



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476  
Phone: 781-316-3000

[webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us)

## Budget Minutes 10/20/2009

### Budget Subcommittee of the Arlington School Committee

#### Minutes for Meeting of

October 20, 2009, 4:30 p.m., School Committee Room  
(Approved November 18, 2009)

#### Attendees

##### Committee Members

*Present:* Joseph A. Curro, Jr., Chair  
Cindy Starks  
Ronald Spangler (Arrived 4:45 p.m.; Departed 5:50 p.m.)

*Administration* Interim Superintendent Kathleen Bodie  
Chief Financial Officer Diane Fisk Johnson

*Others* Richard Fanning, Finance Committee  
Mary Ronan, Finance Committee  
Juli Brazile  
Vicki Ford

#### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:36 p.m.

#### Public Participation

The chair invited public participation. No members of the public wished to share any matters of concern during this portion of the meeting.

#### Review of Minutes

***On a motion of Ms. Starks, seconded by Mr. Curro, the minutes of October 7, 2009 were adopted by a vote of 2-0.***

#### Updates

Dr. Bodie provided a brief update regarding the next five-year fiscal plan for the Town of Arlington.

***Dr. Spangler joined the meeting at 4:45 p.m.***

Ms. Johnson shared a sensitivity analysis projecting major school budget costs out for the coming five years. For the purpose of the analysis, Ms. Johnson removed offsets and included the ability to look at different assumptions around

salaries (teachers and all others), special education, facilities and fuel, and all other expenses.

Ms. Johnson presented this analysis both with and without assumptions regarding enrollment growth over the coming years.

The subcommittee and other attendees engaged in vigorous discussion about assumptions and historical analysis – particularly as this related to special education cost growth.

Dr. Bodie noted that the district has brought around 20 students back into Arlington as a result of recent program investments, but that the cost of out-of-district placements remains flat as a result of tuition hikes. Dr. Bodie predicted that it might be possible to bring home 15 to 20 more kids, but that efforts would become increasingly difficult after that.

In light of Ms. Johnson's analysis, attendees discussed the sufficiency of a 4% level of planned growth.

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Subcommittee members and attendees agreed to target December 1 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Arlington Town Hall for a public forum. Mr. Curro distributed and described an idea for a participatory budget simulation exercise, and he also noted that he had secured agreement from Town Manager Brian Sullivan to participate in the forum.

***Dr. Spangler departed at 5:50 p.m.***

There was further discussion regarding the December 1 event, and the date of the next Budget Subcommittee meeting was fixed for November 18 at 4:30 p.m. in the School Committee room.

#### **Adjournment**

***On motion of Ms. Starks, seconded by Mr. Curro, the meeting was adjourned at 5:56 p.m. by unanimous vote, 2-0.***