

**NORTH BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
FIRST BUDGET MEETING
January 23, 2007**

The First Budget meeting of the North Branford Board of Education for the 2007-2008 school year was called to order on Tuesday at 7:05 p.m. at the Totoket Valley Elementary School Library Media Center. The following members attended:

Board Chairwoman:	Cheryl Smith
Board Vice-Chairwoman:	Bonnie Symansky
Board Secretary:	Marcey Onofrio
Board Members:	Elisabeth Caplan Ron Haskins
Superintendent of Schools:	Dr. Robert K. Wolfe
Absent:	John Bozzuto, Jr.

I. Visitors

Director of Business/Personnel:	Donald Winnicki
Director of Curriculum/Instruction:	Joan Follo
Director of Special Services:	Suzanne Wright
Principals:	Michele Saulis, NBHS Alan Davis, NBIS Nancy Brittingham, TVES Robin Brown-Criscuolo, JHS

Christine Imperato	Joe Tenczar	Richard Bigelow
Mary Bigelow	Dianne Vumback	Todd Stoeffler

There were no visitor comments at this time.

II. Enrollment Projections

Dr. Wolfe distributed a letter from the state of Connecticut with enrollment projections that he requested stating that they were very similar to North Branford's projections with one exception and that was the kindergarten enrollment.

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Dr. Wolfe suggested to the Board that we keep with the projection that we currently have. We can get a better view after February 7, 2007 which is kindergarten registration at JHS and STW. Last year, after the enrollment date, we added back a kindergarten teacher at Jerome Harrison. We have added a .5 kindergarten teacher at Stanley T. Williams in this budget. We will take a closer look at the kindergarten classes at JHS and STW once we have data based on the February 7, 2007 enrollment. It could be a reduction for the Board of Education, changing the picture significantly or we could remain status quo. Dr. Wolfe stated that over the years our projections have been fairly accurate.

III. Teaching and Learning

Joan Follo spoke on the Curriculum Management Cycle stating that North Branford's curriculum is planned until 2010. She reviewed the five phases of the CMS for the Board. The Review Phase, Development Phase, Implementation Phase 1, Implementation Phase 2 and the Evaluation Phase.

Mrs. Follo stated that the Review phase was reviewing internal and external factors of the current curriculum and state mandates and changes. The team looks at all information before they make their report. She mentioned that we are a small school system so usually the same people stay on the team for all phases of a developing curriculum

In the Development Phase the team studies what the curriculum will look like, what the consistent tasks should be, what the recommendations of the review committee were, and all other information that has to be taken into consideration.

The Implementation Phase is when instructional supplies, textbooks, etc. are purchased. Teachers attend in-service, bone up on their skills, practice with the curriculum and go to workshops.

The Evaluation Phase is when the committee looks at the curriculum to make sure it is the taught curriculum. Examine what has to be changed, take teacher surveys to see what is and isn't working, to make sure there is enough instructional supplies and if teachers are getting professional development.

Joan Follo discussed the budget summary for all phases of the CMC explaining why some curriculums are more expensive to develop than other curriculums.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that the Language Arts and the Math Curriculums are the most costly.

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Joan Follo stated that Language Arts money is also used to bring information to the teacher's fingertips instead of everyone looking for their own sources. K-5 Language Arts will be a balanced curriculum and kits will also be purchased

Cheryl Smith questioned what the development money was used for.

Joan explained that this could include paying teachers for attending summer workshops, substitutes so teachers can be released to attend workshops during regular teaching hours and conferences. She mentioned monies could also be used for consultants, instructional supplies, and videos.

Cheryl Smith questioned why we are buying math textbooks at NBHS for \$8,000 and if they will become obsolete before the curriculum is developed.

Joan stated that most likely they would not be obsolete or outdated. This is taken into consideration before textbooks are purchased but sometimes we have to purchase books for incoming students.

Marcey Onofrio stated that NBHS need textbooks now as their population is increasing and these students need books.

Bonnie Symansky questioned Language Arts supplies for NBHS and how this would reflect for the AP courses. She asked if in-service and training was in the budget for NBHS teachers.

Joan Follo stated that the monies are included for NBHS but it is not as expensive as K-5 materials.

Cheryl Smith questioned if the CMC budget was separate from the school budget.

Dr. Wolfe stated that the building budget purchases the existing books and administrators are very careful that they do not overlap.

Cheryl Smith asked about \$127,700 for Language Arts in the budget for K-12 for the first phase and another \$112,000 at the high school for Language Arts.

Donald Winnicki stated that the \$112,000 was from the Curriculum Management budget out of the \$127,700

IV. Personnel

Michele Saulis informed the Board of Education about her request for 1.65 additional positions.

.4 Art Education

She stated that when she met with North Branford alumni they informed her that they felt they were behind their peers when they started college. They agreed that art education at NBHS has to be increased if North Branford students are to compete. Michele mentioned that NBHS has to turn many students away from art classes, as we do not have enough instructors. At this time we include, as many students as we can in current classes so our classes are not that advanced.

.4 Music Education

Mrs. Saulis remarked that one music educator does it all. She mentioned that many talented students are coming to the high school from the middle school but music education drops off at NBHS, as there are not enough educators. She would like to see a choral teacher instruct the select chorus and choral program and the current educator develop the instrumental program. (Jazz band, string quartet, etc.)

Michele Saulis mentioned that art and music educators are fairly easy to find and many are willing to work part-time.

.45 Communications

Mrs. Saulis remarked that she would like to have a full communications program. She stated that since Joe Tenczar was hired school spirit is greatly improved. There are three times more students who would like to take communication courses and she would like to develop three different levels of communication courses next year.

.20 World Language

Michele stated that many students from NBIS want to continue their language that they have studied at the middle school. She mentioned that World Language teachers are very hard to come by and it would be better to keep teachers if we can offer a full time or close to full time positions.

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.20 Guidance

Mrs. Saulis mentioned that one guidance counselor is only working three days per week and this is not enough. She stated that if there is an emergency another guidance counselor will step in but we really need to increase our guidance department.

Cheryl Smith questioned if the World Language position would require benefits.

Dr. Wolfe stated the educator in this position already receive benefits as it is a .5 position at this time.

Cheryl Smith questioned how many more students could take art if this position was filled.

Michele Saulis stated that at least forty-eight more students could take art.

Dr. Wolfe stated that many of our art classes should only have 12 to 16 students participating especially in a ceramics course.

Cheryl questioned the numbers for choral and band.

Dr. Wolfe stated this position would free up Mr. Congo to teach his guitar class and form a Jazz ensemble.

Cheryl Smith questioned how many students each full time guidance counselor was responsible for?

Mrs. Saulis stated from 250 students to 280 students. The head guidance counselor has a reduced load because of other duties.

Cheryl Smith remarked that this seems like a lot of students for one guidance counselor.

Dr. Wolfe spoke on the 1.0 non-certified position for STW stating we are rebuilding the former Title 1 program that was lost because of the lack of Federal Funds. He mentioned 2.0 kindergarten paraprofessionals for kindergarten as they now only have 2 aides for 9 classes. These two positions would give us four aides for ten classes and these aides are very valuable to our kindergarten program.

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V. Special Education

Suzanne Wright distributed information on students served in special programs. She mentioned that TVES has students from the Bridges Program going to NBIS next year and a Bridges Program is needed at NBIS. She remarked that there are students at NBIS now who could be in this program if Bridges was established at NBIS.

Suzanne Wright remarked that a Special Education teacher is a tremendous help to a Regular Education teacher in the classroom. The teaching can be more successful for these teachers who have Special Education students in their regular classes.

Dr. Wolfe stated these Special Education numbers are not as simple as a numbers game as not every student listed is getting the same amount of service as it depends on each student's disability.

Cheryl Smith questioned why if the number of students at JHS are decreasing and increasing at NBHS but not being funded.

Suzanne Wright stated that this is what it looks like on paper but for some students the Special Education teacher only works half-time and the students spends the rest of their day with a paraprofessional. She mentioned that there is very little time at JHS for co-teaching and we must utilize our staff.

Suzanne mentioned that some of our students go to Lyman Hall, Sound School, Vinal Tech, etc. after the eighth grade.

Ron Haskins questioned if we are getting any special education students back for the next school year.

Suzanne stated that we only have seventeen out-placed students and none of the seventeen are coming back next year but it is anticipated that five of these students will graduate this year or reach age twenty-one. Right now it is too early in the year to tell.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that six years ago we had over forty students in outside placements.

Dr. Wolfe remarked that if there were any questions on this budget by Board members to please call him or Donald Winnicki at Central Office.

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Superintendent Wolfe stated that he thought this was a very modest budget with only a 6.18% increase and as he receives more information in the next few weeks he will keep the Board of Education informed. He is hoping that this increase can go down.

Dr. Wolfe thanked Donald Winnicki and all administrators who contributed in developing and producing this budget request.

MOTION: Moved by Elisabeth Caplan and seconded by Ron Haskins to adjourn this meeting of the North Branford Board of Education at 8:10 p.m.

ALL VOTED AYE

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Ardine
Account Clerk