

SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER

Overview

It is with a great deal of satisfaction and sense of accomplishment that I report that on June 9, 2020, the Board of Education adopted its 2020-2021 budget. Although this essentially was the end of that tedious process, it should be perceived a work in progress with minor changes or tweaks still possible during the summer months. This is usually the case as changes always occur, particularly with regard to enrollment and potential modified guidelines and protocols that may be enacted by both the Governor and Commissioner of Education. The administration certainly will keep the Board of Education and our educational community advised of such changes.

The 2019-2020 year began with a potential \$1.2-\$2.0 million deficit; continued with a 2020-2021 underfunded proposed budget leading to a potential supplemental budget request; a COVID-19 pandemic that had a significant impact on the educational programs throughout the country; uncertainties with local programs such as school graduations, greetings, proms, summer school and camps.

Nonetheless, as a result of judicious adjustments, prudent choices, staff restructuring, administrative eliminations, budget freezes and reduced school days, we have turned the situation around and we were able to overcome these difficulties. Of most importance, we were fortunate in obtaining funding from sources that definitely aided us through the crisis.

Monetary Recap

\$109,025,882	Budget from Town
+276,000	Bank of America Lease
<u>+750,000</u>	Negotiated Bus Refund
\$110,051,882	Total BOE monies available. Our restorations and reductions almost bring us to that figure. We are in a good position.

NOTE-

- \$125,000 Anticipated CARES ACT monies will be dedicated to PPE purchases, not included in operating budget.
- \$213,000 Already included these monies into our operating budget (insurance rate decrease from State from 6.5% to 5.0%).

Budget Information

- We had 31 retirements this year: 22 certified and 9 non-certified
- 13 teachers have been recalled from the non-renewal list of 26 staff members
- 13 teachers have lost their job due to budget reductions
- To dispel the rumor that the budget reductions have not affected the schools, please note that 29 certified teaching positions for next year will not be replaced
- Only 4 new positions will be added to our budget
- Transfers – To strategically accommodate the many reassignments, several changes were necessary

Trumbull Schools Thank You!



Next time you drive by the Long Hill Administration building, please notice our salute to our community heroes' sign hanging on the front of the building. We've already received many positive comments regarding our tribute to these people and, although it was costly, we were very fortunate in that Messrs. Greg and Brian DeSanty, owners of ABC Sign Company and Trumbull residents, donated the banner at no charge. I was most appreciative, but not surprised, since both have been educational supporters for many years.

THS Graduation

Principal Marc Guarino and his committee are finalizing details for the Saturday, June 20, graduation ceremony. They did a great job in presenting a plan that honors and respects our 509 graduates. We are grateful to each member who served for their insight, candor and patience throughout their work together on behalf of the THS Class of 2020. Our graduation ceremony had to be aligned with current Executive Orders issued by the Governor, guidelines set forth by the Connecticut State Department of Education and the Department of Public Health; also, our event had to be approved by local Trumbull public safety officials, including the Health Director, Emergency Management Director, District Safety Supervisor and the Trumbull Police Department. Their credo was that the health and safety standards must be met and approved for us, or any district, to move forward.



Our committee, along with our Central Office administration, Board of Education, and Town officials, acknowledge that no single graduation plan would be the preferred option for all students and their families. During this unprecedented time, we understand that many of our daily routines and long standing traditions have been impacted and will result in new realities.

In light of all this, Trumbull High School will celebrate the Class of 2020 on Saturday, June 20, 2020, with multiple in-car processions and recognition ceremonies with family members beginning at 10:00 a.m.

- Graduates will sign up for a graduation time slot to best meet their individual family needs.
- One car per family, including the graduate, is allowed on campus.
- Only graduates will exit their vehicle, have their name read by an administrator, walk across the stage, and have a professional photo taken with their diploma jacket in hand.
- Our graduation will be live-streamed.
- Each graduate will receive a "grad bag" with Special Class of 2020 items.
- Parent/Guardian(s) are able to look on, up close, from the safety of their vehicles.
- A virtual graduation ceremony will be recorded, aligned to our traditional graduation program, and will be available for our graduates and their families.
- Masks are not required when walking out of the car to receive a diploma jacket.
- All diplomas will be mailed home to students after the graduation ceremony.
- A rain date is planned for Saturday, June 27, 2020.

Our graduation ceremony is similar to over 60% of schools throughout Connecticut and not as restrictive as those who are having virtual ceremonies only. Large schools, like Trumbull and Greenwich, do not gain any flexibility with the Governor's recent changes effective in July which allow for a graduation ceremony to be inclusive and equitable to all students and their families.

Opening of School



As of today, local school districts have not received any guidelines or protocols to follow when opening schools, hopefully, in September. The Governor and Commissioner of Education, however, have authorized each district to establish a "Back to School" Committee to develop a re-entry plan. Once more detailed information is received, I will comprise the group and share their information.

Op-Ed Resources

Below please find an interesting link to an Op-Ed which appeared in *The Connecticut Mirror* on Friday, May 1, 2020, as well as several other media publications. Connecticut Association of Public Schools Superintendents (CAPSS) worked on this together with the other organizations listed. It is important that the State of Connecticut help support Trumbull and other municipalities in funding our collective obligation to educate all students appropriately.

<https://ctmirror.org/category/ct-viewpoints/education-funding-is-essential-to-connecticuts-future/>

Bits and Pieces

At its June 9th meeting, the Board of Education re-established a "Later School Start Time" Committee. The group's charge is to revisit this proposal and provide direction as to the best way to proceed to recommend a course of action... Ken McCabe advises that although TLC will not have a summer program, it will begin its new season in September and continue its same daily timeline:

6:00 a.m. – 8:20 a.m.
3:20 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.



Congratulations to Erin Rooney from Hillcrest Middle School who has been named to the prestigious Excellence in Social Studies Education Award. This recognition identifies exceptional classroom social studies teachers who use instructional material effectively, incorporate innovative strategies and techniques, incorporate new innovations into their lessons, and foster a spirit of inquiry and development of skills to be applied in domestic beliefs and values. Also impressive is that Erin is now eligible for the **National Council of Social Studies Award**.



Retirements

[Since our Retirement Recognition Ceremony was canceled because of COVID-19, the district wanted to recognize retirees with a special video presentation by clicking here.](#) Many thanks and appreciation from us for their 628 years of wonderful service provided by:

John Virag, Eileen Piquette, Rosalie Hauge, Sylvia Lemoine, Sheila Craw, Lisa Beers, Anne Tornillo, Kathy Yash, Rosalie Cisero, Lisa Ryan, Tom Piekarski, Georgette Pappas, Rich Mastroiani, Luann Donovan, Felicia Holohan, Dr. Jackie Blackmore, Julie Rogowski, Dr. Gary Cialfi, Val Hamann, Jen Gibson, Stephanie Domanick, Margaret Walsh, Emma Kravecs, Angela Caron, Polly Currie, Maureen Makres-Steinberg, Eugene Halliwell, and Kathleen Belmont.

As we bring closure to the 2020-2021 school year, I would like to thank all of our staff and educational community for their conscientious support and cooperation as we overcame some serious obstacles. It was only through your patience, hard work and perseverance that we were able to implement the numerous protocols earmarked to provide students with a viable working scenario to enhance a very difficult year. Everyone contributed in their own unique way as we moved forward, not as we had intended, but in a sufficient manner to provide us with the foundation from which we can build in 2020-2021. Personally, as an Acting Superintendent, I thank you for your cooperation and support in assisting me in overcoming the many difficulties we faced.

I hope you and your family have a safe, healthy, relaxing summer vacation and we can all return in September with our batteries recharged and ready to, hopefully, experience the education program as we had intended.

Best of Luck!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ralph M. Iassogna". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ralph M. Iassogna, Acting Superintendent