

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
Budget Workshop
March 12, 2014

A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on March 12, 2014 in the Haddam-Killingworth Middle School Media Center. Board of Education Chair, Sue Twachtman, called the meeting to order at 8:52 PM.

***Members Present:** Amy Jacques-Purdy, Susan Dean, Kathy Brown, Becky Valenti, Brian Gamache, Jeannie Young, Dan Chase, Joel D'Angelo (departed at 10:03 PM), Michele Amendola, Karen Perry and Sue Twachtman.*

***Members Absent:** None*

***Also Present:** Superintendent of Schools, Howard Thiery, Director of Finance Martha Vaughn, and Interim Board Clerk Dawn MacLeod*

***Visitors:** 1*

Call to Order/Opening of Meeting

Board of Education Chair, Sue Twachtman called the meeting to order at 8:52 PM.

*Amy Jacques-Purdy **MOVED** and Susan Dean **SECONDED** a motion to go into Executive Session for the purposes of personnel and student matters. Motion passed unanimously.*

The Board went into Executive Session at 8:55 PM.

The Board returned from Executive Session at 9:38 PM.

Discussion on the Superintendent's Proposed Budget 2014-2015

The Board discussed the Superintendent's Proposed Budget for 2014-2015 at length. Board Chair Sue Twachtman thanked Superintendent Thiery and the Director of Fiscal Operations for the information they provided which was requested at the previous budget workshop. Superintendent Thiery began by briefly discussing the survey pertaining to the BES Preschool Program which could possibly generate \$30,000.00 in revenue by charging the twenty non-identified students a \$1,500.00 tuition fee per school year. The Board then discussed the possibility of charging tuition to non-identified students.

The Board talked at length about the increase in the Pension Plan line. The Director of Fiscal Operations stated that some of the increase was from a number of the cafeteria workers that are currently eligible for the pension plan as the cafeteria staff is working more hours due to a decrease in cafeteria staff.

The Board discussed concerns of the projected enrollment and class sizes as well as reducing staff to accommodate declining enrollment. The Board will continue to discuss this matter.

The Board spoke about the increase in the Unaffiliated staff and requested a report to show what the savings would be if a flat percentage rate was used for all unaffiliated staff.

The Board discussed several ideas to create an efficient budget workshop that outlined specific topics for the Board to review before the workshop. Amy Jacques Purdy recommended a segment on the Elementary Schools inviting the principals to the workshop. Another workshop would address the Middle School and High School topics.

The Board talked at length of the Spanish classes at the elementary school level. Superintendent Thiery recommended looking at models that divest in elementary world language and invest in middle school world language in order to excel world language into the high school with possibilities of additional languages. The Board will continue to research this topic for future budget proposals.

The Board discussed concerns of the substitute lines. The Director of Fiscal Operations stated that the overall amount is based on the previous year's history. A year with a lot of pregnancies would reflect higher costs for the long term substitutes.

The Board also expressed a general concern about the 2.35% gross budget increase and talked about finding additional areas of the budget where reductions might be possible.

Adjournment

Board of Education Chair, Sue Twachtman called for the meeting to adjourn at 10:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Dawn MacLeod
Interim Board Clerk

Approval: Becky Valenti Date: 4-1-14
Becky Valenti, Secretary