

Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District

Budget Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

January 27, 2022

Members in Attendance:

Gerald Finn of Millville
Julie Mitchell of Sutton
Chester Hanratty of Millbury
Barbara Auger, District Treasurer

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
Anthony Steele, Asst. Superintendent-Principal
Lorna Mangano, Business Manager
Nicole St. Germain, Assistant Business Manager

Members Excused:

Joseph Hall of Bellingham

Guests in Attendance:

Yvette Martin, Director of Student Services
Edward Evans, Academic Curriculum Coordinator
Michele Denise, Vocational Coordinator

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 4:42 p.m. by Ms. Mitchell in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

Approval of minutes from prior meeting

Ms. Mitchell asked members to review minutes from the January 13, 2022 meeting.

Motion: On a motion moved by Mr. Hanratty seconded by Ms. Mangano it was unanimously voted to accept and approve the Budget Subcommittee meeting minutes of January 13, 2022, as written.

Agenda items

Ms. Mangano opened the meeting with a review of the District Wide/Principal/Coordinator/Student Services budget, which had an overall decrease of \$4,935 or 1.88% from the prior year budget. The main drivers of the decrease related to the following items:

- (\$3.8K) *Student Services Contract Svc:* Viewbook Professional Photography only needed every 2 years
- (\$2.3K) *DW Prof. Dev. Registration:* Reconfiguration of Project Lead The Way [PLTW] trainings, offset by addition of new conferences
- (\$0.2K) *DW Prof. Dev. Other Expense:* Removed Business Tech's DECA membership, as vocational program is closing at end of FY22
- (\$0.2K) *Student Services S&M Non Instructional:* Decreased based on prior year trends
- \$0.7K *Coord Assoc Dues/Subscriptions:* New subscription to District Administration, offset by some minor price decreases on other memberships
- \$0.8K *DW School Contract Services:* Increased based on prior year trends for copy center and printer usage/click charges

Next for review was the Guidance and Special Education budget, presented by Ms. Martin, which had an overall increase of \$21,669 or 11.32% from the prior year budget. The notable changes over prior year budget were as follows:

- \$28.0K *SPED IEP Contract Services:* Addition of Behavioral Analyst based on student need. Increased services for speech, language, OT, PT, assistive technology, hearing, vision, and mobility based on need. Offset by reduction of job coaching that will be grant funded.
- (\$6.3K) *SPED Contract Services:* Decrease in legal fees based on prior trends, and removed one-time cost for DESE Tiered Focus monitoring from prior year

Mr. Evans began the review of the Academic department budgets which reflected an overall increase of \$95,713 or (72.96%) from the prior year budget. The notable changes were as follows:

- \$25.9K Social Studies Textbooks: World History textbooks with 6 year on-line subscription
- \$15.1K Science Instr. Equip. <\$5K: Increase mainly driven by PLTW Biomedical consumables that were grant funded in prior years, as well as new requests for digital microscope cameras and model kits, and an increased cost of lab specimens, offset by the removal of one-time cost for new sinks and cabinet procured in prior year.
- \$14.0K Math Textbooks: Pre-calculus on-line access for textbooks procured in prior year
- \$ 9.3K Science Textbooks: Increase mainly driven by AP Physics textbooks
- \$ 6.0K Humanities Instr. Equip. <\$5K: Request for CAD drafting table, pottery drying cabinet and pottery drying rack
- \$ 5.4K Foreign Language Textbooks: Final purchase in 4 year plan to replace textbooks
- \$ 5.0K Math S&M: Increase mainly due to set of 30 rechargeable calculators that are needed every other year and replacement batteries
- \$ 4.8K English Textbooks: Addition of “Born a Crime” to appeal to Grade 12 interest
- \$ 3.2K Career Enrich. Other Instr. Materials: New offering for AP Psychology, and a subscription to The Economist Magazine
- \$ 2.7K Humanities Other Instr. Materials: Request for musical instruments and storage boxes
- \$ 2.6K Academic Field Trip: Addition of Science and Social Studies field trips
- \$ 1.4K Social Studies Instr. Equip. <\$5K: Replacement of staff chairs within department
- \$ 0.8K Academic Supplies: Increase in price for bubble sheets used for scoring tests district wide
- \$ 0.5K Foreign Language S&M: Day of the Dead supplies that were previously grant funded
- (\$1.0K) ELL Other Instr. Contract Services: Removed one-time Tiered Focus Monitoring costs from prior year

A considerable discussion ensued regarding the rechargeable graphing calculators for Math. Currently, the District is procuring a new set of 30 calculators every other year, and replacement batteries every year. As the District aims to go green with environmental initiatives, an opportunity has been presented to purchase graphing calculators that come with a charging station and would no longer require replacement batteries, which would in turn, reduce waste and overall costs going forward. Mr. Finn raised a question about the lifespan of the rechargeable calculators versus the lifespan of the rechargeable batteries. Mr. Evans will consider the lifespan of the new calculators prior to the District pursuing potential grant funding to off-set the one-time cost of procuring the calculators that come with the charging station.

Next, Ms. Denise presented the Vocational department budgets. Overall, the budget request reflected an increase of \$130,198 or 27.23% from the prior year budget. The significant changes were as follows:

- \$65.5K Instructional Equipment <\$5K: Represents “must haves” from the supplemental handout
- \$46.3K Supplies & Materials: Increased costs, partnered with increased enrollment, as well as the addition of diesel curriculum (Auto Tech), limited use of productivity funds due to COVID (Culinary), and offset by a reduction of prior year budget due to shop closure (Business Tech)
- \$13.4K Maintenance of Shop Equipment: Increase mainly driven by service for spray booths (Auto Body), new jointer bearings (Construction Tech), METI-man maintenance no longer being shared with PN program (Health services), micropipette calibration and microscope maintenance (Biotechnology)
- \$ 6.9K Vocational Shop Repairs: Increase mainly driven by alignment rack bottle jack repair (Auto Tech), welder equipment increase (Machine Tech), and Vex batteries (Engineering)
- \$ 0.3K Other Instructional Materials: Increase driven by request for kits to learn the science of cosmetology and simulations for state board preparation; offset by a minor reduction of a few other shops based on prior year trends
- \$ 0.2K Textbooks: Rotation of new textbook purchases based on predetermined schedule for each shop
- (\$ 0.7K) General Vocational Supplies: Decrease in usage of specialty paper in Copy Center, offset by increase in cost of exploratory T-shirts
- (\$ 2.0K) Vocational Contract Services: Removed NATEF Program Review/Certification cost from prior year, required every 5 years

During the review, Ms. Denise turned the committee’s attention to supplemental handouts. The handouts itemized equipment needs in more detail for both FY23 operational budget request “Must Have’s” and FY23 Perkins grant requests. Ms. Denise indicated the advisory committees have approved all equipment requests on both handouts and further elaborated that the equipment needs represent what is being used in business and industry. It was noted that the FY23 Perkins grant request for equipment was a first pass, as the total grant amount has not yet been finalized.

Ms. Denise then directed the committee’s attention to the supplemental handout that showed vocational enrollment trends by shop. Ms. Denise further articulated that enrollment is trending as expected and reminded the committee that Drafting will be phased-out and will eventually fully merge with Engineering. The last year to increase enrollment for Engineering is FY23, as the maximum of 32 seats will be filled. She also noted that Biotechnology’s first year is FY22, while Business Technology’s last year is FY22.

Moving on, Ms. Denise addressed the follow-up item from a prior meeting, presenting a list of vocational certification opportunities and/or trade hours earned towards licensure, by shop.

Next, Ms. Mangano stated the budget as presented represented an overall increase of \$1.9M or 7.22%, which reflects first-pass Department budget requests. These requests will be evaluated further and Administrative recommendations will be developed to begin balancing the budget to anticipated revenues.

In closing, Dr. Fitzpatrick discussed two articles that he wanted to bring to the committee’s attention. The first was regarding Lt. Governor Polito’s forecasted \$31M increase in unrestricted aid. The second was regarding expected tax revenue growth for FY23 to increase by 2.7%.

The next scheduled meeting is set for Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.

Areas for follow-up:

Mr. Finn’s request for vocational certification opportunities Completed

Adjournment

Motion: to adjourn made by Mr. Finn at 7:00 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Hanratty voted and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by,
Nicole St. Germain, Recording Secretary