

BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

PERSONNEL & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

DATE: August 9, 2023

LOCATION: Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria
185 Damascus Road, Branford, CT

SUBJECT: Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting

ATTENDANCE

HERE	ATTENDEE	AFFILIATION
Y	Meaghan DeLucia, Committee Chair	Board of Education
Y	Peter Berdon	Board of Education
N	Cristina Cantu	Board of Education
Y	Meredith Gaffney	Board of Education
Y	Ellen Michaels	Board of Education
Y	John Prins	Board of Education
N	Dr. Tim Raynor	Board of Education
Y	Laura Troidle	Board of Education
Y	Marie Watson	Board of Education
Y	Dr. Christopher Tranberg, Superintendent	Central Office
Y	Rachel Sexton, Assistant Superintendent	Central Office
Y	Charles Cicarella, Jr., Student Services Director	Central Office
Y	Donald Neel, Chief Operating Officer (COO)	Central Office

Others present:

CALL

- 01** The meeting was called to order at 7:17 PM by Meaghan DeLucia.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gregg Jerolman, Branford resident, thanked the Board for raising the bar of leadership, welcomed Dr. Tranberg, spoke about moving the bar in a positive direction, turnover, district reputation, the Assistant Superintendent and COO, a comment made by Mr. Neel at a former meeting, Darien and bringing in HR talent.

APPROVE MINUTES

- 02** A. MOTION (Troidle/Michaels) to approve the minutes from the May 10, 2023 Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- 03** A. 2022/2023 Year End Report

Mr. Neel stated that we are still in the process of closing last year's budget, the current balance is a little over \$105,000, more encumbered for utilities than we need to pay, this is consistent with where we were in normal time and we are where we need to be.

- 04** B. 2023/2024 Monthly Expenditures

In his report this evening, Mr. Neel, reported that the District has encumbered salaries for 12 month staff (but not for teachers, paras and other 10 month folks), the pupil services budget is 4.7% committed, the general operations budget is 24.1% committed for a consolidated committee of 20.3%. Mr. Neel also stated that it is too early to make any conclusion where we end up budgetarily. On June 29 the State reported that the MERS rate they gave us was significantly lower resulting in a \$300,000 savings which bows well for next year's budget. We have successfully negotiated another contract with Chartwells. Per the national school lunch program, we will need to raise prices (for the first time in a decade), staying consistent with surrounding towns, Branford High School will be \$3.90, Elementary Schools will be \$3.30 and Walsh Intermediate School will be \$3.60. Smart funds ended year with surplus (only

Continued...

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DISCUSSION/CONSENT ITEMS (Continued)

allowed to keep 3 months' worth). We have requested permission from the State to use for subsidize meals for next year, in addition we received STABLE funds (provide free breakfast to everyone, students with reduced prices will also receive free lunch). We are waiting for permission from State to do free lunch for everyone. Solar panels (missing part is here), Tisko is still waiting for their part). The leak in the WIS gym floor (entire floor needed to be replaced, insurance reimbursement was 91%). Mr. Neel concluded his report by stating that the First Student contract expires the end of this year, we have gone out to bid for consultants to craft an RFP and we are pleased with the quality of advice received

05 C. 2032/2024 Special Education Tuition & Transportation Monthly Expenditures

Charles Cicarella reported that this year's budget is approximately \$3.1 million for tuition, our projected expenses this year are already at \$3.2 million (something we haven't had in 13 years). Mr. Cicarella continued to say, however, on occasions, Boards of Education are required to fund tuition expenses for students who are placed by other agencies in medical facilities and we do have some students placed based on that, these are captured and budgeted for the remainder of the year, as students return to district or go elsewhere these figures could change. Right now we are looking at an approximate cost overrun of \$115,000 in tuition, transportation is stable and right where we are typically this time of year with our projections, the budget is approximately \$845,000, our expenses are \$777,000 leaving residuals of \$68,000 our combined expenses are just under four million dollars and we are looking at an overrun of \$48,000 going into June 30th. Mr. Cicarella concluded by saying "clearly this will change."

06 E. ESSER Quarterly Report

Mr. Neel stated that there are a couple of highlights to speak about; for summer school there is a balance there but we still haven't finished paying for this year yet and currently there is no money in the budget that we are using for next year, the para wage increase and associated benefits accounts for the \$122,002 (the last of it will happen in September), the entire grant will be expended by September. Mr. Neel concluded by stating that ESS is under contract and we will be making a payment in September so money is committed.

07 D. Personnel Report

Mr. Neel reported that our HR manager has brought a new benefit to our staff called Perks.com, the paraprofessional contract has reached a tentative settlement (paras will vote on it in early September), teacher negotiations have technically begun (settled on ground rules) and attorneys have said that if we don't meet a negotiated settlement by September 23rd we will have to go into mediation.

ADJOURN

- 08** MOTION (Michaels/Troidle) to adjourn.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Ms. DeLucia adjourned the meeting at 7:42 PM.

**The next Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting will be
September 13, 2023, at 7:00 PM at Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.**

Respectfully submitted,
Meredith Gaffney, Secretary

Prepared by,
Kerry Eyrich