

**Groton Finance Committee
Groton Select Board
Groton-Dunstable Regional School District
School Committee
Middle School PAC
April 4, 2023 – 7:00 pm**

Call to Order to Return to Regular Session (from Executive Session) - 7:00 PM

GDRSD School Committee Members Present:

Rosanna Casavecchia, Yasmeen Cheema, Rafael Glod, Jeff Kubick, Brian LeBlanc, Lacey McCabe, Fay Raynor

Administration Present: Dr. Laura Chesson, Superintendent; Sherry Kersey, Director of Finance & Operations

Groton Finance Committee Present: B. Robertson (Chair), G. Green, M. Linskey, C. Doody, M. Sulprizio, D. Manugian

Groton Select Board Present: P. Cunningham, J. Reilly (Chair), B. Pine

Others: Kristyn MacInnis, SEPAC Representative, P. Dufresne, Groton Town Accountant

Documents Available at the Meeting: GDRSD April Budget Update: https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/2198/GDRSD/2919893/April_budget_update_1.pdf

Groton Select Board called to order at 7:01 pm

Groton Finance Committee called to order at 7:01 pm

Budget - Discussion/Vote

The Chair opened the discussion up to Superintendent Chesson to present the Budget Update for April 4, 2023. Dr. Chesson reviewed the budget modification prior to March which reflected salary modifications and a total reduction in the operating budget of \$338,482. Under non-salary the total reduction reflected in the operating budget was \$651,813; total budget modification prior to March was \$990,295. She then explained the current reductions/changes in reduction for consideration with an adjustment. “reduction of two 261-day building secretaries to 204” of \$20,740 would be removed and “moving expenses, OT reduction Unit C, AP salary differential” of \$20,740 would be added. The total salary reductions would total: \$484,966.

The SC vote on March 22 added \$310,000 with limited information about what expenses (positions, stipends) this money should be appropriated for. Dr. Chesson turned the discussion over to the Chair for clarification on the addition of the \$310,000.

Mr. Kubick presented his position on increasing other fees such as athletics, student activity, parking, and Peter Twomey Youth Center's Before and After School Care fees. He feels it would be a good place to start to raise revenue. Dr. Chesson offered that there is now competition with the Prescott Center for the before and after school care so to ask for higher fees would create a difficult situation. She also explained that GDRSD has the highest athletic and parking fees already in the "Market Basket" comparison. Ms. Casavecchia suggested that the \$310,000 be reduced to \$111,740 with a portion of the money being taken from Excess & Deficiency and the district continue to look for additional funding opportunities.

To get the Committee to discussion, the chair took an informal vote:

The Chair entertained a motion to approve the budget as recommended back on February 25 with the addition of \$111,740 as recommended by the Superintendent tonight funded by the usage of E&D.

So Moved - F. Raynor

Second - R. Casavecchia

Discussion - clarification of the FTE to be saved. The schedule will have to be run before the decision is made as to the subject area that would be affected. Dr. Chesson said that this would be a solution for this year only. Clarification on reductions - SU Tech teacher reduced to .5, elimination of 1 full year Asst. Principal/HS, reduction of overtime for Unit C, reduction of 1 HS World Language Teacher, reduction of 1 HS Guidance Counselor, reduction of 1 ELA FTE at the HS (currently open due to resignation).

All in Favor (informal vote)

Motion Approved 6 - 1

The Chair moved that the total appropriation for the Groton-Dunstable Regional School district for the fiscal year July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 be set at \$48,941,486 as presented by the following functions:

1000 (District Leadership and Administration):	\$ 1,296,176
2000 (Instructional Services):	\$ 25,771,459
3000 (Other School Services):	\$ 3,389,611
4000 (Maintenance):	\$ 3,259,464
5000 (Fixed Charges):	\$ 10,751,584
7000 (Fixed Assets):	\$ 1,116,538
8000 (Debt Retirement and Service):	\$ 596,800
9000 (Programs with Other Districts):	\$ 2,759,854

Second - R. Glod

Discussion - None

Roll Call - Y. Cheema, yes; R. Glod, yes; L. McCabe, yes; B. LeBlanc, yes; J. Kubick, No; F. Raynor, yes; Rosanna Casavecchia, yes

Motion Approved 6 - 1

The Chair moved that member towns be assessed in accordance with the Education Reform Law and the terms of the Agreement and amendments thereto as follows:

Groton Operating	\$ 25,937,716
Groton Capital	\$ 542,257
Groton Debt	\$ 465,796
Groton Total	\$ 26,945,769

Dunstable Operating	\$ 7,742,721
Dunstable Capital	\$ 188,281
Dunstable Debt	\$ 130,148
Dunstable Total	\$ 8,061,150

Second - R. Glod

Discussion-None

Roll Call - Y. Cheema, yes; R. Glod, yes; L. McCabe, yes; B. LeBlanc, yes; J. Kubick, yes; F. Raynor, yes; Rosanna Casavecchia, yes

Motion Approved 7 - 0

Dr. Chesson shared that every person in the district who is a Unit A member whose position is up for reduction will be offered another position in the district, that's available due to retirement. B. Pine, Groton Selectboard, thanked the Committee for making these difficult decisions but they are the right decisions for the town and it may be a good idea for next year that the process should start earlier. R. Casavecchia, acknowledged J. Kubick's efforts to think outside the box in finding other ways to save money.

School Committee Meeting Adjourned at 7:34 PM

Jo Ann Sivazlian, Secretary

Finance Committee Other Business:

On a motion by Mr. Robertson, seconded by Ms. Linskey, the Finance Committee voted in the majority to approve the FY24 Budget Message as written by the Town Manager.

The Vote: 5-0-1 (Mr. Green Abstained)

The FinCom members briefly discussed doing a deeper dive on individual GDRSD budget lines. Mr. Green wondered how per pupil costs are held down in Westford. It was noted that municipalities have more budgetary control over school operations when the district is non-regional.

Mr. Robertson officially adjourned the meeting of the Finance Committee at 7:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Patricia Dufresne (Town Accountant)