

**Please Note: These minutes are pending Board approval.  
Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on January 10, 2017 in council chambers, at 3 Primrose Street.

K. Alexander, Chair	J. Erardi
M. Ku, Vice Chair	J. Davila
D. Leidlein, Secretary	R. Bienkowski
J. Vouros	6 Staff
R. Harriman-Stites	8 Public
A. Clure	2 Press
D. Cruson	

Mr. Alexander called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m.

Item 1 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 – Curriculum Budget

Mrs. Davila spoke about the curriculum budget.

Mr. Vouros appreciated the money available for teachers to attend conferences. He was also pleased to see funding for the project challenge curriculum and that the K-2 foreign language program has requested children's books in Spanish.

Mr. Alexander asked what the K-12 science materials were.

Mrs. Davila said a large chunk is going to our honing in on the new standards and the other piece is for online digital subscriptions.

Mr. Clure noted a typo on page 198 which was noted and asked why math will flip flop.

Mrs. Davila said the common core alignment indicates it was better having two years of algebra and then geometry instead of geometry being taken after algebra I.

Dr. Erardi said the budget implications of this change will be presented at the next meeting.

Mr. Alexander noted that the tuition for the magnet school was going down.

Dr. Erardi said that was due to reduced student interest and declining enrollment.

Item 3 – Technology Budget

Mrs. Ku mentioned that in past budgets we had a five-year projection.

Mrs. Amodeo said we didn't include that in this budget because the cycle should flatten out.

This past year we rolled out Infosnap for returning student registrations.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites was glad that Infosnap was included for the sports teams.

Mrs. Amodeo stated that it would start this summer for the high school.

Mr. Clure asked how this program was paid for.

Mrs. Amodeo said we pay a licensed fee per student. The sports add-on is an additional fee. Right now we are in a paper process for signing up for sports.

Mr. Vouros asked if we have caught up in our technology replacement.

Mrs. Amodeo said we included money to keep our spending down. It takes a couple of years to even out our inventory and we are in the second year. She looked at the obsolescence on all equipment and came up with the dollar amount for the various needed equipment.

Mrs. Ku referred to page 211 and asked what networking projects were removed.

Mrs. Amodeo said this year has no outstanding needs for the network infrastructure because it is pretty stable at this time.

Mr. Alexander inquired about next year.

Mrs. Amodeo doesn't expect an issue next year. The subsequent year we will need a voice software upgrade.

Mr. Alexander said it would be helpful to have an explanation of that.

Mr. Vouros was concerned that technology should be removing money from the budget. He asked how the \$100,000 would be used if it was put back into the budget.

Mrs. Amodeo didn't have a pointed need for next year which is why she removed it.

Mrs. Ku asked about cell phone coverage.

Mrs. Amodeo said there were no complaints about cellular coverage in the schools.

Mr. Clure said that Head O'Meadow has an issue with no coverage.

Mrs. Amodeo stated that Head O'Meadow has a booster system in the building. She would conduct a survey and address the issue.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites asked if there was a reason Sandy Hook was the only school asking for Ipads. She thought we were moving to Chromebooks.

Mrs. Amodeo said Sandy Hook has always used Ipads and the principal feels they are better for their needs and the teachers are used to them.

Mr. Cruson asked about the challenges of student data privacy related to Chromebooks.

Mrs. Amodeo said the State of Connecticut is building an awareness of being careful of student data. Legislation requires that all vendors meet certain requirements. For every app in the district we have to review their privacy policy and get vendors to enter into a contract addendum with us that speaks to how they address each point in the act and how they will handle a breach.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites noted that Reed was coming closer to having one Chromebook cart per team and asked how that lined up with the ratio of students to devices in the elementary schools.

Mrs. Amodeo would provide that information.

Mr. Clure asked if we had anything in place to show they are actually being used.

Mrs. Amodeo said there is nothing in place to track the usage of a device. We usually speak to the building principal regarding need and usage.

Mr. Alexander noted the increase for Alpine.

Mrs. Amodeo said Alpine is not security related. It's an achievement tracking software which helps us to track academic and behavioral interventions.

Dr. Erardi said that under the Department of Justice Alpine is a critical piece for tracking everything we do in the district.

#### Item 4 – General Services

Mr. Bienkowski said this department provides services to run the district.

Dr. Erardi said we were staying static with the level of armed officers and will be meeting with Pat Llodra and the Police Department for a discussion around armed officers.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites noted that we will be covering the fee for the Raptor Service.

Mr. Pompano said that at the onset it was a donation for one year. The amount in the budget is the annual fee. This service gives piece of mind to students and staff.

Mr. Clure requested an explanation of extra work.

Mr. Bienkowski said that was overtime for all of central office including the payroll department which many times has to work extra when paydays fall around holidays. It will also cover costs to work extra to cover an employee out for an extended time.

Dr. Erardi said that many staff members in central office work on their off hours. The difference is compensation and no compensation. There are specific labor laws we have to follow. He assured the Board that the percentage of dollars in the budget is a fraction of additional work time given by staff in the entire district.

#### Item 5 – Continuing Education

Mrs. Gellis stated that summer school enrollment was down this year. The school year ended so early that a lot of programs fell to the wayside. We expect to send out an additional mailer after the end of the school year.

#### Item 6 –Benefits

Mr. Bienkowski explained the employee benefits budget.

Mr. Alexander asked if there was any consideration from our medical insurance carrier to plan better so we don't get hit with a larger increase.

Mr. Bienkowski said the problem is in the way it was funded the past three years. Two years ago we decreased the amount of the prior year so we had to increase the amount last year. The whole idea about self-insurance is to even it out. Years ago we had much higher increases.

#### Item 7 – Plant Budget

Mr. Faiella said there has been an uptick in maintenance projects and spoke about some of the requests.

Mrs. Ku asked about energy costs at Sandy Hook School.

Mr. Bienkowski said that Sandy Hook School requires a lot of electricity and we are watching it. It's a new building and we are working over a lot of issues. We planned on receiving an Eversource credit to offset our operation expenses but have not received it yet. Also if the credit starts in February or March some may spill over into next year.

Mr. Faiella said that more energy was used this summer getting ready for us.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites noted the \$80,000 for an additional custodian at Sandy Hook.

Mr. Faiella clarified that the amount also included the raises for the current custodians as well as the salary for the new one. The additional person is due to the size of the school and work on the grounds.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites asked how the snow removal has gone and if we needed the \$20,000.

Mr. Faiella said it is difficult to clear the grounds. They will rent a snow thrower this winter.

Mr. Vouros spoke about the auto shop fence replacement at the high school.

Mr. Faiella would like to replace it through the building repair account.

Mr. Clure asked if they priced out maintaining the exterior wood paneling at Sandy Hook School.

Mr. Faiella said they owe us one more finishing this summer. It needs a power-washing each year and a finishing every other year or it will turn gray. He will price it out this summer. The purchase price of the driveway plow we are renting is \$150,000.

Mr. Faiella stated that Head O'Meadow has a well system. The pressurized tank was tested and some pitting was found. The State of Connecticut is pressing people to get rid of them because some have exploded but ours is underground. He has pricing to have it removed.

Mr. Clure suggested adding another custodial floater to decrease the amount of overtime. Mr. Faiella would look into that. He wasn't sure that will help because the bulk of the overtime is due to activities at the high school between basketball and school activities.

Dr. Erardi said the overtime is also weather related.

Mr. Bienkowski stated that there is a provision in the custodial contract which states that if someone is out the other custodians have to work two hours extra.

Mr. Vouros asked if there would be any expenses when the high school auditorium opens.

Mr. Faiella hoped a fund would be developed so it can be self-maintained.

Mr. Bienkowski said with updated policies there was a significant increase in high school rental fees so that may help.

Dr. Erardi said the money would be in the account that allows a recurring balance. We were anticipating a couple of custodial retirements so it's worth doing a hard look at this if we realign permanent staff to work on Saturdays or hire a floater.

Mr. Vouros said you could also flex their hours.

#### Item 8 – Transportation

Mr. Bienkowski noted a decrease in the budget due to a change to propane from diesel powered vehicles. There is a zero increase in rates for next year. The only change is in special ed transportation depending on destinations. We have to register propane usage with the federal government. The cost for oil and diesel is also going up.

Mr. Clure asked if we had a schedule when all buses will be on propane.

Mr. Bienkowski said they all have had to switch by the fifth year.

Mr. Clure asked when we would look at rerouting.

Mr. Bienkowski said we will look at that on an annual basis.

Mr. Vouros stated that declining enrollment doesn't mean we can eliminate buses.

Mrs. Ku asked for a breakdown of non-special education non-certified staff number of hours and work assignments in grades K-4.

#### Item 9 – Public Participation

MOTION: Mr. Vouros moved to adjourn. Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

#### Item 10 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Debbie Leidlein  
Secretary

**FY 2018 BUILDING & SITE MAINTENANCE PROJECTS - REDUCED****HAWLEY SCHOOL**

REPAINT CAFETERIA	\$ 15,000
REPLACE SIDEWALK SECTIONS AT ENTRANCE	\$ 10,000
REPLACE CEILING TILES IN OLDER SECTION - PHASED	\$ 10,000
CLASSROOM DOOR REPLACEMENT IN OLDER SECTION	\$ 10,000
RUBBER GYM FLOOR REPAIRS	\$ 15,000
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	\$ 60,000

**MIDDLE GATE SCHOOL**

INFILL OLD WELL PIT	\$ 25,000
INSTALL HVAC IN CAFETERIA	\$ 35,000
INSTALL HVAC IN GYM	\$ 45,000
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	\$ 105,000

**HEAD O'MEADOW SCHOOL**

CARPET FLOORING REPLACEMENT PROGRAM	\$ 20,000
REPAINT INTERIOR DOORS AND FRAMES	\$ 15,000
GYM WALL PAD REPLACEMENT	\$ 22,000
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	\$ 57,000

**REED INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL**

REPAINT CLASSROOMS / HALLWAYS - PHASE I	\$ 25,000
CARPET FLOORING REPLACEMENT PROGRAM	\$ 20,000
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	\$ 45,000

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**

INSTALL ACOUSTICAL CEILING AND LIGHTING - LMC	\$ 22,000
REPAVE CAFÉ SIDE PARKING LOT	\$ 125,000
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	\$ 147,000

**HIGH SCHOOL**

IN-FILL EXTERIOR DOUBLE DOOR C080 WITH MASONRY - NEW	\$ 5,000
AUTO SHOP FENCE REPLACEMENT WITH BLINDED FABRIC	\$ 5,000
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	\$ 10,000

**SYSTEM WIDE**

REPAVE WHAREHOUSE PARKING LOT, DRIVE AND STAIRS	\$ 25,000
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	\$ 25,000

<b><u>TOTAL BUILDING &amp; SITE MAINTENANCE PROJECTS - REDUCED</u></b>	<b>\$ 449,000</b>
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**410 - BUILDING REPAIR CONTRACTED SERVICES**

<b>Maintenance of Buildings &amp; Grounds</b>	<b>2015-16 Budgeted</b>	<b>2016-17 Budgeted</b>	<b>2017-18 Proposed</b>	<b>Increase Decrease</b>
Gym Door Service (RIS, MS & HS)	3,500	3,500	5,500	2,000
Emergency Generators	6,000	6,000	6,000	0
Elevator Service	18,000	18,000	18,000	0
Kitchen Fire Suppression Systems	5,000	5,000	5,000	0
Sprinkler System Testing	10,500	10,500	10,500	0
Emergency Lights	5,000	7,600	7,600	0
Fire Alarm Service	6,000	6,000	6,000	0
Monitoring Service - Fire & Burglar	3,000	3,000	4,600	1,600
Fire Extinguishers	7,000	7,000	7,000	0
Septic Tank & Grease Pit Service	10,000	12,000	12,000	0
Chemical Pit Cleanouts	4,000	4,000	4,000	0
Intercom System	8,000	8,000	8,000	0
Telephone System	10,000	10,000	10,000	0
Paging System	2,000	2,000	2,000	0
Clock & Bell System	2,800	2,800	2,800	0
Parking Lot & Field Lighting Systems	5,000	5,000	5,000	0
NHS - HVAC (complete contract - Global Mechanical)	118,000	118,000	118,000	0
RIS - HVAC (complete contract - Global Mechanical)	70,000	70,000	70,000	0
HVAC - partial contracts HAW,SHS,MGS,NMS	40,000	40,000	40,000	0
HVAC HOM - (General PM) now off 5 year original PM contract	28,000	28,000	28,000	0
HVAC ALL - (boiler cleanings & burner service)	22,500	22,500	26,000	3,500
HVAC - SHS Preventative maintenance contract	0	20,000	29,000	9,000
Repainting Parking Lot Lines	12,000	12,000	12,000	0
Back flow prevention testing - (all schools)	3,000	3,000	3,000	0
Energy Management System	36,000	36,000	36,000	0
Water Treatment Systems (HOM)	7,000	8,500	8,500	0
ADA Chair Lift Inspections (NHS, NMS, HOM)	1,800	1,800	1,800	0
Upholstery Cleaning - Furniture / Stage Curtains / Blinds	4,000	4,000	0	-4,000
Exterminator services - Pest Control	8,500	8,500	8,500	0
Tick Control - All Schools	10,000	10,000	10,000	0
Courtyard Maintenance (RIS, MGS, NHS)	10,000	10,000	10,000	0
Playground Mulch (HAW, SHS, MGS, HOM, RIS)	25,000	25,000	25,000	0
Tree work - removal, pruning, storm damage	2,200	10,000	10,000	0
Rooftop fans - HAW, SHS, MGS, NMS	10,000	0	0	0
Duct Cleaning All Schools - Kitchen Exhaust Fans/Vents	10,000	8,000	10,000	2,000
Playground Safety Inspections (HAW, SH, MG, HOM, RIS)	4,300	4,300	4,300	0
Refinish Gym Floors	8,500	14,000	12,000	-2,000
UPS PM Contract - NHS, NMS, RIS for 1 year	3,500	3,500	3,500	0
Gym Equipment and Bleacher Inspections	500	500	1,000	500
Repaint NHS Bleachers	0	8,500	8,500	0
Water Treatment - HAW Boilers	0	1,000	1,000	0
SHS - Snow Plow and Removal from site	0	20,000	20,000	0
<b>Total Maintenance Contracted Services</b>	<b>540,600</b>	<b>597,500</b>	<b>610,100</b>	<b>12,600</b>