

**Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education special meeting on Wednesday, December 18, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at 3 Primrose Street.

D. Leidlein, Chair  
L. Roche, Vice Chair  
K. Hamilton, Secretary  
J. Vouros  
D. Freedman  
M. Ku

J. Reed

ALSO PRESENT: Legislative Council Members, Board of Selectman Members, Board of Finance Members, Finance Director Bob Tait, Land Use Director George Benson, Attorney David Grogins, Attorney Monte Frank, 28 members of the public, 4 Press

Board of Education Discussion of 2014-2015 Budget:

Mrs. Leidlein and Dr. Reed presented the attached draft estimates of Major Contractual/Fixed Costs and Efficiencies & Other Reductions for the Board of Education. Contract increases range from 1-2%. Medical is a 4% increase. Insurance is a 3% increase. In-district transportation is an increase of \$150,000 and Special Ed transportation has an increase of \$52,000. The Technology increase is for the replacement of instructional computers required for testing. Areas still in development are for the new Superintendent, out of district tuition, security personnel, fuel which has not been bid, and nurses contracts to be negotiated this year. Reductions: Hawley switching from oil to natural gas, charging tuition for non-special ed pre-school students, unfilled positions, estimated turnover, energy management, and reductions for reduced positions.

Dr. Reed stated the superintendent is responsible to recommend the budget to Board of Education. Has one month to go before recommending budget, so Board of Education hasn't seen the budget. He expressed it would difficult to sustain financing of police officers at time and half. They are looking at other models in Enfield and North Branford, using retired Police Officers. Feedback from the visitation team has been positive. This requires an immense amount of co-operation between the Police Department and Board of Education. Both sides would want to be involved in the hiring. Security should be looked at independently from the budget, supplements needed so as not to compete with books, sports etc. Work with staff intelligently to maximize grants. Believes the SERV grant will be approved. Received \$3.25 million for security and secured \$1 million more working with staff and vendors. Good news for town surplus fund, received insurance refund and grant money. Need to show relation between declining enrollment and the budget. Would like a mutual agreement on budget while balancing the needs of the town and school system. Energy containment initial savings will go into paying for equipment. It is a savings in capital expenditures. When paid off, you will see significant dollars coming back in energy savings.

Ms. Jacob stated feedback from Charter Revision Commission said in towns that are successful in passing budgets, is when there is collaboration. Goal is to pass budget first time.

Dr. Reed doesn't remember having 4 or 5 referendums when he was superintendent. He understands what needs to be done to build collaboration. This has been an atypical year

because of the shooting. Decision made not to fill 6 positions this year; we are serious about managing the budget.

Dr. Reed spoke about charging non-special education partner students for attending our preschool program. Most districts charge for this program. Lisa Romano asked how Dr. Reed knows non special education students will pay tuition. Dr. Reed said all school districts that he was aware of charge. It will be fairly priced.

Mr. Knapp stated voters vote on one number. Asked what is the goal? Dr. Reed said start with understanding what the needs are, how many staff can be reduced. We are still getting information in. The more intelligent the budget can be and meet the needs of students while demonstrating we are good shepherds of tax dollars is his goal. Budget will be conservative and modest.

Mr. Amaral hopes to see a zero increase. He would like explanations in budget book for increases and decreases. Dr. Reed will do that.

Ms. Hamilton asked if the line item teacher's/staff salaries is based on current staff. Dr. Reed said yes. Staff reductions are still in development. Ms. Hamilton asked if estimated turnover is assuming people leave and less costly staff is hired. Dr. Reed said that is correct. There are no incentives to retire early.

Ms. Jacob asked if there will be a retirement package offered. Dr. Reed said the Board makes that decision but he thinks it is problematic, and it encourages good people to leave. He doesn't think we should pay people who were going to retire.

Mr. Ferguson suggested the title "major contractual/fixed costs" should read "major contractual obligations". Dr. Reed calls it "known costs drivers".

Ms. Jacob asked if Dr. Reed is currently looking at a \$1.2 million increase over last year.

Dr. Reed said this is not the whole story. He doesn't see anything impacting it to be higher, and is looking to be creative with security. If security is going to be in the Board of Education budget, he hopes it is supplemented some way.

Ms. Romano asked of the council decides where security costs go. Why is transportation going up? Dr. Reed said transportation is increasing according to All Stars contract at 3%. Ms. Jacob said the council does not have line item authority over the Board of Education budget. Dr. Reed and Mrs. Llodra will make recommendations regarding security and the Board of Finance will make a recommendation.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Kathy Hamilton  
Secretary

**Town of Newtown**  
**Board of Education Budget 2014-15 Talking Points**  
**12/18/2013**

	DRAFT ESTIMATES
<b>MAJOR CONTRACTUAL/FIXED COSTS:</b>	
TEACHER SALARIES	\$ 1,091,000.00
ADMINISTRATORS, CUSTODIANS, SECRETARIES, EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS	\$ 160,000.00
MEDICAL BENEFITS (4%)	\$ 324,000.00
INSURANCE (W/C & G/L) (3%)	\$ 28,300.00
TRANSPORTATION (IN DISTRICT)	\$ 150,000.00
TRANSPORTATION (SPECIAL ED IN AND OUT OF DISTRICT)	\$ 52,000.00
TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT	\$ 120,000.00
AREAS STILL IN DEVELOPMENT:	
SUPERINTENDENT	
TUITION - OUT OF DISTRICT	
SECURITY - PERSONNEL & HARDWARE	
GASOLINE AND DIESEL: YET TO BID	
NURSES CONTRACT: TO BE NEGOTIATED	
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GRAND TOTAL	\$ 1,925,300.00
<b>EFFICIENCIES &amp; OTHER REDUCTIONS:</b>	
OIL TO NATURAL GAS (TWO-THIRDS) AT HAWLEY	\$ (20,000.00)
PRE-SCHOOL TUITION FOR NON-SPECIAL ED STUDENTS	\$ (50,000.00)
POSITIONS UNFILLED IN CURRENT OPERATING BUDGET	
CERTIFIED	\$ (240,000.00)
NON-CERTIFIED	\$ (30,000.00)
ESTIMATED TURNOVER	\$ (325,000.00)
ENERGY MANAGEMENT: CONTINUE PERFORMANCE REVIEW W/ TOWN	
REDUCTIONS MADE FOR REDUCED POSITIONS - IN DEVELOPMENT	
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GRAND TOTAL	\$ (665,000.00)

NOTE: AT THIS POINT IN TIME THE 2014-15 BOE BUDGET IS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DEPT REVIEW PROCESS