

**TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT**

**BUDGET MEETING/WORK SESSION – DECEMBER 14,
2009**

Long Hill Administration Building
Lorraine R. Smith Assembly Room

The Trumbull Board of Education convened in the Long Hill Administration Building for a Budget Meeting.

Members present:

T. Lovely, Board Chairman
D. Herbst, Board Chairwoman
T. Kelly, Board Secretary
L. Chory, Board Member
L. Labella, Board Member (6:45 p.m.)
M. Ward, Board Member
S. Wright, Board Member

Members absent:

Agenda Item I – Preliminary Business

- A. Salute to the Flag - The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m., followed by a Salute to the Flag.
- B. Correspondence – There was no correspondence this evening.
- C. Comments and Questions – On behalf of several Trumbull High School students attending the meeting, Connor Dolan, 138 Chestnut Hill Road, Jeff John, 22 MacArthur Road, and Katy Donahue, 83 Meadow Road West, spoke in support of retaining the House Disciplinarian and the importance of that position at the high school. Anthony D’Aquila, 29 Valley View Road, conveyed that a few years ago the Board declined funding a requested data specialist, and that this position is needed to provide staff with the tools, data and resources to support students.

Superintendent Iassogna noted that the proposed 4.5 Trumbull High School positions to be reduced are placeholders; in May, after the budget is voted upon by the Town, final decisions as to where the reductions will take place will be voted upon by the Board of Education.

In response to an inquiry at the last meeting from Board Secretary Tom Kelly, Darlene Ference, Teacher Board Representative, conveyed that teachers are aware of the state of the economy and the difficult decisions that the Superintendent and the Board must make with regard to the budget. Regarding the proposed personnel cuts, all reductions will affect students and staff (buildings will be cleaned less frequently, students in computer labs will be affected by the reduction in paraprofessional help, reduction of THS staff will result in increased class sizes and fewer elective offerings, THS student behavior, which has improved, may be affected). Regarding the reduction in professional development, it is important that in-house trainers are properly educated to ensure teachers have the necessary teaching tools to educate students, meet NCLB mandates, and implement SRBI and the challenge to meet AYP. Christopher Romano, Student Board Representative, conveyed that he feels money and test scores drive most discussions; however, far more transpires during the year. He noted that further cuts would only hurt student’s education. He also reminded the Board of their responsibility to the 7000 students in Trumbull.

Agenda Item II – Personnel

A. Personnel – There was no Personnel report this evening.

Agenda Item III – Consent Agenda

A. Approval/Minutes- Budget Meeting -By unanimous consent of members present and voting at the December 8, 2009 meeting, the Board approved the minutes as presented.

Chairman Lovely commended the following Trumbull High School students who have been named Commended Students in the 2010 National Merritt Scholarship Program students: Marinna Callagy, Michael Citrin, Catherine Donahue, Christina Hospodar, Shruti Kuzhippat, Katherine Labella, Brendan Lewis, Robin Lo, Michael Madden, Hilary Nigrosh, Seth Nigrosh, Katherine Spiegel, and Diana Thompson. Also commended were two students named as Semifinalists, William Dunne and Michael Galant, as well as two students named as finalists in the National Hispanic Recognition Program, Michael Karabinos and Kristi Oki.

Agenda Item IV – Reports

There were no reports this evening.

Agenda Item V – New Business

A. Board Committee Appointments – Board members serve on affiliated subcommittees in addition to serving on the Board of Education. A list of such subcommittees and suggested appointees was included in the Board packet. Mrs. Labella, who was listed to serve as Liaison to CRAC, respectfully declined due to schedule/time constraints. A discussion ensued as to whether a Board representative for CRAC is still necessary as the scope of this committee for the upcoming year is unknown. Superintendent Iassogna will request that at the January 5, 2010 meeting, Mr. Ryan give an update of CRAC's plans for the upcoming year. Mr. Lovely noted that he is willing to temporarily serve as liaison to that committee. Following discussion, Board members were appointed to the following subcommittees: Curriculum Review Committee – Chairman – Michael Ward, Edward Lovely; BEI Representative – Edward Lovely; Trumbull Education/Cable TV Liaison – Thomas Kelly; Liaison to the CES Council Committee – Michael Ward; Board of Directors/Six-to-Six Magnet School Liaison – Michael Ward; Superintendent Evaluation Format Committee – Chairwoman – Deborah Herbst, Edward Lovely, Stephen Wright; Service Contracts Review (Agent of Record/Health & Dental Benefits, Legal Services, Facilities Manager, Other Contracts) – Stephen Wright, Loretta Chory; Policy Advisory Committee – Thomas Kelly, Lisa Labella; Finance Committee of the Board of Education – Chairwoman – Loretta Chory, Thomas Kelly, Lisa Labella; CABE Liaison – Stephen Wright; TEA Negotiations – Deborah Herbst, Lisa Labella; TAA – Loretta Chory, Lisa Labella; and NEASC – Stephen Wright, Edward Lovely.

It was moved (Herbst) seconded (Chory) to move into Executive Session to discuss the Reserve for Negotiations line item in the budget. Mr. Iassogna and Mr. Sirico were invited to attend. Discussion arose as to whether this item could be discussed as part of an Executive Session. Vote: 2 abstentions (Kelly, Wright) (3 in favor (Chory, Herbst, Lovely) – 2 opposed (Labella, Ward). Motion fails. Further discussion followed as to appropriateness of the proposed subject for Executive Session. Mrs. Labella referred to State Statute covering this subject, and was of the opinion that this item could not be discussed. Mr. Iassogna stated he would check with the Board attorney regarding this topic.

Agenda Item VI – Old Business

A. Continuation of Budget Review and Discussion – Mr. Iassogna discussed a framework for this evening's meeting with particular emphasis on receiving Board direction as to the usage of ARRA and ECS monies. Discussion ensued, included possible use of these monies for non-recurring expenses and avoiding programs and salaries; however, some Board members agreed that if using the ARRA meant saving positions for even one year, they would be in favor.

In addition to questions regarding particular line items of the proposed budget, a discussion ensued that included the high cost of out placing students and the associated transportation costs, number of paraprofessionals, most of whom are mandated by special education; concessions by Board of Education personnel; percentage increase for the Agriscience and Continuing Education Directors; general wage and step increments; monies for degree changes; possibly charging for college applications in excess of a certain number; reducing legal fees; retirement savings projections; TAG; security overtime; utility savings; itinerant travel; medical waivers; trash disposal; fuel costs; and digital whiteboards.

Mr. Iassogna stated to the Board that any further reductions to the budget would result in decreased programs and personnel.

Regarding the Board's consensus of using ARRA/ECS monies, a discussion ensued that included moving 3.5 positions into the operating budget and removing an equal amount of "non-funding cliff" monies from the operating budget into the ARRA/ECS funds (i.e. textbooks, modulars). In past discussions, the Board had agreed that since these stabilization funds will be taken from the Town's ECS grant and in Trumbull, as in other communities, this grant is counted on as revenue in their budget, the Board would not spend the remaining balance of the Stabilization monies for the 2009-10 year and revert them back to the Town. It was suggested that rather than reverting the \$432,000 for the final 2010-11 stabilization funds back to the Town, the Board use these funds and reduce their budget request to the Town.

Adjournment

The Board gave unanimous approval to adjourn this Public Session at 10:40 p.m.