

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Ellington, Connecticut

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

The Finance Committee of the Ellington Board of Education met Thursday, January 18, 2018 at 7:00 p.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, Dr. Jaime Foster and Mrs. Tracey Kiff-Judson.

Administrative Team Members: Dr. Scott Nicol, Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Finance & Operations, Mr. Tim McCluskey, Athletic Director

Call to Order: The meeting called to order at 7:26 p.m.

Agenda Items:

1. Bus Transportation Update

Mr. Greenleaf explained that the bus company, First Student, will be entering the 2nd year of a 5-year contract in the next fiscal year. The increase is 7.5% for 2018-2019 and the year after. Board members expressed concern over the service that is being provided by First Student. Mr. Greenleaf recognizes the concern and states the administration has been working with First Student to correct operational challenges. He also notes that so far out-of-compliance buses has yielded roughly \$150K of assessments against First Student. Dr. Nicol notes that this could be cause for termination, but the decision to pursue this route needs to be taken in broader context. The administration is not certain another bid would yield better results.

The committee decided not to make any motions at this time.

2. Pay-to-Participate Discussion

Mr. Greenleaf highlighted the athletic numbers over the past couple years. In the last full year, 2016-2017, the Board covered \$43,000 above the budget. However, the funding for this is pay-to-participate which only raises \$30,000 per year. He explains the increase is meant to cover this increase in transportation costs, as well as provide a dedicated revenue stream to the athletic program.

Mr. McCluskey provides the history of the pay-to-participate program, including the athletic restoration plan which dropped pay-to-participate from \$120 to \$60 in 2010. Since that time, costs in the budget increased 76% to accommodate contractual increases and salary inflation. At the same time, pay-to-participate has remained flat. The new price of \$100 would generate roughly \$20,000 more in revenue.

The Board member state this is a high increase. Mr. Greenleaf suggests capping the fee for three years and re-visiting at that point.

Dr. Foster asks about the strategy to let families know how to apply for waivers to the program. Mr. McCluskey states families can make that known on the pay-to-participate form.

Moved to recommend for approval by the board the an increase in the pay-to-participate fee from \$60 with a \$300 family cap to \$100 with a \$500 family cap for a three year period starting July 1, 2018.

1st. J. Foster

2nd. M. Purcaro

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Michael Purcaro, Finance Committee, Chair