

Voting Summary:

**Special Meeting Notes
Fairfield BoE; January 23, 2014**

Call to order and Roll Call

Chairman Philip Dwyer called the meeting to order at 7:40PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack (arrived 7:55), Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Paul Fattibene, John Llewellyn, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, and Marc Patten. John Convertito and Donna Karnal were absent. Also present was Dr. Title, members of the Central Office Leadership Team, and approximately 40 members of the public.

Adjournment

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded to adjourn. Motion passed 9-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:40PM.

Detailed Minutes:

Chairman Dwyer called the Special Meeting to Order at 7:40 p.m. Members present were: Mrs. Liu-McCormack (arrived 7:55 pm), Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn, and Mr. Patten.

Chairman Dwyer led the Board and the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and reviewed the Budget Review Process.

Historical:

Dr. Title stated that educational goals referred to in the opening letter include student mastery of curriculum as well as the implementation of instructional improvement initiatives; directing resources moves these forward. Mr. Dwyer explained the process of the strategic plan adoption; once goals are adopted, district goals can follow.

Board discussion followed on the achievement gap. Dr. Title stated that many steps have been taken to put resources to work for struggling learnings at the elementary level; intense intervention, such as an extended day or year could be implemented; some students thrive and do well without additional support, and teachers can provide within-class differentiation.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked if the past year cost-containment measures had negatively impacted education. Dr. Title responded that the preference was not to implement any of those measures; the high school library coverage was partially restored.

Mr. Fattibene asked whether enrollment is declining, page 7. Dr. Title explained that a new enrollment projection is currently being worked on and should be ready within the next few months; the big question is kindergarten; Dr. Title stated that the Board will be given copies of the enrollment projection when received, possibly in February or March.

Income:

Mrs. Liu-McCormack requested the cost to make the World Language (WL) program whole again.

The impact of the sequester can found on page 22, under 'Federal', and the biggest impact is the IDEA Part B funding. IDEA part B and IDEA Part B preschool are for special education, Title 1 is restricted to McKinley and Holland Hill based on Free/Reduced lunch, Title 2 is a class size reduction grant and can also be used for professional development; Title 3

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is restricted to English Language Learners; all of these cannot supplant spending, they must only supplement to enhance existing programs.

Mr. Llewellyn requested information on the public transportation grant.

Reimbursement formulas for special education outplacement costs require that a student outplacement cost must exceed the per pupil expenditure by 4.5, with the reimbursement occurring only after the threshold has been met; a limiting factor may be that students might not attend outplacements for a full year or tuition may not be reimbursable; the approximate reimbursement rate is 75% of the excess.

Mr. Llewellyn requested the total cost of Pre-K transportation.

Board discussion on the Pre-K program centered on tuition; Dr. Title stated that the Pre-K program at Dwight was put in place to comply with the state law to address Fairfield's racial imbalance; the Burr program has worked for that purpose; this year's state report is expected by April. Mrs. Liu-McCormack requested the following: (1) the percentage of Pre-K students taking the bus that are also on Free/Reduced Lunch, (2) the total cost of the Pre-K programs, and (3) the number of Pre-K students that remain at Burr - to determine the program's success.

High School Parking fees were increased this year to \$150 and remain the same in 2014-2015.

Dr. Title reviewed the 'other sources' fees with increased rates; going forward, the PTA will not incur a charge if weekday events end by 11 p.m., and the weekend overtime fees still stand.

Mr. Patten requested the difference in outside group and PTA fees and money collected from 2012-13 and 2013-14.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack requested a list of direct student programs cut over the last three years with cost savings and costs to re-implement. Mr. Dwyer stated that lists of cuts could be provided and Dr. Title stated that costs to reinstate specific items could be provided.

Food Service Reimbursement is reduced due to the RFP process; any recoupment of that money may be in the bid and will be up to the vendors.

Executive Summary:

Mrs. Liu-McCormack requested an estimate on fuel costs for the district, to include Pre-K and special education busing. Dr. Title stated that the Town purchases the fuel, buses may be used for 3 runs a day and there are different contract prices for tiered busing. Mr. Llewellyn requested a breakdown of these factors.

Job descriptions are posted on the HR portion of the website.

Board discussion on paraprofessionals followed, the 9.2 increase in paras includes 5.2 new special education paras and 4 special education paras that had previously been funded with a grant. Ms. Leonardi stated that a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) will identify the nature of necessary support.

Until contracts are settled, money is held in in the wage/benefit reserve; contract details are discussed in Executive Session. Retirements are budgeted based on historical data, salary accounts are then reduced. Certified staff replacement is based on a historical average; this is turnover not retirement. The non-certified staff turnover has not been budgeted for in the past and is a bit of a risk.

Information on new hires will be provided to the Board, as Dr. Title mentioned that many new teachers are hired with extensive experience.

The pension number is determined by the Town's working with Hooker and Holcombe actuaries; Mr. Mayer could provide specifics on this; only non-certified BOE employees (approximately 400) are on the Town pension plan.

Food Services Health Insurance is not included in line 201.

Line 409 includes the cost of officials and uniforms.

Page 39, Technical Services increase is being driven by unsettled contracts, and increase in legal expenses.

Mr. Llewellyn requested a legal fees breakdown of special-ed, non-special-ed and contracts, over a 2 or 3 year period.

The First Selectman has announced that he would like to create a Town and BOE comprehensive plan for security; the Police Chief would like to create a school security department with personnel; at this time the \$160,000 security line is a placeholder.

In addition to special education tuition, there are other tuitions paid to the RCA and Aqua programs.

Ms. Leonardi stated that the outplacement process is different for each student, the process can be lengthy or crisis driven; some students move into the district, and others are parent placed.

Dr. Title stated that if the Food Service Program has a debt at year-end; this may be a transfer request but it is too soon to tell. Mrs. Munsell stated that the Food Services Program is audited each year.

Mr. Llewellyn requested the auditor's contact information.

Adjournment

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded to adjourn. Motion passed 9-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:40PM.

*Jessica Gerber
Fairfield Public Schools
Board of Education
Secretary*