

**ANDOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ANDOVER, CT 06232
Special Board of Education Meeting
Wednesday, January 17, 2024
7:00 pm
Virtual Meeting Only via ZOOM for Budget**

Members Present: Michael Beckwith, Gerard Cremé, Brianne Lanzieri, Shannon O. Louden, Celeste Willard

Members Absent: Steven Fuss, Caitlin Greenhouse

Administration: Valerie Bruneau, Superintendent
Taylor Parker, Principal
Terri Smith, Finance

Others: Kim Person

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairperson Willard, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Reminder of Budget Building Seminar Ground Rules

Chairperson Willard reminded everyone of the ground rules for all of the Budget Building Seminars and encouraged the public to send any questions or comments about the budget to the dedicated email address for such.

3. Budget Building Seminar 2 – Focus Topics: Special Education, Supplies, Pre-K

Superintendent Bruneau first provided a recap of the main issues discussed during Budget Building Seminar 1, which focused on the Curriculum and Instruction aspects of the budget. She then shared her screen to present a slideshow about the three focus topics for Seminar 2.

A. Special Education

Superintendent Bruneau reminded everyone that AES' Special Education services are those which AES is legally obligated to provide. She then discussed the number of AES students requiring Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), 504 Plans, and Scientifically Research-Based Intervention (SRBI) services. More screenings and consultations are often needed in the pre-K and K grades to determine the needs of AES students for services as soon as possible. Superintendent Bruneau detailed the number of hours she anticipates will be required during the 2024-2025 school year for the Special Education services that AES is required to provide, such as for speech and language, psychological services, social work, occupational therapy, and physical therapy, noting that the hours listed include those for meetings with parents, screenings, evaluations,

testing, classroom observation and communications, and not simply for time working directly with the students.

All Special Education services are in the 1200's of the third set of numbers on AES' budget documents. IEPs are required to be reviewed on an annual basis and require additional comprehensive testing every three years, for which testing a special consultant might be needed. The Special Education budget includes expenses for equipment, salaries, contracted service providers, transportation (for which AES pays to rent the Town's bus with wheelchair accessibility), and Extended School Year (ESY) services. IEPs require that some or all services are provided to students as ESY services during the summer.

The "good news" for this budget topic is that the budgetary needs have decreased by \$96,000, because AES no longer is required to pay for an outplacement. While Superintendent Bruneau recommends that the budgeted line items for Special Education services for the 2024-2025 school year are increased by some \$44,500, there is a net decrease of some \$51,500 because of the decrease for the outplacement.

B. Supplies

The budget for instructional supplies for Special Education must be stated separately because of a report that is required by the State. Superintendent Bruneau does not foresee any increases needed specifically for Special Education supplies for the 2024-2025 school year but the general supplies needed are included in other line items.

C. Pre-K

Although the pre-K classes typically are self-funded through a School Readiness grant, Smart Start funding, and tuition, Superintendent Bruneau wanted to address the addition of a third pre-K classroom because of the increase in Andover's "birth to three" students. The pre-K class is the largest growing class of Andover students out of all of the classes through the twelfth grade! Superintendent Bruneau anticipates having a good trajectory for the 2025-2026 school year.

4. **Comments from the Public** – None.
5. **Adjournment** – Chairperson Willard adjourned the Special Meeting at 8:03 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Shannon O. Loudon, BOE Member**