



DOUGLAS B. HARDING
Chairman

STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED 1786

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187
www.ellington-ct.gov

DANIEL KEUNE
Vice Chairmen

BOARD OF FINANCE

Board of Education
FY25-26 Budget
Hearing

March 12, 2025

MAURICE BLANCHETTE
LOGAN JOHNSON
ELIZABETH NORD
BARRY C. PINTO

Minutes

Members Present: Douglas Harding, Daniel Keune, Barry Pinto, Maurice Blanchette, Liz Nord, Logan Johnson.

Others Present: Alisha Carpino – Director of Finance & Operations, Jennifer Dzen – Board of Education Chair, Dr. Scott Nicol – Superintendent, Miriam Underwood – Board of Education, Matt Reed – Town Administrator, Jo Lambert – Resident, Harry Lambert – Resident, Tom Palshaw – Resident, Bob Smith – EVFD, Heather Smith – resident, Tom Modzelewski – DPW Director via zoom, Tom Adams – resident via zoom, Jed Lavitt – resident via zoom, Joe Malone – resident via zoom.

Call to Order

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-Chairman Keune made a motion to add Roll Call as an agenda item.

MOVED (KEUNE) SECONDED (PINTO) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADD ROLL CALL AS AN AGENDA ITEM.

Roll Call

All members present.

Citizen's Forum

None came forward.

Budget Hearing – Board of Education FY2025- 2026

The Board of Education's Adopted Budget for 2025-2026 was presented to the Board of Finance, detailing the Superintendent's proposed budget of \$48,200,266, reflecting a 3.18% increase over the previous fiscal year. The Boards Of Education adopted budget amounts to \$48,065,373, which represents a 2.89% increase compared to the prior year.

A significant portion of the budget focuses on special education, with funding from various revenue streams. These include special education tuition, Medicare, Open Choice, restricted donations, excess cost, educational cost sharing (ECS), and adult education/agri-science. The district is actively working to balance the financial needs across these categories to ensure a comprehensive educational experience for all students.

State funding remains a crucial part of the budget, but there is concern about potential reductions. 70 towns are expected to face cuts in state funding, which could impact local revenues. This potential reduction may require adjustments to be made in order to meet funding needs and prevent any disruptions in services. Dr. Nicol stated towns may remain flat-funded.

The budget also includes efforts to right-size accounts. Specifically, 234 accounts will see no change, reflecting a zero-budget change. For example, custodians' overtime is budgeted at \$27,500 for FY25, with no change in the proposed budget for FY26. Additionally, proposed reductions across various accounts total (-\$134,893), with further details available on the BOE Budget Adjustment slide.

The breakdown of the proposed increases for the budget (2.89%) includes a 1.979% increase for salaries, a 0.704% increase for benefits, and a .207% increase for other expenses. These adjustments reflect the district's commitment to maintaining staff compensation while managing other operational costs.

During the presentation, there was a discussion on transportation, specifically regarding the size of the buses used for student transport. Harry Lambert (82 Middle Road) questioned whether smaller buses could be used as many of the larger buses are not fully occupied. Dr. Scott Nicol responded by saying that while reducing the number of larger buses is a goal, logistical challenges prevent immediate changes. Jennifer Dzen further explained that the district currently doesn't have access to enough smaller buses through its contract with First Student. Alisha clarified that the district has recently acquired two new 15-person vans, which are being utilized to accommodate student transportation needs.

For more detailed information on the adjustments and reductions, the full Budget Presentation will be uploaded on both the town and Board of Education's websites.

Adjournment

MOVED (BLANCHETTE) SECONDED (NORD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJURN THE MEETING AT 6:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Elizabeth Luginbuhl, Recording Secretary

