

MINUTES

Finance Sub-Committee Meeting

Thursday, March 21, 2013

Fall River Public Schools Administration Building
417 Rock Street
Fall River, MA 02720

AGENDA

Budget Discussion
Review of School Improvement Plan

Chairman Costa request a roll call at

Mr. Costa	Present
Mr. Hart	Present
Mr. Martins	Not Present

Also present: Superintendent Mayo-Brown, Meg Christ, Mike Saunders, Catarina DaSilva, Teri White, Cathy Carvalho, Joel Jocelyn, ElizabethCoogan, Ivone Medeiros,

Mr. Costa explains that this meeting gives the committee the ability to see what the needs are in terms of staffing and other resources that the schools may need as we plan to move forward with next years fiscal budget. This processtarted last year and it was found to be productive in regards to having an open exchange with building leaders and building principals and eventually leads to adding some additional resources in the buildings.

Superintendent Mayo- Brown just would like to remind the sub –committee that elementary principals will be presenting in many cases requests for additional staff members, as discussed in the first subcommittee meeting we are looking to address the equity between the level of resources between the secondary school and elementary schools . Superintendent Mayo-Brown stated that the district currently spends \$6100 on average on the secondary level per student and only \$4400 per student at the elementary level. Superintendent Mayo-Brown stated that they are looking to add an additional 16 positions, but also made mention that these positions do not include paraprofessional positions. Superintendent Mayo-Brown wanted to make clear that they will not be discussing the additional paraprofessionals this will help reduce class size in the earlier grade levels. Superintendent Mayo-Brown informed the committee that they will be hearing todays principals discuss their thinking and rational about other types of positions to move forward to help ensure student achievement.

Mr. Costa asked that if you are in need of additional paraprofessionals to discuss that with the Superintendent as part of building your budget and making your proposals. Mr. Costa stated that himself as well as Mr. Hart would also like to be made aware, of additional paraprofessional positions

approved and the location of these newly added positions. Mr. Costa welcomed Principal, Meg Christ, Viveiros Elementary School to start off.

Principal Meg Christ stated that the Viveiros School Improvement Plan compliments her budget so that they are embedded within one another. There are five different goals that are going to be discussed and the first is going to be around student performance. Principal Christ wanted to preface her remarks and state that the Viveiros Elementary School is an extended learning time school and the ELT employs a wraparound service model that focus' on the academic achievement and the social emotional well being of the students. In regards to this piece, there is a high focus on ELA and Math. In math there is a coaching model, Principal Christ wanted to state that this is the first year that Viveiros is part of the T3 initiative. There is a T3 coach that leads the T3 teacher leaders, at each grade level. There is a weekly professional development, the focus this year has been around Math and ELA along with the district initiatives around closed reading, curriculum frameworks and math curriculum maps. There is also a math interventionist, T3 math teacher as well. Professional learning time has been a huge focus this particular year, especially because of the T3 initiative. One of the initiatives that has been put into place is called "walk to learn". At this time Principal Christ discussed all that surrounds the implementing of reading street in terms of what the students are doing and the professional development provided. There was great progress in the past school year in ELA and Math. Principal Christ stated that this great progress shows in the focus that students are showing towards their academics. The second goal that is going to be discussed is professional development; this has had a huge impact on the school around teaching and learning especially. The staff has been trained in responsive classroom one and responsive classroom two, and they were recently involved in teaching with discipline. Not only should the students be learning everyday but so should the staff, this is why professional development is a huge piece. The next area that Principal Christ would like to discuss is the social emotional learning and creating a school where all members have a vested interest and a share common vision. This is all tied into the T3 initiative and the professional development and team building. The last goal is around home school community partnerships, Viveiros is a Title One school and this is an area that could use a lot of work in regards to increasing parent engagement and creating opportunities for parent involvement. In the following week there will be a Math and ELA night set up for parents. Principal Christ stated that she would like to add the following positions, convert one Associate Principal to a Vice Principal position.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown stated that this has already been done and agreed to by the union.

The second position request is to convert a Literacy Coach position to a Dean of Teaching and Learning. Would like to recruit and hire one teacher leader and place them into an open K position that was vacated due to a retirement, the additional cost for this position would be \$6,000 stipend. Also requested to recruit three T3 leaders from within the school, one teacher is a special education teacher for a grade three T3 leader and one for a grade four T3 leader. The additional cost for this would be \$18,000. At this point in time the Viveiros Elementary has 6 T3 teachers, two at first grade, a math T3 leader, two grade 5 T3 leaders and a T3 coach.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown stated that the original proposal to the School Committee would be that there would be approximately 8-10 T3 Leaders hired for the Viveiros. This allows us to recruit experienced effective urban educators.

Mr. Costa stated that there would be a total of three new teachers hired and the other recruitments would come from within the school. Also, that some of the additional cost may be absorbed with hiring a new teacher.

Principal Meg Christ stated there is a five year minimum requirement in order to be considered a T3 teacher. She also wanted to state that it's a pretty rigorous process that they have to go through.

Mr. Costa asked if Principal Christ is responsible for the hiring process.

Principal Christ stated that she is part of the hiring process but that T3 coordinates some of the recruiting and that she is part of the final decision.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown wanted to inform the sub-committee that at the last meeting they did discuss moving the apprentice position from the Silvia School to the Viveiros Elementary School.

Mr. Costa, wanted to be clear that the position would be moved and not the individual.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown confirmed that it would be the position that would be moving only.

Mr. Costa just wanted to be clear that there would be the Principal, two Vice Principal positions, a Dean of Teaching and Learning and an Apprentice position.

Mr. Hart wanted to state that he liked the home school community partnership and also made mention of the Math and Literacy night, Mr. Hart wanted to know if this has happened yet.

Principal Christ stated that the first Math night is next week.

Mr. Hart asked if the school council is involved?

Principal Christ stated that the school council is separate from the parent group. There are several parents that are heavily involved in the school. But the number of total parents that are involved on a constant basis is not as high as she would like it to be.

Mr. Hart stated that not only in the Viveiros School but all schools, increasing parent involvement is important. Mr. Hart stated that he really likes the idea of the Math and Literacy nights. Any and all events that take place to increase parent involvement is great.

Principal Christ stated that there are monthly events that take place during the school day such as ice cream parties and other incentives to get the parents involved and in the school. This at times can also help with attendance, attendance is a huge issue with being on time and in school every day.

Mr. Costa inquired as to whether or not Viveiros is receiving help from the attendance officers in regards to attendance.

Principal Christ stated that they have helped and that there is an attendance officer twice a week, she comes in one full day and one half day. Principal Christ stated that she has nothing further to discuss.

Mr. Hart also stated that he has nothing further to discuss.

Mr. Costa wanted to thank Principal Christ. Would like to continue and discuss the Letourneau Elementary School and welcome Principal Catarina DaSilva.

Principal DaSilva began to present for the Letourneau Elementary School, at this point Principal DaSilva referred to a handout and mentioned that the Letourneau School has an average class size of 28 students, at this time she discussed student teacher ratio and how the additional positions added at the beginning of the year such as a SAC has helped achieved goals throughout the year. Based on the overall needs of the schools, Principal DaSilva is requesting two kindergarten paraprofessionals and two interventionist be added to her building for the 2013-2014 school year.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown asked that Mr. Costa refer back to the original sheet that was handed out, in regards to the number of paraprofessionals being requested at the Letourneau.

Mr. Costa asked that Principal DaSilva walk through how she prepares to present the School Improvement for the upcoming year.

Principal DaSilva stated that the overall goal for the school is to support learning for all students. Principal DaSilva mentioned that another focus is developmental professional community learning, to support teacher knowledge and understanding of academic content and effective pedagogy. Third goal is to continue to expand on the health wellness program.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown asked Principal DaSilva to discuss things that she has done this year that will carry over into next year, in terms of the intervention. Superintendent Mayo-Brown stated that the community was curious about the additional tutoring that is being provided and what academic supports are you proposing in terms of interventions.

Principal DaSilva stated that at this point there is the MCAS academy in place that takes place after school. Interventionists have been hired that are supporting the 3rd and 4th grade teachers, to support the students for MCAS. Principal DaSilva discussed all supports that have been put into place throughout the 2012-2013 school year. Such as programs that have students do work over vacations so that they continue to learn.

Mr. Costa wanted to discuss the assessments and asked what plans are in place in regards to assessment and testing.

Principal DaSilva informed the committee that the school has been looking at the data closely, data has been given out in the past but now teachers are really starting to use it and interpret it. Small groups have been formed based on the data and able to get additional support. Since the last school year an ELA coach has been put into place. Many of the supports such as Kindergarten paraprofessionals, ESL and Special Education teachers have doubled and this has made an improvement.

Mr. Costa asked Principal DaCosta “ with the additional personnel what have you been able to accomplish this school year?”

Principal DaSilva discussed how all the additional supports are functioning in order to improve the school and meet the goals of the school.

Mr. Costa asked at what stage the Letourneau Schools PLC was at

Principal DaSilva stated that the time has been expanded instead of 45 minutes, they are now at an hour and a half and that has helped them get deeper into the data. Discussed her benchmark results and how Letourneau is making steady progress, also mentioned that in the places where progress is not being made the school is working on it.

Mr. Costa made a closing remark in terms of being pleased with schools that review and use the data that they are given in order to improve and meet their benchmarks. At this point no further comments or discussion are taking place in regards to the Letourneau Elementary School. At this point the committee is moving on the Fonseca Elementary School and welcome Principal White.

Principal White stated that there is approximately 770 students enrolled at the Watson Elementary School and of those, Special Education and ELL students are the majority of the population in the school. 91% of the students are classified as high needs. The data showed that some of these students showed signs of regression last year, Principal White stated that she analyzed the data with other Administrators and teachers. There has been a lot of discussion around their relationships with the students. Mentioned that some of the data is conflicting in terms of grade levels, some testing is showing that grades are where they should be in terms of reading, however the MCAS data is not showing the same information. At this point Principal White stated that she is looking into the reasons as to why this could be taking place and working to improve that.

Mr. Costa stated that information is very interesting , the grade data is supposed to be a good indicator as to how the student will progress with MCAS. At this point Mr. Costa asked Superintendent Mayo-Brown if this district has looked into this.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown stated that it's not normally used a predictor, but generally where students score is where they will stay.

Assistant Superintendent Roy weighed in on the conversation and made mentioned that a test such a MCAS is more content based and depends on the background of the student.

Principal White partnered with the reading institute, she stated that they are in the school and this has helped. This has also helped with data and tracking students and seeing where they are moving. Also working on relationships between staff and students and making students feel comfortable around the school. At this point in time Principal White would like to present the four goals that she has. Goal one has to do with improving quality and consistency with curriculum. Principal White stated that they are also working on planning and making sure that the teachers are preparing quality lessons. The primary goal has been around the positive school and classroom climate, all teachers have been to responsive classroom training. There is a student support coordinator that coordinates the wraparound services. This has allowed parents to be involved more within the building. The math coach has also planned two parents nights, the was created to help parents better understand what their child is learning. Principal White stated that the Kindergarten classes are very large and that many kindergarten students come in and have never been in a classroom setting. Principal White informed the committee that she is looking to add an additional Kindergarten and that this would decrease the classroom size. The third grade classroom is set up as a 5 unit program, would need to add a fourth grade teacher in order to accommodate this model. At this point the school only has one school adjustment counselor with a total of 770 students. Of the 770 students a total of 150 of these students have outside services, Principal White is requesting an additional SAC.

Mr. Costa stated that he as well as his colleagues are in full support of additional school adjustment counselors.

Principal White stated that the fourth position that is being requested is an ELA interventionist, this would help strategies and instructional practices that take place in the school.

Mr. Hart wanted to state that he is in agreement with the SAC position and is amazed that two SAC's could even function with the number of students that require services. In the future there should even be more. At this time Mr. Hart also wanted to state that he thinks it's great that parents are getting involved in the school.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown wanted to make sure it was mentioned that the Fonseca added a behavioral specialist which also helps and compliments the school.

Principal White discussed the behaviorist and how this position has helped with writing some of the intervention plans, since these supports have been put into place she is now able to get into the classrooms and this has helped the teachers with more effective classroom management strategies. Principal White then went on to discuss the student support coordinator, this is part of the Race to the Top grant. The individual in this position is a trained counselor. Principal White stated that the primary job of the Student Support Coordinator is helping parents connect with outside resources to make sure that they get the supports that they need.

Mr. Costa stated states that he finds it interesting that some of the kindergarten students have never been to pre-school or in a classroom setting, he also stated that 91% of the Fonseca students are considered high needs. Some of these students may have qualified for early intervention services or head start, at this time Mr. Costa asked if Principal White feels as though most of these students would qualify for an early intervention prior to starting kindergarten but do not attend.

Principal White answered "yes". The students that have gone through a head start program due tend to be more successful.

Mr. Costa stated that he interested in looking into this further and making sure these students are taking advantage these services that are available to them. Mr. Costa suggested that the siblings of students in the school already, should be made aware and try to help these families and hopefully they are better prepared to attend school. At this time Mr. Costa requested of the Superintendent Mayo-Brown and CFO Michael Saunders to come up with the analysis of cost to reduce to ratio of SAC's to students and this information could be provided to the committee in terms of cost. If the SAC to student ratio is 200:1 they are not going to be able to be as effective as we would like them to be.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown stated that the schools have been creative in terms of partnering with outside agencies coming directly into the schools.

Mr. Costa commended the work of the schools and all efforts being made to help these students. At this point there is no further comment or conversation regarding the Fonseca Elementary School. At this point Mr. Costa welcomes Principal Carvalho of the Watson Elementary School.

Principal Carvalho stated that she asked her staff to put together what they felt the needs of the school was. The needs that were listed was the cultural climate, student behavior and the scores. Principal Carvalho stated that the scores of the Watson school have decreased in the last few years. Stated that she is not able to add any positions to her budget, but the school is moving in the right direction with the positions that they do have. In regards to the socio-emotional piece, Watson has put into place some positive behavior enforcement plans. The Vice Principal is from the Silvia Elementary School and comes to Watson with a lot of great ideas. There is a parent coffee hour that takes place every month and this gives parents the opportunity to talk about things, as well as giving Principal Carvalho the opportunity to be able to discuss things with the parents such as: attendance and homework. These coffee hours as well received and 30-60 parents attend. Behavior is still an issue, Principal Carvalho did state that it is under control and this is something that they will always be working on. At this point Principal Carvalho expressed that the Watson School is not a responsive classroom school and that she is looking for the Watson staff to be trained. In regards to the scores, Principal Carvalho stated that she has been looking at the data and working with an outside agency SRI, they have been taking apart the data and making it user friendly, this will help teachers see what's working and what's not working. UMass Dartmouth has volunteers coming and helping the students with math. There is an active literacy coach in the building and has worked a great deal with SRI. Students have been displaying a very positive attitude in terms of MCAS and being proud of their hard work.

Mr. Costa stated that Principal Carvalho began with stating that she was not going to be asking for any additional positions because she was not going to be getting any, at this time Mr. Costa asking "as a building leader what could she use?".

Principal Carvalho stated that she was recently informed that she had a Math Coach position in her budget and that she would be looking to hire for this position. At this point Principal Carvalho informed the committee of how she was using her interventionist, paraprofessionals and a retired teacher that comes in four days a week to help in her building. Principal Carvalho stated that she is going to be looking for a math coach. She is also hoping that this person will be going into classrooms and modeling lessons and able to have a great relationship with the students as well.

Mr. Costa stated that based on the math scores there is definitely a need for a Math Coach, at this time Mr. Costa expressed that the committee is here to assist to make sure all the right interventionists are in place. Mr. Costa also stated that he has been looking at the Watson data for some time now and understands that there has been a lot of change in the building and turnover of staff.

Principal Carvalho mentioned that she has used the new evaluation tool and has been getting into classrooms and that she strongly feels as though the school is moving the right direction.

Mr. Costa inquired about Watson not being responsive classroom trained, at this point he asked the Superintendent if this is something that could happen for this school.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown confirmed that this will be happening for Watson

Assistant Superintendent Roy, stated that responsive classroom training started with the wrap around schools and this will be happening for the Watson Elementary School.

Mr. Costa stated that he is pleased with knowing that Watson will now be a responsive classroom school and have a strong behavioral management system in place.

Principal Carvalho mentioned the different approaches that the school is taking in order to get parents in the school and able to see what the students are learning and assist them if they have any questions.

At this point there is no further discussion or comments in regards to the Watson Elementary School.

Mr. Costa welcomes Principal Joel Jocelyn of the Greene Elementary School.

Principal Jocelyn stated that the Greene Elementary School is a K-5 school with approximately 813 students, the number of students have increased by 60-70 students, this is the second largest school in Fall River. Student numbers have increased but not the number of staff. The additional students were just absorbed into classrooms and increased class sizes. The average class size is 29 students per regular classroom and 32 students per class in the Kindergarten classrooms. The number of ELL students have doubled since the last school year, there are currently 50 ELL students, compared to the 26 students in the 2011-2012 school year. At this point there is only one ELL teacher. Principal Jocelyn stated that 84% of the students receive free or reduced lunch. Principal Jocelyn stated that 27% of the students are on an IEP. There was support from the Superintendent to add an interventionist and a few other positions. In June 2011 the school was listed as a level 3 school and it is now listed as a level 1 school in 2012, the school went from chronically underperforming to where it should be. In regards to ELA most of the students have scored above average scores, math scores have reached all the targeted goals. The goal was not met for science and there have been changes made on that. The budget is in line with the SIP (School Improvement Plan), the SIP is also in line with the district accelerated improvement plan. Principal Jocelyn stated that he noticed a trend of first and second graders coming into the school weak and constantly playing catch up in third, fourth and fifth grade. The main focus in the 2012-2013 school year was to strengthen the lower grade and when they approach third grade they will be strong. The Greene School has the reading and math academy still in place and it has been expanded. The first year it was offered to grades 3,4 and 5. For the 2012-2013 school year it was offered to grades one thru five. Principal Jocelyn stated that the Greene School uses Next Year Reading and Dream Box. Currently there are two title one interventionists, last year there were three in the building. There is one interventionist for the math and one for reading. The two interventionist have been working with the upper grade level of students to help with the scores. Principal Jocelyn stated that with the increase in prep time, equaled the equivalent of losing 1.5 people a day. During the prep times the students are still doing work.

Mr. Costa inquired if this occurred in any of the other schools

Superintendent Mayo-Brown replied "yes" and that it happened in every school.

Mr. Costa wanted to know that if the extended prep effected each school by a position and a half

Superintendent Mayo-Brown replied "not in every school"

Principal Jocelyn stated that this was caused due to the size of his school

Superintendent Mayo-Brown stated that conversation did take place in regards to the extended prep possibly causing the need for an additional FTE for each school. The smaller elementary schools such as Watson were not affected like the Greene School.

Principal Jocelyn stated that the only alternative would be to use those periods as busy work, the children could also go into the library or having the students do content based academic work. The main focus this year was going to be on science instruction, so this is why a position was converted into a science teaching position, so that from Kindergarten all the way up they will receive science instruction. The school has an offering for social emotional issues and community engagement. The 21st century also comes into the school and helps students with a variety of academics and also emotional needs. A formal social emotional learning team has been established in the building, this is made up of a SAC, attendance officer, teachers and the administrative team. This has shown to be working based on the numbers in regards to the referral process. In regards to community partnerships the school has done the following: parent math night, parent reading night, parent fun night. Also, this school year math dictionaries were handed out to parents and this would help them with their student at home. There was approximately 150 books handed out, at the cost of \$3 a book and at this point there are about 100 parents on the waiting list to receive the book. One of the components in the school improvement plan is to encourage the students to work as a college prep elementary school, college banners have been hung in the classrooms and some of the classes are referred to as colleges or universities. A formal partnership with UMASS Dartmouth has been set up and the fourth grade class is going to go and meet the president and get a tour of the school. The goal every two years is to match a grade level to a university and have them sponsored. The goal is to have the students have a total of six college trips. Once these students attend middle school the goal is to have the mind set of attending college. At this point the only positions that Principal Jocelyn is requesting in order to meet the needs of the school is an ELA/Reading Coach for the lower grades (K-2). Physically there is not enough space to add classrooms, but this would bring a needed skill into the building. The goal is improve the teachers in this area. Regardless of class size if a teacher is ineffective you aren't going to get the scores you are looking for. Principal Jocelyn stated that the two kindergartens are very strong, the class sizes are average of 33 students and when you walk into the classrooms the teachers make it look easy. Principal Jocelyn stated that these teachers are extremely skilled. The second position that is being requested is an interventionist for grades one and two. The Greene School has one and a half school adjustment counselors in the building and approximately 832 students. Principal Jocelyn is requesting an increase in School Adjustment Counselors and a behavior therapist.

Mr. Hart thanked all the Principals for taking part in the meeting and that he found this meeting gave him a better perspective as to what is happening in the schools and what the schools require for the upcoming year.

Mr. Costa wanted to also thank everyone, especially the Principals that were presenting for the first time. Mr. Costa also mentioned that he finds these meetings to help the Principals present very valuable information. Also the committee will work to try to make all the requested positions happen.

Mr. Costa motion to adjourn
Mr. Hart motion made to adjourn
Mr. Costa second

Respectfully Submitted,

Megan Souza
Administrative Assistant Human Resources

