

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 3/16/26
TIME: 8:00AM
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Town of Seymour ~ Board of Finance
MINUTES
Budget Deliberations
Presentation of Board of Education Budget
Monday, March 9, 2026 at 7:00pm
Norma Drummer Room – Seymour Town Hall

Members Present: Andy North, Quinn Levey, Bettyann Peck, Richard Demko, Kristyn Haniewicz, Mary Kruger; Alice Levey (alternate).

Members Absent: Beverly Kennedy; Robin Andrews, Tracy Rappa (alternates)

Others Present: Jason Vieira, Monica Dimon, Annmarie Drugonis, Steve Ditria, Jean Falbo-Sosnovich, Dr. Susan Compton, Kristin Bruno, Kristen Harmeling, Dr. David Olechna, Shannon Levey, Lori Nespoli, Kristopher Boyle, Peter Kubik, Al Bruno, Chris Champagne, Richard Peck, Cindy Dion, Jennifer Magri, Elizabeth White

Item #1 – Call Meeting to order

Chairman Richard Demko called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Item #2 – Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone saluted the Flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Richard Demko introduced all members (and alternates) of the Board of Finance.

Item #3 – Public Comment

None

Item #4 - Presentation/Discussion of 2026/2027 Budget – Board of Education

- Board of Education Chairman Kristin Bruno along with Superintendent of Schools Dr. Susan Compton, Director of Curriculum Dr. David Olechna, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel, Board Secretary Shannon Levey, and several Board members.
- There was a presentation that was put together as a project of our high school social media class highlighting the Seymour Schools.

The FY 2026-2027 Budget Proposal

\$43,291,819

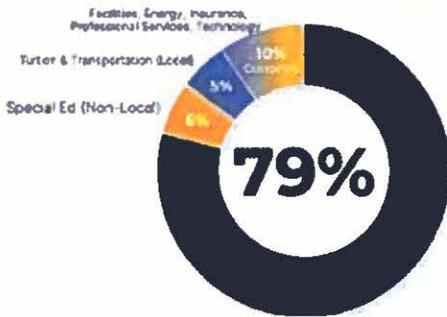
**A 4.7% increase over
the current budget**

Guiding Principles:

-  1. Provide a high-quality educational program that advances long-term goals.
-  2. Identify and prioritize operational efficiencies and reallocations.
-  3. Develop a budget that is respectful of and responsive to taxpayers.
-  4. Collaborate with the Town to pursue cost-sharing opportunities.

Investing Directly in Our People

79% of the budget is allocated to Salaries and Benefits.



Key Drivers Behind the 4.7% Increase

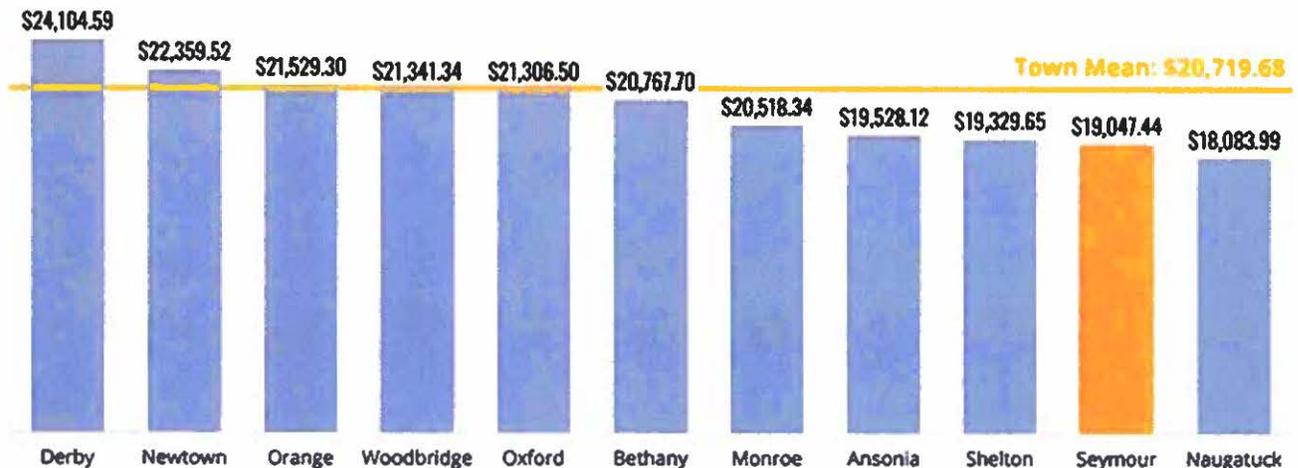
These fixed staffing and insurance obligations account for the vast majority of the total projected budget increase of \$1,951,680.



- We went to the State Plan last year for Health Insurance – this had a 13.5 % (\$772,187) projected increase this year. We negotiated 4 contracts this year which amounted to a 1.8% (\$738,069) increase in our budget. This is for Certified Staff. The Non-Certified Staff increased 2.2% (\$183,669). This brought us to a 4.9% increase over last year and Dr. Compton and her team was able to look over things and was able to bring some savings in legal fees and supplies and insurance and technology and facilities to bring down to 4.7%.
- We provided some information on per pupil spending in comparison to neighboring towns.

Operating Well Below Our Regional Neighbors

Ranked 10th out of 11 nearby towns in per-pupil expenditures.



- We did provide a line item budget.

Account Name	FY25-26 BOE Adopted Budget	FY26-27 BOE Approved Budget	FY26-27 vs. FY25-26 Incr (Decr)	
			\$	%
110 Administration	2,088,614	2,149,413	60,799	2.9%
111 Teachers - Regular Instruction	11,375,697	11,823,656	447,959	3.9%
112 Teachers - Special Ed Instruction	2,094,829	2,210,277	115,648	5.5%
113 Appendix D Non-Sport Stipend	188,383	164,875	(21,508)	-11.5%
114 Teachers - Unified Arts Instruction	750,537	788,879	38,342	5.1%
115 Teachers - Guidance Services	938,663	968,488	31,805	3.4%
116 Teachers - Student Support Services	1,208,547	1,251,685	43,139	3.6%
117 Nursing Services	344,501	353,986	9,485	2.6%
118 Teachers - Library/Media Specialist	272,908	285,309	12,401	4.5%
119 Substitutes - Certified staff	381,820	381,820	-	0.0%
Sub-Total:	19,648,799	20,378,368	729,569	3.8%
120 Custodial Services	1,257,229	1,298,414	41,185	3.3%
121 Monitor Paraprofessionals	142,743	162,450	19,707	13.8%
123 S/Ed Instructional Paraprofessional	1,512,689	1,597,730	85,040	5.6%
125 Appendix D Sports Stipends	285,487	284,831	(656)	-0.2%
126 Tutor Services	13,536	13,536	-	0.0%
127 Special Education Summer School	75,000	75,000	-	0.0%
128 Office / Secretarial Services	958,540	989,295	30,756	3.2%
129 Substitutes - Non Certified Staff	50,000	50,000	-	0.0%
130 Security Services	262,239	264,895	2,656	1.0%
140 Technical Services	221,417	226,399	4,982	2.3%
Sub-Total: Non-Certified	4,778,880	4,962,549	183,669	3.8%
210 Health Insurance	6,002,275	6,774,462	772,187	12.9%
211 Life Insurance	55,000	65,000	10,000	18.2%
220 S.S./Medicare	700,548	723,610	23,062	3.3%
230 Pension Contribution	772,281	798,115	25,834	3.3%
240 Tuition Reimbursement	45,000	45,000	-	0.0%
250 Unemployment Compensation	20,000	20,000	-	0.0%
260 Workers Compensation	150,000	150,000	-	0.0%
295 Retiree Benefits	20,983	112,159	91,176	434.5%
Sub-Total: Employee	7,766,088	8,688,347	922,259	11.9%
320 Professional Educational Services	432,000	432,000	-	0.0%
325 Legal & Mediation Services	125,000	60,000	(65,000)	-52.0%
330 Other Professional Services	201,000	201,000	-	0.0%
335 Professional/Curriculum Development	20,000	20,000	-	0.0%
Sub-Total: Professional	778,000	713,000	(65,000)	-8.4%
562 Tuition - Regular Ed Public Schools	200,818	196,500	(4,318)	-2.2%
510 Transportation - Regular	1,181,648	1,238,914	57,266	4.8%
512 Transportation - Vo-Ag Schools	77,955	81,073	3,118	4.0%
516 Transportation - S/Ed Local	630,826	656,059	25,233	4.0%
519 Transportation - Student Activity	110,000	110,000	-	0.0%
Subtotal: Tuition & Transportation -	2,201,247	2,282,546	81,299	3.7%
561 Tuition - Special Ed Public Schools	875,000	875,000	-	0.0%
563 Tuition - S/Ed Private Facilities	1,650,000	1,650,000	-	0.0%
517 Transportation - S/Ed Non Local	825,000	825,000	-	0.0%
Total District Expenditures	3,350,000	3,350,000	-	0.0%
Special Education Excess Cost Grant	(775,000)	(775,000)	-	0.0%
Net Cost: Special Education - Non-Local	2,575,000	2,575,000	-	0.0%

Account Name	FY25-26	FY26-27	FY26-27 vs. FY25-26	
	BOE Adopted Budget	BOE Approved Budget	Incr (Decr) \$	%
411 Water & Sewer Fees	65,000	65,000	-	0.0%
430 Building Contract Services	171,700	172,700	1,000	0.6%
431 Building Repair & Maintenance	180,000	180,000	-	0.0%
433 Equipment Repair & Maintenance	125,000	125,000	-	0.0%
613 Custodial Supplies	150,000	150,000	-	0.0%
Sub-Total: Facilities	691,700	692,700	1,000	0.1%
622 Electricity	719,900	719,900	-	0.0%
624 Heating Fuel	196,900	196,900	-	0.0%
625 Bus Fuel	95,545	95,545	-	0.0%
Sub-Total: Energy	1,012,345	1,012,345	-	0.0%
520 Property Insurance	120,349	126,366	6,017	5.0%
521 Liability Insurance	163,661	171,844	8,183	5.0%
529 Athletic Insurance	45,451	47,724	2,273	5.0%
Sub-Total: Insurance	329,461	345,934	16,473	5.0%
610 Office Supplies	80,000	70,000	(10,000)	-12.5%
611 Instructional Supplies	200,000	200,000	-	0.0%
612 Instructional Supplies-S/ED	4,000	4,000	-	0.0%
641 Textbooks & Curricular Materials	118,900	98,900	(20,000)	-16.8%
642 Library Media / Reference Materials	7,000	7,000	-	0.0%
645 Software - Instructional	96,050	96,050	-	0.0%
730 Equipment - Instructional	8,500	8,500	-	0.0%
690 Athletic Supplies	108,000	108,000	-	0.0%
Sub-Total: Instructional Materials &	622,450	592,450	(30,000)	-4.8%
440 Equipment Lease / Rental	176,400	176,400	-	0.0%
450 Technology Contract Services	270,720	309,631	38,911	14.4%
530 Communications	119,990	119,990	-	0.0%
615 Technology Supplies	10,000	10,000	-	0.0%
731 Equipment - Non Instructional	38,000	38,000	-	0.0%
745 Equipment - Technology	110,000	175,000	65,000	59.1%
Sub-Total: Technology	725,110	829,021	103,911	14.3%
580 Travel	39,500	39,500	-	0.00%
810 Dues & Fees	62,400	62,400	-	0.00%
890 Conference/Seminars	15,000	15,000	-	0.00%
590 Adult Education Services	102,660	102,660	-	0.00%
Sub-Total: Adult Education & Admin	219,560	219,560	-	0.00%
Total Expenditures	41,340,139	43,291,819	1,951,680	4.7%

- The State has not increased our funding. The 11.9 million the State gives us does not show up on the Board of Education side. It shows up on the Town side as Revenue. Also, all the State unfunded mandates have not gone away. They are still there. We haven't had any new ones this year. We are reducing by a science teacher and are using that to fund a library media specialist. We have over 2,000 students with over 21 languages in their homes, 320 staff members, 184 teachers, 12 administrators. We have engaged in strategic planning, we are really taking a look at our environment and infrastructure and financial stability. Taking a look at our communication and community partnership. We are ranked as one of the best High Schools by US News & World Report, scoring well on AP Exams, School of Distinction Designation by the State Celebrates Growth.

DISCUSSION:

- Richard Demko asked if we could get a list of all the State unfunded mandates over the past five years and how much it adds to each budget. Dr. Compton said that would be quite a lot of work due to the amount of legislation passed over the past five years. Especially with regard to Special Education and the laws and

regulations passed. Richard asked if we could put together some type of list just to weigh what we get from ECS funding with what they are mandating. Dr. Compton said that there is some information in the back of the BOE Book.

- Mary Kruger asked if the Special Ed students would go back out of district again. Kristin Bruno said that any decision about a Special Ed student is made by their team. The department does their best to project that – we know that if we have quality resources in-district, we are more likely to keep kids in district which is more beneficial to all. Our Special Ed Director oversees this. The number that have returned to district have increased which is great. But some, based on needs, still are out of district.
- Kristyn Haniewicz asked if the retiring science teacher will be replaced. Dr. Compton said that based on enrollment, it is not necessary to replace him, but due to accreditation issues, it IS necessary to have the Library Media Specialist position funded. We are fortunate that many of our teachers have multiple certifications and can fill a multitude of positions.
- Bettyann Peck asked to explain Paraeducators – Kristin Bruno said that they work in every building – work directly with students – they are part of the student’s personal education plan – work under direction of special education teacher – implementing behavior plan – help with personal care needs – modifying curriculum – navigate the building – helping kids access the curriculum. Currently we are at 55. Based on PPT meetings. Based on needs of students. Dr. Compton said they are like angels.
- Andy North said nice job. He asked if this is more detailed than previous. Dr. Compton said it is comparable. Andy said that it seems that your hands are tied. The spending per student looks comparable. It looks like we are pretty comparable with the salaries that we offer to teachers. Do we have to give pensions to teachers? Dr. Compton said yes, we do. We have done well with contracts and what we offer teachers, paraeducators, and secretaries. Andy asked what we would do differently with the budget. Dr. Compton said that this is a status-quo budget. There are so many things that we could do differently – that we could add, but we have tried to cut many things to keep the budget low. Andy asked how accurate the 13.5% is for health insurance. We are not sure yet. Kristin Bruno said that when they negotiate contracts, they look at 3 things: salaries, benefits, and working conditions.
- Quinn Leavey said nice job. Quinn asked what an example of an unfunded mandate is. Kristin Bruno said that instruction for students who don’t speak English, training for paraeducators, change in kindergarten age. Quinn also asked what programs and classes do we get grants for at the High School. Dr. Compton said there are Perkins grant and Title I \$300,000 and Title II and Title III. Others are competitive. We did have the ESSR Funds during COVID, but we have not counted on those after COVID. We have utilized shared services wherever possible, and this has saved us money. Quinn asked if anyone from the Board of Finance has ever sat in on the contract negotiations. Dr. Compton said that the Chairman is allowed but has not ever done so. Finally, Quinn asked if you had to cut, where would you cut from. Kristin said that we wanted to show you that we have already cut. We would have to put our heads together and it would depend on the amount.
- Richard Demko asked if salary & benefits of shared services are included in this budget. No they are not. What is the cost of that? About \$300,000. The Administrators are 2 per the 4 schools + 4. We have the smallest BOE Office in CT. Quinn asked Educational Cost Sharing – why is there no line item showing aid from the State of 11.9 million. Kristin Bruno said the money goes to the municipality as an offset to the mill rate. Kristen Harmeling said State Law doesn’t allow the Board of Ed to show revenue. We operate with the Town.
- Alice Levey asked about the cost per student. Why is our cost per student lower? Kristin Bruno said that is what we spend per student. Kristen Harmeling said that is just an actual #. Alice asked how all these good things that are happening with our students are shared with the public. Kristin Bruno said Instagram, Facebook, social media, we need to do more of this. It is important.

Item #5 – Public Comment

Kristen Harmeling – 134 Davis Road – it is very difficult to share our success stories and also our challenges – I work in market research so I understand – we are limited – social media is the way. Page 5 in the workbook shows how much is going to health insurance, etc. 90 % looks the same as previous. How do salaries stack up

with district? Better than some (cities), but not as good as others (Fairfield County). We try to stay competitive. Thank you.

Elizabeth White – 49 Sagamore Drive – Thank you for the opportunity and the countless hours that you devoted to this process and the also, members of the Board of Ed have put in countless hours of their time to put together this budget. I ask that you put forward the Budget they gave you. They have been very mindful, knowing the climate in this Town especially toward the Board of Education. I'm going to guess, having lived here for twenty years, that you could put forth a zero dollar increase and still have it voted down. This increase will be gutted. There are several misconceptions in Town. Last year it got down right ugly and personal. Other districts have far less administrators. Please put forward this bare bones budget. Thank you.

Annmarie Drugonis – First Selectwoman – it will be hard to do unfunded mandates dollar amount; we would have to cut \$3 million from the budget to get to a 0% increase; we can't move the Town forward with this.

Item #6 – Correspondence

None

Item #7 – New Business

03/11/26 Deliberations on Board of Education budget

03/16/26 Presentation of First Selectwoman Budget

03/18/26 Deliberations on First Selectwoman budget

03/19/26 Public Hearing @ 6:30pm

Item #8 – Adjournment

Richard Demko adjourned the meeting at 8:12pm

Respectfully Submitted by:

Monica Dimon
Recording Secretary