

**Town of Norwood**  
**School Committee Budget Workshop**  
**Savage Center, Room 219**  
**Wednesday, February 27, 2023**  
**6:00 - 8:00 p.m.**

The Norwood School Committee held a Budget Workshop on Wednesday, February 27, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Committee Members Present:** Ms. Anne Marie Mazzola, Chair; Ms. Teresa Stewart, Mr. David Hiltz and Ms. Kate Sibbing-Dunn

**Committee Member Excused:** Dr. Joan Giblin

**Administrators Present:** Dr. Dave Thomson, Superintendent of Schools; Ms. Karin Sheridan, Director of Finance and Operations, Dr. Charisse Taylor, Director of Strategic Initiatives and Ms. Lauri Cimeno, Director of Student Services

The Members received the Norwood Public Schools FY24 School Committee Budget Workshop Power Point, dated February 27, 2023. Ms. Karin Sheridan began the Workshop by reviewing Budget Roles and Responsibilities:

She shared an overview of Municipal Finance Law and Norwood's Profile and Links to Other Helpful Resources.

Ms. Sheridan explained funding sources:

- General Fund
- Revolving Funds
- Grants
- Circuit Breaker
- Capital Projects
- Indirect Expenses
- Shared Expenses (Consolidated Departments)
- Chapter 70
- Medicaid/ Homeless Transportation

There were some questions and discussion about what constitutes a homeless status.

**Revolving Funds:**

- Source of funding - fees and donations
- Revolving Funds:
  - Athletics\*
  - School Bus\*
  - Preschool Tuition\*
  - School Drama/ Music\*
  - School Rental / Use of School Property
  - Student Activities
  - Various Donations per School

- Non-Resident Student Tuition
  - School Lunch
  - Extended Day
- (\*Revolving Funds with Budget Offsets)

NPS continues to monitor, evaluate and effectively use our Revolving Funds - Careful Analysis should be done to determine a reasonable Budget Offset for each fund. There was some discussion and explanation about what Budget Offsets are.

**Grants:**

- Norwood Public Schools actively garners grant funding to support projects that address critical unmet needs, supplement existing programs, and explore new ideas.
- Funded by Federal, State and Private Funds;
- Current grant procedures in place and all grants are approved by School Committee;
- Grant Management Team monitors the implementation and expenditures of the awarded funds to ensure compliance with state, local and federal regulations of the grants.
- FY23 Grant Awards to date: \$2,834,429 - 21 grants

**Circuit Breaker Program:** The Circuit Breaker Program was started in FY04 to provide additional state funding to districts for high-cost special education students. The threshold for eligibility is tied to four times the state average foundation budget per pupil as calculated under the Chapter 70 Program, with the state paying up to 75% of the cost above that threshold, subject to appropriation.

**FY24 - Funding Sources - Special Ed Stabilization Fund:** The Special Education Stabilisation Fund was established in May of 2021 for the purpose of supporting unanticipated and unbudgeted Special Educational costs that might arise from year to year. (G.L.C. 40 Section 13E). The Balance in the fund cannot exceed 2% of the annual net school spending (NSS) of the school district.

-Current Balance	\$ 850,000
-FY23 Budget Offset	\$ 300,000
-FY24 Budget Offset	\$ 300,000
-Balance Remaining	\$ 250,000
-2% of FY22 NSS	\$ 1,307,394

**FY24 Budget - Funding Sources - Capital Projects:** Funds used to build, replace, or improve such things as facilities, grounds, mechanical and technological infrastructure, and vehicles. Capital Projects are funded through sources such as borrowing and free cash.

**-FY24 Capital Request - Special Education Transportation - \$212,000**

- One Handicapped Accessible Mini Bus - \$114,000
- One Standard Mini Bus - \$97,000

**-FY24 Capital Request - School Technology - \$117,000**

- Network Switch Replacements - \$44,000 (cost based on estimate minus anticipated 60% E-Rate\* program discount)

-High School Computer Labs - \$73,000

**-FY24 Budget - Funding Sources - Chapter 70 Aid:** The Chapter 70 program is the major program of state aide to public elementary and secondary schools. It also establishes minimum spending, requirements for each school district and minimum requirements for each municipality's share of school cost.

-Norwood has seen substantial increases in the Chapter 70 Aide for two years in a row due to mostly a change in Norwood's Student profile - increases in High Needs (EL, Special Ed, Low Income).

-FY22 - Chapter 70 Aide - \$9,271,812

-FY23 - Chapter 70 Aide - \$12,686,621

-FY24 - Chapter 70 Aide - \$16,341,437

**-Other Funding Sources: Medicaid / Homeless Transportation:** The School-based Medicaid Program offers LEA's and opportunity to receive federal dollars to offset costs for providing certain Medicaid-covered direct services in a school setting.

The State also reimburses School District for students in families experiencing homelessness.

Ms. Sheridan and Ms. Stewart gave an overview of the Town of Norwood Budget (Team Effort).

**-FY24 Budget - Funding Sources - Indirect Expenses:** Annual expenses not included in the school operating budget are reported to the State on the School District's End of Year Report to be sure to identify all costs for the School District.

-FY22 Indirect Cost Allocations from General Government to the Schools consisted of the following:

-Business and Finance;

-Human Resources

-District Wide Info Technology

-Operations and Maintenance

-Employer Retirement Contributions

-Insurance for Employees and Retires

-Other Non-employee Insurance

-Other Fixed Charges - School Crossing Guards

-Purchase of Land / Buildings - including new Middle School Project

-Debt Service - Principal / Interest

-Regional School Assessment

-School Choice

-Charter Schools

Ms. Sheridan and Ms. Stewart reviewed the Town of Norwood Override Pledge. There was some discussion about different people on the Boards having different interpretations of #3 of the Override Pledge.

***(#3 of Override Pledge: A significant aspect to cost reduction is to limit the addition of positions that would require benefits. To ensure management of these costs in years 2-5 no more than 5 benefited positions will be added in one year in the school budget and 2 positions in general government. This shall exclude mandatory Special***

*Education, English Language Learners, grant funded positions, or other mandated or statutorily required positions.)*

Ms. Sheridan then reviewed the FY24 Budget Highlights - Instructional Services - up 7.43% (Total Cost - \$3,100,917) - 9.70 FTE New Staff Requests - 14.60 FTE FU23 SC approved positions:

- Districtwide Academics Leadership - \$1,427,908 - up 5.27%
  - New Staff Request - .50 FTE EL Coordinator (previously grant funded) - \$55,186
  - Cost will increase if position moved to Director
- SchoolBuilding Leadership - \$2,408,129 - up 15.65%
  - New Staff Request - 1.0 FTE LMPA Admin. Position - \$97,778
  - Increase in High School Admin. Salaries with FY23 Restructure
  - Increase Admin. Copier Lease - new contract higher
- Instruction / Teaching Services - \$30,125,571 - up 5.42%
  - New Staff Requests - 8 FTE
  - FY23 School Committee Approved Positions - 4 FTE
- Other Teaching Services - \$5,857,629 - up 9.88%
  - FY23 School Committee Approved Positions - 10.6 FTE - all paras
  - Increase in summer school special education paraprofessional - \$25,740
- Professional Development - \$477,218 - up 28.03%
  - This area has an increase of \$131,491 for FY24 and one that may need to be reviewed to see if District would like to put some PD on hold for FY24
  - Professional Development includes Special Ed increases - McLeans Mental Health, Wilson Reading, Ribas Paraprofessional Training, Accept Collaborative, and BCBA PD. Some were previously grant funded.
  - High School included Mass Insight, Anti Defamation League, World of Difference
  - General Ed includes Highlander, Character Strong and Mass Insight.

There was some questions and discussion around where there can be possible cuts.

The next Budget Sub Committee Meeting is tomorrow. Ms. Stewart asked for the Committee's recommendations to bring to the meeting. There was some discussion regarding trying to work with the town side to increase the Chapter 70 split (try for 80/20) and Medicaid reimbursement amounts.

**Adjournment:** The workshop adjourned at 9:15 p.m.,

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk  
Norwood School Committee

