

**DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BUDGET WORKSHOP  
MEETING MINUTES**  
**Thursday, February 6, 2014, 6:00 p.m.**

**BEAVER BROOK ADMINISTRATION CENTER  
63 BEAVER BROOK ROAD, DANBURY, CT 06810**

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Present: Gladys Cooper, R. Jannelli, K. Molinaro, Committee Members; A. Adriani, Dr. W. Glass, J. Martino, Dr. S. Pascarella, Atty. K. Thompson, Administration

Also

Present: Michael Ferguson, Annrose Fluskey-Lattin, Richard Jannelli, David Metrena, Kathleen Molinaro, Robert Taborsak, Phyllis Tranzillo, Board Members; Michael Haddad, John Priola, and Colleen Stanley, City Council members

Absent: E. Alberts, R. Hawley, D. Metrena, R. Pietrafesa

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K. Molinaro called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and the roll call was taken.

Seeing there is no one here for public participation, K. Molinaro turned the meeting over to Dr. Pascarella who said J. Martino will present tonight and go over the financials, and he will make a formal presentation to the public at the next Board meeting. To recap, the overall budget allocation is about 3.97%. Our increase is about 1.4% to 1.5% generally. The 3.97% opens up the new building, relying on some of the money for furniture, etc. The three additions we have at the three schools are scheduled to open in September. The good news is that we can speak freely about ECS money. We have been able to utilize a large portion to assist us in keeping this budget at a reasonable amount. He said we will be able to put our full-day kindergarten in. Dr. Pascarella turned the meeting over to J. Martino.

J. Martino directed everyone to the Power Point which was given to everyone at the beginning of the meeting. J. Martino went through each bullet in the handout.

J. Martino spent a little bit of time going over the Alliance and ECS portions because this has been a three-year phase from the Governor, and each year Danbury has received increases against the money. In the 2012-2013 budget year, we had a \$1.7 million dollar grant that came down from the State, and it began, as Dr. Pascarella said, our all-day Kindergarten, intervention initiatives, SIOP coaches at DHS, providing training for administrators and new teacher evaluation model, and increased bilingual support as well. He said our charge from the State is to create new programs and new initiatives and we cannot add existing programs or current staff into this new funding model. In Year 2, Danbury received an additional \$2.7 million dollars for a total of \$4.4 million dollars in ECS funding. That helped us transition to

all day Kindergarten in three additional schools, increased math support at our elementary level, provided one full-time social worker at each elementary school, provided additional administrative support and school climate support at our middle and high school levels, and provided a longer term funding solution for Head Start. In Year 3, which will be the last year of increases in the ECS funds as of right now, there will be an additional \$2.2 million dollars to the Board of Education. In total, we will receive \$6.6 million dollars in ECS funding. We have transferred some salaries because there is a balance in the funding formula that does allow for some current positions. The remaining of the funding, which is approximately \$1.2 million dollars will be used for the Assistant Principals at Park Avenue, Shelter Rock and Stadley Rough, the Middle School Department Chairs, a Math Specialist at K-5 level, all day Kindergarten teachers, SIOP, Elementary Principal Teacher Evaluation Support, and Instructional Supplies for the Common Core.

With regard to the Budget Overview by Classification, this was broken down in each area of the budget. A brief synopsis of the items that are impacted is shown. He explained the addition of "Program Improvements." Rather than add teachers back into the main salary lines, we have made a separate line code for these new initiatives. The goal is to not confuse the salary accounts. We want to leave them in their own area, so what is in the current salary accounts is existing staff. Any new additional staff is added in the Program Improvement. J. Martino said the biggest bright spot to the budget this year by far has been the insurance. Current employee benefits for next year are \$25,800,000, which represents an increase of \$871,000, or 3.49%, but in that increase is \$615,000 for health insurance for the new staff for Mill Ridge. The current health insurance renewal right now sits at .7% or \$156,000, and this amount is based on the new teachers and administrators contracts, which will, in a sense, convert every district employee to an HSA health savings account for all of our units including exempt staff. J. Martino continued to clarify the items listed on all of the numbered accounts.

J. Martino asked if anyone would like him to go through the budget book. K. Molinaro asked for discussion.

R. Jannelli complimented J. Martino on his presentation. He asked a question about the ECS money and Dr. Pascarella said it is our money to spend, but we have to show accountability for it. He asked clarifying questions and Dr. Pascarella answered accordingly. M. Ferguson asked a clarifying question about the ECS funds. A. Fluskey-Lattin asked about the ECS grant fund and the additional \$2.2 million dollars to be received in the 2014-2015 year. R. Jannelli asked if the longevity of the ECS funding is contingent upon a term period. Dr. Pascarella said we asked that question at the last Alliance Meeting and they are saying we can expect at least five years of the grant. R. Jannelli is concerned that if we do not receive these funds from the state down the road, how would we be able to continue to fund the projects created? Dr. Pascarella said it is his hope to bring some of it into the Operational Funds so we transition from personnel to purchasing items to support what teachers are doing. Dr. Pascarella said, it is strategically our plan to roll back to take more money off of that, so that if, in fact, that does happen, then we are faced with not cutting our programs. It will be a challenge.

R. Jannelli asked a question about the line that reads “All Other Object Codes” in the 2014-2015 Executive Summary Cost Projections in Section 1, Page 1 of the book prepared by J. Martino.

He asked if this is a discretionary category. J. Martino said those represent some of the soft costs all others are fixed. A. Fluskey-Lattin and M. Ferguson asked clarifying questions with regard to the ECS funds and the actual projected budget of \$122.9. J. Martino said that Section 1 Page 12 takes you through a litany of the years of the grant as it has increased. He cites the Note at the bottom of the page that states this does not include an additional \$2.2 million dollars which will be received in the 2014-2015 year. Right now, the \$4.4 million dollars is what we have today. Once we submit the application, in April the additional \$2.2 million dollars will come into that. He explained that it is listed in the Power Point for Year 3 ECS Funding.

J. Martino said we are running at \$1 million dollars of surplus from health insurance. The security guards for every school are in there. C. Stanley asks a question about the STEM program moving from RPMS to the new Academy and if the teachers are moving with them. Atty. K Thompson answered and explained the process. A discussion ensued concerning the budgeting of teachers for the new middle school. The back section of the budget was revamped. In going forward, we now have listings for each building.

K. Molinaro told everyone that this budget will be on the agenda for the next full board meeting, and the Superintendent will ask for a vote. She suggested that if anyone has of a question that they call J. Martino for discussion so everyone is prepared to vote on Wednesday, February 12. J. Martino briefly explained the Budget Presentation that was given to all present. Additional questions were asked of Mr. Martino and Dr. Pascarella and all were answered accordingly. A discussion ensued regarding various line items, programs, salaries, funds, etc. Clarifying questions were asked and discussion continued.

K. Molinaro asked if the presentation will be made publicly at the next board meeting. J. Martino said this would be the layout we would use to present to the City. K. Molinaro thanked J. Martino and Dr. Pascarella for the detailed information. G. Cooper asked if the Finance Committee will make a recommendation to accept the Budget and R. Jannelli answered affirmatively.

**MOTION:** G. Cooper made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by R. Jannelli, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

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Kathleen M. Molinaro