Region 14 Schools

M I N U T E S
Special Meeting
Agriscience Funding Committee
Tuesday, February 10, 2026; 4:00 p.m.
Library Media Center
Nonnewaug High School

Committee Members Present: **Absent:**
Jim Crocker, Chair
Chris Matta
Alice Jones
Carol Ann Brown

Brian Murphy, Superintendent
Tina Tanguay, Director of Finance and Operations
Mykal Kuslis, Principal
Lee Whalen, Director of Agriscience
Barbara Perkinson, Resident
Steve Sordi, Resident (Zoom)
Jamie Mclaughlin, Former State Representative/Senator (Zoom)
Ray Butkus, First Selectman, Bethlehem
Leonard Assard, Chair, Board of Finance, Bethlehem
Paul Zulpa, First Selectman, Woodbury
Karen Reddington-Hughes, Connecticut State Representative

Presenters/School + State Finance Project
Patrick Gibson
Madeline Peling

I. Call to order
Jim Crocker called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

II. School and State Finance Project Update/State Legislature's Update

Who is the School and State Finance Project?:

- Small non-partisan, non-profit organization in existence for 10 plus years
- Resource for those who are impacted by how Connecticut funds public education
- Works collaboratively with public education to build knowledge and develop solutions to better equip school districts and to demystify some of the complexities regarding how the state funds its various programs

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Purpose of the Presentation:
To discuss the current environment specific to Agriscience Funding in the state

- Funding allocations are calculated using different methodologies for in-district and out-of-district participants
- School districts that operate an Agriscience program receive a flat state allocation of $5,200 per in-district student (Bethlehem and Woodbury) enrolled in the program.
- For out-of-district students, funding is provided through two mechanisms: state funding supplemented by local tuition. Local tuition contributions are capped. State funding is determined by using a weighted formula based on the needs and demographics of the sending district; therefore, grant amounts vary depending on the student's town of residence.
- Currently, there are no statutory provisions in place that provide for future increases or decreases in Agriscience funding.
- Flat funding does not provide districts with what they need and thus, it becomes a budgetary hardship

Policy Solution Proposals

- Modify the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula to account for inflation
- Continue phasing in the state formula that is partially implemented to get to 100% - Ag program fully funded over a four-year period

Examples of policy change impacts were illustrated

Discussion Points:

- Why are Vo-ag schools funded differently from others – there is inequity in the percentage of funding compared to other schools
- What are the chances of the short session realistically addressing key objectives
- Suggestions to help move it forward

Next steps include:

- Upon issuance of the Notice of Hearings, begin to mobilize students and administrators to demonstrate their support for the program
- Plans are to meet next month

III. The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Patricia Paige
Board Clerk

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Patricia Paige, Board Clerk

Minutes created with assistance of Chatgbt

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