

Minutes
Board of Education Special Meeting
June 15, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Board Members Present: James Chakulski, Jr., Linette Dooley, Chairman Christopher Lent, Michael Maziarz and Joseph Napolitano

Board Member Absent: David Crim

Others Present:

Finance Director Beverly Ciurylo and Superintendent Maria Geryk,

I. Call to Order

Chairman Lent called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Action Items (Discussion and Action)

The purpose of tonight's meeting is to discuss anticipated billing as well as proposed unbudgeted purchases in the current school year in response to COVID-19. Legal fees are more than originally anticipated due to personnel matters as well as negotiations for transportation and 403b. It was confirmed there are no other negotiations expected this year.

Discussing the impact of COVID-19, Superintendent Geryk said we have not received guidance from the state yet, which continues to make this a very difficult process to project what will be needed next year. Different scenarios are being considered by the state, some of which would have a major impact on staffing and transportation costs. In anticipation of needs, Superintendent Geryk is proposing these purchases.

Good practice is having an amplification system in the classrooms. The teacher would wear a lanyard around their neck, keeping their hands free for instruction. The amplification system is good for students with attentional needs, auditory processing disorder, or hearing impairment. This is a particularly timely discussion because it is very likely people will be wearing masks next year. Novus was asked to look into amplification system options and they recommend Juno.

Another recommended purchase is swivel robots for iPads to be mounted. These follow the teachers when they are teaching. A teacher may be in one room while students in another room may be receiving that teacher's instruction simultaneously. One per grade level is requested.

\$65,000 is needed to cover large classrooms for amplification and the swivel robots.

The second proposal is for replacement equipment. Novus would coordinate purchasing 20 replacement iPads. Novus will configure single sign-on, making this easier for students and their families. The iPads would be purchased using grant funds, so there is no additional cost to the district for the iPads. District funds would be used to purchase hard cases for the iPads, similar to what is on Chromebooks. Allowing students to utilize individual iPads with these hard carrier cases would eliminate sharing devices, which reduces the spread of germs.

Superintendent Geryk recommends replacing 20 teacher laptops, starting the process of replacing approximately 60 teacher laptops purchased in 2011. A scheduled cycle would be included in future budgets to replace these aging teacher laptops.

\$38,780 is requested for both the iPad carriers and the laptops.

The last recommended purchase is up to \$25,000 for furniture and other environmental supplies. This could be desks in place of tables in some areas/classrooms, or personal protective equipment such as sneeze guards in offices. Other PPE purchases would include foggers for disinfecting classrooms, gloves, disposable masks, N95s and disposable gowns for nurse's office, etc.

Up to \$25,000 is requested for furniture and supplies.

These purchases would total \$128,780. Superintendent Geryk recommends they be made prior to July 1, 2020 so it is part of the 2019-2020 school year budget. We currently have \$453,910 available. \$250,000 is factored into revenue returning to the town from the Board of Education. Funds would also be put into the non-lapsing account.

Superintendent Geryk said these are very strange times with many unknowns. She said that the state may be giving the district \$22,000 COVID funds, which will cover a small amount of what she feels is needed.

Superintendent Geryk responded to questions about how the Juno system works and how it will benefit students. Chairman Lent asked if carpeting would be needed for the Juno system, as it is for others. Superintendent Geryk said Novus did not indicate there would be concerns about the level of sound caused by chairs or tables being moved. Chairman Lent asked if technology specialists were included when compiling these recommendations. Superintendent Geryk stated Ryan D, Greg B and others were integral to this process. She confirmed training will be implemented.

Chairman Lent asked if the cost for laptops have taken into account software licenses. Yes, that is part of the cost and we would be able to maintain the old computers as spares. Ms. Dooley asked about a replacement schedule for computers. One was not previously in place, but is part of Superintendent Geryk's plan going forward.

Discussion about some of the different scenarios the state is considering, as well as decisions other states have already made, ensued. Mr. Napolitano asked if Superintendent Geryk has spoken with other districts to see how they are handling the situation. She responded yes, and they are in the same place we are. We will develop some plans regionally, such as transportation we share. She said we are in good shape in terms of curriculum materials. Consensus from all members present was in agreement with proposals made by Superintendent Geryk.

Ms. Dooley MOVED and Mr. Maziarz SECONDED to spend up to \$65,000 on sound amplification systems and swivel tracking robots.

Discussion:

Ms. Dooley asked to confirm funds must be committed by the end of June to be this year's funds. Superintendent Geryk confirmed this.

MOTION CARRIES 5:0

Mr. Maziarz MOVED and Mr. Chakulski, Jr. SECONDED to spend up to \$38,780 in combination of upgraded iPad carrier cases to support one-on-one student needs as well as 20 teacher laptops to begin the replacement cycle.

Discussion:

Mr. Lent said an inventory had been done recently. Would this be shared so we may be able to move forward later. Superintendent Geryk said her goal is to have a replacement cycle for transparency. Novus is creating that cycle and she would be happy to provide it when completed.

MOTION CARRIES 5:0

Mr. Napolitano MOVED and Mr. Maziarz SECONDED to spend up to \$25,000 for furniture and environmental modifications.

MOTION CARRIES 5:0

Superintendent Geryk thanked the Board and said she will provide updates on what is purchased.

IV. Adjournment

Mr. Maziarz MOVED and Mr. Chakulski, Jr. SECONDED to adjourn.

MOTION CARRIES 5:0

The Board adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christopher Lent, Chairman