

CARVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

7:00 p.m. OPEN MEETING

Town Hall, 2nd Floor, Meeting Room 1

School Committee Present:

Andrew Cardarelli
Jason Greenwood
Stephanie Clougherty
Andrew Soliwoda
James O'Brien

Also Present

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

Meeting Opened: Andrew Cardarelli opened the meeting at **7:01 p.m.** with the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. Comments from the General Public:

None

II. Comments from the EAPC: EAPC President, Tom Pinto

Moving toward a more positive budget - we are looking forward to a positive budget presentation.

III. Reports from the Superintendent:

A. CTE Pathways Meredith Erickson, Michael Schultz

Meredith Erickson and Michael Schultz provided the committee with an update on the progress in the development of new pathways for students in grades 9-12 next year. The addition of a full-time technology education teacher and a .5 science teacher, which are included in the proposed FY21 budget, will allow the district to launch both the Manufacturing/Engineering Pathway and Biotech/Wellness pathway next year. Based on the addition of the proposed new positions, the Project Lead the Way Grant and reorganization of current staff and course offerings we will be able to offer courses next year in the following pathways: Manufacturing/Engineering, Biotech/Wellness, Computer Science, Hospitality, Visual and Performing Arts.

They shared that all departments at the Middle High School are working on different pathways and the timing of the re-structure has worked well with the course selection period. The guidance department has already gone into the classroom and prepared students ahead of time for what may be available through pathways. Mr. Schultz also gave an introductory presentation to students in grades 8-11 and they have already introduced a new course, Intro to Video Production, this semester, taught by Mr. Ewell that has been very successful.

Mrs. Erickson shared the different steps in planning to get these things ready:

- Student presentations in January
- Application and receipt of the Project Lead the Way Grant
- Manufacturing, engineering, and technology curriculum planning with Mr. Rota, grade 6-8 technology education teacher
- Capital outlay requests
- Parent presentation in March

The presentation included how the shift would impact students in grade 8. While grade 8-11 students were given an optional survey on pathways. Grade 8 results were displayed because they are students who could potentially be advantaged by 4 years of pathways opportunities. 75% of eighth graders answered the optional survey with the results below.

When asked to select any pathway they may be interested in pursuing the following responses were recorded:

- 26 Bio-Med
- 51 Manufacturing, Engineering & Technology
- 27 Computer Science
- 27 Culinary
- 20 Environmental & Agricultural Science
- 15 Visual & Performing Arts
- 28 Business Entrepreneurship

New proposed classes to be offered at CMHS in the fall of 2020 are as follows. These classes were proposed with the support of the budget proposals in staffing additions, etc.

- Hospitality:
 - International Foods
 - Pro Start 1
- Computer Science:
 - Computer Science Essentials
- Biotechnology/Wellness:
 - STEM Inquiry Lab 1
 - Health and Wellness 1
 - Fitness and Wellness
- Environmental:
 - STEM Inquiry Lab 1
- Manufacturing, Engineering, and Technology (MET):
 - Engineering Design
 - Computer Aided Drawing (CAD)
 - Computer Aided Drawing (CAD)
 - Robotics 1
 - Robotics 2
- Visual and Performing Arts:
 - Introduction to Music Theory
 - Introduction to Video Production
 - Graphic Design

The staffing for these pathways would be aligned under the following departments:

Biotech/Wellness: Comprehensive Health & Science Departments
(with the addition of a .5 Science Teacher)

Manufacturing, Engineering, Technology: Science Department
(with the addition of a new Technology Teacher)

Computer Science: Math Department

Culinary Hospitality: Language | Arts Department (Chef Portelance)
Environmental Agricultural Science: Science Department
Visual Performing Arts: English and Allied Arts
Business Entrepreneurship: History Department (to take shape in 2022)

Mr. Knief thanked Michael Schultz, Meredith Erickson, and all of the teachers at the Middle High School for the work that has been done in preparation of CTE Pathways. He explained that a lot of the curriculum is based upon the current staff and teachers have been supportive. The staff has been working together and see what they can do to change what they are offering in order to align. Michael Schultz said some of the future goals for the Middle High School Pathways program would be to have a restaurant/cafe, a print shop and a robotics lab all in house, a pop-up store in Carver center and beginning a DECA program.

Mr Greenwood asked if there would be new curriculum materials to be bought for the new courses or if the curriculum would be designed by current staff. Meredith Erickson responded that there have been requests for next year to help fund some of it in regards to durable goods or some capital needed in order launch the programs while in other situations, there are grant funded opportunities like Project Lead the Way. The needs for curriculum is largely dependent on who is teaching the courses and where they are in the process for the pathway. She gave the example of Chef Portelance, who is well versed in each of the courses for the culinary pathway and has the background knowledge and experience in the industry in order to support that. She noted that teachers have done an amazing job with the heavy lifting of this, for instance, the science department has been looking at their current courses and seeing where courses and frameworks can align with pathways during their monthly department meetings all year. Mr. Schultz added that there are curriculums they will be purchasing such as the Prostart curriculum, which is a national curriculum for culinary students, and in other areas they are taking pieces of different curriculum and different frameworks and putting them together.

Mr. Soliwoda gave his full support of where the pathways program is going as it's something they have talked about for years and feels as though that the timing of it has been on pace, moving smart, and with proper planning. He believes Pathways will be able to reach kids and get them excited about their futures. He asked if there would be outreach to the Elementary school so it gets the younger students excited about the opportunities that will be available to them at the Middle High School.

On that topic, Mr. Schultz informed the committee that where the Middle High School they typically hosted a Program of Studies Night for grade 8 parents in particular, this year they will be hosting a community wide Pathways presentation instead. They have been actively working on videos for pathways for promotion. A video for the Culinary pathway has been completed and highlights Carver students working in the classroom.

Mr Cardarelli echoed the opinions of Mr. Soliwoda shares that he is very excited about the program and believes this will make Carver a competitive choice to alternatives when parents have a choice of where to send their students. He also believes the videos will go a long way to help promote.

B. Project Lead The Way Grant Meredith Erickson

Mr. Knief informed the committee that the district was notified two weeks ago that Carver Public Schools has received the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Grant in the amount of \$25,837. The grant money will be used to offset the cost of supplies and materials to support the computer science pathway that will be launched at the Middle High School next year. He thanked Meredith Erickson, as the author and architect of the grant, for the work she has done in order for Carver to be a recipient.

Mrs. Erickson also thanked Erin Young and the Mathematics Department for their leadership in taking on and being interested in leading the computer science courses. She shared that the Superintendent's groups have talked about the difficulty in finding viable teachers for Computer Science courses as there is no certification of it's kind yet through the DESE. Through the work that Jasvir MacIntosh, Erin Young, and Vanessa Haen have done around the Bootstrap Algebra course, this was an obvious next step for them.

The following statement was shared with the committee from PLTW that outlines their take on the computer science courses: "At a time when computer science affects how we work and live, PLTW Computer Science empowers students in grades 9-12 to become creators, instead of merely consumers, of the technology all around them. The program's interdisciplinary courses engage students in compelling, real-world challenges. As students work together to design solutions, they learn computational thinking – not just how to code – and become better thinkers and communicators. Students take from the courses in-demand knowledge and skills they will use in high school and for the rest of their lives, on any career path they take. PLTW Computer Science courses are part of the AP + PLTW computer science pathway."

Mrs. Erickson shared that the PLTW grant is a three year grant which will allow for the offering and implementation of one course per year. Year 1 will be Computer Science Essentials followed by Cyber Security and Computer Science Principles in the following years. Each course requires training which is offered each summer for two weeks at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. The grant will cover the cost of updated computers and programs, spec tables and durable goods for robotics. She said their projections for enrollment are 21-25 students next year and believe that 15-25% of 9-12 students will be taking at least one of the three classes by 2022-2023. Mrs. Erickson and Mr. Knief with Mathematics Department Chair, Erin Young, will be attending the grant convening on March 3, 2020 at Worcester Poly Tech.

C. Public Hearing on the Student Opportunity Act Plan

Mr. Knief presented the Student Opportunity Act Plan and gave a brief overview of the Student Opportunity Act as a reminder and follow up to the conversation at the last school committee meeting sharing that one of the requirements of the Act is that each school district must develop a Student Opportunity Act Plan to outline how the district intends to use additional Chapter 70 funding. Carver will be receiving a Chapter 70 increase of \$30 per student totalling \$47,730. The outlined plan must be submitted to the state by April 1 and includes the following commitments with qualifying data:

Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups: *Which student subgroups will require focused support to ensure that all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life?*

Mr. Knief's response is based upon the support of "Special Education" and "Economically Disadvantaged" subgroups as Carver has a very small number of defined subgroups just due to the nature of our community.

Commitment 2: Using Evidenced-Based Programs to Close Gaps: *What evidenced-based programs will your district adopt to deepen, or continue to best support the closure of achievement and opportunity gaps? What resources will you allocate to these programs?*

Mr. Knief's response is based around the implementation of the new Pathways program at the Middle High School with meets the requirements of their defined "evidence based program."

Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets (Must Select 3): *What metrics will your district use to monitor success in reducing disparities in achievement among students subgroups? Select from the list of DESE metrics or provide your own.*

Mr. Knief's response included the following measures: DESE Metrics which include the percentage of 11th and 12th grade students completing advance coursework, the first year college matriculation rate, and the extended engagement rate. His response also cited custom metrics of the data analysis of the following VOCAL survey questions posed to grade 10 students: In at least two of my academic classes, I can work on assignments that interest me personally; My teachers inspire confidence in my ability to be ready for college or career; and the things I am learning in school are relevant to me.

Commitment 4: Engaging All Families: *How will your district ensure that all families, particularly those representing the student student subgroups most in need of support, have the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the district regarding their students' needs?*

Mr. Knief's response is based upon the district's goals for community engagement found in the Educational Blueprint and noted tools for communication such as JupiterEd, parent-conferences, open houses, athletic and arts events, community forums, school councils, senior internships, parent booster and PTO organizations, and digital newsletters.

Certifications: *Please summarize your stakeholder engagement process, including specific groups that were engaged.*

Mr. Knief's response was centered around the development and implementation of the Pathways program at the Middle High school that has actively engaged the community over the past 18 months through faculty presentations, student presentations and surveys, a parent meeting, and the review of The School Council and P.T.O.

Mr. O'Brien asked if the funds through the Student Opportunity Act was a one time opportunity. Mr. Knief explained that the money is over the next 7 years and would be the same amount unless Carver is no longer found "held-harmless" in which the district would receive additional monies based upon the percentage.

Mr. Cardarelli inquired as to why the three vocal data questions were selected over any others. Mr. Knief said they were selected because he believed they aligned with and were good indicators of the need for the Pathways program in being ready for college and career.

The plan will be brought back to the committee for final approval on March 9.

D. **Public Hearing of the Budget**

Brad Brothers and Scott Knief presented the FY21 budget sharing that the proposed budget meets the towns proposed budget for the schools of (\$24,237,099). Mr. Knief reviewed the addition of 2.5 FTE positions and the elimination of 1 FTE position for a total increase of 1.5 FTE positions reflected in the budget proposal. These positions include:

- **Additions**
 Middle High School Technology Teacher
 Elementary Special Education Teacher
 Middle High School Biology teacher (.5)
- **Reduction**
 1.0 Behavioral Assistant - District

Mr. Knief explained the need to add or eliminate these positions. The addition of the full-time technology education teacher and the .5 FTE science teacher at the Middle High School will support the launch of the pathways programs. The addition of a special education teacher at the elementary level will allow for the development of a grade 3-5 SPI (Supporting Progress and Independence) program. The current SPI program services students in grades K-5 and the numbers and the age span support and require the additional classroom for the program. This shift will support the enrollment of one student in district who would have to go to an out of district program and possibly allow for at least one student to come back to the district from out placement as well. With the addition of a second SPI Program classroom at the Elementary school, the district will be able to reduce the need for the Behavioral Assistant who serves the district.

Mr. Brothers gave the community and community a brief overview once more of the state funding through Chapter 70. He then reviewed the budget by the DESE function codes, outlining increases/decreases in each area for FY21 as listed below. He explained that although there is an increase in percentage from town to school, the school has not lost any money but is due to the transfer of 4 people from the school's budget to the town's budget within the in facilities department.

Offsets displayed were as follows:

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------|--|
| ■ Grants 240 & 305 | offsets | Educational Support Professional Lines |
| ■ Circuit Breaker | offsets | Out of District Tuitions |
| ■ Pre-K Fees | offsets | Pre-K Teacher Salaries |
| ■ School Choice | offsets | Elementary Teacher Salaries |
| ■ Athletics Fees | offsets | Athletics revolving accounts |
| ■ Intramurals Fees | offsets | Revolving salaries and Transportation |
| ■ Parking Fees | offsets | Graduation accounts. |

With the offsets of \$1,620,622 as well as the FY21 Chapter 70 monies received of \$10,056,329 the balance is \$14,180,770. This leaves the percentage split between the town and state at 58.5% and 41.5% respectively, while a 50/50 split would be ideal.

He then reviewed of the budget by DESE function codes as follows:

- **1000: District-wide Leadership and Administration**
includes all school committee and central office expenses
 - 6.25% decrease
 - Legal services increase for negotiations
 - Large decrease in tech expenses with the one time expense for ASPEN in FY20
- **2000: Instructional Services**
includes professional development, curriculum, technology equipment and licenses, principals, teachers, and guidance expenses.
 - 4.5% increase

- 2.5 new positions:
Middle High Tech teacher and .5 Biology Teacher; Elementary Special Education Teacher
- Reduction of BCBA Assistant position
- Decrease of \$30,000 from copier expenses that have been taken over by the town.
- Increase in Districtwide Out of District experience for a student who moved to home services
- Increase in community engagement funding for both the Elementary and Middle High school which is in support and alignment with the Safe & Supportive Schools Grant goal of sustaining these events within the budget.
- Increase of funds for an Elementary and Middle High EL program line.

The committee discussed the addition of the Elementary School Special Education Teacher and grade 3-5 SPI program as well as the elimination of the District-wide Behavioral Assistant.

Mr. Cardarelli inquired as to whether or not the SPI teacher would be able to cover the responsibilities of the BCBA Assistant. Mr. Knief was confident that the new SPI teacher would be able to. Mr. Cardarelli asked Mr. Knief and Mrs. Teichert, Director of Special Education, to give the community and the community an overview of the SPI program. They explained that the SPI program is primarily a behavioral program that supports students whose difficulties are social in nature. These students might have challenges in a classroom setting like self-regulation. Students spend part of the day in the program which prepares them to enter back into the classroom and the time would be determined on an individual basis by the teacher. The program is led by a Special Education Teacher who is experienced and certified in behavioral instruction.

Mrs. Teichert continued that oftentimes there are students with mood disorders and the program allows them the flexibility when they are having trouble and they can enter back into the classroom when they are able. The program is also structured to teach skills for self-regulation, social skills, strategies, etc.

Mrs. Maestas, Elementary School Principal added that a lot of the students that need the additional support are having trouble on their own, which is why they really need a teacher who is specialized in behavior. They have found it to be a growing need for children. Mr. Knief acknowledged that as a community there are a lot of priorities that have been discussed, Kindergarten ESPs for instance, however, sometimes there are needs that arise that must supersede those based upon immediate needs.

In response to Mr. Greenwood's inquiry, Mr. Knief confirmed that although the BCBA was a distributed position, the BCBA Assistant was covering needs at the Middle School more often because the BCBA was spending most of the time at the Elementary school to cover the needs that will now be supported by the additional SPI teacher. With the addition of the teacher, the BCBA can better spend time at both locations equally.

■ **3000: Other Services**

includes transportation, health and athletic expenses

- 4.9% increase
- Increase in hours for the Mechanic Assistant, as the full time mechanic is looking to retire in next several years.
- Increase for the CDL bus driver floater position for full year
- Minor increase for out of district and homeless transportation.

- **4000: Operations**
includes utilities, building and ground expenses
 - 9.5% decrease
 - Salaries for 4 facilities staff moved to the town budget and 1 technology department employee moved to school budget
 - Decrease in utilities at the Elementary school at around 9%
 - Will review the potential for contracted services or hiring custodial staff for the 3rd shift at the Middle High School.
- **5000: Fixed Charges**
includes retirement contribution, health, life and other insurances
 - 1% increase
 - 3.9% increase for health insurance
 - 8.25% increase for Plymouth County Retirement. A large percentage of this will be moved to the town line for new growth.
- **9000: Out of District Programs**
includes special education, vocational and collaborative education outside the district.
 - 3.2% decrease
 - Built with known students that we are fiscally responsible for as of February 1
 - Increase for an out of district placement moved to home services
 - 10 families for FSP at READS Academy although that number will be about \$250,000 higher by the end of the year.

The items that are still in play are voc/aggie school enrollments, as they are not confirmed until October, and school choice seats for FY21 that are still to be discussed and approved.

IV. Recommendations from Superintendent

A. Field Trips

MHS Student Council: MASC Training, Hyannis, March 4-6, 2020

Motion made to approve field trips: Andrew Soliwoda

Seconded: James O'Brien

Vote: Unanimous

V. Reports from the School Committee

Andrew Cardarelli: Offered thanks to Area 58 for taping the meetings especially with so much going on in town that particular evening.

Jason Greenwood: Reminded the community of the Lady Crusader BBall State Tournament Game on Thursday night followed by the Senior Show and wished luck to the Hockey team playing that evening.

Motion Made to Adjourn: Stephanie Clougherty

Seconded: Jason Greenwood

Roll Call Vote:

Andrew Cardarelli, Chairperson: **Yes**

Jason Greenwood: **Yes**

Stephanie Clougherty: **Yes**

Andrew Soliwoda: **Yes**

James O'Brien: **Yes**

Motion Approved: 5 to 0

Meeting Adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by: Gina Marie Russell

NEXT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, March 9, 2020 7:00 p.m. OPEN MEETING