

BOE 2021-22 Budget Review

BOF Q&A #1

2/18/2021

11. Transportation Services

- a. **When does the district begin to plan for a new transportation contract (since we are in the final year with All Star)?**

The 2021-22 school year will be the last year of the transportation contract with AST. RFP's are typically assembled in February/March and published in the paper towards the end of March. The bids are typically due back in the office for review towards the later part of April. The new contract will not have a budgetary impact until the 2022-23 year.

- b. **Has there been any recent effort to consolidate bus routes to eliminate a bus (es)?**

When our district moved from a three tier to a 2-tier system due to the school start time change, this prompted consolidation of routes and raised the passenger load. We did not add buses that year as this was a no-cost solution. At the onset, the biggest complaint was that there were more students on buses than normal.

That being said, regardless of parents driving or some high school students driving, there must be a seat for every student. There are many times when parents use transportation, even when their students have not been on for a period of time. Things change and we have an obligation to provide transportation for all students. That being said, we review routes each year to see if consolidation can occur, but with a 2-tier system, our ride times increased as we cover the same ground (and now have both Reed and elementary students riding together).

Further, since last March, we needed additional space on our buses due to COVID. While we are currently all in-person (with 75% in), there are still uncertainties about the future of the virus and our ability to continue some proximity between students. However, this is yet another reason, even if we could (and we cannot) we did not consolidate.

12. Local Tuition Rate

- a. **How is this amount determined?**

Tuition is determined by the formula: Tuition = Operations & Debt divided by enrollment

- b. **Are the local boards at liberty to set this amount or is it set by the state?**

The Board sets the tuition annually based on the prior year's costs. Tuition is determined annually by the BOE as set forth in the policy.

- c. **How many out of district students pay this rate?**

There are 6 students anticipated to pay tuition in the 2021-22 school year. However, this estimate is based on the number of current students. This number varies as students move into the district and new students may enroll. Tuition for children of full-time non-resident staff members pay an annual rate of 25% of the regular yearly tuition. Staff enrolling more than one child in the district in a school year pay a reduced rate of 15% of the regular yearly tuition for each additional child.

13. Lead Teachers

a. What is the function of a lead teacher?

The lead teacher supports the principal in many of the basic student and staff management responsibilities. These lead teachers also support staff development and work with other staff specialists in this area. However, the lead teacher, unlike the assistant principal, is not in the administrative union and is paid with an additional stipend vs. the cost of an administrator. There was one last Assistant Principal at Sandy Hook (now principal of HOM). When he moved into the Principal role, we did not fill the AP position, pulled that from the Admin Contract, and put in a lead teacher to mirror this role at all 4 elementary schools. Although the push at one point was to move lead teachers to be Assistant Principals, we felt strongly that the teacher-leader role was more appropriate at each of our elementary schools.

b. What is their extra pay amount?

Elementary lead teachers (4) receive an additional 10% of their salary, as well as an additional \$110 for up to 10 teachers they evaluate. This is similar to the Dept. Chairs at the high school.

c. Do they teach in a classroom or is their position administrative

As mentioned above, lead teachers do not teach. While their role is similar to an administrator, they are not in that bargaining unit and do not receive the same level of pay. This is the only support the building principal receives regarding student management and staff oversight since elementary principals do not have assistant principals.

14. Ice Hockey

a. Why is the pay to play fee \$250 for ice hockey and \$160 for all other sports?

Ice hockey requires a significant financial and time investment from both the district and families of students. The higher costs for this sport are largely due to ice rental and additional transportation needs.

A little over two years ago, the Board of Education interrupted a plan to phase-out pay-to-play fees in high school sports. At that time, hockey players paid booster club fees (~\$1600-2000 per player), the majority of which covered facility rental. Because hockey booster club fees were far greater than the pay-to-play fee structure, athletes did not pay a pay-to-play fee to the district. At that time, the district provided funding for coach salaries, officials, security, and transportation typically covered for other high school sports. Over the following year, a district committee conducted a review of sports and fees. The committee's recommendation was to institute a flat \$160 pay-to-play fee for all sports with hockey being \$250. In addition to the previously covered costs, the district would also pay for ice rental and training staff.

15. NHS Student Travel and Staff Mileage

a. Can you please provide a breakdown of this \$157,347 expense?

\$106,847 - student athletics

\$1,000 - band graduation

\$3,500 - TAP field trips

\$2,000 - math team competitions (student travel)

\$1,400 - world language immersion days

\$500 - tech ed competition

\$700 - science trips

\$1,300 - sociology exchange

\$800 - administrative staff travel

\$30,100 - music & theater travel (marching band, concert, winter percussion, guard, chorus festivals, state festival, western region festival & auditions)

\$9,200 - staff travel for all departments, such as culinary, business dept, math, english, greenery, science, athletics