

AGENDA

ITEM # 15

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Hartford Board of Education

MINUTES

Special Meeting – May 3, 2011

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Hartford Board of Education (hereinafter "Board" met on Tuesday, May 3, 2011. The meeting was held at STEM Magnet School at Annie Fisher, 280 Plainfield Street, Connecticut 06103.

I. Call to Order

6:24 p.m. Mr. MacDonald called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

<u>Present:</u> Mr. David MacDonald, Chair Ms. Lori L. Hudson, Second Vice Chair Ms. Sharon Patterson-Stallings, Secretary Ms. Elizabeth Brad Noel Ms. Ada Miranda Mr. Israel Flores Mr. Luis Rodríguez-Dávila Mr. Robert Cotto, Jr.	<u>Absent:</u> Ms. Pamela Richmond, Vice Chair
Superintendent Steven Adamowski	

Ms. Melony Brady, Annie Fisher, Principal, welcomed the Board and Superintendent. She shared her excitement for the news that Annie Fisher STEM Magnet School was chosen by NASA to have experiments on the shuttle when it launches on June 28.

Ms. Brady explained that the school program was opened a few weeks ago and is the first K to post graduate program in the State of Connecticut. The school has a partnership with the University of Hartford for the science and technology programs.

II. Review of Board Questions

Superintendent Adamowski stated that this is the last meeting of a series of meetings that had taken place prior to the adoption of the Budget, and before its endorsement to City Council.

Responses to Board of Education Questions on 4/25/11 Proposed Budget.

1. What is the impact of the reduction in special funds grants from the Hartford Foundation/or Public Giving (\$704,306 in FY 2010-11) and Travelers (\$751,904 in FY 2010-11) sources? (page 17) (Mr. Cotto)

A: The investment made by the Hartford Foundation in the 2010-2011 year largely benefitted the Adult Education Center and High School, Inc. Both of these investments were intended to be one-time and their absence in 2011-12 will not have a long term impact to those programs. We do expect

some investment by HFFPG but as their investment cycle does not coincide with our budget development cycle, we cannot publish a projection at this point.

The Traveler's investment largely funds the Traveler's Leadership Academy (3 full time Resident Principals), as well as the tutoring program at Asian Studies. Again, we do expect some investment by Travelers but as their investment cycle does not coincide with our budget development cycle, we cannot publish a projection at this point.

2. What is the meaning of Interfund transfers (ED Jobs/SR) for \$13,271,025 in Budget Fund 2007 and an offsetting (\$13,271,025) in Budget Fund 1003? (page 257) (Mr. Cotto)

A: The funding for two grants that come direct to the Board of Education under Fund 2007 were distributed to schools using the SBB budgeting methodology under Fund 1003. The inter-fund transfer represents the alignment of the revenue to the corresponding expenses. The net of these inter-fund transfers is zero.

3. Which lines(s) and page(s) of the budget are associated with the cost for the High Road program (i.e. tuition)? (Mr. Cotto)

A: High Roads tuition costs are budgeted in the Transitional Secondary budget beginning on page 211. Please refer to detailed budget breakdown on page 212 and note the tuition line 556 of \$4.8M in 2011-12. This represents the tuition we pay to High Roads for the Hartford program.

4. Are all of some of the 27 paraprofessional positions that are recommended for elimination "one-to-one" paraprofessionals? (Mr. Cotto)

A: No. Pursuant to our response on 4/19/2011, 17 of the 27 paraprofessional eliminations are Special Education paraprofessionals. Of the 17, 1 is a one-to-one paraprofessional and 16 are adult support paraprofessionals.

Mr. Cotto asked for clarification for the term adult support.

Ms. Altieri stated that adult support paraprofessional means one paraprofessional for multiple children. It could be a one to four children paraprofessional.

5. What is the current number of paraprofessional hours dedicated to each student that will be impacted by the reduction in paraprofessionals? (Mr. Cotto)

A: The IEP specifies adult support according to student needs and is not stated in hourly terms.

The following represents the potential impact of the 17 special education paraprofessional reductions:

- No Impact (14 of 17):
 - Three (3) students left the district during the current 10-11 year.
 - One (1) student transitioning to a program with adult support paraprofessionals currently in place.
 - Five (5) anticipated graduations.
 - Five (5) positions are currently unfilled "vacant" positions that are proposed to be eliminated in 2011-12.
- Impact to be determined (3 of 17):
 - Three (3) based on the students upcoming IEP annual review may not need additional support.

6. What is the recommended number of paraprofessional/special education teacher hours for each student that will be impacted by the paraprofessional reduction? (i.e. Student A. has 10 paraprofessional hours/week in 2010-11, Student A will have 5 paraprofessional hours/week in 2011-12). (Mr. Cotto)

A: The IEP specifies adult support according to student needs and is not stated in hourly terms.

7. Please provide a summary that shows the Art, Music, and PE staff by location supported by the 2011-12 Recommended Budget. (Ms. Noel)

Detailed positions by school can be found in the official file for this meeting.

8. Please provide information related to the "Choose Hartford Campaign", specifically how much the campaign costs and the funding sources for 2010-11 and 2011-12 Recommended Budget. (Ms. Noel)

A: In 2010-2011, the Choose Hartford campaign cost \$167,550. In the 2011-2012 Recommended Budget we have allocated \$198,000 for the marketing and parent information brochures for Hartford Choice.

Dr. Adamowski stated that the outsourcing of the marketing for the RSCO office is \$400,000 for fewer schools. Hartford is not competing at a full level with less than half the amount of money for more schools, compare to the marketing budget of the magnet schools.

Discussion followed.

9. What is happening with the lease for High School Inc.? Has this lease been extended? If yes, what are the new terms of the lease? What are the future plans for High School Inc. given our goal for District schools to be housed in District owned facilities? (Ms. Noel)

A: The lease for High School, Inc. (275 Asylum) runs from August of 2010 until July 1, 2015 at a current cost of \$342K per year. At 35,319 square feet, this comes to a price per square foot of \$9.70 which is very competitive in this market

At this time there are no plans to build a new school. With the reduction of the state's construction reimbursement proposed cap at 65% for Hartford, building new is probably not a viable option. Some possible other options are:

- continue leasing and extend the lease after 2015;
- renovate a City owned building;
- renovate a City building that we purchase;
- explore creative ways to subsidize a site by securing a business partner in downtown Hartford who is willing to do this.

The future plans for High School, Inc. will be a priority for the 2011-12 School Year. Other school projects have been the focus of the 2010-11 School Year. Whichever option we pursue, we want to maintain the school in a downtown presence for student access to local businesses and financial institutions.

10. Can you briefly explain why we received revised pages for the budget book and what revisions were made and why? (Ms. Noel)

A: The revised pages do not represent any material changes to the financial information you received on April 11. After printing, duplicate pages were found to exist in the budget document, along with a

few minor typographical errors. These pages were corrected and page numbers changed as a result of eliminating the duplicate pages.

11. Can you please provide the criteria developed for Special Education paraprofessionals and the rationale behind this criteria development? (Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila / Mr. MacDonald)

A: Please find attached the Adult Support Criteria requested.

The rationale behind the development of the criteria aligns with the research findings of Michael Giangreco, Ph.D. After studying numerous districts across the country, he found that "students with disabilities receive the bulk of their instruction from paraprofessionals, while students without disabilities have ongoing access to qualified professional educators."

Concurrently, the Office of Special Education reduced special educator caseloads from 1:25 to 1:18 to ensure students with disabilities receive instructional support from professional educators.

III. Review of Changes to the 2011-12 Superintendent's Recommended Budget as Proposed by the Committee of the Whole

Ms. Altieri explained that the finance committee met with the Committee of the Whole to discuss changes to the budget. There were two changes that were applied:

Reductions:

Sundry – Central Services: \$250,000

- It represents the elimination of Central Office / Cabinet Performance / Variable Pay.

Additions:

Buildings and Grounds \$250,000

- Reinstate minor building / improvement projects.

IV. Business Agenda

A. Items in Order of Importance

1. Resolution: Adoption of the 2011-2012 General Budget - \$283,365,642 (Finance & Audit Committee)

The Connecticut General Statutes (CGS 10-222) requires that the appropriations for the General Operating Funds of the School District be approved by the Board of Education. The Hartford Board of Education adopts a Fiscal Year 2011-2012 General Budget in the amount of \$283,365,642; effective July 1, 2011.

Mr. Flores made a motion; Ms. Miranda seconded the motion. Mr. Rodriguez-Davila opposed.

The motion passed by voice vote.

2. Resolution: Adoption of the 2011-2012 Recommended Special Funds Budget - \$112,429,186 (Finance & Audit Committee)

The Connecticut General Statutes (CGS 10-222) requires that the appropriations for the General Operating Funds of the School District be approved by the Board of Education. The Hartford Board of Education adopts a Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Recommended Special Funds in the amount of \$112,429,186; effective July, 1 2011.

Ms. Miranda made a motion; Mr. Flores seconded the motion. Mr. Rodriguez-Davila opposed.

The motion passed by voice vote.

V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.