are other pieces to it, like the addition of a bus at \$100,000 and a groundskeeper that the town is picking up on their side of the budget. Mr. Dunham shared his surprise that the school committee was looking to vote against the number presented by the Board of Selectmen when he felt that they had an agreement on the budget number presented and worked cooperatively and diligently to find solutions for the school and town to work together.

Discussion continued as to whether or not to vote tonight or not and what the future looks like.

**Motion made to amend the budget to add back a full time art teacher at \$23,881,957:** Stephanie Clougherty

**Seconded:** Gina Marie Hanlon Cavicchi

**Vote: Approved 3 to 2**

Gina Hanlon Cavicchi: Yes

Stephanie Clougherty: Yes

James O'Brien: Yes

Andrew Soliwoda: No

Andrew Cardarelli: No

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## Motion Approved 3 to 2

Meeting broke for 5 minutes recess and called back to order at 9:56p by James O'Brien.

### V. **Communications:**

Mr. Knief highlighted the Massachusetts Association of School Committees' Day on the Hill. The Day on the Hill is MASC annual advocacy day at the State House. This year it is Wednesday May 1st. The day includes an agenda of speakers that outline the Massachusetts Association of School Committee's key points of advocacy, a luncheon, and time for members to schedule meetings with local representatives. Stephanie Clougherty and Scott Knief committed to attending to represent Carver Public Schools.

Mr. Knief also informed the committee that the Legislature is holding a public hearing on Friday, March 22, 2019 on three school finance proposals that are before them, including the Promise Act and the Governor's proposed budget. The MASS is recommending that all Superintendent's who are not receiving aid beyond the minimum increase attend the hearing. Mr. Knief will be attending the hearing and speaking in support of the idea that all communities need to benefit from any legislation that changes or revises the school funding formula.

### VI. **Reports from the Superintendent:**

#### A. **Personnel Updates:**

**Retire:** Deborah Gesualdo, *Teacher, Grade 5, CES*; Dana Caldarone, *Teacher, Mathematics, MHS*; Walter Cole, *Custodian, MHS*; Paula Shaw, *Teacher, English, MHS*;

**Transfers:** Michael Schultz, *Interim Principal, MHS*;

**New Hire:** Diana Dennen, *LT Sub, Paraprofessional, CES*; Sherrye Dolan, *Food Services, MHS*; Rubab Rashid, *LT Sub, Teacher, Special Ed, CES*

#### B. **Drop Out Data Report**

Drop-out data for the 2017-2018 school year was recently released. Drop-out rate is calculated by dividing the total number of students in grades 9-12 who left school during a given school year compared to the number of student reported enrolled on October 1 of any given school year. For example, during the 2017-2018 school year we had 1 students drop-out of school and had a October 1 number of 416 for a drop-rate of .2%. Mr. Knief shared his belief that the CAP/TAP and GAP programs have assisted greatly with the reduction in this data and there will be a CAP/TAP program overview and presentation for the committee and community at a future school committee meeting

### VII. **Recommendations from Superintendent**

#### A. **School Calendar 2019-2020**

The proposed calendar for the 2019-2020 school year is linked above. It is a similar calendar to what was followed this past year. Administration is proposing to have three professional development days for teachers prior to the start of school, Tuesday August, 27, Wednesday August 28, and

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Thursday August 29. Students would start school after Labor Day on Tuesday September 3rd. There would be an additional professional development day Tuesday March 3rd - which is Super Tuesday for the 2020 Presidential Primary. Good Friday would also be a day off by contract agreement and an early release day is added in April in order for teachers to have time to submit evidence for the evaluation system. By this recommended calendar, the Holiday break would begin on Monday December 23rd and end Wednesday January 1st. Students would attend school on Thursday January 2nd and Friday January 3rd. The otherwise the calendar is fairly similar to past years. If the committee wanted to move forward with two weeks at xmas would leave the school year to end at June 18 without snow days.

Mr. Soliwoda asked about the teacher's opinion on the holiday break. Mr. Knief shared that the Administrative Leadership Team was split but it hasn't gone to the teachers yet. In response to a question on savings for electricity and heat, two weeks off during that time would offer a little cost savings in that area and academically there isn't necessarily a gain in any academic time whether it is 3 days following christmas or at the end of the year and winter sports would still continue at the time regardless of how long the break would be. Mr. Knief offered that in the past teachers have been surveyed for their opinion and the school administration would gladly do so and bring the results back at the next meeting. The committee agreed to wait on this decision for further input from the teachers.

**Motion:** Andrew Soliwoda

**Seconded:** Andrew Cardarelli

## B. Request to Dispose/Recycle Technology Items

The Technology team put together a list of items for approval for disposal. The list is linked above and consists of some computers, laptops and projectors. All of the items have been deemed to be non-functioning by the technology department. In regards to the recycling process, a company comes to pick these items up and any items still functioning get shared with or offered to the town. Vote to approve: **Unanimous**

## C. Field Trips:

Culinary Team, May 8 -10, 2019, National ProStart Competition, Washington D.C.

French IV & V Honors Classes, March 27, 2019, Pot au Feu, Providence, RI

**Motion to approve the field trip to the National ProStart Competition and to Pot au Feu:**

Andrew Solidwoda

**Seconded:** Andrew Cardarelli

**Vote:** Unanimous

## VIII. Reports from the School Committee

Stephanie Clougherty: Encouraged everyone to come to town meeting and make your voices heard.

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## IX. **Executive Session**

**Motion:** Andrew Soliwoda. made a motion to go to executive session for the purpose of reviewing and determining the release of executive session minutes.

**Second:** Andrew Cardarelli

### **Roll Call Vote:**

James O'Brien, Chairperson: **Yes**

Andrew Soliwoda, Vice Chairperson: **Yes**

Andrew Cardarelli: **Yes**

Stephanie Clougherty: **Yes**

Gina Marie Hanlon Cavicchi: **Yes**

Motion Approved: 5 to 0

Meeting Moved to Executive Session at 10:15 p.m.

Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by: Gina Marie Rush

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