

AGENDA

ITEM # 14

Public Hearing – April 17, 2012

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Hartford Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Tuesday, April 17, 2012. The meeting was held at Kinsella, Magnet School of Performing Arts, 65 Van Block Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

I. Call to Order

Mr. Poland called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. A quorum was present.

<u>Present:</u> Matthew Poland, Chair Lori Hudson, Vice-Chair Cherita McIntye, Second Vice-Chair Robert Cotto, Jr., Secretary Elizabeth Brad Noel Luis Rodríguez-Dávila Jose Colon-Rivas Richard Wareing	<u>Absent:</u> Mayor Pedro Segarra
Superintendent Christina Kishimoto	

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the Board had an opportunity to review the budget and to submit questions that were reviewed and answered at the Finance and Audit Committee – Committee of the Whole. The public hearing is an opportunity for the public to also comment on the proposed budget.

Dr. Kishimoto and Ms. Altieri, Chief Financial Officer provided an overview of the budget.

II. 2012-13 Budget Overview

- There is an overall decrease in the operating budget of \$9.4M
- We have a second consecutive year of flat funding from the City
- We have a five year Strategic Operating Plan that is driving budget priorities for fiscal 2012-13 planning
- We have six defined cost control strategies
- Strategically we remained focused on minimizing position reductions, while targeting funds toward capacity building
- We continue to be laser focused on closing the achievement gap while further developing our portfolio

2012-13 Budget Priorities

Approach: **Priorities driven by Strategic Operating Plan**

1. A well-defined Managed Performance Structure
2. Third Grade Promise: Pre-K and Kindergarten System
3. A district wide SRBI model (intervention structure)
4. A district wide capacity development approach (Talent Model)
5. A comprehensive public engagement plan

Note: Continue to organize central office in support of the Strategic Operating Plan and to improve delivery of services and support to schools.

2012-13 Proposed All Funds Budget

\$288.8M	General Budget	\$4.8m or 1.7%
\$111.3M	Special Funds	(\$ 14.2m) or (11.3%)
\$400.1M	Total	\$(9.4m) or (2.3%)

2012-13 Proposed Budget

2011-12 Operating Budget		409,463,147
2012-13 Proposed Operating Budget		400,109,906
	Total Change:	(9,353,241)
	Percent Increase:	-2.3%
Salaries	(3,545,543)	-0.9%
Transportation	(2,495,822)	-0.6%
Rental of Facilities	(1,986,690)	-0.5%
Supplies & Materials	(1,529,626)	-0.4%
Building Improvements	(880,448)	-0.2%
Professional Contracts & Services	(523,676)	-0.1%
Fringe & Insurance	(147,047)	0.0%
Tuition	988,119	0.2%
All Other Accounts	531,200	0.1%
Utilities	236,292	0.1%
TOTAL	(9,353,241)	-2.3%

Ms. Altieri stated that the salaries are decreasing for approximately \$3.5 million of the salary accounts. There are some significant changes contributing to the overall decrease. Contractual salaries increase is an adjustment for a total of \$3.8 million for an average increase of approximately 2%.

As salaries are going up, there is an overall decrease in the salaries account. The first decrease is \$1 million on extended day differential which is the result of the realignment of the bell time. There is also a decrease of \$2.9 million as a result of attrition; a decrease in the part time, overtime and subs accounts of approximately \$2 million; also a decrease in severance liabilities associated with the retirement liability that is about \$441,000. There is also the addition of 23.4 positions in the budget for a total increase of approximately \$1.1 million.

Another decrease is in the student transportation account for \$2.5 million which is attributable to a number of initiatives to reduce transportation expenditures that was set forth by the Budget task force last year.

2012-13 Proposed All Funds Budget

Ms. Altieri stated that the general budget is \$288.8 million or 72% of the total district operating budget; the special funds budget is \$111.3 million or 28% of the total funds. There three categories of revenue:

State: \$194.4M
 City \$111.3M
 Grant \$94.4M

2012-13 Revenue Assumptions

	OPERATING BUDGET 2011-12	%	PROPOSED BUDGET 2012-13	%
BOE OPERATING BUDGET	409,463,147	100.0%	400,109,906	100.0%
STATE OF CONNECTICUT(PASS-THRU GRANTS)				
EDUCATION COST SHARING (ECS)	187,974,890		192,783,001	
TRANSPORTATION	1,604,389		1,604,389	
HEALTH & WELFARE	60,722		60,722	
TOTAL STATE OF CONNECTICUT GRANTS	189,640,001	46.3%	194,448,112	48.6%
LOCAL TAX CONTRIBUTIONS	94,368,186	23.0%	94,368,186	23.6%
TOTAL GRANTS/DONATIONS	114,238,953	27.9%	111,293,608	27.8%
ED JOBS BILL - FEDERAL STIMULUS	11,216,007	2.7%	-	0.0%
TOTAL REVENUES	409,463,147	100.0%	400,109,906	100.0%

Dr. Kishimoto stated that there were six cost control strategies that were engaged for this budget cycle:

1. Transportation Tiers and Utilization \$1.7M
2. School Schedule \$3.1M
3. Special Education Costs
 - Transportation out of district \$865K
 - Out of district tuition \$1M
4. Leased Facilities \$2.0M
5. Building Improvement \$740K
6. Fringe and Insurance \$1.8M

III. Public Participation

1. Carlos Morales, parent, expressed his disappointment for the elimination of the School Governance Council (SGC) coordinator position. He stated that Burns established its SGC this

year; the law requires that the SGC should have 14 voting members consisted of parents, staff, community leaders and the principal. Burns only had the required number of parents once. He stated that to be in compliance with the law, the resources need to be available. He asked the Board to reconsider the elimination of the SGC coordinator.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the District is taking an approach at Central Office to increase the oversight of schools and the responsibilities in a variety of critical areas that include the SGC's, comprehensive professional learning, planning, teacher evaluation, and follow through on school accountability plans. A more comprehensive director approach will be put in place to supervise principals to ensure we are adhering with the law. The other component that will be set in place is a comprehensive professional learning approach where there will be a team of trainers out of central office, on key training that is critical across the schools. This is a centralized training that is essential and will include the school governance council's component.

2. Deborah Bigelow, parent, recognized the superintendent's effort for not being in deficit. She also spoke to the Board regarding parental engagement and the elimination of the SGC coordinator position. She stated that this is a crucial position that supports leadership training for parents, and promotes parental engagement.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the SGC coordinator does not have supervisor responsibilities. This will be elevated to a director position as part of the supervisory structure. Parental engagement is a component that the District has work collectively throughout the years. There have been some great steps made; there are a number of other initiatives made including the SGC, the parent committee of the Board, and we will continue to make strides to develop the parent voice. This is a strategic approach to move forward to another level.

Mr. Poland stated that the Board is committed to working with parents to get a full understanding to what is important for the parents to know and what information they need to become fully engaged. It is an important component of the Strategic Operating Plan to make sure that parent engagement is one of the leading things by which we get measure.

3. Rosa Molina, Burr School PTO member, raised concerns for the elimination of the school-based facilitator position.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the Board will be holding a School Governance Council Forum where the SGC members will provide their feedback and will determine what it needs to continue for next year, the work that we would like to maintain, and suggestions for anything that needs to be changed. This is an important topic that can be referred to that summary review.

4. LaToya Thompson, Burr School PTO president, raised concerns for the elimination of the SGC facilitator for the school building.
5. Marie Rodriguez, Kinsella SGC member, raised concerns for the elimination of the SGC facilitator position. She recommended keeping the same facilitator.
6. Natividad Flores and Milly Soto, parents, Clark School PTO members, spoke in support of the SGC facilitator position. They stated that parents would like to move forward with a system that they are familiar with. The facilitator provides parents with the tools and is always readily available for them.

7. Sheila Reese, parent, stated that the mayor concern raised at the budget hearing is the elimination of the facilitator position. She stated that it is a valuable resource to have a person dedicated to parents and the SGC's; having the right support is helping parents to achieve the formation of SGC's.
8. Jane Russell, parent, stated that she is part of the SGC and the PTO. She stated that there are people in the schools who do not do their jobs. These people do not perform well, so they are moved from school to school instead of cutting their positions. There are also people who work and dedicate their lives to the parents and they are beneficial for the system; yet, their positions are eliminated. She recommended reconsidering the elimination of the SGC facilitator position.
9. Milly Arciniegas, parent, spoke to the Board regarding the culture diversity training, She recommended having the training available for all staff and not only for teachers. She stated that this type of training was provided before and it unsuccessful because it was only available to teachers.

Ms. Arciniegas also spoke regarding the special education students who are projected to come back to the district that may represent \$1 million in savings for the district. She advised the Board that there may be other students who may need to be sent outside Hartford, or that parents may choose to keep their children in outside placements because Hartford is not in compliance with Special Education and they are receiving the right services outside Hartford.

Ms. Arciniegas concluded speaking in support of the SGC coordinator position. She stated that the district has undergone through several changes during and before the reform; parents have witnessed failure for many years. The SGC is finally working, so it is discouraging to learn that that the district is reversing the gains by eliminating the SGC coordinator position. She recommended reconsidering the decision to eliminate the position.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the Culture Diversity Training will be a roll out in 2012-13 for all new staff members and a rollout in consecutive years for all staff members. Regarding the special education students, Dr. Kishimoto stated that this is a comprehensive, complex process. It is through the PPT's held this year that we learned that we have more than 20 parents who are interested of having their kids coming back to the District.

Regarding the SGC coordinator, Dr. Kishimoto stated that this is a commitment that the District has as a Board and as a District to the School Governance Council process. Parent voice and parent involvement is critical. Parent training and all the complexity of having a comprehensive parent engagement plan goes beyond one position. The input received from parents was considered and this will not be a one position, this will be a vision around everything that we are putting in place for parental engagement.

Ms. Arciniegas recommended that the comprehensive plan includes quality, because that is what parents are losing with the elimination, they are losing quality.

10. Shonta Browdy, HPOC, raised concerns for the monitoring of the PPT's process. She also raised concerns regarding the surveys and the way in which the data will be used. She stated that there are issues occurring at the building level because the principals are the leaders. So there is doubt to think that the supervisors will be able to do handle the issues with principals.

Dr. Kishimoto requested more information regarding the concerns raised for the monitoring of the PPT's. She stated that it is very important that the monitoring, quality and the supervision of the procedures are done correctly. She spoke regarding the school connectedness survey. The surveys will be monitored by Achieve Hartford that will analyze the data. The data will be then presented to the Board in July and that data will be shared with the principals who will review their school data with the school governance councils to look at some action steps that may be needed, and for their school accountability plan.

11. Paul Holzer, Achieve Hartford, spoke to the Board regarding the Student Based Budgeting and stated its support for SBB. He stated that SBB addresses accountability, transparency and equity for the students in the schools. He also spoke regarding the impact of Choice and transportation on the budget. He concluded speaking regarding the comments and concerns about the SGC coordinator. He stated that parents have a point of contact and trust with the coordinator. The technical assistance should not get lost.
12. Andrew Woods, Hartford Communities that Care, spoke to the board regarding domestic violence and its impact on families and children. He stated that his organization is working with a partnership at Clark School and requested the support from the Board.
13. Michael Downes, Hartford Federation of School Substitute Teachers, raised concerns for the middle grade standards. He recommended separating the elementary grades and the middle grades. He also spoke to the Board regarding the reduction of substitute teachers.

IV. Discussion of Budget Items

Ms. Noel stated that many schools do not have a school librarian or guidance counselors, when there is a high population of special education students and ELL students who need the services.

Mr. Poland stated that the public hearing was about the budget, but the comments made were not about the budget, they were about School Governance Councils and the importance of Parent Engagement. He stated that the Board was not aware that this position was being eliminated. He stated that this is a very significant issue. It is very important to have continuity and sustainability for parents. He requested more information regarding the position and how it supports the SGC's.

Ms. McIntye requested more information regarding the resources available in the schools, particularly the schools with critical needs.

Mr. Cotto asked for the Pre-Kindergarten programs and asked for the difference why some schools have pre-K programs and some do not.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that there is an increase of pre-Kindergartens in magnet schools that are funded through State dollars. This is an issue that was raised with the State department; it is differentiated funding available for three year olds at magnet schools, so it is inequitable funding. We have also funding for neighborhood schools, but we had to eliminate some programs because the schools have not been able to sustain the enrollment.

V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.