

FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, March 19, 2015

5:15 PM

School Administration Building

417 Rock Street

Fall River, MA 02720

AGENDA

Finance Subcommittee Workshop

- Fall River Public Schools Budget
- Budget for Group 1 Elementary Schools (Greene, Watson, Tansey, Silvia, Viveiros)

MINUTES

At 5:12 PM Mrs. Panchley, Chair of the subcommittee, read the open meeting law.

Mrs. Panchley then called to order the meeting of the Finance Subcommittee for Thursday, March 19, 2015 and asked for a roll call.

A roll call for attendance showed Mr. Costa, Mr. Hart and Mrs. Panchley were present.

Also present were Superintendent Mayo-Brown, Mr. Michael Saunders, Mr. Tom Coogan, Mr. Kevin Almeida, Dr. Fran Roy, Ms. Ivone Medeiros, Ms. Jocelyn LeMaire, Principal Cathy Carvalho, Principal Jean Facchiano, Principal Mike Ward, Principal Nicholas Bretz, Principal Kyle Grandfield, Principal Joel Jocelyn, and members of the press. School Committeeman Joseph Martins was also in attendance.

Mrs. Panchley welcomed everyone and explained that this was the first Finance Subcommittee meeting regarding the budget. The budget workshops were implemented a few years ago so that the subcommittee has a chance to listen to principals to see how things are going and to get a better idea of what their needs are as they put the budget together. It is a great opportunity to hear directly from them as they make recommendations to the School Committee as a whole.

Mrs. Panchley asked that Madame Superintendent begin by introducing the budget.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown thanked them for the opportunity to have Principals come forward to the Finance Subcommittee to talk about their successes as well as their challenges and their focus on closing the achievement gap for all students. As is their practice, they have compiled a binder for the Committee of the whole. She walked the subcommittee through the different components noting that some of the challenges they have are that they spend more per pupil on their secondary students than they do on their elementary students; however, that gap is closing based on some of the actions that the Committee has taken during this fiscal year in terms of putting more resources into elementary. She believed the differential last year was about 28% and they are down to 22% and know it will continue to shrink as more resources continue to be focused on the elementary grades. She also

noted that the materials throughout the school budgets are level service budgets. This year they are focusing on Durfee High School and some potential additional restructuring and resources that may be needed for the high school. She admitted that that was in conflict with her previous statement that they spend more at the secondary level but explained they don't want to reduce the secondary per pupil expenditure, they want to bring elementary up to meet that.

She continued that they want to continue the Committee's investment in servicing the social-emotional needs of all of their students. Fall River has been designated as a wrap-around zone district and has been a key factor in terms of turning around a number of their chronically underperforming schools and was a key factor in the redesign work at Doran.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown explained the budget can be defined as a level service budget with a few conversions and additions. "People" make up 80% of the budget as they are a human capital organization. Level service budget means no reductions to staff, programs or services to students. She reviewed the numbers noting that throughout the entire budget they are recommending about a 3.5% increase which is mostly caused by salary increases that are contractually negotiated as well as step increases for the teachers' salary schedule and some contractual services that Mr. Saunders could discuss at a later time. They also included for the Committee's information their new Chapter 70 numbers, their foundation budget. She explained that the terms foundation budget and net school spending (NSS) are used interchangeably. The Governor's budget are the numbers DESE used to determine NSS for towns and cities across the Commonwealth. Fall River's numbers are \$130.9.

Mr. Costa thought there was an error in the percentages.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown said she would have Mr. Saunders review that. She continued that the NSS money is \$131M and the city receives close to \$106M as part of the state aid to meet the \$131M requirement which leaves the city's local contribution at about \$25M. In very simplistic terms, it is about 20% of what is required to be spent on in education in the city (20 cents on the dollar). The city's contribution has gone up slightly.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown said she would turn it over to Mr. Saunders if there was anything he would like to add. She pointed out there was a spreadsheet they typically include in terms of where they are in NSS both this year and projected for next year. This year with the \$1.3M shortfall in the healthcare line item that there has been much public discussion about, if that gap is not closed, the district's NSS is 98.9% for FY15 and if that is not addressed this year it carries over to next year which will put them below NSS for FY16.

Mr. Saunders said to follow up on the foundation budget and also with the cherry sheet, he has had contact with DESE and they had charter school estimates of enrollment and he included that at the end of the section under Chapter 70. There was an over projection after contacting the individual charter schools of about 100 students which would make the assessment that goes to the charter schools reduced and that money would flow into the (Fall River) public schools. In relation to that, when he developed the NSS projection dollar amount he took into consideration those 100 students is about \$900K. He contacted DESE, the adjustment for that would not occur until after April 1 when the charter schools have to say they have actual applications for their enrollment and then the numbers would be adjusted and the cherry sheet numbers would also be adjusted. Even if this budget as it stands was adopted, they would (in combination with FY15 and FY16) be below the NSS requirement and that would still generate a letter from DESE to the Mayor. He continued that they have stuck with the same format for the schools and went over how the budget was set-up.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown asked Mr. Saunders to clarify the 3.5% calculation Mr. Costa had questioned.

Mr. Saunders explained it is the growth of \$3.4M divided by the \$98,301,000 which should come to .035 which is the 3.5%.

Mr. Costa went over the breakdown and Mr. Saunders said they are not totaled up; they are individual relationships between each line and do not run in total.

Mr. Saunders continued that in relationship to that \$98.3M budget; there should be another \$1.3M above that and that would relate to what they are actually going through. The \$98.3M amount will not get them to NSS in FY15.

Mr. Costa said he understood after the clarification but felt it was misleading.

Mr. Saunders said they could display it another way.

Mrs. Panchley said it is still yet to be determined if the city will pay the \$1.3M this year or if they will be carrying it over and is something they need to consider as they go forward. She asked if they did receive the \$1.3M this year, if they could do some things like they did the last time such as prepay special education tuition.

Mr. Saunders said they were maxed out in those areas. He was not sure the city's plan as to if and when they were going to give it to them but if they do they would come back with some recommendations.

Mr. Costa said one other housekeeping item he had was that on the cherry sheet; he asked if the city made whole what the state had granted a waiver for. They still need to make that up.

Mr. Saunders said that the Mayor and the administration made a recommendation directly to the City Council to not take into consideration the waiver which is why they had \$3.3M.

Mr. Costa said that was fine.

Mr. Saunders also noted that the \$3.3M was not represented in the \$98M starting point because it would distort all comparisons.

Mrs. Panchley asked if there were any questions on the overall presentation of the budget before getting into individual schools. She asked Mr. Martins who was also in attendance.

Mr. Martins noted that this was a finance subcommittee meeting but the curriculum is included. He wondered if the curriculum was automatically approved through the presentation and budget process.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown said that was not the case and explained there is no curriculum in the budget. There are FTEs and the narrative describing the school but the document does not contain any curriculum.

Mr. Martins also asked as they deliberate this and make their recommendations to the full Committee that they keep in mind the NSS amount.

Mrs. Panchley agreed and said they would start with the Silvia School and Principal Facchiano.

Principal Facchiano presented:

- Level one school recognized as a commendation school for making significant progress in closing their achievement gap for their students
- 805 students
- 20% special needs population who they find to be the most fragile group and the group they target the most in trying to close the gap for learning
- School-wide focus around comprehension for the past several years as they are an expanded learning time school. With that they have used best practices around T charts and understanding question types and helping students understand that to better understand and respond to text.
- They have targeted some guided math practices within the classroom so that there is differentiated math instruction.
- They have RTI up and running.
- They have added three interventionist (2 two years ago and 1 last year); they have interventions throughout the day and it is embedded into schedules.
- Tier III instruction; students in Tier III receive targeted instruction from their interventionists outside of the class. No children miss core instruction.
- Within their RTI process, their intervention time that is embedded in the classroom, they not only meet the needs of their struggling learners but also their accelerated learners as well. Their instruction is differentiated so if they have different levels of readers, they are targeting groups and grouping them and are able to meet those needs in intervention time so that it is not in core instruction.
- They remain pretty good with SGP; they have targeted areas in science and did make growth last year; however, they feel that their science scores should be comparable to their ELA scores. If children are able to read they believe they should be able to pass science MCAS as well. They are strengthening their science instruction and last year they hired a STEM teacher to replace their computer teacher so she works collaboratively with all grade levels and will push in to help set up science kits and science note booking which is another school-wide focus.
- Attendance does not seem to be a huge issue school-wide; however, their chronic absenteeism is. They have targeted that and their adjustment counselors have set goals around reaching out to families about attendance. Principal Facchiano has also sent letters out to families to communicate with them and see what they can do as a staff to help them support their children to get them to school.

Principal Facchiano said the only change they would request this year is their numbers are large in grade 4. They increased a grade 4 last year which means in turn next year they have to open a new grade 5 so they are requesting a grade 5 teacher be hired but it is not additional.

She continued that they hired a couple of paraprofessionals because their class sizes are a little bit larger in grade 1 and 2 but their interventions are targeted in grade 1 and 2 so that the three interventionists that they have work mostly in the beginning of the year in grade one and support grade two with the Tier III kids. They do a lot of pull-out and push-in in grade one. By mid-year they start taking and targeting some K students so a lot of their work is in the younger grades where they see their higher numbers. They also hired two paraprofessionals to work in both grades one and two where they see some larger numbers and they are splitting between classes that may have 30.

They don't have a large ELL population – about 5% of their school – but they do have an ELL support staff that works with students both pushing in and pulling out. She thought they have been successful with closing the gap of their special needs students because they believe their special needs teachers should be pushing into classrooms versus pulling out. They know kids receive more when they have core instruction and they are pretty adamant about making sure kids are receiving their core instruction so they can close that gap for that population of students.

Mrs. Panchley asked about the family support. She has a child there and thinks that they have done a wonderful job this year pushing that.

Principal Facchiano said that was a really big goal of theirs because last year they were a new administration to the school and they were just trying to get the teaching going, strengthening core instruction and intervention. This year they worked heavily on the parent engagement piece. They have a Silvia engagement team which has about twenty staff members on it who are volunteering which is a good representation of staff. They have conducted two parent academies and their goal next year is to have four. The feedback has been very good and they even provided a bus service and babysitting. They are trying to figure a way to understand what their families need and try to reach out to them. They will continue that work next year.

Mrs. Panchley said she thought the work that they are doing this year around parent engagement is wonderful and is something she hopes other schools emulate as they go down the road. Also speaking to how many teachers go to PTO meetings – she has never seen anything like that in other schools that she has attended. She thought it was wonderful to go to a meeting and see so many teachers there especially at an ELT school.

Mr. Costa clarified that they were asking for one FTE.

Principal Facchiano said yes, one teacher because they have four 4th grades going into three 5th grades not including their GATE classes.

Mr. Costa asked if the numbers in third supported the amount of teachers she has.

Principal Facchiano said yes, in second and first as well.

Mr. Costa said that was fine; he understood the students rolling forward from fourth to fifth but his concern was if third didn't have enough students to fill the fourth then that teacher could roll to the fifth.

Principal Facchiano said there are four third grades currently at 29 or 30 so even if a few from each class went to the GATE class it still leaves them with at least 26 in every class.

Principal Facchiano also asked if she could request it be looked at the fact that they only have one way in and one way out of the school grounds.

Mr. Costa said it was before his time but he believed it was a sell in order to get the school located where it is to have the neighbors agree to have the school located there but they could look into it.

Mr. Hart asked what percentage was chronically absent.

Principal Facchiano said she recently reached out to 59 families. She believed there were just under 100 students that are chronically absent. She reached out to families who are also struggling academically. She looked at the historical data and the most current. If they are not making grade level benchmarks those are the families she first reached out to this year and it is the first time they are doing that. Most families have been receptive and some do have legitimate reasons. She noted that some of it also is that the student may not be in the school's district so it could be a transportation issue.

Mr. Hart asked what the Dean of Student Support did.

Principal Facchiano said they do not have coaches or department heads. When they became the administration, herself, the Dean of Teaching and Learning, and the Assistant Principal were all curriculum people so it didn't make sense to put a department head in math when her Assistant Principal was a Department Head in math. They can and do help support their staff that way – developing all the PD, research, and reach out. The Dean of Student Support is really working with supporting their students. Principal Facchiano cannot be helping out a lot with that if she is worrying about mini-observations, etc. That person is doing that and working a lot with their parent engagement which is also a target for that position.

Mr. Hart asked if they can determine since that person started how much parent involvement has increased.

Mrs. Facchiano said they had two parent academies which had about 80 families at the first and about 100 at the second, their Parent Café was the largest they have ever had, and Family Fun Night was the largest they ever had. She noted that comes from someone running that and sending out the message. The administration helps but when they have a person that is in charge of those things – it was a missing piece last year and they knew that which is why they asked for it.

Mrs. Panchley said from having children in a small school and then a big school she felt it is hard to feel connected to a larger school and thought they had made huge improvements this year with the Dean of Student Support.

Mr. Hart asked if they have a Dean of Student Support at other schools or if they had other titles.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown said that Greene has one as well.

Mrs. Panchley said the only question she had was that she talked a lot about science but she did not see science goals.

Principal Facchiano said they do have a science goal and they also do a lot of engineering at the school. They were brainstorming at their ILT meeting around the fact that June is going to be an extremely long month so they want to see how they can make it engaging. They decided the theme for the month would be engineering and science. She added that their STEM person is really strengthening their science curriculum as well.

Mrs. Panchley said that the school is at a PPI where they are supposed to remain where they were last year because they were above the 75.

Principal Facchiano said she always wants 100 and wants everybody to be proficient.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown said they were at 105 last year.

Principal Facchiano said once they get there the work is hard to sustain.

Mr. Martins did not have any questions or comments.

Mrs. Panchley asked Greene School Principal, Joel Jocelyn, to present next.

Principal Jocelyn presented:

- 795 students
- Title I school
- Special education went from 21% last year to 16.8% this year
- Approximately 62 ELL students
- They have received quite a bit of help from the district in terms of class size. Last year they had approximately 12 classrooms with 30 or more students and this year they have 8 but every one of them has a ½ time paraprofessional working with the children. They have trained every one of the paraprofessionals in reading and math so now they are part of morning intervention with fragile students.
- They have interventionists that have been really helpful pulling students in the morning and pushing in a co-teaching model and they do small groups in the classroom.
- They did not meet their annual PPI last year and were at 55. He noted PPI is a dynamic figure and a moving target. They did really well to get to level one but they are not able to maintain that level because they could not bridge the gap between their special education students and regular education students fast enough. They have spent a lot of time analyzing the data and have a plan moving forward to close that gap. He explained in detail.
- RTI they struggled a little bit with last year because of when they were meeting so this year they shifted it so that their once a month faculty meeting has been shifted to RTI meetings and they feel better that they are addressing those needs as well.
- For their advanced students they are continuing to differentiate instruction in small groups and also making sure that teachers are giving differentiated homework and classwork to the most advanced students to push them as well.
- They have been working on professional culture and have a very active ILT. What he loves about Fall River is that the leadership team has been working with all of the schools. Last year he went to visit at Silvia and took in everything he could find and started their own ILT and it has been very successful. It meets once a month but also for three days in July to plan the coming year. It allows teachers to share the leadership role and it is a real leadership role. The ILT is open to all teachers and they get to vote on initiatives and he is committed to respecting the vote that they take.
- He also has a representative from the teacher cabinet that he has a good relationship with and meets with once a month to work out issues that she is hearing that he can fix.
- They have been working very hard on attendance; their chronic attendance rate has decreased from approximately 18% to 12% and they are continuing to work on it. They have developed a pyramid of intervention that they have distributed to all the staff and mailed to parents. They are going to continue this model to make sure kids go to school and the hope is that they see their rate of chronic absenteeism decrease.
- Parent engagement: they have a parent breakfast every other month where he invites parents open door to talk about attendance, MCAS, etc. They also have a Play Works night and play the same games the kids play during the day with the parents. They also have a family fun

night, a math night, a literacy night, family movie night, and an awards ceremony where kids receive awards for academic performance, most improved, and citizenship.

Mrs. Panchley said she remembered him telling them about that last year and she loved that. She thinks it is all important and sometimes you see schools lose sight of the academic piece because they are focusing on behavior but rewarding academic performance shouldn't be pushed aside.

Mr. Costa asked about the ELA interventions being used at the lower grades and if the benchmarks were showing progress in those areas.

Principal Jocelyn said for Grades 1 and 2 the benchmarks are showing progress. Grade 3 they are not. They started initiatives this year so they are really hoping to see improvement as the grades roll forward. They also brainstormed that morning some immediate ideas for Grade 3.

Mr. Costa asked if it is not taking hold in third grade, what their game plan was.

Principal Jocelyn said that morning they met to focus just on third grade and some of the plans they have in place include revamping the way instruction is delivered so the kids have more opportunity to work and learn from each other. He explained some scenarios. In addition, they are also looking to use the interventionists in a more concentrated way to target some of the kids who are in strategic intervention. They are going to continue with the morning intervention and provide them with additional opportunities.

Mr. Costa asked if that was going on throughout the school year (interventionists).

Principal Jocelyn responded yes; but they really want to ramp up their lower grades so they have been concentrating primarily on Grades 1 and 2.

Mr. Costa asked how often they were checking the benchmarks on the third grade. He remembered that one school shortened the time between benchmarks to address particular issues. He thought it was good that they were not letting the traditional amount of time go by in order to get the data back and were monitoring it a little more closely. He wondered if it was a strategy being used with the third graders noting that they were in March and time was ticking. He asked how many more benchmarks they had planned.

Principal Jocelyn thought two.

Dr. Roy said it may be one or two but all schools do internal benchmarks and it was part of what they discussed. With the students Principal Jocelyn mentioned, they are "tricky" kids so they also have Pam Pacheco who is going to build the capacity of the coaches and interventionists in the building to deal with the third graders who are not fluent readers. There are tricky reasons why they are not readers so it is an added level of expertise that the district is going to provide to the structures that he has already put in place.

Mr. Costa asked if there were any additional resources that could help address the issue.

Principal Jocelyn said no, all of the resources they need they are getting.

Mr. Costa said it is just a matter of monitoring it and staying on it and Principal Jocelyn agreed. Mr. Costa said that was fine and they don't mind providing the funding for requests as long as the proof is

there that it is working. If they have identified an area that is a struggle and they need additional resources to make an impact he would like to have that discussion. They have the resources but it is just a matter of continuing to redeploy.

Principal Jocelyn agreed and said they get to a point where they implement one strategy and need to tweak it. At this point they are definitely seeing big gains in first and second grade and earlier that day they met and are revamping third. He explained some of what they are doing in that area including summer interventions.

Mr. Costa said if that was the case then they should start thinking about what that may look like and what the district may need in order to support that. Even if it is something not set in stone but they are looking at heading in that direction then they should start talking about what that may look like because he does not want to pass a budget not taking into consideration things such as this. This is why they have these meetings; for Principals to identify how things are going. That is why they ask that the improvement plans be a part of this because it should be how they are looking at budgeting. They need to be strategic in where they are deploying their resources financially in order to make the gains they want. More to the point; are they checking and monitoring that they are making those gains and if they are not, what are they doing about it? He does not want to wait until the summer to have a proposal come before the Committee after the process of putting the budget together is done.

Principal Jocelyn agreed and thanked him.

Mrs. Panchley said she pulled the data and it is lumped grades 3-5 and they have not talked a lot about fourth and fifth. She did not know if the third grade was dragging down the benchmark data and wondered how fourth and fifth grades were doing.

Principal Jocelyn said they are feeling good about fourth and fifth. If they look at their data they have really high growth in fifth and some good growth in fourth so they are making strides and third grade is dragging. They are hoping to get kids into third grade strong to really see a change.

Mrs. Panchley agreed and asked if Mr. Martins had anything to add.

Mr. Martins said he noticed that they did have a long way to go. He is pleased that when he looked at Principal Jocelyn's goals that he referenced PPI and CPI. He asked if the CPI goals were referencing the target to the respective year.

Principal Jocelyn responded yes.

Mr. Martins said he did not want to get into curriculum but thinking about the students who are most in need, he asked if he had a specific class that might be representative of students that are most in need.

Principal Jocelyn asked for more clarification.

Mr. Martins asked if the students who were low performing were integrated with students that are high performing.

Principal Jocelyn said yes; they have an inclusion model and he believes the research supports more of the inclusion mixed-ability grouping of students because they can learn from each other and that is what they have. They have an inclusion model where the struggling kids are with the high performing

because they pull them and then for those kids you make sure they have the full core of instruction and special ed teachers or interventionists working with those children to give them the additional support.

Mr. Martins asked if the high performing students were being challenged.

Principal Jocelyn responded that they were and explained that one of the things that the district had designed in the RTI process takes into account not just the academically fragile students but also the high performing students. After each benchmark they actually have a form that they use and they group students for small group instruction and they also have the high performing students grouped as well so that the teacher still pulls them in small groups and pushes them further.

Mr. Martins asked when thinking of a typical classroom like that configuration how many staff he had.

Principal Jocelyn explained that in most of their classrooms they currently have at least two staff for at least half of the day. Some of their interventionists push into the classroom as well.

Mr. Martins said they have two teachers for about 50% of the day and according to the testing results they do have a way to go. He wondered if it would be of assistance to have two teachers in the classroom all day.

Principal Jocelyn said it was an interesting question because at this point...you do reach a point of diminishing return and they place those teachers very strategically in the times when they need them the most. Having the additional 50% of the time does not necessarily work as well. For example, every classroom model is to have the whole group instruction which they want for the entire class so having another person there would not be able to do much because they want that teacher to be focusing on that whole group. After the whole group, then they start splitting into the small groups and at that point they do want another teacher there which they do have.

Mr. Martins said he was a little lost; he wondered if the whole group instruction was for the entire 45 minute period.

Principal Jocelyn said no and explained as an example that in K, 1, and 2 they are not departmentalized so they may decide to do ELA in the morning and math in the afternoon. They have social studies, science, and specials in between. During the time of ELA in the morning it is more of a workshop model. First they would have morning meetings which involve the whole group. He explained different scenarios noting that he would love to be able to have two teachers every day, every hour but he is being mindful in an era of limited resources as to what the most efficient use of the time is.

Mr. Martins said he appreciated what he said but he is concerned about the growth that they need and wondered how they are going to achieve it. He thinks it is reasonable on his part to expect that they achieve the goals they set.

Principal Jocelyn agreed.

Mr. Costa apologized for having to leave for another engagement and told the remaining Principals that he would be in touch with them.

Transcriber's Note: Mr. Costa exited the meeting at 6:20 PM.

Mrs. Panchley asked that Principal Cathy Carvalho present the Watson School.

Principal Carvalho presented:

- Deemed level 4 last year and she is proud to say they have pretty much opened up a new school this year
- 296 students
- 85% free and reduced lunch
- 8% ELL
- 14% Special Needs
- Fortunate with the staff that they have; she used some of the turnaround money to help with the three priorities that they set as a level 4 school. Besides the 12 classroom teachers and the language based teachers she now has 2 interventionists. She hired an early literacy one to help meet her second goal of early literacy for all students K-2 so by the time they get to grade 3 they will be reading. She hired a technology teacher to help with the tier 1/priority 1 so that students have an opportunity to go and work in Dreambox or Headsprout. She also hired a Student Support Coordinator which is supporting her third priority which is to create the wraparound zone at Watson which has been successful in other district schools. She also has a math coach and an ELA coach. One of her interventionists serves K-2 and the other 3-5. She shares a music and art teacher with Tansey and an ELL teacher with Spencer Borden because of the numbers so they work part-time in her building. She is also very fortunate to have 6 paraprofessionals, one in each K and 1 classroom and two in her special needs classroom and that has really helped support large numbers and the very targeted work that they have to do as a level 4 school to make gains.
- They have done a lot of work around those three goals because they know it is what Watson needs to become a level 1 school.
- RTI process is very strong this year; they have about 72 students going through the RTI process right now and it can be academic or social-emotional goals that they set for the students. They have an RTI team that meets on Fridays and the parents are very much involved in the RTI process this year which also helps them help the students get them to where they need to be. They departmentalized in grades 3-5 and they now have CPT in ELA and math every week for every teacher so they are getting that support they need. It has been helpful because they have so many new staff this year that really had to learn the curriculum math and district policies and a way to deliver the materials. Besides having CPT every week they started last year at the end of the year a coaching model and the coaches pair up with teachers 1:1 and there is no time limit on that coaching model. Some teachers may need tweaking and some might need more support. She explained that process and noted that the teachers like the individual attention.
- They have Chromebooks in every classroom and have a blended learning model. They did PD over the summer and it is helping students in small group time who need the additional support but it also is for their students who are proficient or doing well.
- Literacy development (their second goal), they are doing a play and learn for K-2. It used to just be PreK but they have included parents in their K-2 and they are learning how to do the read-a-louds and help their children at home with some of the literacy they need before they get there because she has many students that do not go to PreK. They have also done reading campaigns. One of their biggest changes is that they have an intervention block every day for all students called Achieving Individual Mastery (AIM) and it is for all level students first thing in the morning except Wednesdays because that is their early release. They use data, they have a 26 day cycle - one is ELA and one is math – and then a week in between to look at that data. They have three checkpoints for assessments for the students so there is an opportunity

to move students from one group to another during the 26 days. It is all brand new so in that weeks' time in between they have done some tweaking and trying to make it efficient and getting the biggest bang for their buck. They have put all hands on K-2 to target those students. Grades 3-5 have the support of a couple of extra people plus the computer lab so that they can do some small group work and when they do the item analysis of kids are lacking in skills that can be done during that intervention time.

- The Student Support Coordinator came on board in December and she has already met with and assisted 65 families that have needs that are affecting their students in the school. She brings the parents in and is very tuned in to different agencies that she can help them with. She has an intervention herself that does social skills with the kids. She does observations on students that teachers are struggling with. She meets with the teacher and debriefs and gives some instructions. They have made weighted bags of rice and soft blankets and different tools that she has brought on. She has done a lot of PD with the staff around ADHD and the Occupational Therapist came in to talk about other things that can help students be successful.
- In the summer they had a teacher academy which was fabulous for the climate and culture at Watson. They were together for 7.5 days at Silvia which really pulled the staff together and united them.
- "It's a brand new day" is their new slogan and everyone has bought into that, believes that, and believes in the kids. Every decision they make as a school is with all the teachers. They created the school wide rituals and routines, the schedule; they did a mission, and an instructional focus. They have done some fun things too and they have continued that. It is a different atmosphere in the building.
- They just started peer observations. They have visited other schools and now they are doing them internally as well. She left the ILT doing that work. They have a consultant from National Center for Time on Learning who is there now doing the ILT work.
- 21st Century and morning care
- Parent engagement, they have had some really successful things this year; almost 200 people attended their Dr. Seuss night. They have family cooking nights and for the first time they are going to have a Parent Café. She has a coffee hour every month with parents. They have asked the teachers to bring the parents in at least two times a year to do presentations and those have been very well attended by the parents.
- Attendance was a big issue and she is proud to say that last year they had 33% chronically absent students and right now they have 14%.

Mr. Hart and Mrs. Panchley responded that that was great.

Principal Carvalho continued:

- Attendance has been a huge focus. She has an SEL team that works on it weekly with the truant officer and they have a protocol and incentives such as the Watson Bucks for the school store. They targeted those students this year and the teacher has done data sheets that show the percentage of the absenteeism and then the scores on their tests and you can see the difference which is a wakeup call for the parents when they see how much it is affecting them. They have also broken up how many days they have been absent into hours.
- They have had a lot of PD because they have a new staff. She went through the different PD they have done or will be doing.

Principal Carvalho said she knows Watson has a long way to go as far as numbers. There was a huge PPI jump last year and they made SGP in ELA and she believes they will make it in math. CPI is a huge goal for them right now because for so many years they kept losing ground and the

targets keep moving further ahead. They did make gains last year which she thought was due to what they did for their special needs and ELL students. She explained they put them in one room so the two teachers could push in and the students could have multiple staff in the room at that time and they follow them in math and ELA and it seems to have made a difference. They do pull out when the teachers are doing small groups and they can pull out and do their own small group work. The interventionists pull out during that time as well so they are not losing core – it is during their small group time that they are getting pulled for the individualized instruction and then every single ELL and special needs student gets that additional intervention that everyone in the building gets so they are getting more time with 1:1 or very targeted work that they need and she thinks it will make a difference. It may take a while but they are on the right path to move forward and change the CPI.

Mr. Hart thought she was doing a wonderful job and he is very, very happy with what he has heard. It is not just what they are doing in the classroom but what they are doing to have the kids enjoy school and the activities they have at night. He is a very big fan of that because he thinks that definitely makes a strong community in the school. He asked if they still go to the Boys Club.

Principal Carvalho said they haven't yet this year but she did talk to the Superintendent to see if they could use some of their money. They had applied for a grant to be able to go there once a week but they did not get it so she asked to use her money because she feels it would be a great partnership. They are looking to get it set up for next year.

Mr. Hart said that was great and to keep up the great work.

Mr. Martins asked if she really thought she could achieve the goals she listed.

Principal Carvalho said the CPI targets are far away. She does not honestly believe she can do that this year but she thought they were moving in the right direction and made gains last year. It is a huge goal because of so many years of falling behind.

Mr. Martins said he would agree but questioned why she would put as a goal to be achieved by a certain date...

Principal Carvalho said they are the state targets.

Mr. Martins said he understood that but he is looking at the goals she put down and therefore, expected to achieve. If it is not a realistic goal then he questioned why she would put it down.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown explained that their goals are the PPI goals because those are her School Committee approved goals. She asked them to include their CPI information and their SGP as a point of information for the Committee. Those are their state targets and there can be some combination of those targets in order to meet their PPI. They did not want to leave that information out but if he is asking Principal Carvalho if that is her goal; no that is not the goal she is evaluated on or the goal for her school. The goal for both of those areas is her PPI.

Mr. Martins said he believed in reaching but in something he feels he could achieve; not something that is out of reach. He looked at this and thought these were the goals so this is what he expects and if that is not what is expected then they need to be able to understand that.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown asked if he evaluated Principals.

Mr. Martins responded no.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown explained that he evaluates her so the goals are between the Principals and her.

Mr. Martins said okay but he is going to look at that and ask if she achieved.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown responded as he should and he should evaluate her on whether or not the schools met their goals.

Mr. Martins agreed and said he was going to evaluate her (Superintendent) on the issue if she met the goals set by the Department of Education.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown disagreed saying he was going to evaluate her (Superintendent) based on the goals the School Committee approved 7-0 on March 2.

Mr. Martins said 6-1 and Mrs. Panchley and Superintendent Mayo-Brown said it was 7-0. Mr. Martins said he would have to reconsider that.

Mr. Martins asked Principal Carvalho if she was satisfied with her staffing to achieve for her students.

Principal Carvalho said she was but they are all brand new this year. The scores the previous four years was with a totally different staff.

Mr. Martins said as long as she is satisfied with the staffing that is fine and his question ends but if she is not satisfied with her staffing... In order to have the groups she referenced he thought they needed another teacher in there.

Principal Carvalho said she thought she was fortunate because she has a paraprofessional in all the lower grades, interventionists that target each of the grade levels, coaches for ELA and math, and she has more in that respect than some of the other schools sitting at the table.

Mr. Martins said as long as she is satisfied with the staffing. If some of her goals are behind, she cannot use the excuse of staffing. He said she mentioned that she has a Student Support Coordinator and asked if it was in the budget.

Principal Carvalho responded no and explained it was from her grant. She has three grant positions through her Turnaround Grant.

Mr. Saunders said the Turnaround Grant wasn't on board until after November but all the other grant positions were listed in the budget. The Turnaround Grant is just for Watson.

Mr. Martins said if she is satisfied then he is satisfied; however, he expects results.

Mrs. Panchley said she was looking at the data and noticed she was really on track for ELA to reach PPI again; but not as much in math and she wondered if Principal Carvalho had more concerns about math.

Principal Carvalho said she does not this year. Last year they had some issues with teachers not always teaching math or not teaching the correct math and this year with the new teachers and the coach meeting with them weekly they have done quite well. On the last benchmark only two are not proficient in the entire 3rd grade. They are making gains in math this year; small gains but they are moving in the right direction. It is a new staff and new curriculum for them but she thinks they have the support. She meets with Dr. Roy every two weeks, as well as the Superintendent, and Ivone Medeiros and they help keep her focused and offer any support she needs. She also has the National Center for Time on Learning who did a walk-through in her building and it came out very nice. She just had the state in and did the classroom observations and interviews and focus groups. She received the classroom observations and they did quite well for their first time out and in three more weeks she will get the rest of the results.

Mrs. Panchley said after going to the school last year she felt so encouraged and positive about the direction of the school and the PPI from last year shows she was smiling for a reason and she hopes they continue to make them smile.

Principal Carvalho thanked her and said that was her goal.

Mrs. Panchley asked that Dr. Nicholas Bretz present for Tansey.

Principal Bretz presented:

- 311 students
- 181 low income (free/reduced lunch)
- They look at delivering a high quality of instruction for all students including their special needs population which is currently at 13%
- They are focused on their attendance rate as well as restructuring tier 1 support and the additional RTI
- They have had great strides this year and they have been deemed a level 2 school and are very pleased with that but also know they made that through their science area so they are really targeting what they need to do in regards to ELA and math
- Restructured their tier 1 support
- They are looking at how they can be creative with their schedule and the supports and structures they have in place. They have restructured the schedule for teachers so that teachers have common planning that is an hour versus the schedule from last year. Teachers are working together with coaches with other supports to dive into the curriculum, look at the data, create groups of students, and set targets for those students and what those goals are going to look like. In the classroom, students are grouped in stations and get support with the teacher.
- They allocated their laptops in the building so that most of the classrooms have at least five laptops so one of those stations is a blended learning station. Within K-2 they have students working in Headsprout as well as Dreambox and 3-5 beyond Dreambox they also are working with Read Theory.
- Beyond common planning they have also made sure that their RTI process/Core and more is at least five days a week for 30 minutes for all students. Even he pulls a group for RTI to push their students. Their coaches as well as their administrators are working with their students throughout the day to make sure every student is challenged and those groups have clear targets and they are progress monitoring to make sure they are meeting those targets.

- They make sure they have checkpoints in between those benchmarks to see if they are making progress or if they need to reset.
- RTI is a six week cycle and if it is not working then they may reset that if they know they may not meet that goal or if there are two students who already exceeded that target then they will move those students to other areas so they are not sitting in a support that they have already met the goal in.
- Their school, with the support of the Office of Instruction, has really created a culture of learning. Teachers and staff are happy to be there. He is outside every morning greeting students as well as staff coming in to set the tone for the day to be excited to be at school and excited to learn.
- Their paraprofessionals in their K-2 also run intervention as well for students as additional support.
- He has also looked at restructuring their reading interventionist and their technology teacher to make sure that their technology teacher is pushing in for intervention as well as making sure grades 4 and 5 have allocated time for STEM and dive into hands on projects as well.
- Because they are not an ELT school he wanted to be creative to make the school a community school. They reached out to families as they do all throughout the year for different programs and they started this year with a technology support for parents so that they can understand e-mails, etc. to help parents be proficient at home and to be able to support their students.
- They created different opportunities for students throughout the year. Beyond their day care they have their Tansey Academies K-5 offered two days a week from 3:00-4:00 which is more hands on learning both in math and early literacy as well as MCAS support and really diving into the reading comprehension pieces. They have their open computer lab four days a week for students to get into Dreambox, Headsprout, work on their PowerPoints as well as Read Theory. They have arts and crafts both in the fall and in the spring and that is staffed with students. He has worked very closely with Durfee High School and has juniors and seniors that are interested in elementary education and he has them come in. They help with early literacy as well. They also work closely with Greater Re-Creation to offer different supports.
- They have family nights throughout the year and teachers offer seminars that are specific to grade levels so that parents can understand the language that they use both in mathematics and ELA.
- In response to their chronic attendance and social-emotional learning they are seeing how they can support not just the students but also the families. Some of the supports they changed this year in regard to chronic attendance include having meetings with parents to work closely with them to see why it is hard for them to come to school. They had home visits this year to see how they have to navigate through the city to get to and from school as well as to see what it looks like once students get home to see if there is anything the school can do on their end. It has been a big reach. When they look at RTI it is about how they can help every student succeed where they are and to move forward.
- They are really proud of their efforts, have reset their culture on learning and are very focused on their tier one instruction as well as their RTI. They have a long way to go and he is very appreciative of working with the Office of Instruction. It is very good to problem solve and analyze things and see them from a different perspective and then talk about specific supports to move forward.

- He is proud of their progress and as a community their staff has worked through the growth mindset as well to see where they are and how they can move forward to make growth in the right direction.

Mr. Hart asked Dr. Bretz to walk him through what triggers a home visit and wondered if it was selective and how the home visit works out.

Principal Bretz explained that when they are looking at a home visit it is to see what some of the challenges are to get to the school if transportation is not an option or if there are other families that live nearby.

Mr. Hart asked if it would be strictly because they have bad attendance.

Principal Bretz said he doesn't like to call it bad attendance; when they talk about chronic attendance there is always a reason why they are not coming to school – maybe they are not feeling well or maybe it is a challenge to get to school from wherever they are located. Just thinking about how they can have a perspective of how they can get to school and also to see if there is support they can give beyond that school day once they get home. They look at free and viable options for them. They also want to change the culture and mindset when they interact with a principal, administration or teachers. Not all families have had the best experiences for themselves so if they are called to the principal's office they don't want it to have a negative connotation. They are working with the community to say it is a partnership and figure out how they can help each other to move the student forward.

Mr. Hart asked how many home visits they do a month.

Dr. Bretz said this past spring he had done a total of ten and it depends on the various needs.

Mr. Hart said it had come up earlier and he hadn't asked and was curious as to how they went.

Dr. Bretz said he had done it earlier in his previous role and he appreciates it and it helps him see the student and family beyond the school property.

Mr. Hart asked if one reading interventionist was enough. He knows they get help from the high school but wondered if it was good enough.

Dr. Bretz said he would be pleased to move forward with their current staffing and he thinks they have done a very creative job with their paraprofessionals to make sure they are trained to help and support the process.

Mr. Martins asked for insight regarding the CPI that is listed. He noted to Madame Superintendent that the Tansey School indicated certain CPI targets and asked if those were the goals projected to 2017.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown responded yes.

Mr. Martins said while it is written in there it can be ignored.

Superintendent responded they are not to be ignored; their goal is to meet the PPI and in order to meet PPI it is a combination of the goals that she sets up there. No one wants to ignore CPI or SGP.

Mr. Martins stated come 2017 everyone's goals will have to be at a point where the district achieves a goal. He's hoping that the Mayor will call the Department of Education for a definitive answer on what the goal is for 2017 because he said he would. At that point in time there are some consequences for not achieving those goals but everybody has to be involved in it. He does not like reading something that says they're going to achieve something and then fluff it off if it's not achieved. That is of a concern to him and he hopes it is not the case.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown asked why that would be the case.

Mr. Martins responded that the last few discussions lead him to believe that is the target to be achieved and every school has a different target depending on where they are. Watson has the greatest amount to achieve and he hopes that they do achieve that but he wants to give them the assistance to do so. Principal Carvalho said she is satisfied with her staffing so he can't do anymore.

Principal Carvalho responded that she thought they had been given a lot of additional staff last year.

Mr. Martins said that was fine and continued that Dr. Bretz indicated that their ELA is going to go to 89.1 from 77.9 which is a big job. He questioned if he was going to achieve it.

Principal Bretz said he was very hopeful. They restructured their tier one to make sure that students are receiving the best supports and challenges in the academic area of English language arts.

Mr. Martins said this is a budget hearing and in essence he agrees that there is only so much money but where they apply that money is a different story. He questioned where the best place to put the dollars was. He asked Dr. Bretz if he was satisfied with his staffing.

Dr. Bretz said he was and thought they needed to be creative with their staffing and how they allocate and structure that day. He asked to go back to the PPI and all the different indicators that go into it. He explained that it is not setting a goal that they don't think is achievable but it is also looking at populations of students and saying if originally they were in needs improvement can they decrease that population and move maybe 10% of that population from needs improvement to the next category. He thought they had to look at it as being realistic but also making sure it's a very challenging goal to be a rigorous. They have to set realistic targets and think from the stop sign to the next street but they also have to think about that and reflect on that and they look at how they have to really restructure and target that. It is his goal when it comes to meeting student learning and also meeting all of their targets and not just beyond the CPI but looking at SGP and making sure they are really supporting the students.

Mr. Martins and Dr. Bretz had further discussion regarding goals, growth, and progress.

Mr. Martins said as long as he was satisfied with his staffing and say they are going to achieve these goals then that is fine. Come 2017 that is what he is looking for from the district.

Superintendent Mayo-Brown nodded in agreement.

Mrs. Panchley said for the record that last year a lot of the elementary schools came for shifts in positions and there seemed to be more of a push to interventionists. It seemed like everyone was asking for the same positions and she thought a lot of that came from the work that went into last year's budget and the changes that were made almost at every school. It seems that principals are

finding it successful so far and they're finding that their staffing is pushing them in the direction they want to be going in and for the most part the data from last year shows that they are going in the right direction.

Mrs. Panchley asked that Principal Kyle Grandfield present for the Viveiros School.

Principal Grandfield thanked the Committee for their ongoing support to the Viveiros School and took a minute to complement their students for the effort that they are really providing every single day in school as well as the teachers and their dedication and effort that they are putting in every single day.

- They are an expanded learning time school
- 662 students this year
- 91.6% qualified for free and reduced lunch
- By the hard work of both the students and staff their annual PPI last year was 110 and as a result they were deemed a level one school. There have been a lot of things that went into that for them to reach that status.
- Implementation of the extended learning time
- They have been very creative as a school with the schedule creation that they have and they have not only focused on their fragile subgroup which is special education (just over 14% of their students) but they are also concentrating equally on their proficient and advanced students that they already have in the school to make sure that they are challenged on a daily basis so that they are not being overlooked.
- Within the ELT day they have the RTI groupings which are not interfering with their core instruction. They are teaching the core all day and on top of that they have been able to put in at least 30 minutes of intervention in K-2 every day of the week and grades 3-5 has RTI interventions for three days a week . Within those groupings they have the tier 3 pull out as well as the students who are in proficient and advanced doing novel studies and other things to continue to push them forward.
- On top of the RTI they have a walk to learn model where students are grouped homogeneously based upon the benchmark data. Students are moving to the next group as they master a standard or concept. They are constantly data driven and constantly analyzing the data and making sure that they are moving students accordingly to the next concept.
- They have enrichment opportunities within the ELT. They provide not only a focus on academics but are also a positive youth development piece. They have a wide range of enrichment opportunities ranging from traditional basketball, soccer, foosball type of enrichments as well as a mystery math where they are learning statistics but are also out hunting around the building to see who took the missing item. They have all different things at each grade level and have enrichment twice a week in the afternoons. With all of those things students are not only getting the core but also those additional services targeted to continue to move students in the right direction.
- As far as supporting teachers and enabling them to have the opportunity to analyze the data, part of the schedule enables each grade level to have 96 minutes of uninterrupted common planning time every single week. They follow the inquiry cycle where it is data driven and an action plan is created for the week and goes into the lesson planning. There is support from coaches at the common planning time to create those plans and then it is implemented all week. The following week they analyze what worked and what didn't how it can be tweaked, and how they are moving forward. The 96 minutes of planning time was implemented last year and they feel it is extremely beneficial so was put in place again this year.

- On Wednesdays students are dismissed at 2:35 PM which is an hour earlier than usual and they have professional development for roughly 90 minutes every single Wednesday. Their focus this year has been on the tier one instruction all about differentiation of the core and they often do differentiated PD because just like their students they have some teachers that have been teaching 10 to 15 years and other teachers who are in their first three years so they're making sure that their PD is really meeting the needs of all of the teachers so that they are prepared to go in and teach what's necessary for the students in their class.
- Part of what their ILT oversees is they give staff a climate survey twice a year and they also give a student climate survey which comes out with nice graphs that they can analyze. They see what's working and what looks to be a concern and from there the ILT does a game plan and moves forward with coming up with best practices. ILT also analyzes overall academic data within the building as well as the social-emotional data. They take the social-emotional data back to their weekly wellness team and the academic concerns go right back into grade specific common planning times each week so that it is addressed immediately.
- Their ILT it seems to be a little bit different than the other schools. They have a school wide focus that they try to build upon. Last year it was growth mindset for the staff the goal this year is about the student mindset in the classroom. All students are capable and the motivational tactics that teachers can use all about brain development and really promoting student overall achievement and success and how to get there.
- They have the same staff coming back so they have really been able to build upon that. He thought it was evident with the overall PPI that they had last year.
- There was a big emphasis this year on the parent engagement piece with administrators and teachers and what they can do not to just have school dances but really talk about the academic performance and what is happening in school and how parents can support it. They have had a wide range of different things that they have already implemented this year and things that they have set for the rest of the year. They have had enrichment showcases, multicultural night, grade level specific math nights, and different nights for ELA specific nights. They also have themed weekly coffee hours with topics such as MCAS. They have had family services come in and talk about parenting strategies. They promote these events through a weekly newsletter that goes home to all parents and one portion of it is one sentence on what each grade level is learning for that week and parents are able to see what that is so that they at least know what they can do to support students at home. They do reminders for the week as well as really highlighting the things that happen within the school so that they can come in and be a part of it. They have also done a literacy lunch with loved ones and every grade level has a specific Friday where they are able to come in. The ELA coaches run that and pass out books to the parents and they get to sit down and take the books home with them to keep. They get to bring in a lunch if they choose or they can get the provided lunch and sit with their child and bond.

Principal Grandfield said they would like to continue building upon the momentum that they have and are hoping to stay level budgeted for next school year.

Mrs. Panchley said in general after hearing all of the presentations she is really proud to be part of the Fall River Public Schools. She thinks everyone is working really hard in so many different areas. She does not understand all the idiosyncrasies with the education pieces but she can tell how hard people are working to bring parents in to help children and she is really proud to be a part of it and really proud of the school system and she thanked them all.

Mr. Hart said that was perfectly said and he likes what they're doing outside of the classroom and what everyone is talking about because he's just a big fan of other activities that are within the school

that create a second home for everybody – for the students, the teachers, the parents – the ultimate learning community.

Mr. Hart asked Principal Grandfield what teacher leaders do.

Principal Grandfield said the teacher leaders are the ones who facilitate and create the agendas for their weekly CPT. They have been in place for a couple of years now and their function this year has really been to build upon leadership qualities and sustainability of the grade levels teams.

Mr. Martins asked if teacher leaders have a class schedule.

Principal Grandfield said they are classroom teachers and have taken on the addition of leading their grade level specific team.

Mr. Martins said he is at a high rated school and assumed he was satisfied with his staff.

Principal Grandfield said he was.

Mr. Martins thanked him.

Mrs. Panchley thanked him as well and said she did not really have any questions as Mr. Hart already questioned the teacher leaders. She thanked everyone for coming.

There was no other business to discuss.

MOTION: Mr. Hart – Mrs. Panchley: To adjourn.

2 were in favor

1 absent (Mr. Costa)

Meeting adjourned at 7:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Administrative Assistant for
School Committee Services