

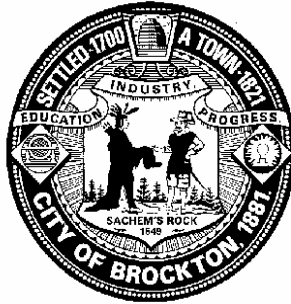
# BROCKTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

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The Honorable Bill Carpenter  
**Chair/Mayor of Brockton**

Thomas J. Minichiello, Jr.  
**Vice-Chair**

Kathleen A. Smith, JD  
**Secretary/Superintendent  
of Schools**



## **Committee Members**

Joyce J. Asack  
Mark S. D'Agostino  
Brett Gormley  
Thomas J. Minichiello, Jr.  
Lisa M. Plant  
Judy A. Sullivan  
Timothy J. Sullivan

May 8, 2018

TO: Brockton School Committee

FROM: Thomas J. Minichiello, Jr.  
Aldo E. Petronio, Chief Budget Officer

RE: **Report of the May 7, 2018 Finance Subcommittee Meeting**

Present: Mr. Minichiello, Chair; Ms. Asack, Mr. D'Agostino, Mr. Gormley, Ms. Plant, Mrs. Sullivan, Mr. Sullivan, Superintendent Smith, Mr. Petronio

The Finance Subcommittee met this evening at the Arnone School Theater for the purpose of discussing the FY19 Budget. Mr. Minichiello called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. and asked Superintendent Smith to begin the discussion.

The Superintendent began with an update on advocacy. Tomorrow, she and Mr. Petronio will meet with Senator Karen Spilka at the State House to talk about the impact of the budget on Brockton in the areas of direct certification/decile 10 and charter school reimbursement, they are worth approximately \$2 million each. On Wednesday she will meet with a group of superintendents about the equity lawsuit, then on Thursday we will be back at the State House again, we are hoping to fill the gallery at the Senate and possibly some sort of demonstration outside. She met with about 35 high school students today who will be going in to the state house.

Mr. Minichiello said he has spoken with councilors Sullivan, Lally, Derenoncourt, Cruise, Farwell and Eaniri with respect to their assistance and support with additional revenues and asked members to speak with their councilors as well. He extended the invitation publicly for anyone to join the rally on Thursday. With respect to city council, the Superintendent added that she will look to be put on an upcoming finance agenda to present the state of the schools.

### **Budget Barometer Review**

Round 3 Cuts - A third round of cuts was added to the budget barometer totaling \$100, these cuts are based on monies that were not used last year in the special education department.

The Superintendent said she is looking at the sustainability of the Project Grads Program and what the deficit will be at the end of the year, based on the actual cost of the program minus transportation. She will ask Mary Read to present to you on what the program provides, and Laurie Silva to talk to you about what she has put together working with outside agencies.

### **Budget Discussion**

The Superintendent reviewed the budget discussion worksheet that showed six options for closing the budget deficit together with the number of layoffs required at for option.

Plan 1, 2 and 3 do not include any changes to schools.

Plan 4 includes the gradual closing of North Middle School in order to renovate it, this plan would not allow grade 6 to start there in September, the school would remain open for one year with grade 7 and 8, then close the following year. This option would give the district planning time and require 58 *additional* RIFs (over those positions lost in the closing)

Plan 5 adds to Plan 4 the option of moving the Davis Middle School to South and reduced the number of *additional* RIFs to 48.

Plan 6 adds closing the Ashfield School to plan 5 and reduces the number of *additional* RIFs to 10.

A discussion followed where Mr. Sullivan brought up several concerns with respect to closing schools that have had MSBA renovations; Mr. Thomas said they are recommending a gradual closure of North which will give the district time. With respect to the Ashfield, the Superintendent said she would recommend turning it into a preschool. Mr. Sullivan asked for clarification on whether North or the Ashfield could be closed due to the MSBA renovations that have been done; Mr. Thomas explained that neither of those schools could be closed permanently. Mr. Thomas further explained that the goal with North would be to renovate the school completely, the Superintendent said the goal for the Ashfield would be to open it as a preschool. With respect to MSBA renovations, Mr. Thomas said he would need school committee and city council approval before even filing with the MSBA, and he anticipated the total renovation of North to cost between \$15 and \$20 million, with the city responsible for 20% of the cost. Mr. Sullivan was concerned that there is no plan and this would need to happen in September, Superintendent Smith responded that the gradual closing could begin, the districts would realize savings this year, and this would give us the year to plan, it would still save in positions this year. Mr. Sullivan asked whether the work could be done in the summer, Mr. Thomas said there would not be enough time to do the necessary renovations. If we go forward with this plan, he said it would be approximately a 2-year process to renovate the school. Ms. Asack said she would need to see class sizes and would not to lose students to the charter because of this move.

Superintendent reminded the committee that “this is not a win” and talked about the need for a master plan and said that Brockton needs a state-of-the-art high school for the kids, citing all of the surrounding towns and cities that are building brand-new high schools. She said it is time for city council to step up and bring in the revenue we need, she is hopeful about the Aquaria deal.

Mr. Minichiello said the committee needs to make a decision this evening about staffing to comply with the BEA contractual deadline of May 15<sup>th</sup>. Superintendent Smith recommended authorizing human resources to prepare up to 100 RIF notices and reminded the committee that on each of the options 13 of the indicated RIF’s are retirements and will not be filled.

Mr. D'Agostino called attention to Plan 4, the gradual closing of North appears to require 70 RIF notices, the Superintendent agreed and added that she has to build in some room, she reminded them that this is just to get us to the May 15<sup>th</sup> date. The Superintendent said this is a difficult decision, we have watched what this does to people, we are looking to give out the least amount of pink slips and have the least amount of disruption. Mr. D'Agostino said that five years of this has been very hard for our employees, obviously we have to do something to have a balanced budget and he wants to be sure the number is as low as possible.

Ms. Plant said she will not vote for cutting the Project Grads program and said she would like to see that removed from the (round 1) cuts. She felt that the program puts a diploma into a person's hand. The Superintendent asked Ms. Plant to hear the presentations and keep an open mind, the concern is the sustainability of the program.

Ms. Asack said she definitely wants to get classroom sizes estimates if the Ashfield stays open and we vote for the gradual closing of North for the next couple of years, and busing.

Mr. Gormley said we should look at the impact of the charter school on our enrollment figures, Mr. D'Agostino called the closing of Ashfield a disaster particularly looking at this in May, he chose Plan 4 because of minimal impact and upheaval. Mr. Minichiello said I hear what you're saying and I'd love to go with the path of least resistance, but that will leave \$2.4 million that needs to be made up. The Superintendent said she was hoping that she would not have to talk about closing a school this year but you might be right back in the same ballfield next year, if you don't you need to talk about this right away for next year. Aldo said the Brockton charter has 105 seats each year, most of those students are coming from Brockton. He is reminding the committee that revenues will continue to be down. Mr. D'Agostino said August would be the time to begin these discussions for next year. Mr. Petronio said that October 1<sup>st</sup> we knew we were getting 2.1 million, in January the state rolled that amount back.

The Superintendent said they have been provided a good overview, she said she needs a vote for the reduction in force. If we are basing the vote on Plan 3, which does not include any school closings or moves, she would be comfortable with sending out 90 RIF notices, 20 above the necessary 70. Mr. D'Agostino asked whether the 100 RIF allowance covers everything. Mr. Minichiello reminded everyone that if the House money never comes all bets are off with respect to not closing a school.

**Mr. Sullivan moved to authorize the Superintendent to send out up to 100 RIF notices by May 15<sup>th</sup>, seconded by Mr. D'Agostino.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Handouts:  
FY19 Budget Discussion 5.7.18  
FY19 Budget Barometer

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Handouts:  
5/1/18 Budget Barometer  
5/1/18 BPS FY19 Budget Discussion spreadsheets