

Superintendent's Report: April 2022

Highlight of the Month: I really enjoyed attending the EES Auction night on March 26. A huge "shout out" to the auction committee, families and staff that made this successful event possible. It was wonderful to be sharing an evening with members of the Eastford learning community. With the lifting of COVID-related restrictions, I look forward to opportunities for more community events in the future.

News and Notes:

Educational Leadership

- I continue to remain involved in the development and implementation of the English Language Arts curriculum, the review and recommendation of new math instructional materials and the provision of a wider range of strategies and materials that address the varied social and emotional learning needs of our students.
- We are engaged in the search for quality candidates for our English Language Arts and elementary teacher positions as well as our Director of Pupil Services position.
- Due to unexpected circumstances, our English Language Arts teacher will not be returning following the April break. We have already posted for long-term substitute for the remainder of the school year. In the meantime, Carole is planning to cover the position with current certified staff and our existing substitute pool.

Facilities:

- I continue to work closely with the Facilities committee to address the ongoing concerns regarding our heating system as well as to look to proactive solutions to protect our aging plumbing system.
- We have not yet received a formal communication regarding our application for the roof construction project. I did, however, reach out to Tom Reault, who said that all materials are in but the State is experiencing delays.

Collaboration and Communication:

- Deb Richards and I continue to collaborate on purchases that impact both the school and the Town. We are currently engaged in the audit review process and a discussion concerning the amount of cyber insurance we should purchase.
- Our district continues to participate in a Regional Education Services collaborative for purchasing oil for the 2022-23 school year. A price for oil next year has not yet been determined. The next meeting of the Consortium is Wednesday, May 4 at 9:00AM. I will keep you updated.
- I continue to attend meetings of the local superintendents' group and in the twice per month State health meetings.
- We are also working with Pastor Moran to offer some family programs this spring.

Finance:

- Update on the budget process: Deb Richards will not be holding meetings with individual Town departments but will request additional information as needed. The Town Budget Hearing is on April 25.
- We recently received notification that the competitive application for additional after school and summer school funding was approved. This funding will allow us to offer additional supports in the area of social and emotional learning as well as another STEM summer school program in collaboration with Mystic Aquarium.

Comments on selected agenda items

XI. Unfinished Business

A. Discussion and Possible Action: Woodstock Academy Contract

There is nothing new to add to this item.

B. Policy 5118, Non-Resident Students

The BOE may wish to have a final discussion and vote on this policy separate from the others.

C. -G. Bylaws second reading

These items are a second reading related to repeal, replace, or retain existing Bylaws. It is the BOE's prerogative how it wishes to proceed with these items. We are voting on the retained items so that the review date in the BOE Policy book can be updated.

XII. New Business

D. Approval of School Readiness Grant Submission

The BOE vote, if approved, allows us to apply for and accept \$100,800.00 in Readiness Grant funds. The Readiness program serves children both with and without special needs, but we are obligated to first provide services to those with special needs. Our space limitations cap enrollment at 17 3- and 4-year-old children. In recent years, we have had more families interested in the program than what we have space for. It is important, therefore, to note that with only one Pre-K classroom we are not able to accept the applications for all the 4-year-old children in our district. At this time, we anticipate that we will not be able to accommodate 12 requests to participate in the program next year, as we only have 5 open spaces. Of the applicants for next school year, 9 of them are for 4-year-olds and 8 of them are for 3-year-olds.

It is also important for the BOE to recognize that the grant funding of \$100,800.00 does not cover all the expenditures for the program. In 2021-22 it is anticipated that, in addition to the grant, \$21,721 in fees and \$58,074 in budget dollars are needed to cover costs. In 2022-23 an estimated \$6,126 of fees and \$87,733 budget dollars may be needed. Kymberli has prepared the attached spreadsheet of estimated costs and funding source for your information.

The provision of a preschool experience for all our 4-year-old children is something that the BOE may want to explore further.

E. Approval of IDEA Grant Submission

The BOE vote, if approved, allows us to apply for and accept close to \$40,000 in IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act) dollars. These dollars fund a portion of 2 paraprofessional salaries and a small portion of the SLP's salary. The amount of the grant does not vary too much year to year, so that as salaries increase, more of the cost is carried in the budget.

F. Ethel Cushing Gardner Music Scholarship recipient

The Scholarship Committee made recommendations of awardees to the Hartford Foundation. The BOE is voting in support of the committee's decision regarding the recommended award. The identities of the recipients are not announced until the recipients receive their letter of award from the Hartford Foundation.

G. Set graduation date

To avoid conflict with a Woodstock Academy event, the administration is recommending a graduation date be set for June 16. We have not yet received the date of Ellis Tech's graduation.

H. -K. First reading of the next set of Bylaws reviewed by the Policy Committee.

As discussed at the last meeting, the Policy Committee is engaged in the process of reviewing the Bylaws of the BOE. Lauren will provide you with additional information regarding these proposed changes to these bylaws at the meeting.

XIV. Financial Reports

As always, if there are any questions regarding the financial reports, please contact me.

C. Budget Transfers

Based on the recommendation of the Facilities Committee to move forward with the pump installation project as well as add to the EMCOR bank of hours at a rate of \$130 per hour, the following transfer is requested:

\$19,500 from 100.1200.3.111.00.5 (Salary, Teachers, SE) to 100.2600.1.340.00.5 (Purch Svc, Maintenance)