

**BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**Meeting Minutes - Monday, January 22, 2024**

**Members Present:** Andrea Catena, Lisa Clar, Dre Collins, Andrew DeLaVergne, Steve DeSantis, Maria Hamilton, Dan Hentschel, Paul Hoak, Nichole LaPlaca, Hailey Lehman, Jessica Mattice, Diane McBride, Ken Nelson, Bao Nguyen, Vinny Rau, Pamela Reinhardt, Millie Sefranek, Katy Smith, Dina Stathopoulos

**Members Absent:** Chuck Allan, Karen Arthmann, Cara Granger, William Hall, Clay Harris, Carl Kirchgessner, Brad Malone, Diana Sheffer

**Ex-Officio Members:** Kimberly Delardge, Mary Ann Exler, Andy Whitmore and Dr. Barbara Mullen

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

### **WELCOME AND CHARGE TO THE COUNCIL**

Dr. Barbara Mullen, Superintendent, welcomed the members of the BAC, and asked each member to introduce themselves and the stakeholder group they represent. She reviewed the charge to the council noting that the role of the council is to be advisory to the Superintendent as she develops her proposed budget.

### **BUDGET DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW**

Dr. Barbara Mullen, Superintendent, presented an overview of the budget development process. The goal of the budget process is to develop a budget that is student-centered, equitable, and fiscally responsible. The budget will maintain the quality and scope of effective programs/services, support student learning and social/emotional development, advance district priorities, provide incremental resources to areas of need, and ensure successful outcomes for each student at all schools. The budget increase will be reasonable based on enrollment changes, student needs, inflation, state and federal mandates, and the state of the economy. The property tax levy increase will not exceed the state's property tax levy cap.

The current fiscal environment calls for the budget to encompass wage escalation driven by labor shortages and minimum wage increases while providing for enhanced and increased mental health supports, additional academic support and resources for students in need, as well as, the expansion of the continuum of special education services and an 11% increase in the number of special education students. New York State is forecasting a \$4.3 billion deficit for 2024-25. The governor has ordered all state agencies to maintain budgets at current levels. We anticipate a minimal increase but a reduction is possible in the district's Foundation Aid. The \$3.1 million of federal stimulus funding included in the 2023-24 budget, will not continue for 2024-25. The budget will need to support the recurring expenses that were previously supported with federal stimulus funding.

### **BASE BUDGET REVIEW**

Andy explained that the Base Budget for 2024-25 as outlined in the Base Budget Review examines the programs and services provided by the district and the associated costs. It allows us to see what was budgeted for 2022-23 versus what was actually expended. And, what was budgeted for 2023-24 - the year we are currently experiencing. With this information, we project the rollover budget for 2024-25. The rollover budget assumes the continuation of all current programs and services and adjusts for contractual wage increases, inflation and other anticipated rate changes like retirement system contributions and health insurance.

Andy took the members through the Base Budget Review noting the areas that increased or decreased compared to the 2023-24 budget. The base budget includes 40 additional positions and an increase of \$7.8 million. He encouraged the members to email him with any additional questions. The questions will be reviewed and answered at the next meeting of the council.

### **TOPICS FROM THE COUNCIL**

Members of the council brought up the following topics during the meeting:

- NYS mandate for electric buses and efforts to delay implementation
- Self-funded status of health insurance
- Wage compression
- Free & Reduced Lunch participation data collection
- Movement of teachers and students due to expansion of special education continuum of services
- Removal of assistant principal position and related clerical position at Roth
- Placement of assistant principle positions at elementary buildings

- Extended School Year Program expenditures
- Status of and plans for Good Shepherd property transformations
- Disparity in number of students between schools within grade bands with same number of nurses and counselors
- Status of bus notification system

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

The next meeting will be on Monday, February 26, 2024 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Ann Exler, Budget Technician