

**MINUTES**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Location: 5 West Street, School Committee Room**

**November 29, 2023 6:00 p.m.**

**In Attendance:**

**Absent**

**Zoom**

Jessie Harrington

Meghan McCrillis

Brooke Wrenn

Samantha Rapahel

Stef Parker

Beth Chamberland, Superintendent

Alan Keller, Assistant Superintendent

Cecelia Wirzbicki, Business Manager

Joseph Fahey

Gregory Walton

Eric Bouvier

Jennifer Stanick

Brooke Beverly

Susan Lopez

Gregg Desto

Dan Delongchamp

Molly O'Connor - SWIS Teacher (GOTR)

Kristin King - SWIS Teacher (GOTR)

Ella Canelaria - SWIS Student 52 Lorna Drive

Lola Rand - SWIS Student 3 Paul Revere Road

Mara Lanry - SWIS Student 26 Lorna Drive

Isabella Faber, Student Representative

Molly Hilditch, Student Representative

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Jessie Harrington called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

Meghan McCrillis read out loud the Auburn Public School Vision & Commitment.

### **CITIZENS' COMMENTS:**

Jessie Harrington asked if we had any citizens here to comment either in the audience or on Zoom. There were no comments.

**SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS:** None

**Minutes:** 11/15/23

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to accept the minutes from 11/15/23

Brooke Wrenn made a motion to accept the minutes from 11/15/23. Samantha Raphael seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT:**

Isabella Faber & Molly Hilditch:

- Juniors won Lip Sync
- Successful Junior Popcorn drive raised over \$5000
- Rockets to Rockets Glow To Include dance happening Friday

AYFS food drive

- Dr Ferdellas class won

Varsity Math team had second meet today

- AHS hosts

Finals week

- split between today and tomorrow
- First day of tri 2 is Friday

#### Upcoming

- NHS field trip to Quincey market
  - Super fun last year
  - Multidisciplinary lessons
- Winter sports have started

Auburn selected as a "Ceremonial Stop" for the Wreaths Across America convoy

- Wreaths Across America travels from Maine to Arlington National Cemetery every December and places remembrance wreaths on every veteran's headstone at Arlington and at more than 3,700 other participating locations.
- tractor-trailers, Patriot Guard Riders and nearly 200 participants.
- Auburn will be welcoming the convoy to town on December 11, 2023.

Mr. Auburn this spring, there will be a meeting on Monday, December 4th  
Auditions are December 5 and 6 with callbacks on Dec 7

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

#### **Student Spotlight**

Dr. Chamberland invited Swanson Road Intermediate School Principal, Dr. Lopez up to the podium to introduce her students and staff associated with Girls On The Run.

Dr. Lopez introduced staff coaches, Molly O'Connor and Kristen King. As well as the following students:

Lola Rand  
Mara Landry  
Ella Candelaria

The students and two staff members addressed the committee and each shared what the significance of Girls on the Run means to them. They meet twice a week and perform a community project at the end of the year that the girls choose. They also complete a non-competitive 5k at the end of the season. There are approximately 15 members and are open to all grades at SWIS. The premise of the group is to empower young girls and to encourage them to try something they wouldn't normally do.

It is based on 3 main principals:

- Understanding your mental and physical self
- Valuing relationships & teamwork
- Recognizing how you shape the world

Rules the group follows:

- Be there for each other
- Be kind
- Have each others back
- Respect each other

### **Unfinished Business:**

#### **FY '25 Draft Budget Presentations**

Dr. Chamberland addressed the school committee, members of the leadership team and those in the audience both in the room on zoom.

Dr. Chamberland: I want to begin by saying how very proud I am to be before you this evening as the Superintendent of the Auburn Public Schools. I am so very honored to be a part of this team of educators, leaders, school committee members, support staff and community members who have always demonstrated a true, consistent and dedicated commitment to our students. I would also like to take this moment to thank the administrators, who comprise the APS Leadership Team and the work they do to support teachers, staff, kids and myself on a daily basis. They are an amazing group of leaders and as a group we work collaboratively and collegially, also remembering the importance of kindness, laughter and the fact that we must always work to find joy in our work, even when things are tough. The Auburn Community has always supported the Auburn Public Schools and thus, I believe, this has been a key factor in making the Auburn Public Schools what it is today-a great place to work and to learn. Tonight, we will share with you our vision and hopes for the FY 25 school year and the impact this vision will have on the budget. We have been thoughtful and careful in this preparation and we will be happy to address any questions the Committee may have as we go through the presentation.

- Reviewed Mission, Vision & Commitment
- Strategic Plan
- School Committee Priorities
- Budget Considerations: maintaining staffing levels, October 1 enrollment, supplies, no new positions, social and emotional well being of students, IA's and

ABA' noted in current assignments, Level funded grant monies, projected medicaid reimbursement to be \$140,000, Special Education Circuit Breaker reimbursement anticipate at 70% and busing application fees to provide \$150,000 from the revolving fund as an offset to the budget

- Continue using offsets from Revolving accounts
- Participate in School Choice Program
- Budgeted for 11 regular education school buses
- Anticipated 5% increase in Special Education Private Schools Tuitions
- Continue staffing social/emotional and mental health positions
- Increase in electricity, fuel and contracted services
- Negotiations for the AEA & ABA contracts, actual impacts to the FY '25 budget are currently unknown
- Oil pricing per gallon for FY '25 is currently known at \$2.6490, Electricity Supply Contract rate .1267 per kWH, Natural Gas Contract rate \$8.99 per MMBTU
- Continued use of Solar Credits from roof top arrays at AMS and AHS, along with credits received from the Town Solar Project in Rutland to offset electrical costs
- Projected offsets totaling \$3,504,928.70

Dr. Chamberland then turned the meeting over to Mr. Keller to present.

Alan Keller:

- Looking ahead to the 2024-2025 School Year, focus is continuing the strong foundational work that has been in place for several years. Strong organizations establish a few priorities and commit to seeing these priorities through until they are part of the fabric, and you will hear that tonight from the administrators
- UDL: Next year, Universal Design for Learning will be in its fourth year of a district initiative focusing on designing instruction that meets the needs and abilities of all of our students.
- Culturally Responsive Practices: Embedding culturally responsive practice and equity that builds capacity in the district is essential to the work all of us do and we will accomplish this through establishing district and school-based teams focused on building competencies and skills. This PreK-12 focus started with the

district's Equity audit in 2021.

- Health and Physical Education Standards: Earlier this year, DESE released new Health and Physical Education standards for Preschool through grade 12. These are the first updates to the standards since 1996. Our Wellness teachers, nurses, and counselors all have a role in addressing student well-being and teaching the skills necessary for students to improve health outcomes and behaviors.
- Professional Development Committee: Establish a PreK-12 Professional Development Committee whose purpose is to organize professional development experiences that incorporate effective learning environments and engaging instruction to meet all students' academic, social and emotional needs in alignment with our strategic plan.
- K-8 Math Textbook Review: Elementary and MS math textbooks are coming off of license and with that is an opportunity to identify materials that may help bridge the gap between these two stages by bringing together educators at both levels.
- Data Protocols: It is imperative that we utilize a data cycle to establish what we are doing well—bright spots—and replicate that as well as identify areas for improvement—dig into those to identify
- through some purchasing using grants and FY24 funds, we are able to reduce our textbook line item next year to \$50,000

Alen Keller turned it over to Greg Walton

Greg Walton:

Areas of focus in Special Education:

- To retain and provide services for social/emotional and behavior students within District
- Tweaks to be made to our programs to bring more students back from out of district placements
- Data collection
- 17 students placed out of district last year, this year 12. And looking to

bring more back

- Roll-out of the new IEP with guidance from DESE
- Encore Program; bringing in students from other districts
- Increase in Health Supplies, Special Education in Town Transportation, NonPublic School Transportation and Tuition Mass public Schools
- Decrease in Tuition to Non Public Schools and Tuition to Special Education Collaboratives
- No new positions

Greg Walton turned it over to Joe Fahey

Joe Fahey:

Areas of focus in facilities:

- Building security
- Resurface running track at Auburn High School
- Energy improvement projects at Bryn Mawr Elementary School
- Increases across the board at all schools for fuel/natural gas, electrical, water, sewage, custodial supplies and building repair/maintenance

Joe Fahey turned it over to Eric Bouvier

Eric Bouvier:

Areas of focus in Technology:

- Increase in district network and digital security
- Enhance district protections for student data privacy
- Complete necessary upgrades and replacement of instructional technology
- Increase in computer supplies line and computer software. Decrease in computer maintenance services due to modifying contracts
- No new positions

Eric Bouvier turned it over to Cecelia Wirzbicki

Cecelia Wirzbicki:

Areas of focus:

- Utilize the allocation of grants
- Utilize Capital Improvement Funds
- Work with the director of Food Services to ensure the continued fiscal stability of the school lunch program
- Collaborate with transportation vendor, school resource officers and crossing guard staff to ensure student safety
- Work in conjunction with payroll, accounts payable and central office staff to achieve more efficient workflow processes
- Collaborate with Town Departments to ensure all financial and personnel transactions are completed in a timely manner
- Increase in advertising, regular education transportation and school committee dues
- No new positions

Cecelia Wirzbicki turned it over to Jennifer Stanick

Jennifer Stanick

Areas of focus:

- Continue use of Universal Design for Learning to promote inclusivity and equity for all
- Focused data reviews on Special Education and EL Students
- Use of school improvement Teams that focus on School Climate (Restorative Justice and relationship mapping), diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, as well as UDL
- No changes to line items, level funded
- No new positions

Jennifer Stanick turned it over to Brooke Beverly

Brooke Beverly

Areas of focus:

- Integrating Universal Design for learning strategies and student voice throughout the curriculum
- Targeted 'What I Need Differentiated' block to provide intervention, enrichment and SEL support with focus on EL and Special Education



- Implementation of School Improvement Teams with a focus on School Climate Task Force, diversity, Equity, Inclusion and belonging
- No changes to line items, level funded
- No new positions

Brooke Beverly turned it over to Susan Lopez

Susan Lopez

Areas of focus:

- Integration of UL principles across all teaching practices and learning activities
- School Improvement Teams geared to enhance all aspects of our school community
- Embedded Inclusive Practices ensuring an environment that celebrates diversity
- Reduction in after school programming costs
- No new positions

Susan Lopez turned it over to Gregg Desto

Gregg Desto

Areas of focus:

- Universal Design for Learning embedded in all units of instruction
- School Improvements Teams enable all staff to have a voice and to integrate school improvements in real time
- Implementation of Life Skills and Restorative Practices via FLEX Block, BRYT Program and Therapeutic Classroom; continuing to improve how we coach kids through these challenging time in their lives
- Decreases in audio visual supplies, athletic/physical ed supplies and awards/incentives
- Increases in classroom supplies
- No new positions

Gregg Desto turned it over to Dan Delongchamp

Dan Delongchamp presented for Fine Arts, Athletics & Auburn High School

Fine Arts

Areas of focus:

- Expanded extracurricular opportunities - Fall Play, Indoor Percussion and Colorguard, Swanson Road Intermediate School Chorus, Band and Drumming
- Increase student retention across performing ensembles in all grade levels
- Expand opportunities for more “Hands On’ electives at the high school to engage non-traditional music learners

- Increase opportunities for students to use music technology to create/express/engage with all music styles
- No changes to line items, level funded
- No new positions

## Athletics

### Areas of focus:

- Revive the Student Leadership Club
- Updating AHS Training Facility
- HUL - develop coaches and athletes skills using the HUDL software
- Increase in Athletic transportation, Athletic Officials, Athletic Team Equipment, First Aid/Training Supplies and MIAA/SWCL dues
- No new positions

## High School

### Areas of focus:

- Increase in the amount of school choice assignments and assessments across the disciplines
- Further enhance our Enterprise program to include a social emotional component
- Continue creation of social emotional programming in our Communities
- Creation of opportunities for our student led ADL peer groups throughout our programming
- Reduced line item Curriculum Competitions
- No new positions

When Dan DeLongchamp concluded his presentation, Dr. Chamberland thanked the leadership team and the teachers who contributed to the information that was shared here tonight and all the staff. You can see us rowing in the same direction, and that is when you make progress.

Tonight we present you with a draft budget of \$31, 828,336.68. This reflects an increase of \$1,696,060.68 over the FY '24 Budget of \$30,132,276. This number also includes the use of projected offsets from grants, revolving accounts, solar credits, program revenues and fees totaling \$3,504,928.70. This equates to a 5.63% increase over the FY '24 Appropriated Budget. It is not lost on any of us that this budget reflects a significant increase over the budget approved in the last fiscal year. Yet we face some unprecedented increases in maintenance costs, and our contractual obligations are yet unknown as we continue to negotiate in good faith with the AEA and shortly after the New Year, we will begin negotiations with the ABA Bargaining Group. We have done our best to provide an estimate related to what the negotiations may cost us, but as noted throughout this presentation, this is currently a draft document that still needs your approval, that of the Selectboard and the Finance Committee and ultimately Town Meeting Members. We are also committed, as directed by the Committee, to support the social and emotional needs of our students. This budget includes the continuation of the programs at SWIS, AMS and AHS that allow us to support students with complex

social and emotional needs in our schools vs. the alternative which removes the child from their community and can place exorbitant costs on the district which could push the district far beyond this proposed budget increase.

- We have worked to maintain all current positions and materials while meeting all contractual salary obligations to the best of our ability given ongoing negotiations with the AEA and upcoming negotiations with the ABA bargaining group
- We have reflected increases for electricity, fuel, contracted services and materials
- We have used available offsets to the greatest extent possible
- We have been thoughtful to maximize the use of all grant funds available
- This draft may continue to change, based on the availability of Chapter 70 state funding numbers
- We will continue to work through the negotiation process with the AEA and ABAs as is required by their contracts
- The Committee will vote to send a draft to the Town on January 3, 2024

I would like to end our presentation this evening with this quote: Community is much more than belonging to something: it's about doing something together that makes belonging matter.

I thought this quote was appropriate because this budget isn't about what one person wants...It is about collaborating to meet the needs of all of our students and our staff, it's about maintaining the exceptional school environment and quality of education that we have created for our students in Auburn, it's about remembering that we are a part of the Auburn community....not a stand alone organization....and because of that, we have to remember and respect the ongoing support our town provides to us. I believe this budget does that and I hope that the committee will lend their support to us.

The committee had no questions, but thanked Dr. Chamberland, the leadership team and the teachers. The leadership team was dismissed from the meeting.

### **Policy Updates**

Dr. Chamberland presented the following policy updates for a second reading:

#### **Policy JJH - Student Late Night or Overnight Travel**

#### **Policy JJH-R - Student Travel Regulations**

Jessie Harrington: I have a few concerns. I think as a committee we may want to rethink the notification timing when it comes to field trips, is 3 months really enough notice when it comes to overnight field trips, they may need to fundraise.

Samantha Raphael stated she was thinking the same thing. Maybe add something for out of state requests and out of country requests. I even think 3 months is too short for overnight and out of state trips. Maybe 6 months overnight and out of state, 3 months in state.

Jessie Harrington: Yes maybe a year's notice for out of the country, because a lot can change in a year. It would give us enough time to monitor situations that might arise.

Meghan McCrillis: I agree, but are there any field trips that happen within the first few months of school that would be out of state that could put a hindrance on?

Samantha Raphael: They could apply for those trips prior to the end of the school year the year before.

Dr. Chamberlain: They have done that in the past.

Jessie Harrington: And if it is a repeat trip there would be some leniency there..

Samantha Rapahel: Does the school committee have to approve in-state trips?

Meghan McCrillis: No, just out of state and international.

Jessie Harrington: I would still like to know even if it is in-state so we know where our students are going. Before teachers look outside of Massachushtts, maybe make sure we've exhausted all potential in-state opportunities.

Dr. Chamberland: We are living in a more and more unstable world. A lot more considerations. I am going to continue to research. I did reach out to my core group of superintendents. Most had very similar policies, but I can expand the research.

**New Business:** None

**TEACHING AND LEARNING REPORT:** None

**BUSINESS/FINANCIAL REPORT:**

**Year to Date Budget Report**

Mrs. Wirzbicki presented a year to date budget report dated 11/20/2023 for the committee to review.

### **Budget Transfers**

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a listing of Budget Transfers dated 11/20/2023 between the same series and between different series for which she is seeking approval.

Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to approve the list of Transfers dated 11/20/2023 as presented by Mrs. Wirzbicki.

Samantha Raphael made a motion to approve the list of Transfers dated 11/20/2023 as presented by Mrs. Wirzbicki. Brooke Wrenn seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

### **Executive Session - None**

At 8:03pm Jessie Harrington entertained a motion to adjourn for the evening.

Samantha Raphael made a motion to adjourn Samantha Raphael seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:03pm.

### **Roll Call Vote *Adjournment***

Respectfully submitted,

Mandy Williams

Recording Secretary

### **Referenced Documents:**

Meeting Minutes: 11/15/23

FY '25 Draft Budget & Presentations

Policy JH & JJH-R

Year to date budget report dated 11/20/23

**Budget Transfers dated 11/20/23**

**Approved 12/13/23**