

Board of Education
Darien, Connecticut

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2021**

**PLACE:
DARIEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS'
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
MEETING ROOM
7:30 P.M.**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order..... Mr. David Dineen 7:30 p.m.
2. Chairperson's Report..... Mr. David Dineen
3. Public Comment*..... Mr. David Dineen
4. Comments from Board of Finance.....Mr. David Dineen
and RTM Education and
Finance and Budget Committees
5. Further Discussion on 2021-22.... Dr. Alan Addley
Proposed Budget and Follow Up
Questions
6. Adjournment..... Mr. David Dineen

AA:nv

*** Due to the current COVID-19 regulations and restrictions pertaining to public indoor gatherings, the Board of Education meeting will be available to the public via Zoom.**

**Those members of the community wishing to view only, should do so through the Darien Youtube link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUnnvYKBFbFrTWQRuoB6OZA>
Those members of the community wishing to participate in public comment should join the meeting via Zoom.**

<https://darienps.zoom.us/j/94903005373>

In order to reduce audio interference, members of the community are requested not to simultaneously view by Youtube while participating on Zoom.

BOF QUESTIONS

<u>RC</u>	<u>QUESTION</u>	<u>ANSWER</u>
12	Do we have enough resources to clean the fields?	The district was short one groundskeeper during the summer due to a retirement in June. That position has since been filled. While facilities in general has less staff than needed the fields should be adequately maintained based on the current staffing.
Capital	Can we have more information on the basement renovation for the copy center?	The current space is disruptive for public meetings and inadequate for the copy center. The relocation of the copy center to the basement will address both these concerns.
25	Is health insurance part of the plan that administration entered into last year? What would our costs be if there were no rate cap?	Yes, the district was offered a renewal last year by Connecticare of 34.1%. As a result, the district shifted all employees to Anthem and negotiated a rate cap of 7.95% for FY22. Based on the trend of health insurance claims, it is projected by our insurance consultant Brown and Brown that we would have received a +19.0% rate increase for FY22 if not for the rate cap.
26	How many ELP students can be accommodated in the new Ox Ridge building?	The original Ed Spec called for 10 classrooms at a max of 15 students or 150 students. The revised building plans reduced ELP by 1 classroom which would bring this down to 135 students.

RTM ED QUESTIONS

<u>RC</u>	<u>QUESTION</u>	<u>ANSWER</u>
1	What is the \$10,000 remaining in Other Student Activities after the China Exchange trip is reduced?	<p>Included in this account are:</p> <p>Poetry Contest: 1,000 Freshman Class Orientation: \$5,000 Math Team Buses: 2,000 School Enrichment: 2,000</p>
2	Have we considered a MMS Fitch?	We are currently assessing and reviewing the cohort of students at MMS that require a supportive program similar to Fitch Academy.
5,7,8,9,10	Are there transportation costs for Open Choice, other budget implications?	There are no transportation costs for Open Choice. Those are paid for by CES. We would have to increase our elementary allocation of resources by the amount of students accepted. This would be \$2,569.50 if we accepted 18 Kindergarten students. The State pays each district \$3,000 per student, which would more than offset that cost.
11	What are MMS Intramurals, Elementary Intramurals and DHS Intramurals?	<p>MMS Intramurals include:</p> <p>Basketball/March Madness Volleyball Floor Hockey Matball Weight Room Soccer Flag Football Frisbee Ping Pong Running Club</p> <p>Elementary Intramurals include:</p> <p>Flag Football Kickball Soccer Basketball Volleyball</p>

		DHS Intramurals include: Open Gym for basketball and volleyball
11	What are consultant services for?	This is for the outside trainer for CPR for all coaches and presenter for coaching modules required by the SDE for coaches.
11	What is PD for in RC11?	This is for American Red Cross Adult/Child and Infant CPR Training as well as opportunities for coaches to earn CEU's for coaching permits.
11	Can we have a breakdown of cost and revenue for YMCA?	<p>Currently the district does not charge for the use of its facilities to the YMCA in exchange for not paying for the use of facilities at the YMCA by DHS Athletics. We do budget the cost of custodial overtime, which for FY22 is \$34,170. Based on the 18/19 School Year (the last non COVID impacted school year) this would be the breakdown based on current rental rates:</p> <p>Revenue: School Rental Fees: \$299,139 Custodial Fees: \$34,170 Total Cost: \$333,309</p> <p>Cost: Boys Swimming: \$67,860 Girls Swimming: \$67,860 Gymnastics: \$19,000 Overtime: \$34,170 Total Expenses: \$188,890</p> <p>Net Revenue:\$144,419</p>
11	Does New Canaan YMCA charge us for use of their facilities?	Yes, they charge \$5,500 for Diving.
Capital	Can we have a schedule of the last three years capital spending vs. budget?	See attached schedule Capital 3 Year Spend
25	Is the constellation contract up soon?	This expires in December 2022.
13	Can we have a list of clubs and councils in this account?	The most recent DEA contract agreed to reclassified many music stipends, which is the result of the increase. The stipends are as follows:

		Music Concerts Elementary: \$48,748 All Town Music: \$9,847
14	Is there any staff that should be associated in RC14 for systemwide?	There are no staff in RC14. All art teachers are allocated to the school RC's.
21	Regarding district library expenditures of \$152,000 vs the average of our peers at \$80,000, is this correct?	The DRG A average excludes Online Subscriptions and Equipment. Based on RC21 total proposed budget of \$152,335 removing these two categories would bring it down to \$112,145. While above the average would be in line with Westport and Ridgefield.
15	How does the town's Blum Shapiro report impact RC15?	The Blum Shapiro report reviewed the Town's Technology needs. Some of the outcomes are included in the agreement for shared services between the Town and the BOE. There are no impacts on the BOE side from that study.
26	Will the new SESS AP's impact ELP?	Laura Straiton, Early Learning Program Director, will continue to chair all PPT meetings and lead curriculum and instruction in ELP.
26	How is PD used for ELP?	PD supports current best practices in assessment, instruction, and development of exemplary educational programs.
24	Can we have more detail on the increase in consultant services?	Increases are related to school closure and anticipated expenditures related to recovery of skills and the provision of special education services. Additional increases are contractual and/or PPT recommendations for 2021-2022.
24	Are we anticipating an increase in counseling services in special education as we re-enter school?	We anticipate a greater need of support for all students in response to school closure. We currently have a robust clinical and counseling staff in the elementary and secondary schools to support our students. We do anticipate the need for on-going professional development and training for our clinicians and school counselors to support students returning to school in the wake of the pandemic.
24	How will the new AP's be different in schools with DLC and ELP?	Assistant principals will have the same role and responsibilities in all buildings.
24	What is the capacity being created by the new AP role?	The additional assistant principal will increase opportunities for all building administrators for mentorship, instructional leadership, professional development, and time in the general and special education classrooms to support teaching and learning.
19	Why are program coordinators in this budget but department chairs are not?	Program Coordinators report directly to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and work in Central Services, which is why they are in RC19. The Department Chairs are in RC1 and RC 3 .
19	Is there a plan for more education about diversity?	Yes, through the establishment of a District Equity & Diversity Team, continued professional development, and approaching curriculum writing and revision with an equity lens, there is ongoing commitment to diversity education in Darien.

19	Will we need to execute more testing as a result of COVID?	At this time there are not additional expenditures anticipated for assessments as a result of COVID.
18	Does CES have Teacher in Residence, can we use them rather than CREC?	CES does not have this program, even if they did the current CES membership would not cover this fee.

RTM F&B QUESTIONS

<u>RC</u>	<u>QUESTION</u>	<u>ANSWER</u>
1	If STEM Course is not approved will it change the budget?	The new courses proposed in the area of STEM can be accommodated within the operating budgets of their respective department. One course requires free software and curriculum writing will be allocated to another area of need if the course is not approved.
1	In Accounts 25014 and 72041 historical spending is lower than budget, can this be reduced?	25014 includes costs for Business Cards, Letterhead, Transcript Requests, Welcome Cards, Turkey Bowl Tickets, Lawn Signs, Graduation Programs. The amount fluctuates based on need, number of students, and turnover. 72041 is for Microscope Repairs. The amount fluctuates based on the need for repairs.
2	The transfer in 21301 is that representative of who is teaching now and who is anticipated to teach next year?	Yes, this transfer represented teachers currently at Fitch as there was a change in staffing.
11	Swim and Dive are listed as separate sports, why?	They practice and compete separately from one another so they are separated in the budget.
12	Why is the building conditions study budgeted at \$200,000 when the KG&D study cost approximately \$138,000 five years ago?	We have received one quote for this work, which was \$231,425, however it included much of the work done by NE Collaborative, which is why we budgeted \$200,000. We are soliciting additional quotes.
25	Are the retirement/OPEB figures what the town received or will these be changed?	Yes, the Milliman Actuary report was provided by Jenn Charneski, Town of Darien Finance Director in November.
13	Why are clubs and councils so high in RC13? What is in this account?	The most recent DEA contract agreed to reclassify many music stipends, which is the result of the increase seen starting in FY21 carrying forward to FY 22. The stipends are as follows: Music Concerts Elementary: \$48,748 All Town Music: \$9,847
14	Would we potentially see a decrease overtime in supplies due to the new software proposed?	While the supplies teachers request may change as a result of new professional learning, there is no anticipated reduction in supplies cost needed over time.
15	Can the broadcast studio computers be funded through a grant?	As Video Production, Media Studies and other related courses are part of the curriculum at Darien High School, it would not be appropriate to pursue a

		grant for necessary classroom equipment. Just as we fund science labs, kilns, projectors and other necessary materials employed in teaching and learning, we are asking to replace lab devices which have reached their end of life. The same would be true if the computers in the music technology lab needed to be replaced.
15	Can a 5th year be added to the replacement cycle page?	Yes, See Attached 5 Year Replacement Cycle
24	What are the metrics to judge success of the new APs?	Evaluation and supervision of assistant principals will assess their professional responsibilities. These responsibilities include and are not limited to: maintenance of regulatory compliance, implementation of services, support for improvement of student outcomes, strengthening the engagement of students and families as partners, Chairperson for PPT meetings, evaluation and supervision of general and special education staff and related service providers.
24	Can we see a job description of the new APs?	Assistant Principal Job Descriptions
24	What is the reporting relationship of the psychologists and the new APs?	Everyone reports to the building principal.
24	Why is the teacher aide's salary line up if we are cutting two positions?	The collective bargaining agreement for the paraprofessionals was not processed and agreed to until after the printing of the budget book, thus the salaries for FY21 are not reflected in the revised budget and instead are reflected in RC18-Contract Support. In January those raises are allocated to the respective line items out of contract support. Thus the teacher aide line item for the purpose of this budget book represents 2% for FY21, 2% for FY22, with the corresponding offset for FY21 in RC18-Contract Support.
19	What is the status of the 9th Grade IDEA program?	The ninth grade enrollment is strong and there are no plans for program elimination. In FY 20 there were 4 students enrolled. In FY21 there are 21 students enrolled. Students are selecting their courses in the coming week for FY22.