

10 JUL 16 AM 11:20 NAUSET REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Meeting of January 14, 2010
Held at Nauset Regional Middle School, Cafeteria

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chair Bob Jones.

ROLL CALL:

- Ed Brookshire, Dion Dugan, Marie Enochy, Greg O'Brien, Bob Jones, Bonnie-Jean Nunheimer, Jon Porteus, Jean Souther (absent: Sarah Blackwell and Fred Walters)
- For the Administration: Richard Hoffmann, Gail Briere, Ann Caretti, Hans Baumhauer, Kathy Schrock, Greg Baecker, and Tom Conrad
- Also present: Town officials, interested citizens

CITIZENS SPEAK - none

PRIORITY BUSINESS

- Review FY11 Budget

Dr. Hoffmann gave a recap of the preliminary budget worksheet. The Budget/Finance Subcommittee has met twice and are reviewing items line-by-line. Dr. Hoffmann reviewed the FY11 Operating Budget Worksheet with the Committee members analyzing revenues and expenditures. The Central Office Budget Subcommittee is reviewing the Central Office budget. Revenue projections are down by 8.42% - almost \$600,000 less to operate next year. Principals have done a good job keeping their budgets level funded with the exception of contractual salary increases.

Dr. Hoffmann met with the Executive Board of the NEA and told them he would visit each school and see if they had any ideas of helping with the budget situation. The Superintendent pointed out that the principals have very little control over most of the budget as it is comprised of salaries and fixed costs, maintenance costs and personnel. 95% of the budget at the High School is for contractual and fixed costs and 95.2% of the budget at the Middle School is for salaries and fixed costs. Dr. Hoffmann reviewed the slides provided in a handout indicating percentages and expenditures for the High School, Middle School, Region, and Central Office budgets.

The Region Only budget is comprised mainly of contractual and fixed costs equaling 98.2% including the employee benefits, which equals 50% or \$4,600,000. Only 1.8% of the budget is not a contractual or mandated cost.

The region share of the Central Office budget increased .49% over last year or \$3,625. Central Office costs are shared by the four towns. This year the total funds processed by the Central Office staff for payroll, expenses, capital plans, and grants will exceed \$39.5 million.

Nauset Regional High School Principal, Mr. Conrad reviewed his budget with the Committee indicating there was no new staff, no new programs and nothing new in discretionary money over the past 18 months. They no longer fund or have lost a school resource officer, a full time English teacher, one full time guidance secretary, one full time library educational assistant, one full time special needs teacher, one part time business technology teacher, one full time careers position, no more secretarial overtime, AV coordinator, no more sub calling after hours, 5 part time Access teachers, one part time summer custodian, another full time custodial position, full time world language teacher, a full time special needs educational assistant, and another full time special needs teacher. Mr. Conrad told the Committee that general supplies purchases of paper and pencils have been drastically reduced. They will use scrap paper. Postage has been cut way down. (3 mailings) Two department heads donated their stipends this year to meet the required cuts last year. This year they are put back into the budget. The High School budget increase is at 5.9% at this time.

APPROVED

A discussion was held regarding class sizes, course offerings, singleton classes, and required subject courses. Mr. O'Brien asked that they look closely at the courses with 10 or less students enrolled. Further discussion revolved around virtual high school courses and costs, Collaborative courses, and dual enrollment at Cape Cod Community College. Chairman Jones requested that Mr. Conrad present a list of the courses that are in question - the lower enrolled courses and the courses with the high numbers for the next meeting addressing the implications of the elimination of those courses, who are the students that are affected, and how does it affect the overall level of excellence that Nauset wants to maintain.

Mr. Conrad reminded the Committee that last year they froze their budget right away and ended up in the black. This year there is absolutely no room to move anywhere. Textbook and instructional supplies line equals about 185 books purchased next year. Department heads will need to justify all new books. Departments no longer have a budget to spend. If you look back years ago, when Nauset had about the same number of students, the allocation for textbooks was \$110,000. Today there is \$14,000. The High School continues to operate with 5 guidance counselors and 1 adjustment counselor. About 40% of seniors went early action, early decision for college which means immediately applications and recommendations were being put together at the beginning of the year. The school nurse services 1,000 students. There is no money to get her any extra assistance. A recently retired nurse from an elementary school is volunteering to help the nurse with state mandates for health screenings.

A discussion was held regarding costs of textbooks, textbooks on-line, use of computers, computer labs, and technology for electronic grading.

Athletics - Mr. Conrad stated he is against fees. He reminded the Committee that \$60,000 was cut from this account last year. At league meetings they were told no more increases in officiating fees or other fees or he would be prepared to cut JV or sub varsity games. Transportation - can't pay for scrimmages. Must put off uniform purchasing. Coaches on notice, not to anticipate more funding going forward. Mr. Conrad expressed real concern about this area.

Special Needs budget is responsible for education of students up until 22nd birthday. Around 126 students are in special needs program, 80 students are involved in 504 program and 6 ELL students. There is no way of cutting funds from this area.

The High School no longer has a guidance secretary or special needs secretary that works full time in the summer. There is one secretary on campus in July and August. The guidance counselors have volunteered to man the office one full day a week to help families register students, answer questions, and get the paperwork done at no cost.

In the spring Mr. Conrad wants to blend regular day teachers into the Access Program. Some teachers may teach 4 classes in regular day program and one in the Access Program. 86% of Nauset students go on to further education. There is a population of 40-50 students in Project Access. These are the students that stay on Cape and will be the students servicing our cars, doing landscaping, and working on our homes. Mr. Conrad indicated that Project Access is critical for these students and wants to provide them with the best possible education using as many resources as available.

A short break was taken and the Committee reconvened at 8:20 p.m.

Nauset Regional Middle School Principal, Mr. Baecker reviewed his budget with the Committee comparing the last budgetary year to this year. He stated that a key component of middle school experience is adult to adult, adult to student, and student to student collaboration. Teachers no longer have collaboration time. This is the only year the staff does not have any time. Over time, part time positions could be brought back into the Middle School so that teachers could have time for team meetings and collaboration. This is an essential component for middle school education. To the staff's credit, this is the very best middle school with strong programs, even though over the course of the last two years, they have taken significant cuts. Teachers have stepped up in many areas and give of themselves so that the students that come to school at Nauset Middle School benefit. There are 565 students at Nauset Middle School. Of that number 57 are school choice. That says something to the quality of education that is at Nauset Middle School.

There is not a lot of money that the principal controls in the budget. In order to have the subject coordinators reinstated in the budget next year, money was moved from a sub account and put into an account for team leaders. Dr. Hoffmann indicated he would like to add back one of the three teachers cut last year which would help with scheduling and collaboration time for teachers.

Mr. Baecker indicated last year he had to bring his budget in at 2.5% and that the 2.5% went below 1% by the time school started. The general supply account had only \$6,250 to start the year as compared to \$16,727 a year ago. Mr. Baecker thanked the Committee for transferring funds into that account. Mr. Baecker suggested that over a three year period he would like to move counselors back to 100%, since they were reduced to 80%. The nursing staff is 1.5 and Mr. Baecker justified the staffing by letting the School Committee know that the Middle School students have many needs such as toileting issues, changing issues, certain types of feedings and distribution of meds that require a registered nurse.

Mr. Baecker reported that the athletics held at the Middle School this fall were soccer and field hockey with the football program being club sponsored. They did not run interscholastic basketball this year, however, the Cape Cod Youth Basketball League stepped in and ran the basketball programs. In the spring they will run baseball, softball and track and field. Track and field gets between 40-50 students. (coach and two assistant coaches) He has eliminated, except for track and field, all assistant coaches. Teams are not allowed to play passed Hyannis. Salaries for student activities are stipend positions. Out of 565 students, there are about 200 students who start their day at 7:50 for band, orchestra, chorus and early morning gym. Early morning homework club is well attended and the kitchen is open for breakfast. There is also extra help opportunities in the morning. Extended day concept, is already at NRMS as they may start at 7:50 and end their day participating in interscholastic sports or drama club in the afternoon.

Mr. Baecker reported that in the custodial area they may have situations with retirements and presently employ two custodians at 80% and a custodial supervisor at 100%. They also have a part time 19.5 hr. position in the afternoon. Custodians do an exemplary job as the building being used all the time by Adult Education and Recreation Programs.

Of the 565 students, approximately 108 students identified as special education and other students are on 504 plans. Special needs sub account is absorbed in regular sub account. They have a fairly significant number of educational assistants because there are many students who require 1-1. They also have youngsters who require 2 person lifts. Usually educational assistants stay with youngsters through 6, 7, & 8 grade. This year they are graduating 3 students and there are 3 students coming in who need 1-1 educational assistants. Mr. Baecker commended the special needs program at Nauset and feels Dr. Caretti has done exemplary work to make sure the special needs program is excellent.

The Middle School budget is at 3.56% at this point in time.

Dr. Hoffmann reviewed the FY 11 Region Budget Worksheet, Summary of Potential Budget Gap Analysis. Dr. Hoffmann gave a recap - Potential budget gap - \$591,281

Drop in revenue is \$600,000

Potential shortfall is 1.2 million dollars with the towns giving 2.5 %

Potential sources to reduce gap - revenue enhancements - Chapter 70 state aid may go up. So far we reduced it by 10%. If it was level funded it would give us \$300,000. ARRA - that is \$212,000, \$179,000 SN funding for Special Ed. tuitions and the other Title I funding. Money may have to be spent differently than in the past and may have to use that money on new programs. Grant funds - not much you can use as they are designed for specific things and used to enhance programs. E&D - this year in FY 11 \$250,000 from E & D Account was used to balance the budget. A decision was made to lower this amount to \$200,000 with the hope of increasing that amount using some of the transportation reimbursement funds. Once the E & D amount is certified, it will be brought forward and the School Committee must make the decision to spend toward next years budget and determine how much to keep in reserve. Dr. Hoffmann would like to keep about 5%.

The cutting process will be reviewed at next subcommittee meeting keeping in mind the need to provide students the best education possible. There are a couple of potential retirements and if someone retires, the budget gets reduced. Potential contract concessions include course reimbursements, conferences – may have to forgo those types of contract items, things that aren't salary but costs. Salary concessions – Dr. Hoffmann had a brief discussion with Nauset Ed. Association and school administrators as to what concessions the various groups might make – reduce cost of living increase? Work year reduced? Perhaps every one of the 600 employees does not get paid for two days. After all concessions made, could also look for a small override.

Mr. Dugan asked that administration take a look at fees.

Margie Fulcher addressed the Committee indicating that the Town of Orleans voted on their budget policy and sent it to Central Office indicating no more than 2%. She indicated that the Town of Orleans has another union that has agreed to take 0%. They are waiting to hear from Fire and Police. She stated if town employees can do it, the private sector can do it, then teachers need to make concessions as well. The public must feel that there are some salary concessions or there won't be support for an override.

It was suggested to formally invite Selectmen and Finance Committees to come to meetings via email. Greg O'Brien invited them to next Budget/Finance Committee Subcommittee Meeting. It was also requested that the Superintendent invite School Committee Members, staff, and teachers to all budget meetings.

Chairman Jones stated teachers' salaries increasing 6.75% at the high school, teacher salaries' increasing 8.4% at the middle school, principals' salaries increasing 4.29%, nurses' salary increasing 5.8% and on and on. He asked the question how long can these types of increases be sustained and stated there is nothing left to cut. He reiterated the need to get some concessions from employees as cuts will dismantle the district leaving kids shortchanged. When you cut services to kids, you can never replace them.

Mr. O'Brien expressed that Administration needs to lead and would like to see concessions from Central Office to set the bar. Teachers won't make concessions unless Central Office makes them first.

Things that need to get done quickly: notify the NEA, get deadlines for warrants and overrides, identify Negotiation Subcommittee members.

MOTION: On a motion by Chairman Jones, seconded by Bonnie-Jean Nunheimer, it was voted unanimously, to invite all union and non-union employees, including administration, to enter into re-negotiations of existing contracts.

Chairman Jones would like first draft of the FY 11 budget in two weeks. The Region School Committee will convene on Jan. 28th at 5:00 p.m. at which time they will proceed with the budget review identifying specific cuts at each level. The Committee has asked the Principals and Administration for a list of cuts by that meeting. It was also suggested that the Administration notify all staff and make sure everyone understands the potential increases vs. revenue and the seriousness of the situation.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Tefft, recording secretary