

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Ellington, Connecticut

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

The Finance Committee of the Ellington Board of Education met Tuesday, January 29, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. in the Board of Education Conference Room in the School Administration Building, 47 Main Street, Ellington, CT 06029.

Attendees:

Board of Education Members: Mr. Michael Purcaro, Mrs. Liz Nord, Mrs. Tracey Kiff-Judson
Administrative Team Members: Dr. Scott Nicol, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Finance & Operations, Mr. Brian Hendrickson, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Kristy LaPorte, Director of Special Services, Mr. John Collins, Director of Technology, and Mrs. Susan Kalagher, Administrative Assistant/Sub-Coordinator

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 8:31 a.m. by Mr. Purcaro.

Agenda Items:

1. *Review of Substitute Teacher Pay Rates*

Mr. Greenleaf states that the district has been tracking substitutes and the rate of pay in surrounding towns since the beginning of the year. The labor market for these jobs is tight macro-economically. Both administration and teachers have discussed the notion of attracting better substitutes, especially those with teaching experience or certifications. The quality of the substitutes are recognized by both school administration and teachers, as it changes what students can accomplish. He notes that Stafford moved to a tiered model and since then our unfilled vacancies has increased.

Mrs. Kalagher states that from her experience as a coordinator, substitutes are motivated to work in Ellington for its schools, but are also looking at the money in each district.

Mr. Purcaro asks if this has been budgeted for. Mr. Greenleaf explains that the substitute account was increased for next year, partially in anticipation of this.

Dr. Nicol notes that he is going to work with principals next year to operationalize new strategies for maintaining permanent substitutes.

Motion: To recommend that the Board of Education adopt a new rate structure, \$90 per day for substitute teachers, \$98 for those with current CT Teaching Certification.

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

2. *Review of the 2019-2020 Budget*

Mr. Greenleaf walked through some of the budget questions brought up by board members at the budget workshop.

The cellphone account currently includes custodial/maintenance staff, technology staff and central office administration. Mr. Purcaro suggests meeting with the representative to reduce rates and inquire about priority phone lines for emergency situations. Mr. Greenleaf states the budget has been increased to include building principals for next year.

Mr. Greenleaf states that VOIP is something the district is looking into. Mr. Collins notes that the district has been investing in its infrastructure over the past few years and is currently at the point where this could be considered. He does warn that having one source for all telecommunications can be an operational risk. Currently, the account sits at \$25K for the year, and savings would have to justify any upfront capital investment.

Mr. Greenleaf discusses the breakdown between severance and adjustment within the budget. Severance is calculated from known retirees. Adjustment is tied to potential costs following contractual negotiations.

Mr. Greenleaf discusses medical claims over the past five-year period in the context of self-funding. Mr. Purcaro states the BOE should look to establish a medical reserve account.

Mrs. Nord asks about elements of the budget document, including the Open Choice Funds. Dr. Nicol explains that Open Choice Funds are used for a variety of sources. Mr. Greenleaf notes that expenditures are shown within the budget book for the first time in the administration's effort to increase transparency.

Motion: To recommend that the Board of Education to adopt an operating budget for the 2019-2020 year in the amount of \$39,750,319 representing an increase of 3.78% over the current year's budget as proposed by the Superintendent and recommended by the Finance Committee.

1st. T. Kiff-Judson

2nd. L. Nord

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Michael Purcaro, Finance Committee, Chair