

BFCCPS Finance Committee
1st Budget Preparation Meeting Minutes
03/16/2011

Attendees: Jerry Cimmino, Lori Clements, John Cofran, Anna dos Santos, Pat Fairbanks, Rich Frongillo, Suzanne Graham, Dr. Kevin O'Malley, Joe, Perna, Tim Tracy, Heather Zolnowski

8:10am meeting began

Jerry presented an overview of the initial draft of the FY12 budget. It is based on 446 students and a blended reimbursement rate of \$9,582 per student. The main points of focus for this meeting will be salaries, rent, and technology.

Dr. O'Malley provided comments on the draft budget. Although we may be able to enroll more than 446 students, there is no guarantee. There is a charter limit of 450 students, so we can't over enroll some grades to provide for possible departures. The technology plan that will be reviewed is a good plan for the next few years and covers hardware and software needs. It focuses on using technology in the classroom more effectively. Training for staff will be critical.

Jerry reviewed the salary plan. In general, those below 85% of Franklin's comparable salary would receive a 3% increase; those at or above 85% would receive a 1.5% increase. One group will receive bonuses only. FY11 salary actuals include bonuses paid in July, so it is higher than the number used to calculate FY12 salaries. Substitute expenses in FY12 should be lower than FY11. It was suggested and agreed that the bonuses be adjusted so that the net amount is equal to the agreed upon amount. No new positions are planned or funded. The SPED aide funded from ARRA funds for the past 2 years is covered by the operating budget in FY12.

Health and dental insurance are budgeted at a 10% increase. If the actual numbers are higher, coverage adjustments will be made to stay within the 10% range.

Next, Joe reviewed the new technology plan. The goal is to make it easier for teachers to use technology in their classrooms. The plan will update the server infrastructure and enable cloning of desktop images; replace outdated desktops and laptops; implement school-wide Wi-Fi capability; and implement more cost effective software such as Open Office and Google Apps for Education. Thirty new laptops with extended battery life will replace the laptops currently in the library. Thirty-one new desktops computers will be added to the classrooms. These improvements will mostly be funded by the Annual Fund donations and FY11 technology funds already in the budget. The Board will be asked to fund the balance from FY11 funds. FY12 technology expenditures will focus on training, teacher support and if possible, replacement of the desktops in the upstairs computer lab.

A discussion of the technology plan with the following items needing more thought or analysis:

1. Should we install Unix vs. Windows 7 as the operating system for the 61 new computers? With so many new machines, now is the time to decide on making a commitment to open software.
2. Should we lease this equipment – would it be cheaper? Require less expertise to maintain?
3. Should we consider switching to Macs?
4. Does Comcast have any business services that would be useful?
5. Can the Wi-Fi implementation be done more cheaply? The cost appears high.

The group agreed that overall the technology plan makes sense and should be funded in FY11.

Jerry noted that the rent in FY12 will be going up and that \$210,000 is the current offer by BFCCPS to the church.

At the next budget meeting a line by line review of the FY12 budget will be done.

The group discussed a proposal by Bob Baldwin, a charter school real estate and facilities consultant, to help us complete a facilities plan. The group agreed to recommend to the full Board that the proposal be accepted.

Some additional facilities ideas were presented. Could the Carriage House be used by the school if storage containers were used to store St. Rocco equipment? Could the Washington Street property be used for athletic fields? These options should be kept in mind for the future.

10:20am meeting adjourned