

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
May 10, 2016

A special meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on May 10, 2016 in the Central Office Board Room. Board of Education Chair, Joel D'Angelo, called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

***Members Present:** Joanne Nesti, Eric Couture, Sue Twachtman, Suzanne Sack, Kathy Brown, Susan Dean, Jeannie Young, Maura Cawley (arrived 7:23), and Joel D'Angelo*

***Members Absent:** Neal Perron, Dan Chase*

***Also Present:** Superintendent of Schools, Howard Thiery, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Holly Hageman, Director of Finance, Martha Vaughn, and Board Clerk Larissa Johnson*

***Visitors:** 2*

Call to Order/Opening of Meeting

Board of Education Chair, Joel D'Angelo called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

Discussion of the Board of Education Budget 2016-2017

The Board of Education discussed the upcoming timeline for the second budget referendum. There will be a Public Hearing and special meeting on Thursday, May 12, 2016 in the Central Office Board Room, followed by an Annual District Meeting on Wednesday, May 25, 2016 in the Central Office Board Room, and the second budget referendum will take place on Thursday, May 26, 2016.

Superintendent Thiery presented some possible reductions to the budget based upon new information the district has received since the prior budget hearing. The Workers Compensation renewal is projected to come in approximately \$103,096 less than was originally estimated. These changes represent a reduction of approximately \$212,926 reducing the gross budget increase to 1.31% from 1.83%. He also stated that they have been looking ahead at the 2015-2016 fund balance and they are projecting a balance of approximately \$372,000. The Superintendent proposed that the district purchase equipment and textbooks during the 2015-2016 school year at an approximate total amount of \$139,159. The additional reduction through pre-purchasing items would reduce the gross budget increase to approximately .98%.

The Board also discussed information regarding reductions to the state Transportation Grant, which has been rumored to result in a reduction of revenue to the district of approximately \$140,000. After speaking with a couple of lobbyists regarding the state budget, Superintendent Thiery recommends that the Board withhold reducing the budget by this amount to offset the rumored cut because it may not remain in the state budget and is highly contested.

The Board then discussed whether to keep Kindergarten paras in the budget and considered current class sizes and discussed ideas regarding what enrollment levels would be appropriate to have paraprofessionals assisting.

The Board then discussed the acceptance of approximately \$212,926.35 in reductions to the budget based on the Superintendent's proposal. The Board then discussed the pre-buying proposal along with at what level and how the Capital Fund should be funded. The Board discussed at some length whether the Capital Fund should be funded at less than .5% as proposed in the 2016-2017 and what approximate amount of the projected fund

balance for 2015-2016 should be contributed to the Capital Fund at year-end. The Board also discussed whether there might be other areas that could be looked at for possible reductions and talked about how a lot of major reductions to the budget are actually done through contract renegotiations and other changes, such as the elimination of the portable classrooms at HES and KES to bring the district significant savings throughout the year. The Board then also discussed the acceptance of a reduction of \$139,159 to the budget through pre-buying equipment, supplies and textbooks needed for the 2016-2017 school year as proposed by the Superintendent.

The Board briefly discussed staffing levels and a possible "Pay-to-Play" program for extracurricular activities. The Board felt that "Pay-to-Play" would be better left for discussion by the community and that also the CIAC generally opposes "Pay-to-Play" programs because they generate equity and fairness issues. The Board also discussed whether there were areas where the school PTOs may be able to help with certain technological initiatives, or perhaps future playground equipment funding. The Board also quickly revisited the issue of funding the Capital Fund at .5% in the 2016-2017 operating budget and felt that the funding level should remain at .5%.

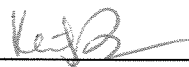
Adjournment

Board Chair Joel D'Angelo called for the meeting to adjourn at 8:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Larissa B. Johnson
Board Clerk

Approval:  Date: 6/7/16
Kathy Brown, Secretary