

BUDGET SESSION OF THE GREENWICH BOARD OF EDUCATION

DATE: December 10, 2009, 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Havemeyer Building

PRESENT:

Board: Mr. Steven Anderson, Chairman
Mrs. Leslie Moriarty, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Michael Bodson, Secretary
Mr. Jonathan Cohen
Mrs. Marianna Ponns Cohen
Ms. Nancy Kail
Ms. Natalie Queen
Mr. Peter Sherr

Administration:

Dr. Sidney Freund, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Susan Wallerstein, Asst. Superintendent, Business Operations
Mr. John Curtin, Asst. Superintendent
Ms. Mary P. Forde, Director, Pupil Personnel Services
Mr. Richard Calcavecchio, Director,
Ms. Kim Eves, Director, Communications

Other:

Mrs. Sue Rogers, Mrs. Bianka Courtlan-Cox, Mrs. Rianne Fernandez Staps, Mrs. Caroline Reilly, Mrs. Christina Russell, PTA Council; Ms. Cathy Delehanty, GEA; Mrs. Anna Saras, Mrs. L. B. Savitz, Mrs. Regina Semmes, Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Michals, Mrs. Jennifer Dayton, Mrs. Kim Carr, Mrs. Paula Daum,ALP; Mrs. Camille Broderick, Greenwich High School; Julie Faryniarz, Greenwich Alliance. Mr. Colin Gustofson, Greenwich Time and Mr. Ken Borsuk, Greenwich Post. . An attendance list is on file in the Board of Education office.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Anderson, Chairman, at 7:04 p.m.

1. Public Hearing

Mrs. Sue Rogers, PTA Council President, thanked Dr. Freund and Administration for the amount of work put forward in development of the budget. She encouraged the Board to take a hard and honest look to ensure tax dollars are in fact used to achieve maximum educational value.

Mrs. Elizabeth Barth & Mrs. Sophie Dowling spoke regarding inequitable funding at Riverside School for the 2010-2011 school year in the current model. They indicated that they have more students and have larger class sizes, yet the school had the same number of staff for specials, despite having almost twice as many students as some of the other schools.

Mrs. Christina Russell and Mrs. Bonnie Novek spoke in support of ALP Third Grade Science Interdisciplinary program to be included in the 2010-2011 budget.

2. Discussion of Budget Questions and Answers

Mrs. Fran Kompar, Director of Technology, provided the Board with answers to the questions submitted in advance of the meeting. She advised that all classrooms, Grades 3 to 5, have been outfitted with Smartboards. Over the course of the next two years, all Grades 6 to 12 will also be outfitted. There will be a trainer in every school this summer training staff on the use of this equipment. Questions from the Board included whether the district uses UCONN's free training for school districts, a discussion of digital textbooks, the process and evaluation of training, and the potential savings which could be realized through the use of Ebooks as compared to hard copy books.

Dr. Freund responded to Riverside parents questions related to the 2010-2011 budget for Riverside School. He advised that he had met with Mr. Grasso, and several relevant points were raised during that meeting. Dr. Freund will take another look at the allocation for Riverside and other schools, keeping in mind the relevant points made by Mr. Grasso.

The Board asked several questions involving literacy specialists and the increase in costs for Special Education. One Board member requested a breakdown of the costs involving the Special Education increase and it will be supplied at the next meeting. They also discussed Third Grade ALP Interdisciplinary program, magnet school, the rationale for Western Middle School being considered as a magnet

school, utilities expenses, and the costs of training for a middle school magnet. A request was made for additional information regarding the dollars spent on Special Education settlements and mediations.

In regard to the Capital Budget, Mrs. Moriarty advised that there are \$80 million in requests to the CIP Committee all vying for \$50 million in funding available. The MISA Project and the Central Fire Station represent \$52 million of potential spending. The BET has advised there will be no funding for a project until all appropriate Planning and Zoning and other related land use approvals have been received.. Dr. Wallerstein advised that a discussion of this project as well as alternative projects which could be accelerated from future years in replacement of MISA will take place at the January 7th Work Session, when the Capital Improvements will be on the Board Agenda.

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mr. Cohen to move into Executive Session to discuss Personnel Matters at 8:45 p.m.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Mr. Bodson to move back into Public Session at 9:05 p.m.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Ms. Queen to adjourn at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael C. Bodson
Secretary