

Board of Education

February 17, 2016

The Wethersfield Board of Education met in Special session on Wednesday, February 17, 2016, at 7:00 p.m., in the Stillman Building, Lower Level Meeting Room, 127 Hartford Avenue. The following Board members were present: Mrs. Hughes Granato, Mr. Morris, Mr. Cascio, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Hill, Ms. Moon, and Mrs. Vasel. Also present were: Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Emmett; Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Curriculum and Instruction, Mrs. Dastoli; Director of Maintenance, Mr. Bushey; Director of Special Services, Mrs. Daigle; Director of Technology, Mr. Rafaniello; Business Manager, Mr. Kozaka; Emerson-Williams Elementary School Principal, Ms. Thakur; Webb Elementary School Principal, Michael Verderame; Mayor Montinieri; Town Council members; Mr. Martino, Mrs. Hemmann and Mr. Spinella.

1. Call to Order: 7:02 p.m.
2. Public Comment: A motion was made by Mr. Cascio MOVED to amend the agenda to move public comment to the beginning of the meeting. The motion was SECONDED by Mrs. Hughes Granato and VOTED unanimously. There was none.
3. Town Budget Update – Ms. Moon explained that the purpose of the meeting was to answer any outstanding questions that Board members or Councilors had as well as garner input from the public. Ms. Granato outlined her priorities as security, class size and curriculum. Mr. Emmett said that the draft addressed all of these. Mr. Kozaka provided the estimated savings in health insurance of approximately \$167,000. Mr. Kozaka also indicated that he is awaiting figures for diesel fuel as well as the amount of pension contribution. He also noted that 1.39% (\$784,000) of the budget represents the WFT contract's arbitrated increase. Mr. Montinieri advised that the newly proposed governor's budget includes an increase in ECS funding. That amount, however, will not be solidified until the state budget has been finalized.

Mr. Montinieri also reiterated his commitment to early childhood development via additional \$10,000 for WECC, which is matched by the town. He and others are meeting with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving in anticipation of grant application. Several Board members also included support and discussion of Pre-K and a Gifted & Talented program to be long-term goals by the District. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that any financial support should be supported by a plan including goals developed by WECC.

4. Discussion of the 2016-17 School Operating Budget: Various Board members asked questions regarding specific items, including Mr. Morris who requested additional information regarding the need for an additional World Language teacher at the high school.

Mr. Hill suggested consideration of the requests of the middle school. Since there has been considerable focus on test scores there, it is important to provide staff with the resources to improve them.

Mrs. Vasek MOVED that while Mr. Emmett should present the proposed budget at the next Board meeting on Tuesday, February 23, 2016, the final vote should be postponed until the March 8, 2016, meeting. The motion was SECONDED by Mrs. Hughes Granato and VOTED unanimously. This should also provide sufficient time for

Mr. Kozaka and Mr. Emmett to prepare the final document to be submitted to the town on March 15 as required by charter. Public input was included in the discussion of how to include more parents in the process. The proposed budget will be placed online on Friday, February 19, and flyers and notices will be circulated to parents of all schools as well as PTO's, WSPC and other parents' groups.

5. Mr. Morris MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Hill and VOTED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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John Morris, Vice-Chairperson - Secretary