

The Board of Education

Town of Brooklyn
119 Gorman Road
Brooklyn, CT 06234

Mae Lyons, Board Chair
Justin Phaiah, Secretary
Ailla Wasstrom-Evans

Melissa Perkins-Banas, Vice-Chair
Kayla Burgess
Deb Metzger

Mission: The Brooklyn Schools will foster a drive for learning within each student to reach his/her greatest potential. To achieve this mission, the school will continually improve its educational programs and services to meet this community's expectations for a quality education for all.

The Brooklyn Board of Education held their monthly meeting in the Brooklyn Middle School Auditorium and virtually on January 24, 2024 via Google Meet. In attendance were Mrs. Lyons, Dr. Perkins-Banas, Mr. Phaiah, Ms. Burgess, Mrs. Wasstrom-Evans (arrived at 5:36 p.m.) and Mrs. Metzger.

Also in attendance were Patricia Buell, Superintendent, and Donna DiBenedetto, Business Manager.

The Brooklyn Board of Education will hold multiple budget workshops to determine the needs and priorities for the 2024-2025 school year. There will be as many meetings as necessary to agree to a budget to be shared with the Board of Finance. Each budget workshop will be via Google Meet and the Public is welcome to attend.

We will not be able to respond to questions live, but welcome comments or questions at budgetquestions@brooklynschools.org. Budget questions and answers will be posted on the Brooklyn Public Schools website at www.brooklynschools.org.

This budget will be passed by the Board of Education once they have finished discussing the budget.

Budget workshops for the 2024-2025 school year are scheduled for:

January 3, 2024	5:30-7:30 PM	March 27, 2024	5:30-6:30 PM
January 24, 2024	5:30-6:30 PM	April 24, 2024	5:30-6:30 PM
February 28, 2024	5:30-6:30 PM		

1. Attendance, Establishment of a Quorum, Call to Order

Mrs. Lyons began with roll call: Melissa Perkins-Banas, Justin Phaiah, Kayla Burgess, Deb Metzger, and herself, Mae Lyons. Ailla Wasstrom-Evans arrived at 5:36 p.m.

Quorum established. Meeting called to order at 5:35 p.m.

2. Budget Discussion

The Superintendent's Proposed Budget for the 2024-2025 school year is \$22,856,083, which is \$1,221,083 or a 5.64% increase over the 2023-2024 school year. The budget drivers are salary increases, special education costs and high school tuition.

Mrs. Buell discussed a few adjustments that were made to the budget from the last Budget Workshop on January 3, 2024. The new Superintendent's Proposed Budget for 2024-2025 school year is \$22,780,939, which is \$1,145,939 or 5.30% increase over the 2023-2024 school year. Mrs. Buell discussed that there is a possibility that insurance costs may be lower than anticipated. She also stated there will be a grant of \$144,000 applied to the new reading program at Brooklyn Elementary School.

Mrs. Wasstron-Evans asked where there are so many step 11 salaries at Brooklyn Middle School, are you anticipating a lot of retirements and how do you plan on filling those positions step/salary wise? Mrs. Buell stated that we can hire at any range based on the applicant's experience and certification. She explained that step 11 is the highest step and staff stays at this level until they retire. If a teacher has been working at Brooklyn Public Schools for 11 years, they may have another 20 or more years left before retiring.

Mrs. Lyons asked if the ESSER funds will be the next grant to go away. Mrs. Buell stated there will no longer be ESSER funds for next year covering the Technology Director and Business Manager, which we have been planning for.

Mrs. Burgess asked a question in regards to the special education budget paraprofessional line increase, is it adding more people based on the need of the students coming in? Mrs. Buell stated that is correct.

Mrs. Wasstron-Evans asked if a decision had been made on the new reading curriculum. Mrs. Buell stated they have not made a final decision, but they are leaning towards Witt and Wisdom.

The next budget meeting is scheduled for Wednesday February 28, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

3. Public Comment

None

4. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 6:15 p.m.
(Phaiah/Perkins-Banas)

No Discussion

Vote Count: 6, 0

Unanimous vote to approve

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca S. DiBenedetto

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Board Clerk