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**BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD  
NOVEMBER 28, 2017  
MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Brookline School Board was conducted on Tuesday, November 28, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy.

Chairman Matthew Maguire presided:

Members of the Board Present: Lauren DiGennaro, Vice Chairman  
Alison Marsano, Secretary  
Kenneth Haag  
Erin Sarris

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent  
Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent  
Kristen Maher, Assistant Business Administrator  
Dennis Dobe, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy  
Daniel Molinari, Principal, Richard Maghakian Memorial School  
Brian Rater, Brookline Finance Committee (arrived at 6:40 p.m.)

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AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

Superintendent Corey requested the agenda be adjusted by removing the math presentation, which would be provided at a later date.

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**MOTION BY MEMBER DIGENNARO THAT THE AGENDA BE ADJUSTED AS REQUESTED  
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HAAG  
MOTION CARRIED  
5-0-0**

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36

CORRESPONDENCE/RESIGNATIONS/NOMINATIONS

Superintendent Corey informed the Board of his receipt of a letter of Intent to Retire from Karen Kulick, Special Education Coordinator, effective June 30, 2018. In her letter, Ms. Kulick states, during the past 8 years it has been a pleasure serving the students, staff, and community of the Brookline School District. The educational experience at RMMS and CSDA, which focuses on quality instruction and outstanding professionalism has allowed her to work with an exceptional staff that places children first.

Superintendent Corey expressed his gratitude to Ms. Kulick for her service to the SAU as did the Board.

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**MOTION BY MEMBER DIGENNARO TO ACCEPT, WITH REGRET, THE LETTER OF INTENT TO RETIRE FROM KAREN KULICK, WITH AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF JUNE 30, 2018  
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS  
MOTION CARRIED  
5-0-0**

51  
52

PUBLIC INPUT - None

53  
54

PRINCIPALS' REPORT

55  
56

Principal Molinari spoke of the District's receipt of a \$500 Augmented Reality Sandbox (A.R. Sandbox) Grant. It is a 3D/4D type model that students can manipulate to solve real world problems around erosion, landforms,

1 etc. Instead of students visually seeing these concepts, they can manipulate, and problem solve. Additional  
2 grants are being sought as the cost of the sandbox is around \$1,500.

3  
4 Principal Molinari provided a presentation (copy attached to [agenda](#)) on the playground equipment at the  
5 Richard Maghakian Memorial School (RMMS). The latest inspection identified areas needing to be addressed.  
6 The presentation detailed the work to be done (in order presented).

7  
8 When asked about the plan for the existing equipment on the preschool playground, Principal Molinari  
9 responded the plan is to not replace it. They can use the equipment that is not residential in nature.  
10 Eventually, consideration can be given to the purchase of commercial grade preschool equipment, which is  
11 costly. When asked how old the playground structure is, he noted he has been searching for records, and was  
12 able to identify the company it was purchased from, but not when. He believes it may have been early to mid  
13 '90s. Chairman Maguire stated the equipment was present when his youngest child attended the school some  
14 16 years ago.

15  
16 When asked if replacement of the playground equipment and repairs should be included in the Capital  
17 Improvements Plan (CIP), e.g., long-term planning, he noted, the District will continue to be audited (through  
18 insurance company; Primex) if not addressing the issues identified.

19  
20 Superintendent Corey stated this same audit was done in the Hollis School District a few years back, and the  
21 way identified issues were addressed was through a three-year plan; each year the operating budget included  
22 funds to address issues. The current draft of the FY19 budget includes \$12,000 - \$13,000 for the equipment.  
23 The pieces where concern was expressed will be addressed. The Administration considered a few grant  
24 opportunities. Playground grants are typically matching funds only, which requires planning. The SAU has a  
25 few companies it can look to in determining when the existing equipment was installed. They do have  
26 replacement parts, etc. One of the biggest pieces is the actual landing surface. We started with the  
27 blue/rubberized mulch, which is expensive, but over the long-term is the best solution.

28  
29 Principal Dobe stated project Canis Lupus deals with all offerings outside of the standard curriculum;  
30 enrichment, acceleration, and extension programming. Canis Lupus 2.0 is the experiential learning; a program  
31 that was put together to formalize the way they approach field trips, other off-campus enrichment programs,  
32 and after school programs.

33  
34 Principal Dobe spoke of having recently had the opportunity to visit each grade level to talk about school safety  
35 as part of the annual review of emergency response procedures. Students did a tremendous job approaching  
36 difficult and uncomfortable topics in a very mature way. An off-site evaluation drill was conducted on the  
37 Tuesday before the holiday break, and went very well.

38  
39 A home & security audit was recently conducted by an officer from the New Hampshire State Department,  
40 which went very well. The investments and projects undertaken in recently years to improve the security of the  
41 school and grounds have paid off.

42  
43 When asked about the recent water problem, Principal Dobe stated it to have been an end-cap on a pipe  
44 (termination point) that had corroded resulting in water flooding the 5<sup>th</sup> grade wing over the break. Five  
45 classrooms had to be relocated for part of the previous day. All but 2 were up and running again before the  
46 end of the day, and all were back to normal earlier in the day.

47  
48 They are in the process of compiling a list of damage/loss, which will be submitted to the insurance carrier. It  
49 is anticipated work will need to be done on some of the floors. They will be going through all the heating units,  
50 inspecting the caps, and almost certainly replacing them, as a preventative measure.

51  
52 Superintendent Corey stated the first thing that occurs in such an instance is the disposal of anything that got  
53 wet. They then extract all water, and begin the period of allowing everything to dry. After a sufficient drying  
54 time, they go back in and wash it with clean water and environmentally friendly solvents. The rooms will be

1 done again over the winter break. An air quality sample will be taken just to ensure nothing has been missed.  
2 Carpets, etc. will be replaced, and the cost submitted to insurance.  
3

4 Superintendent Corey commended the administration across the SAU commenting as much as we are three  
5 separate unique districts we don't act that way when something goes wrong. Everybody pitches in and we  
6 make sure we do what is best for the students. An update will be provided once the insurance claim is  
7 finalized. He stated his belief the tiles in the rooms will also need to be replaced given the temperature of the  
8 water and concern the glue will start to come up at some point.  
9

10 Principal Molinari noted, since reported at the last Board meeting, enrollment has increased by 3. The  
11 enrollment sheet has been updated. Registration for Kindergarten will open on December 1<sup>st</sup>. They have been  
12 contacting private preschools in the area (25), reviewing birth records (19), considering current enrollment in  
13 the preschool (18), and have accounted for 62 possible students. It is understood, there will be overlap in  
14 terms of the birth records.  
15

## 16 DISCUSSION

17  
18 Superintendent Corey noted he had not received a response to the invitation to the membership of the Finance  
19 Committee, and was uncertain if members would be present. He suggested addressing the SAU update first.  
20

### 21 • SAU FY19 - Update

22  
23 The proposed budget results in a 5.88% increase, due in large part to the proposal for two additional positions;  
24 1 full time equivalent (FTE) in the Business Office and one part-time to assist H.R.  
25

26 The Public Hearing for the FY19 budget will take place at the Governing Board meeting scheduled for  
27 December 14<sup>th</sup> at the middle school. During the budgeting process, the proposed budget went through 7  
28 different renditions/reviews. The detail of reviews 4-7 (including associated cost of each) as well as that of the  
29 default budget were included with the information provided with the agenda.  
30

31 The default budget, which includes all legal contractual obligations of the SAU, is \$1,543,757, which represents  
32 an increase of \$45,127 or 3.01%.  
33

34 Round 4 was what was presented to the Governing Board at its last meeting at which time it was  
35 recommended the budget be revised to ensure it meets the needs of the SAU. The Budget Sub-Committee  
36 went through multiple versions of a revision trying to balance the needs of the SAU and the potential increase.  
37 There is always concern were the gap between the proposed budget and the default budget to become too  
38 great, voters could opt for the default budget, which would result in great difficulties in the effective running of  
39 the SAU.  
40

41 The Budget Sub-Committee made structural changes that would allow the increase to remain the same while  
42 placing priority on the positions.  
43

44 Round 7, which is the final draft, and what will be presented at the Public Hearing, includes the addition of a  
45 FTE in the Business Office. That position will help tremendously particularly during this time of year. When  
46 creating budgets, it becomes very difficult to monitor budgets. Superintendent Corey commented earlier in the  
47 day he was informed in the last 10 days, there have been 9 students move in across the SAU, seven of which  
48 are special education students (3 require mandated one-on-one paraprofessionals, 2 fall under the category of  
49 homeless, and 1 will have multiple services). That is one of the most difficult parts of doing a budget. Another  
50 example is the reduction experienced in the COOP District last year when special education students moved  
51 out of district, and pieces that had been budgeted were no longer needed. It is a very difficult balancing act.  
52 Having someone to monitor the budgets while budgets are being created would allow for better tracking of  
53 moving pieces. That monitoring occurs now only because existing staff put in countless hours in that effort.  
54

1 The Network Administrator will be retiring. It is not likely the SAU will be able to attract someone with the  
2 credentials of the current Administrator at the current salary. Originally proposed was a transition period of two  
3 months. One of those months was removed, and the intent is to make a request of the Governing Board that  
4 funds be utilized from the Unreserved Fund Balance, if necessary.

5  
6 At the request of the Governing Board, the Sub-committee revisited the proposed allocation for health  
7 insurance cost. Listed now are the costs associated with health and dental at the two-person rate for one  
8 position and the family rate for another. The new hire reduces some of the hours in the Business Office (half  
9 position). The salary adjustment to the Accounting Specialist and Assistant Business Administrator are  
10 included. Cleaning services for the SAU facility have been increased. The attic recycling cost has been  
11 removed.

12  
13 Being proposed is a budget in the amount of \$1,586,803, which represents an increase of \$88,173 or 5.88%.  
14 The proposed budget puts the SAU in a good position to move forward. It does maximize the building space.  
15 The SAU is working with the Hollis School Board (landlord) on potential options as far as ways to expand or  
16 recapitalize the barn.

17  
18 Superintendent Corey spoke of long-term planning for capital expenses (through the CIP), regular inspections  
19 on equipment such as that which was recently done for the playgrounds, and the benefits in terms of safety,  
20 budgeting, and liability. Those pieces have been put in place through the efforts of the Business Office, and,  
21 although requiring additional manpower to accomplish and maintain, protect both the students in terms of  
22 safety and the SAU from a financial standpoint.

23  
24 Superintendent Corey remarked, since the October Board meeting, the SAU has brought on board Amanda  
25 Graham, Accounting Specialist, and has been utilizing a retiree who has helped with some of the routine tasks.  
26 The retiree would end up retiring once again, and that part-time position would be filled. They see that part-  
27 time position primarily attributed to the H.R. Department, given the workload in that area. In the next year, he  
28 anticipates making a request for additional support for the Assistant Superintendent's office in the area of  
29 curriculum.

- 30  
31 • Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) - SAU Budget Information, Brookline Staffing and Special Education

32  
33 Brian Rater informed the Board Gale Taylor, Finance Committee member, will be moving to Concord, NH.

34  
35 Superintendent Corey spoke of the information included in the Board's agenda packet, noting if the Board were  
36 to move forward with the budget, as proposed, all Warrant Articles were passed including the teachers'  
37 contract, the result would be an increase of \$553,014.09 or 5.98%. The operating budget stands at an  
38 increase of 4.52%.

39  
40 The Administration is seeking guidance. There is the desire to ensure the priorities of the Administration align  
41 with those of the Board. Superintendent Corey stated his impression, given what is occurring across the SAU,  
42 the overall increase of 5.98% appears high as does the 4.52% increase associated with the operating budget.

43  
44 Superintendent Corey spoke of Warrant Articles that will be put before the voters. Being proposed is a  
45 renovation project at the high school that would bring in a new tech. center and robotics and fitness center.  
46 There will potentially be an article for a turf field (12-year lifespan). The SAU is desperate for an additional  
47 field. It appears to be more cost effective to go with turf because of the amount of usage you can get out of it,  
48 and a reduction in the amount of maintenance support needed. Were an additional grass field to be installed,  
49 there would likely be the need for at least an additional part-time maintenance person (approx. \$30,000 cost).  
50 The difference in cost between turf and grass is about half a million. A turf field would pay for itself. Having  
51 checked with the Bedford School District, who has had a turf field for the past 15 years, he was made aware  
52 the only maintenance they have been required to do is purchase a sweeper (redistributes the filler; \$5,000) and  
53 repave the lines a single time. They do have lights, which is an option the COOP School Board is discussing  
54 given the increased hours of use that would provide.



1 Superintendent Corey spoke of the goal of balancing the increases from district to district.

2  
3 The priorities of the Administration, in no order, are: 1) classroom teachers; there is concern with Kindergarten  
4 enrollment. One of two strategies would have to be taken; the District could decide funding that position would  
5 be too costly, and put in place a contingency fund that could be utilized if the projected enrollment numbers  
6 materialize or decide to include an instructional assistant in the classrooms. Placeholders have been included  
7 in the proposed budget (full-loaded cost), 2) moving the STEM position to full-time. The STEM position in the  
8 classroom has been outstanding, and the District runs the risk of losing the individual if not moving to a full-  
9 time position (\$34,000 cost), and 3) teacher and support staff contracts.

10  
11 Superintendent Corey remarked information that has not yet been included in the proposed budget, and for  
12 which additional information is awaited, is the potential revenue for Kindergarten. A placeholder will be put in  
13 to receive the revenue. There are a number of different things communities are doing; if a taxpayer funded  
14 program, some communities are looking at it as a windfall, and in the case of Brookline, Derry, and Milford,  
15 there are three different strategies. He is taking the strategy of wait and see. Derry has decided to reduce the  
16 portion parents will have to pay for the afternoon. Superintendent Corey noted many communities have  
17 decided not to have Keno, revenue from which would go to the State and be redistributed to offset the cost of  
18 Kindergarten.

19  
20 One of the things that had been discussed is the phone system at CSDA. Knowing where the District is now,  
21 from a budget point of view, everything must be re-evaluated. It may be that the Administration decides it can  
22 struggle through for another year (could move \$25,000 out of the operating budget and into the maintenance  
23 trust).

24  
25 Nearly all technology requests have been zeroed out because of qualifying for the Federal Rural Education  
26 Achievement Program (REAP) grant. The purpose of that grant is for the purchase of technology. The only  
27 area within the budget that technology dollars have remained is for teacher devices.

28  
29 The Administration is recommending a contribution to the Special Education Trust Fund of \$25,000.

30  
31 One of the things the Administration is seeking feedback on is the idea of a contingency fund. Superintendent  
32 Corey spoke of the contingency fund of the Hollis School District. Each year the taxpayers are asked for a  
33 \$95,000 contribution to that fund. Those monies can only be spent after gaining approval of the Board and  
34 Budget Committee, and after a formal discussion at a Board meeting. It is a mechanism that has not been  
35 utilized since his time in the District, and is not designed to be utilized. What it does is provides the opportunity  
36 to address unanticipated circumstances that cannot be addressed through the operating budget. In the COOP  
37 School District, the contingency fund is funded through budget surplus. He recommended the same structure  
38 be utilized in Brookline were the decision made to establish such a fund.

39  
40 Superintendent Corey stated his belief there will be the need for a teaching position or paras in the budget.  
41 Whether that need will materialize is not yet known, and there is reluctance to fund such a position. Were a  
42 contingency fund established and monies allocated there, there would be the flexibility to address whatever  
43 needs arise. There is the risk that the voters won't support such a request, but the same risk exists if including  
44 the cost of two teachers in a budget that is not approved, e.g., operating on a default budget.

45  
46 When asked, Superintendent Corey stated, were the contingency fund to be approved, monies remaining at  
47 year end would simply be reallocated to the fund as opposed to being returned to the tax base. The ability to  
48 fund it would be contingent on there being a surplus. When asked, he stated the order in which the Warrant  
49 Articles appear is the order in which they are funded. The Administration could speak with legal counsel  
50 regarding wording that could provide some flexibility, e.g., providing the ability to fund more than one account if  
51 surplus is not sufficient to cover all.

52  
53 Superintendent Corey commented on the effort put forth to include all needed items. Each year the budget  
54 process begins with a look back at the work of previous years. Historical knowledge is preserved to identify  
55 the number of times (years) each other has been proposed and postponed.

1 It was noted the only item that is not included in the current version is the cost associated with the BESSA  
2 contract. The SAU assessment number may fluctuate depending upon the action of the Governing Board at its  
3 December meeting. The contingency fund (proposed at \$50,000) is included. From operating budget to  
4 operating budget, there is an increase of \$398,970.09 or 4.52%.

5  
6 Information included with the agenda relative to the budget detail for new items depicts the Administration's  
7 support of math intervention in the form of a program called Dreambox at both schools. It is a program where  
8 a student performs a few exercises after which the math instruction is tailored to his/her level. The defined  
9 STEM software takes it to the next level. He spoke of being the only SAU in New Hampshire that now has  
10 robotics K-12. Great value is seen in the skillset being taught.

11  
12 Under personnel, is the placeholder for the positions already described, a science specialist for \$17,000 a  
13 classroom teacher listed as TBD, and a part-time custodian. Superintendent Corey spoke of how clear the  
14 need for that position became when the water heater valve broke (limited on the number of people that could  
15 be called in), and having a part-time person on hand could avoid an overtime situation. During the summer  
16 months, being able to allocate the hours on a part-time person to items such as a painting project would allow  
17 the full-time staff to remain focused on the cleaning.

18  
19 The science specialist is listed under both RMMS (\$17,000) and CSDA (\$17,000) as the position is split  
20 between the buildings. The classroom teacher at CSDA is listed (grade 6). Also listed is \$1,250 for a day for  
21 the paraprofessionals, to learn student IEPs, etc. prior to the start of the school year. That is being listed within  
22 the proposed budget; however, there are ongoing discussions of how that could be done.

23  
24 Items listed under new computer equipment will be funded through the REAP grant. Under replacement  
25 computer equipment, listed are the laptops for staff (\$5,200; 6 @ \$650), a copier for the teachers' room at  
26 RMMS, staff laptops at CSDA (\$6,500) and a copier for the main office.

27  
28 Under hosted software, Barracuda is the filtering system, which is required. Both E-Rate funds and REAP  
29 grant dollars are received, and in both cases, you are guaranteeing the Federal Government you will have  
30 some sort of filtering system to protect students. Infinite Visions is how payroll, etc. is tracked across the SAU  
31 (Brookline portion listed).

32  
33 The area of facilities/maintenance is an area where discussions could be had, e.g., if the District can make do  
34 with the phone system for another year, \$25,000 or more could be moved out of this area.

35  
36 Other items listed under facilities/maintenance include, for RMMS, classroom sinks in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade  
37 wing (\$7,800), playground equipment, one boiler replacement (\$8,500; will need to look at an overhaul long-  
38 term), carpet (\$3,000 for classroom; all carpets must be fire rated), HVAC work/air handler (\$12,000) and for  
39 CSDA, carpet (\$3,000; music room), window servicing (\$3,500; few done each year as part of the identified  
40 service/replacement cycle), fit and repaint exterior doors, and carpet (\$3,000; classroom). Superintendent  
41 Corey noted the current balance in the Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund to be \$72,341. The addition of  
42 \$50,000 is proposed.

43  
44 The proposed budget represents a 1% decrease in the cost of health insurance. The budget also includes  
45 approx. \$58,000 or 10% increase in special education costs. Superintendent Corey spoke of the tremendous  
46 job done in that area. The new program that began at RMMS for the self-contained students is paying for  
47 itself; a better education for the students and avoidance of out-of-district costs for the District.

48  
49 Superintendent Corey stated the Administrative team would like to hear the Board's thoughts on where the  
50 proposed budget is presently, and where the Board would like the budget to be.

51  
52 Chairman Maguire spoke of the potential for several issues to be before the voters, and stated his desire to,  
53 where possible, reduce the overall increase/impact on the tax rate. Superintendent Corey remarked it would  
54 be helpful for the Administration to understand the desired percentage of increase so that there is a number to

1 work towards. He noted within the 5.98% proposed increase 1.5% is related to the teachers' contract, which is  
2 a contractual obligation.

3  
4 Chairman Maguire commented an amount below 5% would be good, but that represents a reduction of  
5 \$100,000, and he is uncertain that level of reduction can be achieved. Superintendent Corey responded it  
6 depends on approach, e.g., were the District to utilize a contingency fund to cover the cost of a teacher, should  
7 that become a necessity, that \$70,000 placeholder reduction would come out of the operating budget. Were  
8 the contingency to be listed as one of the first Warrant Articles, the funding mechanism would be in place,  
9 providing there is a surplus at year end. Were the \$25,000 for the phone system and the placeholder for the  
10 teacher removed from the operating budget, it would represent a 1% reduction.

11  
12 Vice Chairman DiGennaro questioned if the District could get by for another year with the current phone  
13 system. Principal Dobe responded they could. The phone system works, and does not require service. It is  
14 outdated and lacks capacities they had hoped to have as part of the communication system, e.g., opportunities  
15 it would afford in terms of building security and emergency management. There are things that can be done  
16 with a modern phone system that cannot be done with the current system, e.g., all caller page from any phone  
17 in the building. That was highlighted in the recent meeting with Homeland Security. As far as voicemails, etc.,  
18 those functions are nice to have, but they can function without. Newer systems also have a one tone alarm  
19 from a phone punching in a code, e.g., if someone cannot announce that there is an emergency under way or  
20 breach, etc., they can punch a quick code that automatically sends an alert throughout the building. Mr. Haag  
21 spoke of COPSync, and was informed that requires someone to call it up on their computer and type in a  
22 message. It allows kind of a backchannel communication among people about what is going on, provides  
23 information to emergency responders, etc. That is an important function the District has. With COPSync  
24 teachers must be at their computers.

25  
26 When asked about the phone system at RMMS, Principal Molinari stated the voicemail is not currently working.  
27 Parts are difficult to come by. Superintendent Corey stated, in terms of the SAU, the system at the high school  
28 is the worst. It has taken three years, but theirs will remain in the budget this year.

29  
30 Ms. Sarris commented the key is the security aspects. When communicating with teachers, she utilizes email.  
31 Teachers are quick in their response to emails. Principal Molinari stated agreement. Chairman Maguire  
32 questioned if there would be economy of scale savings by doing the phone systems at both schools. It was  
33 noted the Town is looking at a new phone system.

34  
35 Superintendent Corey commented when the Principals were asked if they would rather have a teacher or a  
36 phone system, the decision was an easy one.

37  
38 Chairman Maguire questioned if the \$25,000 cost would bring the system up to an IP based system, and was  
39 informed it would. When asked if any of the cost could be covered through grant funds, Superintendent Corey  
40 stated E-Rate funds are unknown at this time of year. Last year the District was able to do the wiring at RMMS  
41 with the matching funds. They have moved away from the phones. Homeland Security grants don't cover  
42 phones. Every year those grants are changing.

43  
44 When asked to provide additional clarification of the proposed contingency fund, Superintendent Corey  
45 commented when the Kindergarten program was started, it was under the scenario of being cost neutral. Not  
46 knowing what will come from the State in terms of revenue, he is concerned with the idea of putting a cost in  
47 the budget for something that was sold to the community as cost neutral. Grades 1-6 are funded by the  
48 taxpayers. The current teacher/student ratios are in accordance with existing policy. If a contingency fund  
49 were developed, it would provide the Board greater flexibility as the funds could be used, if necessary, to cover  
50 some of the costs of a teaching position or other unanticipated item(s). Although \$50,000 would not cover the  
51 cost of a full-time teaching position, finding the additional \$20,000 in a \$10 million budget is possible.

52  
53 Superintendent Corey stated the directive he needs is a number or percentage that the Board would like to see  
54 the budget come in at. With that, he can continue work on the budget, and provide options for achieving the  
55 desired figure.

1 It was reiterated the current increase proposed for the operating budget (which does not include items  
2 addressed through Warrant Articles) is \$398,970.09 or 4.52%.

3  
4 Mr. Haag questioned how the headcount at the SAU compares to neighboring/similar districts, and was  
5 informed it is about \$1 million lower than surrounding districts that are multi-districts. The allocation to the  
6 Brookline School District was \$271,051. The brunt of the increase goes to the COOP School District, which is  
7 still indirectly the tax bill of Brookline residents. At the same time, at the COOP School District level, that  
8 budget, because of reductions in special education with students aging out, is seeing a \$250,000 reduction in  
9 costs.

10  
11 Brian Rater, Finance Committee, stated the District budget accounts for roughly 1/3 of the overall tax rate in  
12 the Town. Brookline has the highest tax rate of any town in the State, and that has been the case for the past  
13 4-5 years. Part of that is because we have excellent schools and the lack of a business base to offset some of  
14 that cost. Mr. Haag questioned if the Planning Board is working towards addressing the business aspect. Mr.  
15 Rater stated the Economic Development Committee is focused on bringing business to Town. The Selectmen  
16 have looked at taking advantage of certain laws to provide tax incentives to businesses. He clarified it is either  
17 the Town or the School tax rate that is the highest in the State, the other is in the top 10.

18  
19 The percentage of increase in the operating budget is what he focuses on as he believes that is what voters  
20 focus on; see it in separate context from warrant articles. He stated his goal for the overall increase to be  
21 under 3%. He commented, what they do with the budget cycle is set the goal to see what that looks like,  
22 decide if it is a good trade off, and then adjust from there.

23  
24 He questioned the need for the boiler replacement, and was informed it is a residential boiler, and in need of  
25 replacement. Mr. Rater stated his preference to look at a long-term plan, and questioned if the purchase could  
26 be delayed for a year or two to allow that to happen. Superintendent Corey responded what he and the  
27 Administrative team were looking for, at this time, were suggestions. Any suggestions would be vetted, and  
28 the Administration would come back before the Board with responses.

29  
30 Mr. Rater stated his belief there is a bond for the school that will be paid off in a few years (accounts for 1-2%  
31 of the overall budget), and suggested a good time to plan for some capital items that have been pushed back  
32 year after year would be when that happens.

33  
34 Ms. Sarris spoke of the number of small vendors utilized for purchases such as supplies, and questioned if  
35 there is a plan to move to a big box company, e.g., Amazon, etc.

36  
37 Kristen Maher, Assistant Business Administrator, stated the SAU gave Amazon a chance at the start of the  
38 school year with the hope of ordering in bulk, but that did not go as well as planned. When ordering from them  
39 you don't always get the product from them. You may order 40 books, but they arrive from 12 different sites in  
40 12 different packages. The receiving end of that was difficult, e.g., trying to identify who ordered 12 books only  
41 to receive another package of 12 several days later. If the additional staff is approved, there may be the  
42 opportunity to consider other cost savings possibilities in that regard.

43  
44 Mr. Rater questioned enrollment projections. Superintendent Corey noted the information contained in the  
45 agenda packet, and added NESDEC is projecting enrollment to increase in Brookline. He believes it will occur,  
46 and be more of a bubble affect.

47  
48 Mr. Rater commented several years ago there were 60-63 students in the lower elementary grades, and now  
49 there are 68-78. It has gone up significantly in all grades at the elementary level. Superintendent Corey  
50 cautioned when the District hears from new families they are coming in for the schools, and are accepting the  
51 tax rate for the schools so it is a fine balancing act where if we don't maintain the schools then people who may  
52 no longer have school-aged children and may be looking to move out of Town won't be able to get back the  
53 investment they have made into their home.



1 Ms. Sarris commented the teacher/student ratio is an easy data point for families looking to move into the  
2 District.

3  
4 Vice Chairman DiGennaro questioned what is occurring with the bring your own device program at CSDA.  
5 Principal Dobe stated it continues to be well subscribed to. When asked if there would continue to be a need  
6 for the program with the proposed technology purchases, he stated there would. The desire is to achieve a 1/1  
7 ratio.

8  
9 Vice Chairman DiGennaro stated her appreciation for the interest in moving the science specialist to full-time.  
10 Although she understands why writing instruction/social studies allocations were removed from the latest round  
11 of the budget, she sees everything that was left in, in terms of smaller items, were all STEM and math related.  
12 She commented for all the innovation that the District is putting into STEM, she is looking for a little innovation  
13 with reading enrichment and reading remediation; reading and writing overall.

14  
15 Principal Dobe commented the District fell very heavily behind in mathematics and science where, historically,  
16 the schools did fantastically well in literacy. We still maintain the reading specialists/literacy coordinators who  
17 do a lot of the things mentioned. It likely just gets less press. They are very active doing a number of things  
18 not only to enrich but also to support teachers and their professional and program development related to  
19 reading and writing. The District has brought some things on board recently such as Read 180, which does  
20 not service all students, but for those students that it does, there has been remarkable growth.

21  
22 Ms. Sarris commented one of the key things that people like about STEM activities, and that will be important  
23 as the program and curriculum progress, is integration. There is a lot of cross-curricular, cross-grade  
24 involvement. To highlight the language arts, humanities, etc. within that same concept of integration is a great  
25 next step in the process. She commented the integrated specials and problem-based learning at RMMS has  
26 addressed a lot of that. Principal Molinari commented the Technology Integrator goes to each PLC. She is  
27 integrating with ELA one week with all grade levels and with science another, etc.

28  
29 Mr. Rater commented on the anticipated reduction in health insurance cost, and questioned how solid that  
30 number is. Superintendent Corey stated it to be the guaranteed rate at this point.

31  
32 Mr. Haag noted current enrollment shows 5 teachers in grade 1, and questioned if the position that would be  
33 removed from that area would be reallocated, and was informed that is the case. The grade one teacher will  
34 move into grade 2. Mr. Haag commented that would get the District close to the class size policy in each  
35 grade. Principal Molinari remarked Kindergarten is the wildcard. Right now, we have 3.5 teachers. Were a  
36 teacher needed there, it would bring down the ratios to 15-16 kids in a class in Kindergarten where currently it  
37 is at 19-20.

38  
39 Superintendent Corey reiterated the options to address the possible need for an additional teacher; fund it  
40 through contingency, if it is going to be a Kindergarten position do we elevate the part-time person to full-time,  
41 do we use paraprofessionals instead of a teacher. If the needs end up being in Kindergarten the most cost-  
42 effective means would be the half-time to full-time. There would remain the discussion of whether to fund the  
43 additional cost through the operating budget or a contingency account. Potential revenue from the State has  
44 not been budgeted. If it is a half-time Kindergarten person it may be covered by that revenue. However, a  
45 taxpayer paying for half-day Kindergarten may be expecting that revenue to reduce their cost. He commented  
46 a lot of articles have talked about an adequate amount of \$3,600 for Kindergarten, but we all know cost per  
47 pupil is closer to \$12,000 or \$13,000.

48  
49 **Mr. Rater departed at 7:57 p.m.**

- 50  
51 • Update on Brookline Teachers Negotiation

52  
53 Chairman Maguire noted an agreement was not reached last year resulting in the teaches operating without a  
54 contract this year. Negotiations began prior to the summer and continued through the fall. An agreement has  
55 been reached. The two-year contract results in a cost of \$154,095. For year 1 of the salaries, the increase

1 would be a step plus 1.5% for those on the table, and 2.25% for those that have moved off the table. Year two  
2 is a step plus .75% for those on the salary table and 2.25% for those that have moved off the table.

3  
4 One of the big changes is in insurance; have switched to a cap only plan. A new feature is a Flexible Spending  
5 Account (FSA) plan.

6  
7 DELIBERATIONS

- 8  
9 • To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy **ACA** – Freedom from Sexual Harassment  
10 1<sup>st</sup> Reading 8-22-17 (as amended)  
11 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading 9-26-17  
12 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading 10-24-17 (as amended)

13 *Given its fourth reading;*

14  
15 Principal Dobe remarked policy ACA has been on the Board's agenda, and the topic of conversation for a few  
16 months. No new changes have been proposed since the time of the last reading. A prior change was in the  
17 language related to reporting an incident so that it indicates "any district administrator" as opposed to "the  
18 Principal".

19  
20 **MOTION BY MEMBER DIGENNARO TO ACCEPT THE FOURTH READING AND ADOPT POLICY ACA –**  
21 **FREEDOM FROM SEXUAL HARASSMENT**  
22 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HAAG**  
23 **MOTION CARRIED**

24 **5-0-0**

- 25  
26 • To see what action the Board will take regarding the ratification of the Tentative Agreement with the  
27 Brookline Teachers Association

28  
29 **MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO RATIFY THE TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH THE BROOKLINE**  
30 **TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**  
31 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS**

32  
33 ON THE QUESTION

34  
35 Ms. Marsano questioned language found in the second to last paragraph on page 6, which reads: "Any full-  
36 time staff member who is eligible for health insurance under this Agreement, who shows proof of otherwise  
37 being covered by a health insurance plan roughly comparable to any plan offered under this Agreement, and  
38 who does not elect to receive health insurance through the District for the fiscal year, and who remains  
39 employed by the district for the complete school year, shall receive additional compensation from the District of  
40 \$2,000 in 2017-18, and \$2,500 in 2018-19 and thereafter." specifically, if there were any changes outside of  
41 the dollar amounts, and was informed there were not. She asked for clarification of the "and thereafter" at the  
42 end of the paragraph, e.g., concerned it would be \$2,500 in 2018-19, \$5,000 in year 2019-20, etc. It was  
43 suggested "and thereafter" could be replaced with "2019-20" to specifically address the term of the agreement.

44  
45 Superintendent Corey spoke of past practice where the amount had been \$2,000 each year of a contract. He  
46 agreed the question could be asked of legal counsel.

47  
48 The tentative agreement will be posted on the District and SAU website, and included in future agenda packets  
49 for continued exposure to the public.

50 **MOTION CARRIED**

51 **5-0-0**

1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2  
3 Brookline School Board . . . . . October 24, 2017

4  
5 *The following amendments were offered:*

6  
7 Page 3, Line 29 replace "Candidate" with "Candidates"  
8 Page 5, Line 14; replace "The" with "They"

9  
10 **MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT AS AMENDED**  
11 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS**  
12 **MOTION CARRIED**  
13 **5-0-0**

14  
15 NON-PUBLIC SESSION

16  
17 **MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION**  
18 **PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3, II (c) TO DISCUSS A MATTER, WHICH IF DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC, WOULD**  
19 **LIKELY AFFECT ADVERSELY THE REPUTATION OF A PERSON, OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF THE**  
20 **BODY OR AGENCY ITSELF**  
21 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER DIGENNARO**

22  
23 *A Viva Voce Roll Call was conducted, which resulted as follows:*

24  
25 Yea: Matthew Maguire, Lauren DiGennaro, Kenneth Haag, Erin Sarris, Alison Marsano

26  
27 Nay: 5  
0

28 **MOTION CARRIED**

29  
30 *The Board went into non-public session at 8:07 p.m.*  
31 *The Board came out of non-public session at 8:14 p.m.*

32  
33 ADJOURNMENT

34  
35 **MOTION BY MEMBER DIGENNARO TO ADJOURN**  
36 **SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS**  
37 **MOTION CARRIED**  
38 **5-0-0**

39  
40 *The November 28, 2017 meeting of the Brookline School Board was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.*

41  
42  
43  
44 Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_