

SC Budget Subcommittee Meeting Minutes, 2/9/18, Ripley Bldg. conf. rm. 3, 3pm  
Present: Bob Grom, Wally, Laurie Hunter, June Rzepczynski, John Flaherty, John Hickling,  
Dean Banfield.

Absent: Linda Miller, Melissa McMorrow

Wally chaired the meeting. Minutes for the 1/30/18 meeting were approved.

**SPED Costs** - A handout was provided comparing the DESE SPED reported numbers for CPS, CCRHS, and the comparison towns. Comparisons were made using % of total student population because many of the districts are much larger. Our % of school operating budget for SPED costs was in range with other districts, as was % of students in SPED. It's hard to make comparisons because the needs of each child differ, but in general we have more in partial inclusion and fewer in full inclusion. We also tend to have a few more, perhaps 5% on average, in a private placement. Laurie Hunter will look into whether that is because of student needs or a difference in instruction strategies, or something else.

**Transportation** - Still trying to find out exactly what the DESE "Transportation" category is supposed to include. Calculations using the DESE "Transportation" numbers and data from research into Transportation numbers from individual town budgets were compared and Transportation/pupil values were found to have no relation to each other. In an attempt to use DESE transportation category numbers to get a reasonable metric, a handout was provided showing results for "DESE Transportation cost per pupil/Town road miles" and "DESE Transportation cost per pupil/town square miles", without finding useful insights or correlations.

**OPEB** - The effort to calculate the contributions to Town OPEB for school employees, was not successful. The data is not available without significant effort for each individual town, and even then it isn't reliable. The PERAC data is good, and we are much better shape than most towns. A few are in better shape than we are.

**Tech** - Some new data has been found, and a summary will be presented at next meeting.

**Summary** - We probably have all the data we're going to get at this point. We've looked, and we seem to be in line with peer spending in most areas, and where not, it's because of requirements or philosophical choices we have made as a community. Areas where we have higher costs seems to be:

- CCHRS FTEs spread over more employees due to lower teaching load than other districts.
- Administration costs have fixed administration costs just to have a school district. In smaller districts, this fixed overhead is spread over fewer students. We're in the ballpark when looked at this way.
- We pay teachers well.
- We are taking a disciplined approach to the technical lifecycle, while other districts (Lincoln/Sudbury) haven't spent any since their high school was built. Our district believes we need to use technology as a cornerstone of a 21st century educational philosophy, while some schools decide not to use tech at all.
- Our transportation is in-house. One of the big reasons transportation has been so costly recently is because of having to rent the bus locations and construct the new parking location. Someone

will try to estimate bus costs for the next two years, now that the transition to the new facility is over. The schools are moving toward a model for orderly maintenance and bus replacement. We are also much further out than other schools who do METCO, and our program is K-12 instead of just upper grades.

By next meeting, someone will put together a rough draft of what we have data for (and its caveats), what we cannot get data for, and a narrative explaining reasons, choices, and benefits of current costs.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30p.

Next meeting will be Friday, March 2, 2018, 7:30am at Ripley.