

# MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE

Wednesday, July 19, 2017

Professional Development Room

Kennett Middle School, Conway, NH

Chairman Jim LeFebvre called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm. The following members were present: David Jensen, Richard Klement, Mike Fougere, Bill Marvel, Ted Sares, Bob Drinkhall, Doug Swett, Steve Steiner (left at 6:50 pm), Mike Tetreault, John Edgerton, Joe Mosca, Terry McCarthy, and Mary Seavey. Also present: Lisa Towle, recording secretary

Excused: Pat Swett and Peter Donohoe

Absent: Patrick Kittle

David Jensen lead those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**John Edgerton moved, seconded by Bill Marvel to accept the minutes of June 21, 2017.**

Discussion of minutes: Ted Sares noted on the bottom of page 4 there was a typo with a duplication of “anyone wanting to do.”

**In favor: 7; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 4. Motion carried.**

## REPORT OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN:

Mary Seavey reported that there is a meeting next Monday night for the study group for the rec center.

Chairman LeFebvre reported that he walked through the rec center with Mr. Eastman and had sent out an email to all board members regarding the progress. He reports that it is an interesting process to take a look at and encourages all members to do that. He also could set up a meeting for the group in September, similar to what is being done with Conway El. If anyone is interested, please let him know and he will get it set up.

## REPORT FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:

Mr. Mosca reported that on Monday night there is a School Board meeting and they will be discussing moving the 6<sup>th</sup> grade into the middle school and they will probably vote one way or the other on Monday evening. That is something that is probably important to this board. Chairman LeFebvre agreed and encouraged everyone to make that meeting at 6:30 PM on the 24<sup>th</sup> here as members of the public.

## TOWN BUDGET REVIEW:

Lilli Gilligan, Finance Director for the Town of Conway reported that at this stage the town has collected 51% of the anticipated non-tax revenues. The non-tax revenues of note, that look like they will be tracking to exceed how much we had originally budgeted are; motor vehicle registrations, that is we have collected 60% of what we anticipated, the garage repairs reimbursement will have already exceeded what we originally put in, which are primarily for repairs we have been doing for the fire department in Center Conway, and the highway income has exceeded and that includes the payment for maintenance of Eagles Way, the maintenance of the Police Department parking lot which is half paid by the court house, and the other portion is for the rebuild of Eagles Way.

Ted Sares asked if that was 60% over budget on motor vehicle registrations? Ms. Gilligan answered that we are at 60% of the budget, there should be 44% left to collect and right now there is only 40% left, so they are 4% ahead in revenue collection right now.

Lilli reported that the code that was added last year of patriotic events, donations and fees, \$3,120 were collected from vendor booth registrations for any vendors that were up there as well as pass the bucket donation that was conducted by the parks and rec staff of all attendees in Schuler Park. Those are the highlights.

Chairman LeFebvre inquired about the pistol permits, \$2,000, isn't the fact that pistol permits are basically obsolete now, given state law. Ms. Gilligan answered that they are obsolete, but some people do like to have the pistol permit and are still pulling them. They are not required by law anymore. Mr. Marvel noted that the pistol permits are necessary for interstate travel.

Dick Klement inquired about the \$1,208 under Welfare, was that received from monies dispersed last year or this year? Ms. Gilligan answered that she does not know but could look it up in regard to what the payments are for. Mr. Klement noted that we are obligating \$31,000 and I would like an understand of how much we are getting back versus how much we are loaning to people. Mr. Holmes responded that he has conversations often with BJ Parker the welfare office and he believes that she has told him over the course of the year that some of this money is old money, more than a year ago. He believes that at least one case, she wasn't expecting it. It could come in anytime, I think this is what we have received this year, but it could have been dispersed in any given year.

Lilli Gilligan presented the expenditure report on the general fund budget through expenditures that will be paid this Thursday, noting that at this stage, they are left with 44.2% to go for the year. On the last page of the report, you can see they are at 42.6, so we are tracking over right now as we are budgeted, but I will make a presentation to show you how lumpy spending for our budget is the reason. You will never have the same amount of money spent on any given day throughout the course of the year from the municipal budget. The items that have been fully paid are; all of the insurance products for property liability, car insurance, unemployment, workers compensation. We are charged less money for paying at the beginning of the year, so the health insurance products and dental insurance products, where part of that money comes from the employee and part of it comes from the employer, are paid monthly. The other insurance products have been fully paid for the year. Any membership dues for the NH Municipal Association, North Country Council, and any affinity groups for assessors or planners, things like that are all paid at the beginning of the year, because it is for the year. The software maintenance agreement on all of the databases have been paid. There are no more elections, so that budget is fully spent. Memorial Day is completed, Fourth of July is completed, the audit has been fully paid, and incentives for the police department and sick buy out have already been paid in full. The library bond and its interest are fully paid. Ambulance contracts in the general fund budget are fully paid, because the rest of the payments for ambulance coverage in town will be coming out of the warrant articles, because of the new contracts. Non-precinct fire agreement is 2/3 paid, because the contract calls for payment in June, July, and October, so that is a large spending piece out of the general fund budget that is 2/3 spent at this stage. Welfare only has 32% left in its budget, so I do believe that we will be coming close to spending this full budget at the end of this year. I don't anticipate that there will be significant monies put towards fund balance.

Ted Sares asked if any of these contracts or agreements have an impact on the default budget? Ms. Gilligan answered that all contracts are covered in the default budget. Mr. Sares asked even the utility bill ones? Ms. Gilligan responded that is not a contract, it is a contracted rate, but it is not a contracted expense in terms of we don't know how many kilowatts you are going to use, you know what your rates is going to be. Mr. Sares noted that it is considered a contract for the school budget and that we should look at that, because it has an impact on the default budget.

Dick Klement inquired about the highway department, you are 99% spent on highway drainage, 13% left in highway pavement, bridge maintenance is overspent by 350%, and you are digging up Middle Street and putting in that culvert and repave it. How much are you figure we are going to overrun that total highway area. Ms. Gilligan answered, the culvert on Brownfield Road and the Middle Street projects are both projects out of the capital reserve fund for infrastructure for this year. The spending you see here are for projects that are covered under the general highway maintenance as opposed to infrastructure and those are almost fully completed in terms of paying invoices for completed work.

Ted Sares asked if there is any item that should be red lined or yellow mark through, any early warnings that are required? Ms. Gilligan noted that welfare

right now is tracking to overspend. Mr. Sares asked how much are we talking? Ms. Gilligan answered that there is 32% left. In the general assistance line on page 6 of the expenditure report there is \$32,453 that has been spent and \$15,546 that is left in the \$48,000 budget. If somebody comes in and needs welfare assistance and we have been fully spent, we will still provide welfare assistance. Mr. Holmes noted that again in his conversations with Ms. Parker, the biggest overspending line in her budget is housing. We are seeing a lot of people who are having trouble finding a place to live and coming in homeless. I think we all know that a lot of our existing housing that used to be used for low-income people is being eaten up by transient rentals and people are having a really hard time finding a place to live and that is the number one reason the budget is overspent as much as it is. There is some concern going forward with things like whether a federal budget will cut fuel assistance monies and so forth.

The Budget Committee thanked Mr. Sires for his service as Town Manager and wished him well in his retirement.

#### SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW:

Kadie Wilson, Assistant Superintendent and Pamela Stimpson, Director of Special Services presented the school budget. A budget summary to date (July 14, 2017) was presented to the committee for review. Ms. Wilson pointed out the last number on the back page, being the fund balance of \$1,165,542.89. There are \$340,000 in encumbrances right now and those are to cover outstanding bills that have not yet come in. There is potential that some of that money could be added to that line, however until those final bills come in we won't know the exact number.

Chairman LeFebvre asked when does that usually happen? Ms. Wilson stated that they typically vote on whether they are going to retain the 2.5% that they are allowed to retain as a school board in early fall and at that point is when they would know, so sometime in the early fall.

Ms. Wilson continued that for perspective that is not on the report, they had budgeted \$775,000 fund balance, so this is more than what they had budgeted, which is good news. Ms. Stimpson noted additionally they are seeking all bills from all vendors so they can close the books out for all of the line items and they are aiming for a September deadline. Ms. Wilson noted that another number that is not reflected in the report is that Jim Hill and Kevin Richard worked very hard since last November to make reductions to health insurance costs. As a result of their work, some of the union and staff, went out to bid for health insurance. The final savings numbers are not in yet, because that number is an ongoing change based on who gets hired, who leaves, changes in families and what not, but they it is looking like at least a \$250,000 savings for Conway.

Ted Sares asked what prompted them to do that? Ms. Wilson answered they wanted to make sure that we keep health insurance. Mr. Sares indicated he was aware of that, as everybody does, but something must have triggered it, because

the local newspaper has been asking them to do that for years. Ms. Wilson stated that she is not going to speak for them, she knows that Jim over the years has kept track of this. They also have a health insurance committee now. Mr. Sares asked that the discussion be tabled until Mr. Richard returns.

Chairman LeFebvre asked for clarity on which unions have not agreed to participate in this process? Ms. Wilson answered last year it was CEA and CESP and they are working with them right now. Chairman LeFebvre asked how that looks, is it positive. Ms. Wilson stated she felt it was positive, it is early in conversations and it is an ad hoc committee of the Conway School Board that is working with those unions right now. The AFSCME as well as SAU admin, Jackson, and Bartlett all went out to bid. Chairman LeFebvre asked how it is going with them at this point from your perspective. Mr. Mosca answered as a member of the committee I think it is going relatively well, everybody is on board, we are seeking input from three (3) different providers that are available to us, we are waiting for information to come in and we can go from there. Everybody is on board with trying to save money for themselves and the town. Mr. LeFebvre asked this group of 85, which is the smaller unions and if the other two (2) unions agree to come on board, would you anticipate. Ms. Wilson noted that you can't anticipate, even if it went out to bid, it doesn't mean that we would save money. Mr. Sares asked didn't the smallest unions? Ms. Wilson stated the way it worked, yes it did, because it has to do with your rating.

Ms. Wilson stated that unless there are specific questions, most lines are pretty self explanatory. On page one, trying to anticipate questions, the 2210, the very last line, there is \$39,000 left that is mostly due to unexpended courser reimbursements for different groups. On page two, third from the bottom where it talks about operation, maintenance of grounds, \$37,000, that's the Kennett Road, which would come from the trust fund.

Chairman LeFebvre noted last year there were several questions about the school lunch program. Ms. Wilson commented that the school lunch program is going to be an estimated deficit for last year of \$175,000. \$128, 366 was budgeted, so there is a deficit of \$46,000 over what was budgeted. Chairman LeFebvre asked if there was any feedback or additional information that could be shared? Ms. Wilson stated not at this time.

Bill Marvel asked 2113, family liaison, is there a particular reason it is over \$300,000? Ms. Wilson noted that it is over \$34,000. Mr. Marvel clarified he meant the total of \$309,000. Ms. Wilson stated it has to do with the people who were hired for the positions, being salary and benefits. Mr. Marvel commented that people who were hired are getting more than expected. Ms. Wilson stated that it depends on their families and we can't discuss benefits for individuals. Chairman LeFebvre interjected that it the total compensation is higher than you anticipated. Ms. Wilson responded that the total compensation is higher than what was budgeted.

Mr. Marvel noted he did not see transportation provided for project succeed, is that something that was just authorized this year, it seems not to have been expended before, it is line 2721 on top of page 3. Ms. Wilson noted that she is not confident enough to answer right now, I can get you that answer.

Dick Klement noted going back to the family liaison, how many employees are in this category? Ms. Wilson answered three (3) this year. Mr. Klement commented there are three (3) employees in this category with a gross salary of \$309,000. Ms. Wilson noted salary and benefits. Chairman LeFebvre clarified that it is total compensation not just the salaries.

Ted Sares asked if project succeed is a line item. Ms. Wilson answered that project succeed has a grant and then there is also a line that came out of a warrant article. Mr. Sares pointed out that this is a classic case, not that he is against it, although he was years ago, of something that starts as a grant and sooner or later as I always said, you shouldn't look at grants in and of themselves, rather look at them as a future line item. Here is a classic case of the grant involving a line item. When you see something that is a grant, somebody writes a grant, it is a one-time deal, they have a way of staying around. Keep that in mind as people come up with grants not this one but other ones.

Ted Sares noted his observation is on early retirement, he is led to believe, that they double tiered that now. In other words, certain people when they are hired now will have a different kind of early retirement? Mr. Mosca answered right. Mr. Sares stated that is good because again there is a catch 22 with early retirement, you always complain about turn over, early retirement feeds into turn over. We need to analyze early retirement and exactly what good it does.

Dick Klement commented that there was discussion earlier about project succeed transportation, I believe that is reimbursed from the grant to this, so it is not truly a deficit for this report. Ms. Wilson stated I believe you are right but I just wanted to double check, as I am not 100% sure.

Ted Sares asked if there are one or two items that you would red line as early warnings? Ms. Wilson stated right now, none. We have over \$1 million at this point in the fund balance, so I am feeling pretty confident.

Chairman LeFebvre noted that earlier commentary stated you had \$1,100,000 +/- fund balance and \$300,000 +/- outstanding bills, which leaves us with probable plus or minus \$800,000. Ms. Wilson clarified that the \$1.1 million would be the minimum that they have in fund. There is \$340,000 encumbered right now to pay outstanding bills and not all that is likely to be used, so that would be added to the \$1.1 million. Then the School Board can vote to retain up to 2.5% based on the assessed value and that amount for next year would be \$429,699, that they could chose to retain out of that. The rest would be turned back to the town. Mr. Klement inquired about the previous money that was in

that 2.5%, does that come out or does this keep multiplying. Mr. Mosca stated no, it is 2.5% per year of the fund balance goes back, they retain the current year, per statute.

#### STATE OF SCHOOL PRESENTATION (EGGS AND ISSUES):

Chairman LeFebvre noted that he thought this presentation would be useful so the members could get a feel for how the school sees where they are at currently.

*[questions are being held until the end]*

Kadie Wilson, Assistant Superintendent and Pam Stimpson, Director of Special Services presented the EGGS and Issues to the Budget Committee.

Ms. Wilson noted that back in April Kevin and herself were asked to do a presentation for the economic EGGS and Issues, so we will go through this. It has been slightly updated based on some numbers that had been added at the end of the school year. Ms. Stimpson began the power point presentation stating the purpose is to develop an understanding of today's SAU9 students and staff, be aware of changes to instructional practices in our schools, develop understanding of shifts in education at the state and national levels and their impact on our schools, and begin to answer the question, "How can we work together to reach our vision of realizing the full potential of each and every student?"

One of the things they have been looking at are the enrollment trends. What is interesting is over the years, they have seen a decline overall of about 5% of the student enrollment. An interesting piece of this is that in 2013-14, in that school year, you will see that the elementary schools have plateaued out. A few of the schools are starting to see an increase in enrollment. I think we are safe to say we are in a plateau now and we are not constantly declining like they were in 2009 2010 2011, when they were having that conversation.

If you take a look, we really have a diverse community right now. The biggest issue we are seeing that we are concerned about is our turn over in the school population and you will see on the next slide we are looking at, numbers of students who stayed with us through their education and stay in one school throughout their career. The good news is we have almost 72% of our students with AP exam scores of 3 or higher. We have 36% of our students who are eligible for free and reduced lunches, Eagle Academy graduate number, that number has been updated this year with 30 that have just graduated this school year. So, overall, we are meeting the needs of the very diverse community of students and learners.

This chart shows you what I was just talking about, for our percentage of students at each of our elementary schools over SAU 9, the students completing grades 1-6 at the same school, that means started at first grade and they are leaving and going to middle school having stayed at the same school, started to increase slightly over the past two (2)

years in all of our schools. Except you will see Jackson Grammar school has a had a slight shift of a decline. We are thinking that maybe focused on the consistency in the curriculum across schools and with the schools across classrooms. We are constantly addressing the social emotional learning and growth of students. Additionally, I personally feel that our increase in commitment in Conway to put the family liaison positions in has made a huge difference in the family's engagement and commitment to their elementary schools.

Our Conway teachers are demonstrating more of a commitment and staying with us. You will see over the years our numbers of hires have decreased, because less staff are moving on. Also, our new hires are staying with us. We think a piece of that is the board and the Budget Committee and the community's commitment to having the conversation about the 3-year teacher contract, the commitment to our strategic plan development and our commitment to education across the board in our community.

Ms. Wilson stated one of the things they pay close attention to is achievement. One of the tools that is used to measure literacy achievement in our school is the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). I know the tool you see up there is called F&P, which is the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment. We try to leave you with at least 3 data points for each student. Collecting data on students over time is really challenging, one of the issues we have is, when you look at these numbers, they are not as high as we would like them to be, but when we are looking at this group of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade then in 4<sup>th</sup> grade we are seeing increases in that performance. It is important to be able to look at the same group, however, as Pam mentioned before having students stay in our schools is a challenge.

So, not only do we have a lot of students that don't start 1<sup>st</sup> grade and finish 6<sup>th</sup> grade in the same school, we have a lot of students that turn over during the school year. For example; at Kennett Middle School last year, of the students who started on the first day of school 14% of them were not the same students at the end of the year. That number was about 12% for Pine Tree, it was 27% for Conway El, and 28% for John Fuller last year. That is almost 1 in every 3 that is a different child than the child that started at the beginning of the school year, which does make keeping track of children and their achievement really challenging. We are looking to find better ways to disaggregate this data so that I can say these are the students that started at the year and stayed with us for 3-years and that's how they are doing as compared to those that are moving more frequently. We don't have the structures to do that yet, it is something I am working to build.

The same thing with math again, this is their SBAC, which is one point in time a computerized test that students sit and take for multiple hours and then get their results. It is data that we use at each individual school and data that we use in our curriculum as well. One thing that we are seeing some improvement in is our SAT scores. We are not able to look at SAT scores prior to 2016, the reason being that before 2016, not everyone had to take the SAT. In 2016, the State made the decision to use the



SAT instead of SBAC as the measure for 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Therefore, all of the juniors had to take it across the State. Prior to that only some juniors across the State took it so you weren't able to compare knowing how many took it from each school district. This year's scores, if you take a look at Kennett's scores they were above both the national and state average in literacy, at state average and above the national average in math, and again overall scores were above both the state and national average.

This is what makes taking a look at student achievement really challenging. They have to look at how students are doing compared to standards, but we also have to look at how they are doing in comparison to themselves. Not every child comes in with the same amount of skills. A child that comes into a classroom, not having skills and below where they need to be, we need to make sure that those children are growing at a rate. They may not reach the same end point at the same time, but we want to make sure they are making at least a year's worth of progress every year. It is finding that intersection of how do you measure the achievement of the standard on top of the progress they are making individually.

Ms. Stimpson notes this leads us to our friend Yogi Berra, "The future ain't what it used to be." Things are really changing, the concept of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner, some will say we are still in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in our schools. So, our focus as an admin team and with each other with our faculty, is to move us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There was an article in the NY Times in 2014, talking about how do you get a job at Google and when you take a look now at the jobs that some of our students are leaving high school and getting and leaving college and getting, we had never even imagined the careers they are in and the jobs they did, it is just incredible to talk to these young people.

At Google, what they are looking for, and other businesses, they are not looking for a specific skill. They are looking for ones learning ability, how they can take on new tasks and learn new skills, they are looking at their leadership ability, how we respond to difficult issues with a team, do we jump in and get dirty with it and solve problems or do we walk away and let someone else do it. Looking at humility and ownership, do we take responsibility and learn from our failure. Collaboration, our adaptability, our we able and our students able to say this my opinion and then hear a differing opinion, learn from that and either shift their opinion or use the new information to continue their leadership and finally, expertise, what are the specific areas of expertise someone comes to the able with. That's at the bottom of what Google and other companies are looking at. You can really take this outside of technology and move it to the medical field or educational field and really move it along many different businesses.

The collaborative for academic, social and emotional learning has identified for us that we have 11% increase in achievement for students who have had some kind of social emotional learning programming in their early years. When you take a look at that what we are finding more and more often is students are entering our schools without school readiness skills and also without the ability to express themselves, to identify their feelings, and to be able participate positively on a consistent basis in the classroom. So,

focusing the learning of who they are as a person as well as their academic learning is a key goal of ours as we continue to support children so they can learn in the classroom. Additionally, Kevin had left a note, in 2015 a national study was published in the American Journal of Public Health, they found that statistically significant associations arose between social emotional skill development in kindergarten had key outcomes for young adults years later in education, employment, criminal activities, substance abuse and mental health issues. This study really highlights the importance of early childhood education, I think our health and wellness committee work that we are doing at the school district level and many other focuses that we have, while we are also focusing on the academic achievement of our students.

Ms. Wilson noted given that we have different needs of our students in terms of what they need in order to achieve once they leave our schools, different needs of the students who are coming into our schools, it is imperative that we take a look at the way we do school and continue to change and adapt it so that it meets the needs of all those students. That concept of realizing the full potential of each and every student requires us to think differently about how we present education.

You are probably going to hear the term competency based education more often. When we are talking about the competency based education, we are talking about transforming what we are doing in order to help all children achieve. It means that we have very clearly defined competency standards of what we want all students to know and be able to do when they leave our schools. That students have an opportunity to express their opinion, their voice and choice about learning. It doesn't mean a free for all or whatever they want to do, but that they have a say in how they show what they know, that they have different opportunities to demonstrate what their knowledge is and to earn credit. That we are mindful that we are dealing with those social emotional skills. That we are providing opportunities for personalization, that we are separating out work habits, so when we are reporting achievement we are actually able to report, you can add 2+2 or you can't.

Whether or not you do your homework is important but it is separate from whether or not you have the skill. That we are using assessment to communicate what it is that students can do and that students have a part in that the curriculum is relevant. We don't move on just because we are at the end of 180 days, we move on for students when they are ready, whether that is before or after that. The concept of any time any place any pace learning. Just because you are 6 years old doesn't mean every 6-year-old wears the same shoe size. So why would we then expect them all to learn the exact same skills at the exact same time. Another huge part of this comes down to the grading. Grading is not just about learning a skill it is about being able to apply it and we want to make sure those grades reflect actual learning.

Kevin's story about this, if you become a runner and you start running and your first few times out there you are running a 15-min mile then you practice and you run, and you run and you run and you get to a 10-min mile and you get to an 8-min mile. When it

comes time for that race, do you take the average of all of your times of all your practice and that is your pace or do you get to run the race at whatever pace you accomplished at that time. I think that is important, we don't punish children because they had attempts at learning and they have gotten better.

How we get at that really comes down to the idea of competencies and making sure that our assessment is meaningful, that students learning is judged by what they are able to demonstrate and the outcomes they have, not just the input because they sat in the seat for a certain amount of time. This is directly tied to our strategic plan, especially focus area number 2, where we are taking a look at making sure all children, continuously striving to improve each students level of achievement and growth. It is going to be not only a change in how we deliver but how we assess.

The NH Department of Education model competencies for many levels and many content areas. NH is actually a leader in this work across the country right now. These are the K-8 model English language arts competencies, broken out into grade level spans at the top and underneath, what they provide is what they call "I can" statements, which are the standards that differentiate out those more specific skills that students should have at different skill levels.

Ms. Stimpson noted a key piece in this competency based education is being able to communicate student growth and achievement to families to the children themselves then also to career and college. What we have done is we are moving from that grade ABCD grade or the percentage 60% 50% 100% 95% and we are moving to standard codes. A number 1 on a report card would say that the student is demonstrating minimal understanding and application of the standard. When you get to the number 4, the student achieves the number 4, they have a thorough understanding and can apply the standard to multiple settings. The other piece to point out is the habits of learning, like Kadie talked about, separate out that ability to do those tasks, demonstrate responsibility, and be an active participant in the classroom. A student may have academic skills and may chose not to do their homework or not to participate in class discussions.

The next slide you will see this is what our Kennett Middle School report card looks like right now. NYA means not yet assessed, the hashtag mark which isn't on this report card, a hashtag mark would mean there was a modified plan for a student with some kind of special needs. If you look through the reporting period that identified what the competencies were that the student was working on and then where they were, what kind of achievement they demonstrated. Once a student demonstrates that competency, they move on to the next. In the future, the report card will look very different for each student, much more complex and true to who they are as a learner.

Currently we have diverse opportunities for our very diverse community. Our career tech center is leading the way right now in our competency based education. CTC programming throughout the state has been attacking competencies and developing them for years and years, so we are taking their lead. If you are going to do more

business I would recommend going to our career tech center to see what our students and teachers are doing there. We have project succeed afternoon activities, ESSC, ski programming for students, family support liaison, and robotic activities. The school to career activities, include summer programming, our students are learning year-round right now, really taking opportunities to learn. ELO is abbreviation for enriched learning opportunities, that is when teachers work with individual students or groups of students to identify specific competencies they want to address then partner with community member or business holder to be able to have real life opportunities to learn about and demonstrate their competencies out in the real world.

When you look at our strategic plan obviously we continue to work on all points of our plan. It is a work in progress, we are always referring to the plan in our decision making. A few things that we have going on now, when you look at our technology and our increase in our practices we are currently doing all of our hiring through a recruit and hire online application system that has really streamlined the process. As you all know we created a needs based budget the last several years. Our staffing has decreased and some of our staffing responsibilities have shifted so when we say someone is the teacher of x they may have be doing many more responsibilities than they have had in the past. We are really looking at a much broader application of what it means to be a teacher and a facilitator of learning. We are collaborating with communities and as you know we are constantly looking at the best use of our facilities and recruitment of our facilities.

Ms. Wilson commented that we do update and monitor the strategic plan, this was the update from February posted on the website, it will be updated again in August showing progress towards the different goals that have been established. A few highlights, the recruit and hire that was an initiative to try and reduce some of the paper and time that was spent on clerical tasks in the process of hiring, to become more efficient, and to do a better job. The mentoring program we have revised and expanded to make sure it is much more in-depth and effective. We are looking at growing professional development opportunities using in house people as well to take some expertise that we have. Building our curriculum committees to have a 12 focus, providing more project based experiences. We do have a 3-year technology plan for Conway, we have a brand new SAU 9 website that was created last year, new student information system, and the schools are working on revising websites. We pay close attention to this and we use it to make the decisions and guide our actions.

In closing, one of the biggest challenges of creating an educational system that is going to meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners is that none of us have experienced it. We all have a picture in our heads of what school is, the way it is supposed to be, and how it works. What we need in order to achieve our personalized system where we are able to realize the potential in each and every student is something different. Creating that new mental model, when we don't have anything to hang it on is a challenge, but we want to create a system where we are looking at the teacher as not just the deliverer of knowledge, but that teacher learns along with the students and helps the students make

discoveries. That learning is okay to make a mistake as long as you learn from that mistake and do something different with it. As students are just asking questions not just receiving information, that they are thinking, and that the goal isn't about getting an A, the goal is actually about learning something. It is more important that you can take away some information and some knowledge and some skill from that experience than I just got a letter grade on a piece of paper. The concept of one size fitting all isn't going to match for meeting the needs of our learners today. So, just to leave you with really years past that whole idea when you were taught to do something and you could do it well you were going to be able to succeed. In today's world being able to do well really means that you can figure out how to do things you weren't taught to do already.

#### QUESTIONS:

Ted Sares asked you mentioned the mentoring program, can you say something about that, who mentors who and who is the head of it. Ms. Wilson answered that she co-facilitates the mentor program with Brian Hastings for Conway. They run trainings, so anyone who is going to work as a mentor in Conway has to go through a training, they actually did one last spring. The mentors are veteran teachers typically, they have to be recommended by their building principals, they go through the training, once the training happens, during the new teacher orientation in August, they will match them up, they have expectations in terms of the amount of time they need to spend with that person. They guide them in the different activities and the different work, it is very individualized, because not every new teacher needs the same thing. Mr. Sares asked who are you guiding, the mentors. Ms. Wilson answered, yes. Mr. Sares asked Who are the mentors mentoring. Ms. Wilson responded that there is a significant research that shows that strong mentoring for new teachers helps to increase your retention rates and the success of those new teachers. Mr. Sares noted that in theory he has an issue with teachers mentoring public teachers. Ms. Wilson offered to get him some of the research on it if you are interested. Mr. Sares said no, I will take your word for it. He also thought they gutted that program. Ms. Wilson noted that they worked to rebuild it over the last few years. Ms. Stimpson noted that they had a shift of who is responsible for it and now the mentor program is directed out of the SAU 9 office, so Kadie's position as Assistant Superintendent is responsible for that along with one of our administrators, currently Brian Hastings, principal at Conway El. That has been able to support the ability for us to have colleagues for each other. Mr. Sares clarified no one specific person is the head of mentoring anymore, it is really shared by people who are doing other things. Ms. Wilson noted that it is not a specific mentor job and she has absorbed the responsibilities.

Dick Klement asked when you started with your educational trends you showed the charts 11-12, I think you would have a vastly different looking chart if you started with 05-06 when the new high school went into operation. I can see a downward spike, you guys might take a look at it.

Mr. Klement noted you said the 71% of your AP scores of 3+, shouldn't that be 71% of the AP student who took the test got a 3+ score. Ms. Wilson answered, yes.

Mr. Klement noted you talked at length about students transferring in and around the schools, why are they transferring have you done any research on that. This would seem to be something that would pop up and say hey what is wrong, what is happening. Ms. Wilson responded that they just noticed this over the last couple of years, that rate, we weren't aware of that prior, I believe it was last fall we started taking a look at that number. Right now, we have been collecting the data to see if that is continuing. As we move on one of the ways we are trying to respond is working with families to get a sense, I think the issues around housing and jobs, impact families' abilities to stay in one place.

Mr. Klement inquired about the SBAC, are the special ed students required to participate in the test, and do their scores affect the overall scores. Ms. Wilson answered, yes. Mr. Klement asked as things progress and in order to get the scores higher, we are going to be getting worse percentage wise. If you have 45% as opposed to 53% and they go into next year and the score is higher and acceptable you are going to be going lower, it is a no win in my book. Ms. Stimpson noted that is why we are shifting how we look at the scores, we are not just saying 43% this year and 52% next year and 36% the following year. What we are looking at is their growth from the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in 2015-16 to when they are in 8<sup>th</sup> grade in 2020-21. We want to see that there is growth instead of a number, because you are correct the numbers will look different.

Mr. Klement noted that you spoke at some length of what Google wanted people to be, when I hired people, one of the main things I was looking at is that they get to work on time. Timeliness is very important, young people, many of them don't have that concept. Ms. Stimpson noted that is something we are addressing, when you go back to the report card, habits of learning, when we look at our new report card, we are looking at those pieces so therefore we are teaching that in the classrooms, we are looking at the responsibility, self-advocacy. Ms. Wilson commented at the middle school the way to describe those skills are responsibility, self-advocacy, perseverance and effort, respect, citizenship and organization. They are assessed separately from the content.

Mr. Klement inquired about competency based education, do you believe that the high school students could pass citizenship test today. Ms. Wilson noted that she doesn't have any data. Mr. Klement noted that would be something someone might be interested in.

Mr. Klement inquired about moving from a grade to a code system at the middle school, how do you determine that the student should be left back and attend summer school. You are giving out prizes everyone participates you get a trophy. Ms. Wilson noted that is what we are trying to move away from and we are also

trying to move away from you learn 65% of the material, so you are now ready for Algebra II because if you have not learned 35% of that material, even though you earned a grade that gets you to Algebra II, you are not equipped to succeed.

David Jensen asked if the score averages, are those numbers median or means. Ms. Wilson noted they are means. Mr. Jensen noted if they are means then Mr. Klement's question about lower scores has an impact if you are looking at the median obviously there is none. When people talk about average they don't really know what they are talking about, so I just wanted to make sure we are talking about the right kind. Ms. Wilson noted we are talking about the real average.

Dick Klement noted you talked about diverse opportunities and had a nice chart, do you know aside from project succeed, ESSL, and Robotics, you didn't have high school core classes in there. It is something, yes this is a criticism of the presentation, the purpose of the high school is to educate the child and I would think the high school core classes would be at least on a card. Ms. Stimpson noted that the core classes will look different in the future then they do now, thanks for pointing that out.

Ted Sares asked you indicated that the shift of lower enrollment has changed. Ms. Stimpson responded that they think it has plateaued at the elementary level. The sending towns, we have had some decline. Mr. Sares asked in the light of what I hear and read about and see is that the population is shifting in the area to an older population, almost retirement type place. That would seem to indicate the opposite. Ms. Wilson responded it is, but these are the enrollment numbers that we have and we have collected since 2011-12, but if you look at the elementary level when we added them up three were 733 in 2011-12, 735 2012-13, 706 2013-14, 726 the following year, 738, 747, then 743. I heard the same thing you have but when you add up the numbers. Mr. Sares noted that impacts the issue of consolidating schools, closing a school, all that, so it is very important. I think there is a vote coming up at the school board meeting. Joe Mosca noted that it is Monday night to move the 6<sup>th</sup> grade to the middle school.

Bill Marvel asked if the mentoring is a paid service. Ms. Wilson noted it is a stipend. The teachers who do it, get extra money. Mr. Marvel noted that in other districts it is just something you do.

Mr. Marvel commented that measuring vehicles that you are employing now seem very reflective of what I had on my report cards at Pine Tree school in the mid 50's. It seems almost predictable that after decades of tinkering with education and experimenting here, experimenting there, we are coming right back to what used to work. I guess that says more about my view of curriculum and experimentation and educational experimentation in general.

Mr. Marvel further noted that he didn't feel the analogy of a race compared to grading, particularly apt because a race takes an average of one's time through a

certain period of distance and so does a grade in a semester or a career. The standard codes and habits of learning you were illustrating there imply average performance as well.

Ted Sares commented that he thought this was very good, he has a hard time seeing how it impacts our responsibilities to analyze the budget, make recommendations, it gives us an understanding of what they are doing. I would never question in depth the experts in this area. I wouldn't super impose my lack of expertise on them, I would kind of go with what they are saying because these are the people who are responsible for the research, which says to me I am more interested in the budget then I am this. Chairman LeFebvre stated he appreciates the comment, the rationale for having everyone sit through this is to give you a better understanding of their effort and how they see their own progress, that's always beneficial to us as we look at what we are doing I think.

Chairman LeFebvre inquired about the 36% of the free and reduced cost lunches, that is a surrogate for something, what are you using that for to tell us, what does that 36% represent in reality. Ms. Wilson noted that there are a couple different factors, as you have an increase in students that are eligible for free and reduced lunch, that means you typically have an increase in families that are living in lower socioeconomic status. Chairman LeFebvre asked maybe dysfunctional in some way shape or form? Ms. Wilson responded not necessarily, but there can be correlation between socioeconomic status and academic achievement because of pressures on families and everything else. It is also linked to our Title 1 funding and the more people who apply for free and reduced lunch and qualify actually helps us in terms of the Title 1 grant funding for Conway.

Chairman LeFebvre asked how you measure the effectiveness of the liaisons. Ms. Stimpson answered we are working on that now on identifying what data we will collect over a time. This year was our first year that we had in each of our elementary schools a family liaison, next year in the middle school we will have a family liaison as well. They are working together with us this summer to identify what data points they will be collecting over time. I do believe that one of the reasons families are staying in a building is because they are developing relationships and becoming more engaged as members of the school community because of the work our family liaisons do. Chairman LeFebvre noted that clearly the economic impact of the liaisons is not inexpensive and that's one of the reasons why I was asking the question of how you measure their effectiveness. Mr. Sares added that you could work on indicators. Mr. Klement noted indicators of performance.

Dick Klement commented that he spent some time a number of years ago at Conway El with the family liaison and I wanted to cry when came away. The things these people are doing would just tear your heart. If the state doesn't stand up and help these children, it is not our job, but we are the last one there. I



will support it on that and vote you got. As far as the free and reduced school lunch, you guys gave us as a socioeconomic factor, their scores are lower, they are not. The kids on free and reduced lunch, if you look at some of the stuff you have given us over the years, they are on track with the other kids. Ms. Wilson commented I am not saying that students have lower achievement, I am saying there is a correlation nationally if you look at areas with higher numbers of free and reduced lunch. It doesn't mean just because you happen to qualify that you have a lower score. Mr. Klement noted that it doesn't appear to be the same problem here. Ms. Wilson noted it may not, when you take the data out, it is a subgroup that has expressed demonstrated challenges over the years and across the country.

Chairman LeFebvre asked what percentage of students do you have that don't deal well with testing, especially the mandated standardized computerized testing and how do you deal with that. Ms. Wislon stated she could not come up with a number for that to be measured, other than anecdotally students saying they like it or didn't like it. There is no way to quantify that. Chairman LeFebvre asked if someone comes in and says they can't deal with the computerized test for whatever reason, what is your options. Ms. Wilson stated there is a paper and pencil option, it is not recommended by the state. Then there are a couple of options to get the test done, but they are pretty significant in order to qualify for them.

Chairman LeFebvre asked in regard to the model competencies has the new draft state plan impacted on that at all at this point. Ms. Wilson stated that the state has developed model competencies in some areas, but not all areas and we are now across Conway and SAU 9 in the process of looking at those. You don't have to adopt them, we need to adopt something. We are taking a look at our courses, the work that the high school has done with their curriculum development, the work that our curriculum committees have done and trying to see what makes the most sense for our students here in the valley.

Chairman LeFebvre noted there are colleges out there that require a GPA's, what is a GPA without a 4-point scale. Ms. Wilson stated we are not looking right now to get rid of GPA for anyone. There is a way you can actually have a hybrid system where you grade the competency's then you can translate it. There are a number of high schools across NH that have done that. Again, we are not there yet, we are in the very beginning stages of this, but in no way, are we looking to prevent any child from getting into any college at all. There are a number of actually colleges that have signed on to use the Great Schools Partnership that have said they would even take a straight standard based report card without a GPA. So, we are not looking to do that.

#### **BUDGET COMMITTEE SCHEDULE REVIEW:**

Chairman LeFebvre stated he would like to defer this subject until the meeting in August. The August meeting is on August 16, 2017, it will be following the DRA presentation, which starts at 3:00 PM in this room. At 1:00 PM, there will be a walk through at Conway El for those who are interested. You should meet at Jim Hill's office in the SAU complex, be there about 12:45 PM if you want to go through that tour of the Conway El. At 3:00 PM, the DRA presentation will be in this room. I have already talked with the two folks that are coming up from the DRA and provided the information I received from several people (I appreciate your feedback). If anyone else has any questions, I have one other person who submitted a question to me after I sent that down to the DRA, I will make sure that gets taken care of tomorrow. Any questions they would like to add, please get in touch with me as soon as possible.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

Mike Fougere commented that in the beginning when you took over, you asked to have meetings with each of the members on the board, anything that I have read tells me that that is not supposed to happen. Friends or not, if you are going to be friends you should have been friends before you got on the board. Board members are not allowed to have meetings one-on-one, a chance meeting at the dinner that's fine, but if you are going to have a meeting with John and then you have meeting with Doug that changes. As you add up everyone you meet, it becomes a quorum. Anything you discussed at each one of them meetings has to be recorded. Chairman LeFebvre stated that he has notes on all the meetings that he had on a one-on-one basis. Mr. Fougere stated they have to be recorded into the minutes. Chairman LeFebvre stated he disagrees with that reading.

Ted Sares stated that he thinks the timeline is important, it happened at a point in the timeline, where I don't think, Mike's point is relevant. I think that happened after our first meeting then his point is relevant. So, for me the timeline is not a problem, if it had been I would not have met.

Mr. Fougere stated that once you are on the budget committee and you accept that position and you take a meeting with John and then you take a meeting with Doug, anything that had been brought up as budget material, even one of them casual meetings it needs to be recorded. If you are having meetings outside of this office and budget stuff is being brought up and you are discussing ways of doing things it needs to be done here. It doesn't need to be done outside the view of the people. If you feel you are doing is legit, then why fine, why are you talking to me afterwards, why was this brought up after the meeting. Chairman LeFebvre stated he just wanted to know if Mr. Fougere had any interest and he said no and he dropped it. Anyone of the people I have had a session with had the option to say they didn't want to meet and I would have had absolutely no problem with that. My purpose was to get to know, where you were coming from as an individual and a person, that's just my preference, we did not discuss any. Mr. Fougere stated that should have been done before you became an elected official. Chairman LeFebvre thanked him for his input.

Ted Sares stated that one of these days he would like to bring up the size of this group. I know this would become an issue with the appointees, I remember when we were a budget committee of about 6. Chairman LeFebvre stated the numbers in chapter 32 are 12 and 5 and that is exactly what we have 12 and 5. I appreciate your comment though. Mr. Sares stated it's too big. Chairman LeFebvre stated he would not disagree with that as an individual.

NEW BUSINESS:

Bill Marvel commented that it would be interesting if we could get a handle over the next year on what the economic impact will be if the sending towns did not continue to be sending towns to us when the agreement expires. Which is some years away, but not that far that we should probably forget about it, because originally those towns were encouraged to come in for their own economic benefit and for ours. We viewed it as beneficial to have some of the costs paid for of the new high school. The new high school that we might not have needed with the sending towns. Some of those towns are rather demanding in different aspects. A few years ago, I remember Jackson attending one of our school board meetings, our annual meeting, and more recently a Madison school board has imposed it's desires on the Conway School Board in an issue I think should be a Conway School Board issue. All of this pressure I think probably increases the actual economic impact on Conway, whereas it was supposed to lessen it. Therefore, I would like to see what would happen if instead of 1818 students in the Conway school district, we had the 1272 that we had last year. Chairman LeFebvre stated he believes that information is available from the superintendent and will make sure that gets to the board. It is also an excellent point for the ad hoc committee to take a look at once they get themselves functioning. Mr. Marvel further stated that the formula exists, the actual costs of dispensing with the sending towns, I think that would be a little difficult to calculate really that is why I was thinking it would take some time to do it and should be kept in our consciousness.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ADJOURN

**Ted Sares moved, seconded by Joe Mosca, to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM. Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa E. Towle, Recording Secretary