

**Nantucket School Committee**  
**Public Hearing Meeting Minutes**  
**January 16, 2018**

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Present Members: Zona Butler, Jennifer Iller, Timothy Lepore, Chairperson Melissa Murphy, Pauline Proch & Natalie Gammons

The Public Hearing was called to order at 6:00 PM, by Melissa Murphy, Chairperson, in the Nantucket High School LGI. She asked that the Committee move from Open Session to the Public Hearing. Tim Lepore made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Pauline Proch, it was approved unanimously. Mrs. Murphy welcomed everyone to the Nantucket School Committee Public Hearing on the FY19 Budget.

**Superintendent, W. Michael Cozort – Nantucket Public Schools FY’19 Budget Development Presentation**

Superintendent Cozort began with the enrollment summary and reinforced this is what always drives our budget numbers. He explained that it is not as simple as rolling over grade counts, because there are certain grades that historically have a bump in enrollment, such as first grade and in ninth grade (as private school students come back into the district). Our growth does indeed continue and Mr. Cozort presented a slide depicting the growth of population over a 20-year period, illustrating the continual rise in all four schools. This year we can show the elementary school numbers broken out between the two schools, which eases the overcrowding and allows the schools to operate with enrollment numbers they were originally intended to house. Interesting to note that the Nantucket High School now has the highest enrollment of all the schools. The 20 year chart mimics the changes within the community, specifically the growth of the last ten years, and clearly defines the demographic changes and the explosion of our ELL population and Special Needs population.

In Fiscal Year 2018 our total budget is \$27,486,642. The 2019 Budget total shows a projected increase of \$1,333,000 which represents a projected increase of \$1,200,000 and also a one-time expense for Technology of \$133,000. Within this number, \$5,190,620 (18%) of this increase is expenses while \$23,629,022 (82%) is contractual agreements for payroll. Mr. Cozort reviewed slides to support the projections, depicting the per pupil expenditure over the last ten years (\$20,760 to \$21,237) and the state average increasing in similar fashion (\$12,448 to \$15,545) over that time. The Chapter 70 funds comparison also shows what we have received in the past ten years and while it remained fairly steady in the last three years, it now illustrates an increase from \$3,067,074 to \$3,114,564. These funds are based on a complex formula designed to ensure that every district has sufficient resources to meet its foundation budget spending level, through an equitable combination of local property taxes and state aid.

Beyond enrollment, there are many factors that contribute to the budget numbers. Mr. Cozort discussed expenses versus payroll and showed a graph portraying spending at the various schools and within all the departments. He reminded the School Committee that we have previously presented each separate department budget in the preceding meetings. He also reviewed the level of Federal Grants that the district receives. He shared a graph depicting the special education out-of-district tuitions and noted district efforts to develop in-house programs to minimize the need to send students off the island for their education. He pointed out that, years ago, we were woefully under-budgeted for residential placements. There was mention made about a new “Stabilization” fund, new for the State of Massachusetts. Creating this fund is on the ballot for the Annual Town Meeting to be voted and approved to put money into a fund to cover any unforeseen expenses. If, for example, a student transfers into our district and requires residential placement, we might not have the money to cover these unforeseen costs. This fund will facilitate making up the difference that we are responsible to cover. Finally, the Superintendent reviewed a graph showing the Community School appropriation. That appropriation has fluctuated over the years, and we are fortunate with the proposed appropriation (\$450,000). This is critical, as without it, the burden falls solely on participant fees, which could make it impossible for some families to participate in certain programs.

The parameters for the Administrative Team in creating this budget, as directed by the Superintendent and the School Committee directives, were as follows:

- 1) Align the budget needs with the district and school goals and the Strategic Plans;
- 2) Justify the building budgets be based upon projected enrollments;
- 3) Have the principals identify essential services for their students;

**Nantucket School Committee  
Public Hearing Meeting Minutes  
January 18, 2018**

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53 4) Support programs that sustain the physical, social and emotional development of the students;  
54 5) Develop these budgets to closely reflect actual expenditures from the last three years, continuing to reduce line  
55 item transfers;  
56 6) Budget utility expenses more closely to reflect actual expenditures from the last three years – especially at NIS  
57 where we now have a year to reflect usage; and  
58 7) More closely monitor the NCS finances to reduce expenditures and raise revenues.  
59

60 A summary of increases to the FY 2019 budget was provided and Superintendent Cozort showed how they address  
61 the needs outlined in the parameters. The Budget increase requests are respectively as follows:  
62

- 63 • Increase funding, add a .2 FTE PreK Teacher
- 64 • Increase funding, add a .2 FTE PreK Teaching Assistant
- 65 • New NIS ELA Coach
- 66 • New NIS ELL Teacher
- 67 • New NIS Fifth Grade Teacher
- 68 • Increase funding, add a .2 FTE NIS Spanish Teacher
- 69 • New CPS Special Education Teacher
- 70 • Increase funding, add a .2 FTE CPS Phys Ed Teacher
- 71 • New CPS Chinese Teacher
- 72 • Increase funding, add .2 FTE NHS Landscaping Teacher
- 73 • Increase funding, add .2NHS Wellness Teacher
- 74 • Increase funding, add .2 FTE Occupational Therapist
- 75 • New Special Education Speech & Language Pathologist
- 76 • New Special Education Team Chair
- 77 • New District Interpreter/Translator
- 78 • New Technology Repair & Application Support Specialist, .4 FTE
- 79 • Increase funding in Technology Hardware
- 80 • Increase funding for Facilities Supplies
- 81 • Increase funding for Utilities at NIS  
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83 To close, the Superintendent provided a breakdown of Capital requests for Fiscal Year 2019. A total of \$1,350,000  
84 scheduled for NPS is hopeful for approval by the Capital Committee and the Financial Committee response (meeting  
85 on Thursday, January 18).  
86

- 87 1. Backus Lane Playground & Field Improvement, a request of \$400,000 for recreational purposes. Adding a  
88 playground to the new NIS grounds, and as part of the Athletic Fields Master Plan, moving the Varsity Baseball  
89 Field from current location to the Backus Lane property, also adding some additional parking.
- 90 2. A Safety & Security request of \$450,000 to construct the interior vestibule inside the main lobby of the High  
91 School. The project will include the front office slide window, interior and exterior cameras, new interior  
92 doors that lock and unlock via security software, as well as bulletproof construction materials.
- 93 3. A Central Office addition, requesting \$500,000, which includes design and construction to add offices for  
94 Special Services, the IT Director's office, the ELL Directors office and an administrative conference room.  
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96 In conclusion, Superintendent Cozort reemphasized the steps that were taken to create the budget, sharing the  
97 information with faculty, gleaned feedback from constituencies, presentations by principals and department heads,  
98 and now holding this public meeting. He will next present to Fin Com on January 18, 2018 with finally a vote from  
99 the School Committee and then the voting at the Town of Nantucket Annual Meeting.  
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**Nantucket School Committee**  
**Public Hearing Meeting Minutes**  
**January 16, 2018**

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103 The School Committee thanked everyone for their hard work and agreed that this year's budget has been a fluid and  
104 transparent process. Mrs. Murphy reinforced that while our numbers and needs have changed significantly, she  
105 continues to appreciate the flexibility and plans in place to meet the diversified needs and is confident the budget will  
106 remain reflective of the needs of our students.

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108 **Comments from the Public**

109 NHS Teacher, Anthony Suppa asked if the new Special Education Chair will move to the Central Offices along with  
110 the SPED Director office being moved. Superintendent Cozort responded that he did not think that would happen,  
111 preferring the Chair to remain in the buildings, making them more accessible to students and staff, offering higher level  
112 of services and faster response times.

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114 Tim Lepore made a motion to adjourn from Public Hearing, Pauline Proch seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

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116 **Public hearing adjourned at 6:44 pm.**

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118 Respectfully submitted,

119 Logan M. O'Connor, School Committee Clerk