

FIRST DRAFT



Natick Finance Committee

Pursuant to Chapter 40, Section 3 of the Town of Natick By-Laws, I attest that the attached copy is the approved copy of the minutes for the following Meeting:

Town of Natick Finance Committee

Meeting Date: March 11, 2021

The minutes were approved through the following action:

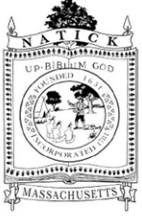
Motion: XXXX
Made by: xxxx
Seconded by: xxxx
Vote: x - x - x
Date: <date>, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Evans

Clerk

Natick Finance Committee



TOWN OF NATICK

Meeting Notice

POSTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF M.G.L. CHAPTER 30A, Sections 18-25

Natick Finance Committee

PLACE OF MEETING

DAY, DATE AND TIME

Virtual Meeting accessed via Zoom:
ps://us02web.zoom.us/j/81404627596
Meeting ID: 814 0462 7596 Passcode:
715717 One tap mobile
+19292056099,,81404627596# US
(New York) Dial by your location +1
929 205 6099 US (New York)

March 11, 2021
at 7:00 PM

Notice to the Public: 1) Finance Committee meetings may be broadcast/recorded by Natick Pegasus. 2) The meeting is an open public meeting and interested parties can attend the meeting. 3) Those seeking to make public comments (for topics not on the agenda or for specific agenda items) are requested to submit their comments in advance, by 2:00 PM on the day of the meeting, to the Chair: phayes.fincom@natickma.org. Comments will be posted on NovusAgenda and read aloud for the proper agenda item. Please keep comments to 350-400 words. 4) The Chat function on Zoom Conferencing will be disabled.

Posted: Thursday March 9, 2021, 11:54 AM

MEETING AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order**
 - a. Pledge of Allegiance & Moment of Silence
 - b. Advisement of Pegasus Live Broadcast and Recording for On-Demand Viewing
 - c. Review of Meeting Agenda and Ordering of Items
- 2. Announcements**
- 3. Public Comments**
 - a. [Committee policy & procedures available via this link and also at the meeting location](#)
- 4. Meeting Minutes:** Review & Approve Meeting Minutes for March 2, 2021 and March 4, 2021
- 5. Town Administrator's FY2022 Budget - Public Hearing**
 - a. [Keefe Tech FY 22 Budget Update](#)
 - b. [NPS Teaching Learning & Innovation Budget](#)
 - c. [NPS Technology Budget](#)
 - d. [Town Administrator FY 22 Budget Update](#)
- 6. Committee and Subcommittee Scheduling and Process**
 - a. [Update on upcoming Committee and Subcommittee meetings](#)
 - b. [Subcommittee Updates](#)
- 7. Committee Discussion (for items not on the agenda)**
- 8. Adjourn**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dirk Coburn, Member
Linda Wollschlager, Chairperson
Jeff DeLuca, Member
Bruce Evans, Clerk
Bill Grome, Member
Todd Gillenwater, Vice-Chairman
Julien LaFleur, Member
Mike Linehan, Member
Jerry Pierce, Member
Richard Pope, Member
Jim Scurlock, Member

MEMBERS ABSENT:

David Coffey, Member
Cathy Coughlin, Member
Chris Resmini, Member
Phil Rooney, Member

Town Administration

Mr. Bob Rooney, Interim Town Administrator

Keefe Tech

Mr. Jonathan Evans, Superintendent, Keefe Tech

Ms. Dolly Sharek, Business Manager, Keefe Tech?

Elizabeth Smith-Freedman, Natick Representative to Keefe Tech School Committee

Natick Public Schools

Dr. Anna Nolin, Superintendent, NPS
Dr. Peter Gray, Assistant Superintendent, Finance
Mr. Kirk Downing, Assistant Superintendent, TLI
Mr. Dennis Roche, NPS IT Director

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Linda Wollschlager, Chairperson.

Announcements - None

Mr. Pierce moved to open the public hearing on the Town Administrator's FY 22 budget and the 2021 Spring Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles, seconded by Mr. Linehan, voted 9 – 0 – 0.

Roll-call vote:

Mr. Coburn = yes	Mr. LaFleur = (arr. late)
Mr. DeLuca = (arr. late)	Mr. Linehan = yes
Mr. Evans = yes	Mr. Pierce = yes
Mr. Gillenwater = yes	Mr. Pope = yes
Mr. Grome = yes	Mr. Scurlock = yes
	Ms. Wollschlager = yes

Keefe Tech (KT) budget

Mr. Scurlock said Keefe Tech is always a pleasure to work with and listen to them discuss their programs. To provide some context, consider the challenges that KT had in trying to teach carpentry, plumbing, and electrical work on a remote basis. We're very fortunate to have such a well-run vocational high school. So much of what KT does literally is hands-on. Natick is down slightly in our number of students, but it's not due to lack of enthusiasm as KT continues to be held in very high regard. The budget that KT will present tonight was approved by the Education & Learning Subcommittee 4 – 0 – 0.

Mr. B Evans noted that the KT learning model is to learn by doing. Many of the KT teachers went the extra mile by setting up shops in their basements or garages to demonstrate techniques for students to learn. Many filmed themselves doing particular tasks, so that there wouldn't be such a gap when students went back to school. So if you can imagine, you know, somebody saying, alright, this is how you operate a belt sander and shape a wood block. To me, this is illustrative of the teachers going the extra mile, caring enough about their students' progress to go ensure that they continued to get a great education despite the pandemic. As many of you know, Framingham was a COVID hot spot, so in addition to all these other items they had to deal with the complete closure of the school. We in Natick know how difficult it has been during a partial closure, but we were able to get hired with Mark. So there have been creative. They have been diligent, and as always, they managed to lower the budget from their initial budget. .

Presenter: Mr. Jonathan Evans

JE thanks Dr. Nolin for the ongoing support of KT Regional Technical School to provide access to students and support to families who are considering our form of education. Natick has a fantastic school district and there are some students who would be a good fit for KT, so we really appreciate that acknowledgement and the support to getting those kids the access they need.

JE said he was asked by the Education subcommittee to provide some highlights to you about some of the things we'd love for you to know about going on at KT this year. And as was stated, the pivot to remote learning was a real challenge for our hands-on environment. And as those introducing us indicated, our staff did a great job of being creative in providing opportunities for students to see the skills that they are now going to be learning in person. We had a number of supplies that went out to our students through pickup, so students could work on some skills at home I have the privilege of working as the President of the Mass Association of Vocational Administrators this year and that network has been incredible in terms of sharing best practices to come up with different strategies to help kids across the state get the skills they need and career and technical education to go forward. There is no replacement for in-person learning so we're thrilled to have the kids back with us in the hybrid program we have now and they are putting their skills to use with us in person.

JE said he wanted to highlight that KT needed to make a lot of adjustments to our finances this year. As I said to my school committee on Monday, this year looks nothing like the year that we planned for in November of 2019, when we started planning for the FY 21 budget, so we've had to be nimble and make adjustments. There have been places where we had unanticipated expenses, awesome in the area of technology in the area of cleaning, building equipment, etc. And there also have been unfortunately, some areas of surplus resulted from not having kids in the building for the first half of the year. For example, a lot of consumables ended up not being used. We've made many adjustments that met the needs of our students. Along the way, we were able to initiate a 1-to-1 Chromebook model for our students. We started by emptying out the laptop carts that we had deployed throughout the building and got them to students. We used CARES Act money in some other areas of surplus to get a Chromebook in the hands of each one of our students up for the need for remote learning. That isn't something we've had in place of the way Natick as I know, for years, but we were able to get that going pretty quickly. And that was necessary, and it's gone well, in terms of our academic program, 55% of the class of 2020 went on to post-secondary college programs. JE said he wanted to highlight that we had one of the KT science teachers was honored by Mass Insight for excellence in AP instruction. I mentioned both of those to indicate to families who might be watching to know that when coming to KT for our career and technical programs, students are not closing the door on rigorous academic construction or the ability to go on to college after high school. Last spring, we were able to donate substantial amounts of PPE, face shields, masks, gloves, goggles, and gowns from our dental program of health careers and some of our other programs to MetroWest Medical Center and we were proud to provide that as community service when it was needed. This year, we had a record number of medal winners at Skills USA, a program that allows students to demonstrate vocational excellence and allows students to compete at the regional level. And there was a competition of about 600 students. Forty-two KT students won medals in various competitions, and 35 of those students got the chance to go on to the state level of competition, and we will cheer them on in April, when they get a chance again to go at the state level. We've also had a number of our juniors and seniors participate in cooperative education, an opportunity for our students to put the skills they have learned to use in an actual work setting with our support and that program has begun again, so we actually have students out doing work in the community, earning income, and providing services. We've added in some extra steps to ensure that our employers fully understand their COVID responsibilities for our students. That program has been successful as well. In terms of admissions, I'd like to highlight that we are actually approaching the capacity for in our building. We currently have 225 freshmen who came to us this year, and that's about as many as we can serve in our academic programs and this is the highest number of incoming freshmen that I've seen in my 25 years at KT.

We had three open meetings with our budget subcommittee where we went over every line item of our budget with the manager who stands in front of that area presenting any changes and the rationale for

any increases or decreases. A number of members of Natick’s Finance Committee have participated in our meeting. Although a virtual meeting, it was a similar format as in previous years. In January of 2021, our school committee approved a preliminary operating budget with an increase of 4.95%. And that's where we were the first time we met with the Education subcommittee of the Finance Committee. And then we go from there. So between January and March, we look through our budget carefully to you find efficiencies in places where, with a closer look, we could find some reductions along the way, while still meeting the needs of our students as we plan for next year. And that leads up to March 8, 2021 where we had our public hearing on our budget. At that time, we had unanimous approval from our committee for an operating budget of \$21,909,422, an increase of 3.68% over FY 21, contrasted with the 4.95% increase in our preliminary budget.

Account Description	Original Proposed FY22 Budget	Revised FY22 Budget	Reduction
2000 - CTE Supplies (in total)	\$226,587	\$192,599	\$33,988
2000 – Salary Variance	\$140,000	\$125,000	\$15,000
3000 – Supplies – Athletics	\$27,763	\$11,763	\$16,000
4000 – C/S – Custodial	\$467,000	\$405,000	\$62,500
4000 – Technology	\$125,500	\$62,000	\$60,500
5000 – Health Insurance Active Employees	\$2,274,617	\$2,195,501	\$79,117
Total Reductions:			\$267,105
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Total Preliminary Budget was \$22,176,527 (4.95% increase over •Total Final Budget is \$21,909,422 (3.68% increase over FY21) 			

So I have provided for you the details of the areas where we found those efficiencies between that 4.95% and the 3.68%. Some of these efficiencies include:

- Select career and technical supplies cut because the building was closed for the first half of the year so it was not difficult to replenish those unused supplies from this year going into next year so we backed some of that money out of FY 22 funding.
- We took a closer look at salary variance, which is sort of an area where we might have a teacher move a column through coursework, or we might have some differential in hiring a retiree and a new staff member or somebody who resigns a change in positions, we believe we can confidently lower that a little bit by \$15,000.
- Athletic supplies were also not used this year because we did not have a fall or a winter season. We're hopeful for the spring and will be ready to go in our fall and winter seasons in FY 22 with what we have, so we were able to cut there.
- Efficiencies in custodial resources, again, largely due to having a closed building and the great work of our maintenance team.
- Technology was offset by some Cares Act money this year and we were able to replenish some supplies and not have the same needs going forward next year.
- We conservatively budgeted for a 15% increase in health insurance and were pleased to learn from our insurance broker that the increase will be under 10%, most likely at 8.5%.

We extend these savings to our member communities in the form of a reduction after the preliminary budget. So in total, that is the \$267,105 that we were able to reduce from the preliminary to the final budget. And that is an increase of over 1%. That gets us to 3.68%.

Budget Area Increases > \$25,000		
Health/Dental Insurance-Active & Retiree	\$337,162	Increase in premium
Transportation	\$48,125	Contracted rate – year 3
Asset Acquisition	\$29,326	Siemens Energy Contract
New Positions – 4 FTE	\$240,000	ELA, Math, Science, Carpentry
Salary Increases for Current Staff	\$295,120	Contracted 2.25%
Total	\$949,733	
Total Budget Increase in FY22:		\$778,422

As requested by the subcommittee, these are the major areas of movement within our budget and a brief explanation for what those are. We presented this list to the Education subcommittee with our preliminary budget and some of the increase areas kind of dropped off because they went back below \$25,000. These areas are:

- Increased health insurance premiums totaling \$337,162
- Transportation is up \$48,000. This is year three of our transportation contract and we feel we have a good relationship and are getting a fairly good rate.
- Siemens Energy Lease is where we've upgraded our building infrastructure and that is \$29,000. There are two more years on that energy lease and that will complete our expenditure in that area.
- Four new FTEs - \$240,000. We added positions in English Language Arts (ELA), math, and science in the academic areas because class sizes are creeping up into the high 20s in some cases and 43% of our students receive special education services (IEPs) so we have a need in order to serve them to get some smaller ratios. By having an additional instructor in those areas, where our freshmen have academics, both weeks will be better able to serve our students. In carpentry, we've consistently had really good enrollment, and need another instructor to be able to go out and do a house building project.
- Salary increases for current staff. We're going into the third year of our collective bargaining agreement with an increase of 2.25% COLA, along with some steps for a total of \$295,120.
- When you add in all of those areas where the budget moves more than \$25,000, you get a total of \$949,733. This may be contrasted with the lower overall budget increase of \$778,422 that demonstrates that we try to be responsible and prudent in other areas of our budget while understanding our needs for increases.

Revenue Update

Chapter 70 Projection for FY21: \$6,499,717
Chapter 70 Shortfall for FY21: \$302,692
Chapter 70 Projection for FY22: \$6,509,850

Other Assessment Offsets other than State Aid

Investment Income:	\$10,000
Excess and Deficiency:	\$250,000
Local Revenue Offsets – Tuitions & Medicaid	\$108,600
Total:	\$368,000

Prior to COVID, we had a very rosy picture of Chapter 70 projections from the state and were anticipating \$6,499,717. At the time, I said if that amount changed, we would deal with it internally without coming back to our member communities. And as it turned out, there was a shortfall of \$302,692. Fortunately, we were able to work that out through the same mechanism of our flexibility in budgeting. So for FY 22, we are projecting more confidently a Chapter 70 number of \$6,509,850. When you contrast that number with the \$6,000,499, it looks like a small increase in Chapter 70, but when you factor in that there was a \$300,000 shortfall last year it's a decent increase and more realistic projection going forward. So as we talk to our member communities, especially in ones where there are increased assessments, we're highlighting that last year's assessments were built on some incorrect numbers that we could not have possibly predicted. That's true in Natick as well. To offset assessments, we continue to put forward our investment income from accounts by applying \$250,000 of our excess and deficiency regional reserve account and the four tuitions that we receive for non-resident students and our Medicaid reimbursement money. We apply these offsets directly to assessments to offset the cost for member communities. These offsets \$368,000 for FY 22

District enrollment continues to grow – we currently have 812 students from our five member communities, an increase of 17 students or 2.1%. We are also anticipating an increase next year as we have 170 seniors and over 400 applications for next year. Since we're at the mercy of 14 year olds making decisions, we don't know for sure how many will plan to enroll at KT, but we expect an increase next year. Natick has a slight decrease in students, decreasing from 60 to 56, a 6.7% decrease. As stated early, this doesn't reflect poorly on our relationship with NPS as it has never been stronger. Dr. Nolin and I presented to a group of aspiring Career and Technical administrators, and I appreciated her taking the time to do that, to really present a model of a good working relationship between a regional technical school and ascending community. This is not a trend - it's just that fewer kids chose KT this year on and we continue to provide the information to the Natick community, and hope to have more students next year. In conclusion, our assessment request for Natick this year is \$1,250,715, a decrease of \$83,683 or 6.27% less than FY 21. So that is our request. That concludes our presentation. And of course we'd be happy to answer any questions you have about what we presented, or anything to do with Keefe Tech

Questions from the Committee

Mr. B Evans noted that \$267,000 of one-time savings due to COVID closure should be noted and we should put down a marker that says next year, they're not going that \$267,000 and we should add \$267,000 to their overall baseline and I wanted to flag that. Mr. Scurlock said he has great faith in KT continuing to be a strong partner with Natick to help find our kids that just right placement, either in the Natick schools or in KT.

Mr. Linehan asked whether KT run into any problems with internet connections at home for using the Chromebooks. Mr. J Evans said they were able to purchase and become a part of a program for mobile hotspots for students so that they could access the internet.

Ms. Wollschlager thanked Mr. J Evans and Dolly Sharek and the Education and Learning subcommittee for all the work that they've done to vet this budget.

Mr. Evans moved to recommend approval of the FY 22 KT budget in the amount of \$1,250,715, seconded by Mr. Pierce, voted 11 – 0 – 0

Roll-call vote:

Mr. Coburn = yes

Mr. LaFleur = yes

Mr. DeLuca = yes

Mr. Linehan = yes

Mr. Evans = yes

Mr. Pierce = yes

Mr. Gillenwater = yes

Mr. Pope = yes

Mr. Grome = yes

Mr. Scurlock = yes

Ms. Wollschlager = yes

Debate

Mr. B Evans reiterated the great job that KT continues to do in providing a truly a full service, educational institution. They do a great job and do it efficiently.

Mr. Pierce thanked Mr. J Evans and the staff at KT and noted that he is grateful that they can resume most of those in-house programs learning and I can't be more proud to promote KT to friends in Natick.

Mr. Scurlock said Mr. J Evans is a modest individual. From his leadership position at the Mass Association of Vocational Administrators this year, he reached out to other schools which gave him great access to other best practices that he brought back to Keefe Tech and shared their best practices with his peers.

Natick Public Schools Teaching Learning and Innovation (TLI) budget

Presenter: Mr. Kirk Downing, Assistant Superintendent, TLI

At the request of the Education Subcommittee, this will be very brief presentation as we did that more comprehensive presentation to the Education Subcommittee previously (January 14). The slides I'm using tonight provide a summary of the overall TLI budget, the Digital Learning budget, and to provide a little bit of color why we see the significant increase in our professional development; some of which was based on requests from the Finance Committee.

	FY 18 BUDGET	FY 19 BUDGET	FY 20 BUDGET	FY 21 Budget	FY22 Request	Inc/(Dec)
Dues & Memberships	\$29,334	\$29,334	\$40,730	\$20,000	\$43,689	\$23,689
Office Supplies	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$3,000	\$4,200	\$1,200
Prof. Development	\$384,700	\$333,349	\$333,349	\$339,650	\$455,560	\$115,910
Text/Software	\$155,182	\$149,277	\$24,319	\$304,600	\$51,243	(\$253,357)
Instruct Materials	\$517,948	\$265,500	\$329,718	\$380,598	\$370,591	(\$10,007)
Test & Assessment	\$189,900	\$32,427	\$81,767	\$63,500	\$79,900	\$16,400
TOTAL	\$1,277,564	\$810,387	\$810,383	\$1,111,348	\$1,005,183	(\$106,105)

The FY22 TLI budget decreases by \$106,105 from FY21. This is due, in part, to reduction in Title 1 funds from DESE and all digital professional development tools are now in the TLI budget. When digital tools become available we have a process to ensure evaluation of these tools and are often able as a free trial to evaluate their effectiveness. However, sometimes there are some pilot costs involved with these evaluations so we need to keep a small budget for that purpose. Last year, \$240,000 was added in to the TLI budget mitigate the gap and in Title One funding, and two late Norfolk Agricultural tuitions.

Dues and memberships are increasing by \$23,689 to \$43,689 in FY21. FY21 was an anomaly in that when COVID shut-down occurred, dues and memberships were reduced. The more accurate comparison is the \$40,730 figure in the FY20 budget.

Office Supplies – this is the funding that our communication director uses to deliver services and also includes copy services.

Text/Software: The reason for this significant decrease in this line reflects a shift to digital learning tools and decreases need in this area during FY 22.

Digital Learning Office FY 22 Budget Request

	FY 20 BUDGET	FY 21 Budget	FY22 Request	Inc/(Dec)
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	\$22,000	\$50,000	\$0	(\$50,000)
SUPPLIES	\$43,000	\$10,000	\$8342	(\$1,658)
ON-LINE SERVICES (PILOTS)	\$9,645	\$15,000	\$10,000	(\$5,000)
ON-LINE DISTANCE LEARNING SERVICES	\$140,000	\$92,000	\$153,000	\$61,000
TOTAL	214,645	167,000	171,342	

Remote learning tools:

- Edgenuity -\$61,000
- TECCL Courses for NHS (The Education Collaborative Online Learning) -\$92,000

There is a slight increase in this budget from \$167,000 to \$171,342 that is due specifically to putting our online tools in the digital learning budget and lifting the professional development budget and inserting it into the TLI line that I will show you in the next slide.

We will use two distance learning tools next year:

- We will continue with Edgenuity at a cost of \$61,000. That is going to be used for remote learning situations for families and it is the platform that we use for credit recovery for students at the high school. When a student fails a course, they can use this program to remediate that.
- TECCL are online courses that we work with our collaborative on that made a high school students take.

Professional Development FY 22 Budget Request

All professional development budgets from all nine of our schools, as well as the digital learning office were moved into the TLI budget as a result of the Finance Committee requesting consolidation of all professional development in a single budget and not by individual schools. The lone exception is that special education professional development was kept in the Student Services budget to reflect the training requirements specific to special education.

	FY 18 BUDGET	FY 19 BUDGET	FY 20 BUDGET	FY 21 Budget	FY22 Request	Inc/(Dec)
Professional Development	\$384,700	\$333,349	\$333,349	\$339,650	\$455,560	\$23,689

Budget Adjustments and Renewal Costs

- \$50,000 increase moved from digital learning budget (NILS)
- \$74,800 consolidated from school budgets
- \$9,830 for Diversity and Equity training

- \$25,000 for Middle School ELA workshop training (5th)
- \$33,630 for World Language proficiency professional development
- \$71,200 for TLI professional development to support strategic plan as determined throughout the school year. This includes professional development needs to that are universal across the district. For example, in civics development we've done the professional development and redesigned the social studies curriculum. Others include professional development in Fine and Performing Arts, physical education, math, science, and social studies.

Remaining balance are renewal costs for TLI = \$191,100, which breaks down as follows:

- The Skillful Teacher - \$30,000 (onboarding tool)
- Tuition reimbursement for teachers and administrators - \$45,000
- Curriculum writing - \$79,200 (anticipate need for increased curriculum writing needs this summer to close gaps due to COVID)
- Open Circle - \$7000 (Social-Emotional learning curriculum at the elementary level)
- Primary Source - \$5000 (social sciences, civics)
- TLI course costs - \$5000
- Marshall Memo - \$400
- Thought Exchange - \$17,000 (Dr. Nolin noted that it is a crowdsourcing platform that allows us to survey people on ideas and gauge community sentiments. Was used extensively during the closure. NPS used it before the KMS override and we may use it if there's any work with the Select Board on future potential overrides for the town.)
- Communications department PD - \$2500



FY22 forecast from DESE Grants
 Management office indicates Natick poverty levels will once again be less than 5% resulting in a forecast budget allotment similar to FY21. Actual budgets will be announced in July 2021.

FY21 - \$199K (Below 5%)
 FY20 - \$394K (Above 5%)

In FY 20, our allotment of federal dollars for the Title I was \$394,000. In FY 21, after mid-year adjustments were made our total annual budget was \$199,000. This significant decrease happened because the poverty Index in Natick dropped below 5% and that took Natick out of the Tier 3 funding levels, reducing our grant. I just received the forecast for FY 22, and it looks like we are going to be below the 5% threshold again, and I anticipate that's going to be the situation for the future so we are reevaluating the strategy we're using in our Title 1 program to decide how we're going to implement that program in the future.

Ms. Wollschlager asked if the Education Subcommittee had any comments. Mr. Scurlock said the investments that were made in the TLI budget will give NPS tremendous flexibility going forward. Nobody knows what remote learning might look like going forward; some students may do better in a remote learning environment. There are some silver linings in the areas of technology and remote learning that will help in the long run.

Mr. Evans noted that the Committee should read the January 14 Education Subcommittee minutes. One of the things that struck the subcommittee was how adept NPS was at identifying the solutions that people need moving forward in the new environment. One example is Zearn and Freckle – two math intervention products that for middle school-aged kids. And, one of the things that came out in our discussions was, although language arts are being challenged, there's more of a challenge in math. And these are the sorts of tools that help will help close that gap and give kids what they need to move on to the next level of math.

Mr. DeLuca noted that as NPS goes back to in-person learning. There's recognition by the NPS team that it's not just going back to normal; that overcoming learning loss has been factored into their analysis and there is also the recognition that there's psychological impact as well. There are a lot of moving parts so I want to credit the schools for being forward-thinking on this.

Mr. Pope noted that the priorities are changing in response to emerging needs both now and in the future.

Mr. Linehan asked what the Marshal Memo and Thought Exchange (TE) are. Mr. Downing said the Marshal Memo is a resource material that includes a distillation of all the periodicals salient to public education into a weekly memo - it's a great subscription because it gives leaders like ourselves the opportunity to sort of read the annotation of those articles, and then seek out the ones that are most relevant to our work. Dr. Nolin noted that it is a crowdsourcing platform that allows us to survey people on ideas and gauge community sentiments. As people begin to comment on that question, members that participate in the thought exchange can amplify if they agree with that question, so you begin to see the predominant themes to help us understand what your community wants. Mr. Downing said TE has been used alongside other surveying tools so that we can get picture of what the town of Natick is thinking. It was instrumental in helping us design our remote, hybrid, and in-person learning models this year.

Mr. Linehan asked if TE is a one-time fee. Dr. Nolin said TE is an annual fee for the contract. Each time we use it, we're provided with their data analytics service and they help us to design questions and help design professional development based on the findings.

Mr. Pierce asked what OpenCircle is. Mr. Downing said OpenCircle (OC) is instrumental to our elementary social-emotional learning program. When our elementary school teachers are hired, they participate in OC training as part of the onboarding process which is led by Ms. Laura Loftus, our guidance counselor at the Johnson school. It equips these teachers with that training - we have now been an OC user for almost twenty years so some of the materials in the system down the line are dated and we want to get some refreshers for some of our veteran teachers as well.

NPS Technology Budget

Mr. Dennis Roche – Director, IT, NPS

[Link to NPS Technology budget presentation](#)

Mr. Scurlock noted that the technology department was challenged greatly by COVID and performed extraordinarily well. However, technical support was stressed beyond capacity and remedying that needs to be taken quite seriously. Secondly, some the equipment is getting a little long in the tooth. And, there is a budget gap that may delay getting some technology to the elementary schools.

Mr. Evans pointed out that the details of the technology budget review by the Education Subcommittee are in the January 26 minutes and encouraged Committee members to read it. Several things stand out in addition to what Mr. Scurlock just described. One is when COVID first struck, they had to scramble around to get devices to people to get in in place to enable hybrid learning and that was that was a mad scramble. Secondly, Mr. Roche made a timely acquisition of Chromebooks that paid off because there was a great demand for those devices as soon as people started to go hybrid or work from home. By acting quickly, Mr. Roche was able to secure that he was able to get devices to every student that needed it. He was also able to arrange the Wi Fi hotspots that Mr. Linehan spoke of when we're talking about KT. Another thing that Mr. Scurlock brought up is the technician/device ratio. Now that everybody is working remotely, the number of devices that need support is staggering. That's also outlined in the meeting. They are requesting that they add one support technician this year. Ideally, it would be two technicians, but this is an emerging need. Kudos to the technician staff that was able to keep this all rolling in difficult circumstances.

Mr. DeLuca called out the agility of the teachers who learned how to use all the applications and technical tools that are used during this remote learning environment. Many of us are working from home, but picture the difficulty in getting a kindergartner to do this and you realize that it's exponentially harder. The teachers' ability to do this is an overwhelming feat and it went as smoothly as possible this year and that could only be achieved through a network of support from the top down, and including hardware, software and IT support.

Mr. Pope noted the innovation that the IT department demonstrated as they have coped with a huge increase in supported devices during this time, they have a plan to increasing the tech support in the middle schools. The support organization is located at the High School and having a presence at the middle schools reducing the travel time between schools to serve to serve the younger middle school students.

Dr. Nolin related that a ninth grader who is now at the High School who learned some programming through the robotics program at the Kennedy School pitched an idea to Mr. Roche and Ms. Magley that that he would really like to take on some programming in earnest and offered himself as a free intern to us. Since he is an excellent student where his teacher said he was more than up-to-date, we've been able to take him on staff as a ninth grader to help us create some workflows in the Digital Learning Office. There are many stories like that where students are offering their technical expertise, either in research or in helping us with our computers. Mr. Roche got his start that way when he was a High School student so we've been trying to do this in addition to the formal certification programs at the high school that allow students to develop careers in this area and get certifications and other areas too.

Technology Inventory

Total number of devices as of 12/31/2019	8468
Number of computers added in 2020	1941*
Number of computers retired YTD in 2020	(199)
Additional computers to retire in 2020	(161)
Total number of devices as of 12/31/2020 (Increase of 1581)	10049**

* One asset was purchased and retired in 2020.

** Does not include devices on order for Middle Schools or Kennedy Building Project.

Mr. Roche stated that the inventory of devices as of the end of this calendar year is higher than normal. This is a result of the global pandemic and the difficulty in getting new devices so NPS has been extremely conservative in not retiring devices and trying to get more life out of them. NPS has lent a lot of devices to families needing devices for remote and hybrid education. Fortunately, we purchased a lot of devices over the last year because there were some grant opportunities to help us do so. We did have one asset that was bought in 2020 that was retired in 2020, so that is why the numbers are off by one. In addition, the new devices in support of the opening of the new Kennedy Middle School are not yet included in this report because this is a calendar year summary and those items will be reflected in January 2021.

	BEN	BRO	ESC	HL	JOH	KEN	LIL	MEM	NHS	OOD	PRE	TEC	TWN	WIL	Grand Total
Chromebook	114	81		836	44	860	80	80	599	2	460	22	1048		4226
Chromebox	4				1	26	3	3	19						59
Desktop	6	11		1	2	10	3	12	153		6	67	1	32	304
iPad	331	292	46	2	137	189	275	212	52	9	48	84	25	295	1997
iPod	12	1	1		1	4	23	15	12			1		4	74
Laptop	114	95	13	64	51	301	110	61	1526	2	27	536	29	310	3239
Tablet				1					101			11		37	150
Grand Total	581	480	60	904	236	1390	494	383	2462	11	83	1159	77	1729	10049
% of Total Devices	6%	5%	1%	9%	2%	14%	5%	4%	24%	0%	1%	12%	1%	17%	

	BEN	BRO	ESC	HL	JOH	KEN	LIL	MEM	NHS	OOD	PRE	TEC	TWN	WIL	Grand Total
2009	2	2				5	11	1	3		1	2			27
2010	4				1	23	13	1	4		4	1		14	65
2011	32	4			5	70	8	2	15		2	11	1	13	163
2012	86	40	1	1	5	45	7	23	84		6	25	7	36	366
2013	50	34	1		26	31	16	29	10		4	9	12	34	256
2014	93	113	5	21	61	155	161	104	127	1	25	110	7	320	1303
2015	13	16	7	1	4	67	10	6	27	3	3	46	8	116	327
2016	107	110	9	188	33	322	16	26	116	1	8	340	11	392	1679
2017	154	120	12	174	71	197	206	149	538	3	5	56	10	326	2021
2018	7	16	9	136	13	111	29	8	385	2	4	53	5	75	853
2019	30	24	16	103	16	103	14	29	536	1	19	77	15	66	1049
2020	3	1		280	1	261	3	5	617		2	429	1	337	1940
Grand Total	581	480	60	904	236	1390	494	383	2462	11	83	1159	77	1729	10049

This slide shows the distribution of the devices across the schools and the historical totals. In the first section, the column labeled HL is the number of device that NPS has lent to families, a total of 904 devices and these numbers continue to rise. In addition to these devices, we've also lent out

approximately 50 hotspots that are not included in this list. These hotspots were required because some students have had issues getting reliable internet and we've provided those services to them as well.

Inventory by year

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Grand Total
Chromebook					7	6	99	825	886	343	228	1832	4226
Chromebox									32	2			59
Desktop	8	9	4	23	8	32	5	79	72	1	62	1	304
iPad		1	33	112	195	801	71	237	384	73	49	41	1997
iPod	12	13	8	18	7				12	2	2		74
Laptop	7	40	118	183	37	455	97	524	644	429	696	9	3239
Tablet		2		30	2	9	55	2	1	3	14	32	150
Grand Total	27	65	163	366	256	1303	327	1679	2021	853	1049	1940	10049
% of Total Devices	0%	1%	2%	4%	3%	13%	3%	17%	20%	8%	10%	19%	

Asset Count													
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Grand Total
BEN	2	4	32	86	50	93	13	107	154	7	30	3	581
BRO	2		4	40	34	113	16	110	120	16	24	1	480
ESC				1	1	5	7	9	12	9	16		60
HL				1		21	1	188	174	136	103	280	904
JOH		1	5	5	26	61	4	33	71	13	16	1	236
KEN	5	23	70	45	31	155	67	322	197	111	103	261	1390
LIL	11	13	8	7	16	161	10	16	206	29	14	3	494
MEM	1	1	2	23	29	104	6	26	149	8	29	5	383
NHS	3	4	15	84	10	127	27	116	538	385	536	617	2462
OOD						1	3	1	3	2	1		11
PRE	1	4	2	6	4	25	3	8	5	4	19	2	83
TEC	2	1	11	25	9	110	46	340	56	53	77	429	1159
TWN			1	7	12	7	8	11	10	5	15	1	77
WIL		14	13	36	34	320	116	392	326	75	66	337	1729
Grand Total	27	65	163	366	256	1303	327	1679	2021	853	1049	1940	10049

Our goal each year is to ensure that we keep good, effective devices for students, faculty and staff and this makes up a significant portion of our budget each year.

Technology Device goals for FY22

- Provide incoming freshman with a new Chromebook
- Expand 1-to-1 program to grades 5 & 6
- Refresh and replace obsolete teacher laptops
- Refresh and replace obsolete devices at elementary schools

Technology Budget

Objective	FY21	FY22	Variance
Supplies	\$3,500	\$3,500	-
Equipment replacement	\$699,279	513,589	(\$185,690)
Equipment (new)	-	-	-
AV	\$15,000	\$15,000	-
Purchase of services	\$360,000	\$405,546	\$45,546
Software	\$69,500	\$85,600	\$16,100
LAN/WAN Maintenance	\$244,500	\$273,500	\$29,000
System-wide Copiers	\$395,000	\$395,000	-
TOTAL	\$1,786,779	\$1,691,735	(\$95,044)

Overall, the budget request is (\$95,044). One of the areas that I typically spend time on is sustainability planning or the device replacement plan across the district. However, given the

COVID-19 situation, we had to scrap our normal sustainability planning and start from scratch because of all the different things that were going on.

	Target Life	FY22 July 1, 2021	FY23 July 1, 2022	FY24 July 1, 2023	FY25 July 1, 2024	FY26 July 1, 2025	FY27 July 1, 2026	FY28 July 1, 2027	FY29 July 1, 2028
High School Student Device Sustainability (Chromebooks 3 Year Lease):									
Incoming Freshman FY22	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Incoming Freshman FY23	4 Years	N/A	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$0.00			
Incoming Freshman FY24	4 Years	N/A	N/A	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$0.00		
Incoming Freshman FY25	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$0.00	
Incoming Freshman FY26	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$0.00
Incoming Freshman FY27	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Incoming Freshman FY28	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Incoming Freshman FY29	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$60,000.00
High School Labs & Building Systems:									
Video Editing Lab - 3 Year Lease	4 Years	\$14,399.40	\$14,399.40	\$14,399.40	\$14,399.40	\$14,399.40	\$14,399.40	\$14,399.40	\$14,399.40
Web Design Lab (One Time Purchase - Cash)	4 Years	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$51,000.00	\$0.00				
Game Design & Art Lab (One Time Purchase - Cash)	4 Years	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$51,000.00	\$0.00				
Foreign Lanaguage Lab - 3 Year Lease	4 Years	\$7,189.40	\$7,189.40	\$7,189.40	\$0.00				
Zspace Lab (One Time Purchase - Cash)	4 Years	\$60,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00				
Security System Replacement Hardware	4 Years	\$32,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00				
MS Chromebooks for Students : (One Time Purchase to Expand 1 to 1 to Grades 5 & 6)									
Wilson Students (Incoming Grades 5 -7) 750 Chromebooks - Grant Funding in FY	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kennedy Students (Incoming Grades 5 -7) 750 Chromebooks - Kennedy Building	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wilson & Kennedy Incoming 8th Graders FY22 (New devices provided in FY21)	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MS Chromebooks for Students : (Chromebooks 3 Year Lease)									
Incoming 5th Graders FY23	4 Years	N/A	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00				
Incoming 5th Graders FY24	4 Years	N/A	N/A	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00			
Incoming 5th Graders FY25	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00		
Incoming 5th Graders FY26	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$0.00	
Incoming 5th Graders FY27	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Incoming 5th Graders FY28	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Incoming 5th Graders FY29	4 Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$60,000.00
Elementary Devices for Students :									
Elementary Schools (Re-fresh old aging devices)	4 Years	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Teacher Laptop Sustainability: (Laptops 3 Year Lease)									
Teacher Laptop Replacements - Replace 250 each year	3 Years	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
Teacher Laptop Replacements - Replace 250 each year	3 Years	N/A	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
Teacher Laptop Replacements - Replace 250 each year	3 Years	N/A	N/A	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
Total Cost:		\$513,588.80	\$641,588.80	\$663,588.80	\$674,399.40	\$764,399.40	\$674,399.40	\$674,399.40	\$674,399.40
Budget:		\$699,279.00	\$699,279.00	\$699,279.00	\$699,279.00	\$699,279.00	\$699,279.00	\$699,279.00	\$699,279.00
Budget Variance:		-\$185,690.20	-\$57,690.20	-\$35,690.20	-\$24,879.60	\$65,120.40	-\$24,879.60	-\$24,879.60	-\$24,879.60

Dr. Nolin noted that NPS has been transitioning away from Apple to Chromebook for student and staff use. This year, we made the final transition of high school students off Apple laptops. Mr. Roche and his team solved the barriers that precluded NPS from moving to Chromebook and the teachers are now on board with using the Chromebooks because we can provide good solutions to allow us a parallel experience to their previous devices, but at a much cheaper price. Mr. Roche said that when NPS went to full remote learning, we had to make some hard decisions – one of these was telling the current 8th grade class to keep their Chromebooks during the summer and bring them to the HS. This was done to ensure safety and not contribute to spreading the virus. These Chromebooks had some viability going into the next school year. This set the stage for a long-term decision about Chromebook usage and we talked with the high school faculty and staff. Note that the sustainability plan shows we're not using funds for fiscal 22 to maintain the student 1-to-1 program, until FY 23. We also didn't start any new leases last year which puts us in a great position to start planning sustainability and create creative opportunities. When we went into closure, we had to determine how to continue our learning environment support, getting people devices that needed while staying within budget. The first thing we did was grab as many devices as fast as we could from our two middle schools - devices that were shared between 5th & 6th graders. Then, we ordered 300 Chromebooks using unspent funds in our operating since we knew we didn't have enough devices to last the rest of the

school year. This worked out well because we heard from families who had home computers that didn't work or didn't have easy access to technology at home, so our priority shifted to ensure that we had devices to loan out to the public. In addition to that, we planned to upgrade the 7th grade Chromebooks for the following year, which we did. We didn't upgrade teacher laptops and we didn't upgrade the elementary school devices to save cash, believing we could address these in the following school year. This purchase also allowed us to purchase \$133K of much-needed lab equipment at the HS (Video Editing, Foreign Language Lab, zSpace, & Security System replacement software).

The Chromebooks have a three-year life cycle so our plan is to do a three year lease for incoming freshmen to get a new device starting in FY23. So when we get to the third year, we have a laddered approach for leases at the high school. We're taking the same approach at the middle school level and aren't using FY22 budget to expand the 1-to-1 program to grades 5th & 6th grade and beginning in FY23, we will start the same laddered approach as in the high school. Previously, it cost us \$400,000 per year to purchase Apple laptops. For \$360,000, using this laddered approach, we're only at \$360,000 and we've expanded 1-to-1 to cover grades 5-12 at a lower cost. From a technical perspective, we have a more versatile device that we can more readily manage. Further, we were able to leverage the Kennedy MS project to equip devices for the Kennedy Middle School for grades 5, 6, & 7 and had a grant that helped with COVID-19 devices for students that we applied to the Wilson MS grades 5, 6, & 7. So The MS orders were placed with already secured funds in the projected delivery date is April/May 2021. We usually don't order devices until July, but did so to assure availability for the start of the school year since there is high demand for the devices and device shortages.

At the elementary level, we budgeted \$300,000 for both FY22 & FY23 for replacement of old devices. We recognized this past summer that demand for devices from families was ongoing and we didn't have enough devices to give to every student, so pulled the all the devices in our elementary schools that we could round up and that's how we got over 900 devices out in the community. We don't know when we can get those devices back and what the start of the school year looks like yet and it wouldn't be responsible for us to ask for the return of those devices until we know what the learning environment looks like. Also, these devices are mostly older devices that may be nearing their end-of-life. Next year, when we get the devices to the middle schools, there will be some devices there that we can redeploy to the elementary schools, but the quantity is unknown so this plan is fluid and my last resort is buying new devices. Thus, the \$300K is a placeholder (to acquire anywhere from 750-900 Chromebooks depending on the price point we can get) - I know I'm going to have to spend some of it, but don't know how much yet.

Teacher laptops (Chromebooks), we're allocating \$100K in FY22 and will use a three year lease.

Age of Teacher Devices

Age	Year	Chromebook	iPad	Laptop	Total
New	2020	17	22	6	45
1	2019	24	18	240	282
2	2018	12	14	51	77
3	2017	7	29	249	285
4	2016	45	21	135	201
5	2015	18	23	35	76
6	2014	1	41	162	204
7	2013	1	59	24	84
8	2012		23	58	81
9	2011		1	17	18
10	2010			1	1
11	2009			2	2
	Total	125	251	980	1356

Depending on the curriculum requirements, some teachers have both Chromebooks and iPads. I'm concerned about the number of devices that are 6-11 years old. There are also technology people with multiple devices because they need to support all these devices. There also are teachers or department heads that may have secondary devices to do evaluations, classroom visits and other tasks. Some curriculums require specific applications on iPads, for example.

Purchase of Services

INCREASES:	
Power School	\$43,346
Increased Dark Fiber (redundancy) & Internet Bandwidth	\$ 3,400
DialPad - Remote Technical Support	\$ 4,500
Google Enterprise for Education Licenses	\$32,500
School Messenger Communicate	\$ 8,800
TOTAL	\$92,546
DECREASES:	
Hosting of IPass	(\$10,000)
Esped (Now part of PowerSchool)	(\$22,000)
Blackboard Connect (being replaced)	(\$15,000)
TOTAL DECREASES	(\$47,000)

DialPad is VOIP service to provide a better way to provide remote technical support when my technical staff were working from different locations at home and wanted to leverage their own personal cell numbers but not have to provide those cell numbers to people needing tech support. Dialpad lets us set up a helpdesk line and rotate calls across my department to have a remote Help Desk. It was also very effective in support of virtual Town Meeting where my team spent over 250 hours ensuring that it went smoothly.

Google Enterprise licenses are enhancements that improve Google Meet capabilities. We had been looking at doing this last January and when the pandemic arrived, this further highlighted the requirement. These educational licenses allow us to actually take advantage some advanced functionality that other districts who don't subscribe will not get.

School Messenger Communicate is a new mass communication system that provides similar capabilities to Blackboard Connect at half the cost. Similarly, hosting of iPass and ESPED are replaced by the PowerSchool modules that we're adding.

Splashtop is an application used in higher education that provides low latency remote control of HS and MS labs. All our computer labs are based on Apple software and we provided Chromebooks to our incoming freshmen class so we needed to enable them to access Apple software if they're in these classes. Splashtop works with any device to remotely connect to these lab computers. So a Chromebook user can run Final Cut Pro using this software and the experience is just like you're sitting in front of the lab computer so it provides access to the software needed for their curriculum, and not only provides the short-term COVID-related benefits but also will save money long-term. We have licenses for the middle schools and high school.

The LAN/WAN Maintenance agreement for security systems (\$40,000) is a placeholder. I'm filling in for the Facilities Director who recently departed and this is to ensure that we have a service agreement in place for those key systems. We were able to retire some obsolete networking tools that we no longer need.

Mr. Evans noted how impressed he was with the Splashtop application during the Subcommittee meeting in that you could be at a remote site and to use Mr. Roche's example access Final Cut Pro, an Apple app, and you cannot tell the difference in response time from being remote to being right in front of the screen. There is no lag and this is an incredible plus to be able to do that and emulation software has become very sophisticated. I also would like Mr. Roche to talk about something a KMS building project which added a redundant fiber channel network as well as a second data center. Mr. Roche said while they were designing the Kennedy project, we wanted to make sure we could continue to sustain everything we're doing from a technology perspective for generations of students to come. And on a regular basis, my team and I look at security risks or risks in general. One of the real risks that exist is that we had single points of failure where if we ever lost the high school data center or our internet connection, or fiber connections between any of our schools, our systems would be completely down. So in the design of KMS, we included a redundant data center and outfitted that data center to host and run our entire infrastructure, so we could actually flip data centers, if needed. Right now, we're running everything out of the KMS data center and were using it even before the building was occupied with students and teachers. At the same time, we implemented a redundant fiber ring. So we decided on creating two points of Ingress and egress into the Kennedy project. Ring one (the existing ring) communicates at a 1 Gbit/sec. speed coming in the back of the building. Ring two is a new fiber ring coming in through the front of the building that is 10 times the speed at 10 Gbit/sec. and that's what we're running on today. So with all the different things we talked

about, and then the innovative classroom design we did with student huddle spaces, we have built a model on the old Kennedy classroom a few years before the project started so we could build in the specifications. So we now have redundant fiber and redundant data center. It came in on time and under budget and it's all working and been tested. We're waiting right now to reconnect the ring one fiber, once the next phase of construction is done (it was temporarily disconnected as we got out of the old building), so by this summer, we'll have full redundancy. We also have redundant internet circuits at both of our schools. We have a backup one gig circuit that I was able to work into the operating budget as well, which is a very low cost way of providing us some alternatives if we had either an internet circuit fail losing a data center or losing one of the fibers and any one of the directions from the school. So we're very well positioned to handle failures. I mean, there's always something else that could break, right. But it allows us to move on to what the next things that we should worry about are. And what we're looking at right now for the future is content filtering in providing a better content filter that also is more dynamic. That isn't a piece of hardware that sits in a data center, but it would sit in the cloud. That would also embrace the dual data center strategy we have, but also give families a little bit more flexibility at home if they have different filtering news than we have in school or something else.

Mr. Linehan asked whether Wilson MS students can benefit from the new KMS setup. Mr. Roche said he licensed Splashtop for both middle schools and the high school so they all can take advantage of their own labs. If there's any specialty lab anywhere in the district, and we wanted to extend it to more students, we certainly have that option.

Ms. Wollschlager asked how device inventory management is handled. Mr. Roche said they use an application called Asset Panda to inventory all our equipment. When equipment comes in, we match it to our PO and then put an asset tag on it and it gets added to our inventory system. We use this system daily in my department. When a machine is reassigned to someone, we reassign it to that individual in the inventory system. Periodically, we go to the schools and scan the bar codes on the devices to confirm that the information in the inventory matches what is in the buildings.

Ms. Wollschlager asked if they had to do anything differently now that devices are outside of NPS property. Mr. Roche said it's pretty much the same process. The only thing that is different is that now we're getting more tech support requests than we ever have before, I'm getting phone calls from parents of kindergarten students, elementary students, who never had devices assigned to them specifically before, but now we're providing a providing support to those families that we never used to do. We usually only dealt with the families directly in the 1-to-1 program and with the teachers, and, with the younger kids in the mix, our workload has increased.

Mr. Coburn asked if the support staff is adequate to meet the expansive needs. Mr. Roche said they're trying to experiment with cloning, because I think that's probably the biggest part we're really struggling with. Keeping up with the volume has been the biggest challenge and we added a Middle School tech support position this year. And I also needed to spread my staff out considerably, not just in response to the pandemic, but for safety reasons, too. This is becoming a greater and greater challenge. Because the more we're able to do successfully, the more we're asked to do and the higher expectations go and we look forward to meeting those expectations.

Mr. Linehan moved to close the public hearing on the FY 22 Town Administrator's budget, seconded by Mr. Grome, voted 10 – 0 – 0.

Roll-call vote:

Mr. Coburn = yes	Mr. LaFleur = yes
Mr. DeLuca = yes	Mr. Linehan = yes
Mr. Evans = yes	Mr. Pierce = (no vote, tech. problems)
Mr. Gillenwater = yes	Mr. Pope = yes
Mr. Grome = yes	Mr. Scurlock = yes
	Ms. Wollschlager = yes

Meeting Scheduling

Ms. Wollschlager said that the Finance Committee only has a defined schedule set through Tuesday March 16 and is still waiting for Town Administration to confirm when they will be ready on the various warrant articles. We'll hear a number of them on Tuesday and the schedule after that this is a little up in the air, so you will know what I know when I know it. We're going to have to cover a lot over these next few meetings.

Mr. Scurlock said the Education & Learning Subcommittee asks that we push voting on the NPS budget as late as late as possible, recognizing that it's a jam-packed schedule because NPS and town administration are working to reconcile the budget gap.

Ms. Wollschlager said the tentative schedule is to hear the Omnibus Budget on March 30. That's the last warrant article we will do.

Mr. Evans noted that March 30 is the town election and we would have to start after 8 PM when the polls close.

Ms. Wollschlager said here objective is to get as much as possible done before April 1 because we need to provide our recommendation letter to Town Meeting members at least seven days in advance of Town Meeting which begins on April 13. So, probably, the last date that we could meet is on April 1 and I would prefer not delaying anything past March 30 if we can avoid it.

Mr. Linehan moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Pierce, voted 11 – 0 – 0

Roll-call vote:

Mr. Coburn = yes	Mr. LaFleur = yes
Mr. DeLuca = yes	Mr. Linehan = yes
Mr. Evans = yes	Mr. Pierce = yes
Mr. Gillenwater = yes	Mr. Pope = yes
Mr. Grome = yes	Mr. Scurlock = yes
	Ms. Wollschlager = yes

MEETING ADJOURNED 9:01 PM