

**Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, January 7, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at 3 Primrose Street.

D. Leidlein, Chair	J. Reed
L. Roche, Vice Chair	L. Gejda
K. Alexander	R. Bienkowski
J Vouros	4 Staff
D. Freedman	2 Press
K. Hamilton	
M. Ku	

Mrs. Leidlein called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved that the Board go into executive session to discuss school security goals and invited Dr. Reed, Ron Bienkowski, Joni Capocitti, Carmella Amodeo, Gino Faiella and Mark Pompano. Mr. Alexander seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 1 – Executive Session

Exited executive session at 7:35 p.m.  
The public session began at 7:50 p.m.

Item 2 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 3 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to approve the consent agenda which included the high school debate team and jazz ensemble field trips, and donations to Sandy Hook School, the high school automotive repair class and the Newtown school district. Mr. Vouros seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 4 – Public Participation

Item 5 – Reports:

Correspondence Report: Ms. Hamilton said correspondence was received from Kathy Hamilton regarding the Board vote on committee structure, Duckfish Electronics regarding IT needs which was forwarded to Carmella Amodeo, Kathy Hamilton regarding the Board of Finance liaison, committee structure and membership, a liaison to the donation group and a question regarding the CIP presentation to the Legislative Council, Debbie Leidlein regarding the Legislative Council discussion of the new Sandy Hook School driveway, Laurie Borst regarding school bus safety and Wolfgang Halbig's FOIA request about the Sandy Hook tragedy response.

Chair Report: Mrs. Leidlein discussed the Board retreat and would send out the goals of that meeting with possible dates. She received a packet from the Hillsboro Country Magnet School with music and poems composed by students to share with Sandy Hook School.

Superintendent's Report:

The NICE presentation will be given in the second regular Board meeting in February due to some staff not being able to attend tonight.

A letter was received from Victoria DeFrank of the AFSCME regarding the Newtown Board of Education Nurses, Local 1303-215 of Council 4, union negotiations. Their contract expires June 30, 2014. We are providing information they requested.

The SERV Grant was approved. We received notification on Monday that it runs from September 1, 2013 to August 15, 2014. David Esquith and the team they sent to Newtown were very insightful in helping address some issues regarding the grant. There was significant cooperation on the part of many people involved in preparing this grant.

#### Committee Reports:

Mrs. Roche said the committee discussed the budget newsletter and asked for the Board to vote to continue providing these communications. A newsletter will be sent out before the budget process, one after each budget week and a summary after the Board of Finance meeting.

At the last meeting she spoke about having people subscribe to receiving agendas and found out that there is an option for that on the Town website.

Mr. Alexander said last year we posted the budget newsletters on google docs which is allowed.

Dr. Reed said we have a speaker's bureau where anyone can make a request for a speaker to attend and address issues. He will be announcing dates on Saturdays starting in February where he will have open office hours for anyone to drop in and discuss the budget.

Ms. Hamilton said there would be a policy committee meeting on Thursday.

#### Item 6 – Old Business

##### Appointment of Committees:

Mrs. Leidlein shared the list of committees and their charges and asked for feedback.

Mr. Freedman asked about the donation committee and felt it should be added to the list.

Mr. Alexander is on that committee and Ms. Hamilton was a public member.

Ms. Hamilton said the work of that committee has decreased and they only meet on as-needed basis.

Mr. Freedman asked to be removed from the curriculum development and testing improvement committee.

Mrs. Roche suggested voting on the committees but preferred to wait to vote on the charges.

Mrs. Leidlein said the charges of the committees are part of the board policies and it may be best to refer them to the policy committee. The Board agreed.

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to approve the appointment of committee assignments with the revisions discussed. Ms. Hamilton seconded.

Mrs. Ku said the policy states that the chairperson of the Board will be part of the standing committees so we may not be able to have three per committee.

Mr. Alexander said the chair would have to be an exofficio member.

Ms. Hamilton said an exofficio member is not a voting member.

Mr. Alexander preferred to have three members on the subcommittees and keep the list we have.

Ms. Hamilton would look into it.

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to amend the motion to state with possible changes as needed based on policy re-read.

Vote on amendment: Motion passes unanimously.

Vote on original motion: Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to refer the committee charges to the policy subcommittee for possible addition to the policies. Ms. Hamilton seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Graduation Requirements:

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved that the Board of Education approve the changes in the Requirements for Graduation Policy 7-302. Ms. Hamilton seconded.

Dr. Gejda spoke about Mr. Dumais' presentation regarding changes in the graduation requirements to come into alignment with the secondary school reform. This initially will start with the class of 2018. It is recommended that the graduating class of 2018 have 23 credits, the class of 2019 have 24 credits, and class of 2020 have 25 credits. We are looking at requiring world language for the first two years and in 2020 taking senior project and redistribution of the content area credits. This discussion is important at this time because we want to let the freshman know next year upon entering the high school so they know the requirements.

Ms. Hamilton recalled Mr. Dumais saying that most students graduate with two world language credits so it is a non-budgetary issue.

Mr. Alexander asked if there was any modification for special education students.

Dr. Gejda said school districts are required to make a concerted effort with students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade to be sure they can meet these standards.

Mr. Alexander was concerned it would be more costly in the third year to add these credits.

Dr. Gejda said the challenge will be to distribute the credits and look at remediation for students who didn't pass. We need to have options for those students such as summer school or online courses.

Mr. Vouros was concerned about eliminating positions at the high school to meet these requirements.

Dr. Reed said we will be able to absorb the increased requirements for graduation. A possible addition to the policy would be at the discretion of the principal to substitute another credit for a failed course.

Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Freedman moved that the Board of Education authorize the Communications Committee to continue to issue information on behalf of the Board of Education. Mr. Vouros seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

#### Item 7 – New Business

December 18, 2013 Minutes:

MOTION: Mrs. Ku moved to approve the minutes of December 18, 2013. Ms. Hamilton seconded. Ms. Hamilton suggested a change to the second paragraph on page 2 to read "Dr. Reed spoke about charging non-special education partner students for attending our preschool program. Most districts charge for this program."

Dr. Reed suggested having a change in his statement in that paragraph to read, "Dr. Reed said all school districts that he is aware of charge."

MOTION: Ms. Hamilton made a friendly amendment to add Dr. Reed's change. Mrs. Roche seconded.

MOTION: Ms. Hamilton moved her suggested sentence in that paragraph on students being charged. Mrs. Ku seconded.

Vote on amendment: 6 ayes, 1 abstained (Mr. Alexander)

Vote on minutes: 6 ayes, 1 abstained (Mr. Alexander)

December 23, 2013 Minutes:

MOTION: Ms. Hamilton moved to approve the minutes of December 23, 2013. Mr. Vouros seconded.

MOTION: Ms. Hamilton moved to amend the minutes on page four. She added a sentence in the third paragraph to read, "Ms. Hamilton said usually the money is expended before the end of the school year. It might be more beneficial to save the money for larger expenses in the future." She also requested to remove the next sentence. Mrs. Ku seconded.

Motion on amendment: 6 ayes, 1 abstained (Mr. Alexander)

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved to amend the first sentence under Committee Reports to read, "Mrs. Roche said the policy committee has been meeting regularly and at our last meeting Ms. Hamilton was voted as the chair. Mrs. Ku seconded.

Vote on amendment: 6 ayes, 1 abstained (Mr. Alexander)

Vote on minutes: 6 ayes, 1 abstained (Mr. Alexander)

First Tee Program:

MOTION: Mr. Freedman moved that the Board of Education accept the donation of the First Tee Program. Mr. Alexander seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

School Climate Assessment Instrument:

MOTION: Ms. Hamilton moved that the Board of Education approve the implementation of the Comprehensive School Climate Assessment Instrument. Mr. Vouros seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Dr. Gejda said this request is from the Safe School Climate Committee. This is a requirement for surveying students, parent and staff members. Last year this legislation went into effect. We used a survey for staff and parents but didn't feel the surveys were complete. Jo Ann Freiberg from the State Department of Education spoke to our committee about another instrument we could use which looks at school climate more comprehensively.

Mr. Freedman asked if we looked at any others before we chose this.

Dr. Gejda said we chose this because it was recommended by Dr. Freiberg, is used nationwide and is reliable.

Ms. Hamilton asked if we have any evidence to show what we are doing is effective?

Dr. Gejda said that part of the new legislation is to collect the reports and decide what information should be addressed at the building level.

Mr. Alexander asked what part of the budget this fell under.

Dr. Gejda said it would come under her budget. The committee was looking to use it this year. They liked it because the questions are geared for certain grade levels.

Motion passes unanimously.

Unexpended Education Funds Account:

Mr. Bienkowski said this refers to a public act which went into effect for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011. This allows us to carry over any unexpended balance into the next fiscal year. The first motion elaborates the 1% budgeted appropriation and indicates the fiscal year it would begin. This is more complete than past motions that had been prepared. Examples of how the money could be used is for costs associated with storms and snow removal, the Head O'Meadow generator replacement, 12/14 expenses, delayed maintenance projects or technology infrastructure/obsolescence. This law would benefit the Board of Education to assure that funds approved for education at the referendum would all be used for education.

MOTION: Ms. Hamilton moved that the Newtown Board of Education respectfully request that the Newtown Board of Finance establish a non-lapsing account for deposit of any unexpended education funds from the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014, and each fiscal year thereafter, not to exceed 1% of the Board of Education's budgeted appropriation. Such request is in accordance with State Statute Section 10-248a, Unexpended Education Funds account. Any funds expended from the Non-Lapsing Education Fund established by the Newtown Board of Finance under this statute shall be authorized by the Newtown Board of Education. Mr. Freedman seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Ms. Hamilton felt it was great that we were doing this as it will give us flexibility in the future for projects or capital expenses. She hoped we wouldn't use this to supplement our operating expenses.

Motion passes unanimously.

Item 8 – Public Participation

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

Item 9 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Kathy Hamilton  
Secretary

Consent Agenda  
January 7, 2014

- NHS Debate Team and Jazz Ensemble field trips
- Donations:
  - Sandy Hook School
  - NHS automotive repair class
  - Newtown School District



FAXED 12/22

# FIELD TRIP BUS REQUEST FORM

Teacher Making Request: THOMAS Date: 12/19/13

Other Staff Involved: Larry Saladin / Cole Brainerd

Date of Proposed Field Trip: 2/14 - 2/17

Class/Group Involved: Debate

Number of Students Scheduled to Make Trip: 24

Other Adults (non-teachers) Chaperoning the Trip (list names): \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: Cambridge MA (Harvard Debate Tournament)

Place and Time of Departure: NHS 12 pm

Estimated Time of Return: NHS 1 pm

Special Arrangements (i.e. stopping at a restaurant, picnic, etc.) staying overnight @ Doubletree Boston  
Boyside

Estimated Cost of Transportation: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Cost per Student: ≈ 300

Other Information: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINCIPAL APPROVAL BY SIGNATURE: [Signature] DATE: 12/23/13

OVERNIGHT/OUT-OF-STATE FIELD TRIP BOE APPROVAL: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Billing Information

Bill to: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pricing: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours @ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Miles @ \_\_\_\_\_ per mile = \_\_\_\_\_

Minimum Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Charge per Bus: \_\_\_\_\_

## Confirmation

Information taken by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Confirmed: \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Recorded in Book: \_\_\_\_\_



# FIELD TRIP BUS REQUEST FORM

Teacher Making Request: Eckhardt Date: 12/30/13

Other Staff Involved: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Proposed Field Trip: February ~~18-19~~ 7-8

Class/Group Involved: Jazz Ensemble

Number of Students Scheduled to Make Trip: 28

Other Adults (non-teachers) Chaperoning the Trip (list names): TBA

Destination: Boston - Berklee School of Music Jazz Festival

Place and Time of Departure: NHS - 3pm - 2/7/14

Estimated Time of Return: - 8pm - 2/8/14

Special Arrangements (i.e. stopping at a restaurant, picnic, etc.) Hotel

Estimated Cost of Transportation: 2200

Estimated Cost per Student: \$100

Other Information: Hotel costs - \$50 per student

PRINCIPAL APPROVAL BY SIGNATURE: *Admanis* DATE: 01/02/14

OVERNIGHT/OUT-OF-STATE FIELD TRIP BOE APPROVAL: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### Billing Information

Bill to: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pricing: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours @ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Miles @ \_\_\_\_\_ per mile = \_\_\_\_\_

Minimum Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Charge per Bus: \_\_\_\_\_

### Confirmation

Information taken by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Confirmed: \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Recorded in Book: \_\_\_\_\_





# FIELD TRIP BUS REQUEST FORM

Teacher Making Request: Edchardt Date: 12/30/13

Other Staff Involved: Carley

Date of Proposed Field Trip: March 7-8

Class/Group Involved: Jazz Ensemble

Number of Students Scheduled to Make Trip: 55

Other Adults (non-teachers) Chaperoning the Trip (list names): TBD

Destination: Durham, New Hampshire - UNH Jazz Festival

Place and Time of Departure: 3pm - NHS 3/7

Estimated Time of Return: 12am 3/8

Special Arrangements (i.e. stopping at a restaurant, picnic, etc.) TBA

Estimated Cost of Transportation: \$ 2200

Estimated Cost per Student: \$50

Other Information: Hotel \$50 - student

PRINCIPAL APPROVAL BY SIGNATURE: *[Signature]* DATE: 01/02/14

OVERNIGHT/OUT-OF-STATE FIELD TRIP BOE APPROVAL: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### Billing Information

Bill to: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pricing: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours @ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour = \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Miles @ \_\_\_\_\_ per mile = \_\_\_\_\_  
Minimum Charge: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Charge per Bus: \_\_\_\_\_

### Confirmation

Information taken by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Confirmed: \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Recorded in Book: \_\_\_\_\_

# DONATIONS

To BOE for Approval on January 7, 2014

1/7/2014

<b>SHES</b>				
	Pastor Donald Gauthier & Family Jesus Cares Ministries Jensen Beach, FL	\$40.00		Cash
	Total	\$ 40.00	\$	40.00
<b>SHES Library</b>			\$	-
<b>Newtown Public Schools</b>		\$	-	
	Families who own and operate McDonald's Restaurants in CT (for surveillance/security systems)	\$ 25,000.00	\$	25,000.00 Ck# 1323523
	Total	\$	-	
<b>NPS Teachers</b>			\$	-
			\$	<u>25,040.00</u>
			\$	25,040.00

January 2, 2018

TO: John Reed

FROM: Charles S. Dumais

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'C' and 'S' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that curves upwards at the end.

Please accept the donation of a 1997 Honda Accord, VIN:  
1HGCD5532VA245404 at an estimated value of \$2,000 from Dave Foss, 429  
Woodstock Ave, Stratford, CT 06614

The vehicle will be used by Newtown High School Automotive Repair Classes.

Thank you.

*Encl.*

To Whom It May Concern:

I, David L. Foss, would like to donate my forest green 1997 Honda Accord to the Newtown High School auto shop effective December 21, 2013. The vehicle identification number is 1HGCD5532VA245404. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*David L. Foss*

David L. Foss

12/18/13

*ll*

BOE Communications Report, 1/7/2014  
 Kathy Hamilton

From	Date	Subject
Debbie Leidlein	12/31/2013	Informing the board that the LC will be discussing the new SHS driveway.
Duckfish Electronics	12/27/2013	Asking our IT department if they need any electronics – forwarded it to Carmella
Kathy Hamilton	12/30/2013	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Volunteer for BOF liason</li> <li>2. Committee structure as well as membership and purpose need to be posted on website.</li> <li>3. Need liason to Donation group headed up by GE Exec Elizabeth Rallo</li> <li>4. Question about responsibility of CIP presentation to LC</li> </ol>
Kathy Hamilton	12/26/2013	Board needs to vote on committee structure.
Laurie Borst	1/2/2014	School Bus Safety
Wolfgang Halbig	1/2/2014	FOI request about SHS Tragedy response

## Committee Assignments - Draft

- **Communication**  
Laura Roche, Chair  
Debbie Leidlein  
Keith Alexander
- **CIP/Facilities/Finance**  
David Freedman  
Kathy Hamilton
- **Policy**  
Kathy Hamilton  
Laura Roche  
David Freedman
- **Contract Negotiation**  
Debbie Leidlein  
Kathy Hamilton  
Michelle Ku
  
- **Special Education/Gifted Education – this is an assignment not a standing cmte**  
John Vouros  
Michelle Ku
- **Technology – this is an assignment not a standing cmte**  
Keith Alexander  
David Freedman
- ~~**Coherence – this is an assignment not a standing cmte**~~  
~~Laura Roche~~  
~~John Vouros~~  
~~David Freedman~~
- **Security – this is an assignment not a standing cmte**  
Michelle Ku  
John Vouros
  
- Other assignments:
  - SHS Building Cmte – CIP
  - Liason to LC, BOS and BOF
  - Education Connection - Michelle
  - Magnet School Advisory Board – John V

Dear BOE Members,

The BOE Policy subcommittee has been reviewing the district's Graduation Requirement Policy and considering revisions that would be needed to meet the Secondary School Reform legislation that goes into effect for the graduating class of 2020. Chip Dumais, NHS principal, made a presentation to the Board on this subject earlier this year.

Presently, to qualify for graduation, NHS students need 22 credits in different content areas, as defined in district policy # 7-302. The graduating class of 2020 will need 25 credits in order to graduate. Also, the distribution of credits is different than our current policy.

In an effort to meet the 2020 deadline, and be fiscally sensitive, Chip Dumais and I are suggesting that the subcommittee consider the following proposal:

**One additional credit requirement in three consecutive years and distributed as follows:**

**2018 (23 credits): World Language**

**2019 (24 credits): World Language**

**2020 (25 credits): Senior project (and redistribution of content area credits)**

This suggestion takes into account information regarding credits/courses that NHS students graduate with.

It is important to realize that graduation requirements for any given class must be in place when that class enters its Freshman year. The graduating class of 2018 will be entering NHS this coming Fall.

Thank you for your consideration.

Linda Gejda

**Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education special meeting on Wednesday, December 18, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at 3 Primrose Street.

D. Leidlein, Chair  
L. Roche, Vice Chair  
K. Hamilton, Secretary  
J. Vouros  
D. Freedman  
M. Ku

J. Reed

ALSO PRESENT: Legislative Council Members, Board of Selectman Members, Board of Finance Members, Finance Director Bob Tait, Land Use Director George Benson, Attorney David Grogins, Attorney Monte Frank, 28 members of the public, 4 Press

Board of Education Discussion of 2014-2015 Budget:

Mrs. Leidlein and Dr. Reed presented the attached draft estimates of Major Contractual/Fixed Costs and Efficiencies & Other Reductions for the Board of Education. Contract increases range from 1-2%. Medical is a 4% increase. Insurance is a 3% increase. In-district transportation is an increase of \$150,000 and Special Ed transportation has an increase of \$52,000. The Technology increase is for the replacement of instructional computers required for testing. Areas still in development are for the new Superintendent, out of district tuition, security personnel, fuel which has not been bid, and nurses contracts to be negotiated this year. Reductions: Hawley switching from oil to natural gas, charging tuition for non-special ed pre-school students, unfilled positions, estimated turnover, energy management, and reductions for reduced positions.

Dr. Reed stated the superintendent is responsible to recommend the budget to Board of Education. Has one month to go before recommending budget, so Board of Education hasn't seen the budget. He expressed it would difficult to sustain financing of police officers at time and half. They are looking at other models in Enfield and North Branford, using retired Police Officers. Feedback from the visitation team has been positive. This requires an immense amount of co-operation between the Police Department and Board of Education. Both sides would want to be involved in the hiring. Security should be looked at independently from the budget, supplements needed so as not to compete with books, sports etc. Work with staff intelligently to maximize grants. Believes the SERV grant will be approved. Received \$3.25 million for security and secured \$1 million more working with staff and vendors. Good news for town surplus fund, received insurance refund and grant money. Need to show relation between declining enrollment and the budget. Would like a mutual agreement on budget while balancing the needs of the town and school system. Energy containment initial savings will go into paying for equipment. It is a savings in capital expenditures. When paid off, you will see significant dollars coming back in energy savings.

Ms. Jacob stated feedback from Charter Revision Commission said in towns that are successful in passing budgets, is when there is collaboration. Goal is to pass budget first time.

Dr. Reed doesn't remember having 4 or 5 referendums when he was superintendent. He understands what needs to be done to build collaboration. This has been an atypical year



because of the shooting. Decision made not to fill 6 positions this year; we are serious about managing the budget.

Dr. Reed spoke about charging non-special education partner students for attending our preschool program. Most districts charge for this program. Lisa Romano asked how Dr. Reed knows non special education students will pay tuition. Dr. Reed said all school districts that he was aware of charge. It will be fairly priced.

Mr. Knapp stated voters vote on one number. Asked what is the goal? Dr. Reed said start with understanding what the needs are, how many staff can be reduced. We are still getting information in. The more intelligent the budget can be and meet the needs of students while demonstrating we are good shepherds of tax dollars is his goal. Budget will be conservative and modest.

Mr. Amaral hopes to see a zero increase. He would like explanations in budget book for increases and decreases. Dr. Reed will do that.

Ms. Hamilton asked if the line item teacher's/staff salaries is based on current staff. Dr. Reed said yes. Staff reductions are still in development. Ms. Hamilton asked if estimated turnover is assuming people leave and less costly staff is hired. Dr. Reed said that is correct. There are no incentives to retire early.

Ms. Jacob asked if there will be a retirement package offered. Dr. Reed said the Board makes that decision but he thinks it is problematic, and it encourages good people to leave. He doesn't think we should pay people who were going to retire.

Mr. Ferguson suggested the title "major contractual/fixed costs" should read "major contractual obligations". Dr. Reed calls it "known costs drivers".

Ms. Jacob asked if Dr. Reed is currently looking at a \$1.2 million increase over last year.

Dr. Reed said this is not the whole story. He doesn't see anything impacting it to be higher, and is looking to be creative with security. If security is going to be in the Board of Education budget, he hopes it is supplemented some way.

Ms. Romano asked of the council decides where security costs go. Why is transportation going up? Dr. Reed said transportation is increasing according to All Stars contract at 3%. Ms. Jacob said the council does not have line item authority over the Board of Education budget. Dr. Reed and Mrs. Llodra will make recommendations regarding security and the Board of Finance will make a recommendation.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Kathy Hamilton  
Secretary

**Town of Newtown**  
**Board of Education Budget 2014-15 Talking Points**  
**12/18/2013**

	DRAFT ESTIMATES
<b>MAJOR CONTRACTUAL/FIXED COSTS:</b>	
TEACHER SALARIES	\$ 1,091,000.00
ADMINISTRATORS, CUSTODIANS, SECRETARIES, EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS	\$ 160,000.00
MEDICAL BENEFITS (4%)	\$ 324,000.00
INSURANCE (W/C & G/L) (3%)	\$ 28,300.00
TRANSPORTATION (IN DISTRICT)	\$ 150,000.00
TRANSPORTATION (SPECIAL ED IN AND OUT OF DISTRICT)	\$ 52,000.00
TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT	\$ 120,000.00
AREAS STILL IN DEVELOPMENT:	
SUPERINTENDENT	
TUITION - OUT OF DISTRICT	
SECURITY - PERSONNEL & HARDWARE	
GASOLINE AND DIESEL: YET TO BID	
NURSES CONTRACT: TO BE NEGOTIATED	
	-
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 1,925,300.00
<b>EFFICIENCIES &amp; OTHER REDUCTIONS:</b>	
OIL TO NATURAL GAS (TWO-THIRDS) AT HAWLEY	\$ (20,000.00)
PRE-SCHOOL TUITION FOR NON-SPECIAL ED STUDENTS	\$ (50,000.00)
POSITIONS UNFILLED IN CURRENT OPERATING BUDGET	
CERTIFIED	\$ (240,000.00)
NON-CERTIFIED	\$ (30,000.00)
ESTIMATED TURNOVER	\$ (325,000.00)
ENERGY MANAGEMENT: CONTINUE PERFORMANCE REVIEW W/ TOWN	
REDUCTIONS MADE FOR REDUCED POSITIONS - IN DEVELOPMENT	
	-
GRAND TOTAL	\$ (665,000.00)

NOTE: AT THIS POINT IN TIME THE 2014-15 BOE BUDGET IS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DEPT REVIEW PROCESS



**Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on Monday, December 23, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at 3 Primrose Street.

D. Leidlein, Chair	J. Reed
L. Roche, Vice Chair	L. Gejda
K. Alexander(absent)	R. Bienkowski
J Vouros	1 Staff
D. Freedman	2 Public
K. Hamilton	3 Press
M. Ku	

Mrs. Leidlein called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m.

Item 1 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved to approve the consent agenda which included the minutes of December 3 and December 9, 2013, the donation of \$781.00 to Middle Gate School for Veteran’s Day activities, a \$3,396.25 donation to Sandy Hook School, the donation of the Educational Alliance Grant of \$500 to Sandy Hook School, the donation of equipment for the high school music lab, the donation of \$5,000 for the high school tech ed department, the Debate Team field trip and personnel items which includes authorization for the Superintendent to hire Jay Smith to serve as Interim Assistant Principal at Newtown Middle School while Tony Salvatore is on leave until on or about March 31, 2014. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 2 – Public Participation – none

Item 3 – Reports

Chair Report: Mrs. Leidlein asked for motions to add discussion and possible action on the high school auditorium and Board of Education committees.

MOTION: Mrs. Ku moved that the Board of Education add a discussion and possible action on the high school auditorium to new business. Mr. Freedman seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mrs. Ku moved that the Board of Education add discussion and possible action regarding Board committees. Vote: 4 ayes, 1 abstained (Mrs. Roche), 1 nay (Ms. Hamilton)

Correspondence Report: The following correspondence was received:

Mr. Freedman regarding protocol for Board members visiting schools  
Mrs. Leidlein regarding the Board presentation at the joint meeting  
Mr. Vouros regarding confirmation of receiving the \$25,000 donation from Swiss Army  
Cindy Smith regarding a merchant account analysis  
Mrs. Leidlein through Mary Ann Jacob regarding the high school auditorium  
Kevin Fitzgerald regarding the makeup of the Board  
Ms. Feola-Guerrieri and Dr. Gejda regarding schools of distinction  
Offer from Cindy Moore regarding a Marshall Arts course  
Mrs. Leidlein regarding a public act that addresses carrying money over year to year  
Mrs. Leidlein listing all subcommittee members  
Pat Llodra encouraging the Board to have a discussion on school safety  
Eric Larson regarding Boy Scouts wanting to help the town  
Adam Keenan from Chicago asking for a donation from the Board for their Chicago organization

Mrs. Leidlein stated there would be an FOIA workshop at the meeting on February 18. Mrs. Ku asked to have a discussion regarding a possible student rep be added to the Board of Education. This may want to be referred to the policy committee. Mrs. Leidlein said that requests to visit schools should go through the Superintendent's office. There was a request for a Board retreat which will be scheduled.

Ms. Hamilton said there are a few concerns regarding emails between Board members. This is not allowed as these are considered meetings under FOIA rules.

#### Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Reed shared a small poster which lists a state phone number for anyone to report something they see which they have a concern about and stated the poster will be placed in various areas of the school system.

There will be an executive session on security at the next meeting.

We received confirmation that all camera installations in the schools will be will be completed by January 2. We also expect to receive notification on the SERV Grant any day.

Dr. Reed congratulated high school principal, Chip Dumais, for receiving the Outstanding Scholar Award in the graduate program at Central Connecticut State University.

The doors at the high school front lobby are now operational for electronic locking and unlocking which will be operated by staff.

#### Coherence Planning Report:

John Vouros read the members of the Coherence Planning Committee which included Dr. John Reed, Dr. Linda Gejda, Joni Capoccitti, Phil Cruz, Chip Dumais, David Freedman, Julie Haggard, Tom Kuroski, Pat Llodra, Gail Maletz, Jo-Annek Peters, Laura Roche, Lisa Schwartz, Denise Tramosch, Anne Uberti, and John Vouros.

Jonathan Costa spoke about the work of the committee. One-third of all the work in this plan is what was required by the state. The committee met four times. You will have the source document as a framework for the new superintendent. This plan shows the weight of the work being addressed. He stated that Newtown is beyond its capacity to get done what is planned to do.

Mrs. Ku said as a new Board member she found it very useful.

Mr. Freedman felt it was a great opportunity to be on the committee.

#### Item 4 – Old Business

##### Educational Specifications for the New Sandy Hook School:

Dr. Reed said there have been some changes since these were approved on June 18. Svigals has had numerous meetings with various groups. He and Dr. Gombos have reviewed what is there. He said that ultimately there is a framework which the total square footage must be aligned to.

Ms. McFadden said that any further changes will be made to meet the goals of each educational space. We will come back to the Board with any changes as we move forward.

Ms. Hamilton asked what the next step was after approval tonight.

Dr. Reed said this approval was needed now primarily for the design team to work on the schematics with possibly three scenarios to bring forward.

Mr. Brotman said that in past projects the state is only looking for the number of students and programs. What we have now is sufficient.

Ms. McFadden said the state asked for a comparison of the square footage from the former school and the present ed specs.

MOTION: Mr. Freedman moved that the Board of Education approve the educational specifications for the new Sandy Hook School. Ms. Hamilton seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Adoption of the SOS Program:

Dr. Reed stated that we have spoken about teenage depression and David Jacob was here to answer questions regarding this program.

MOTION: Ms. Hamilton moved that the Board of Education adopt the SOS Program as presented. Mrs. Ku seconded.

Dr. Jacob stated that depression can ultimately be related to thoughts about suicide. Every high school and middle school student with parental permission will complete an anonymous self-administered depression screening for self-awareness and the possibility a student may refer a friend for assistance. There are 8,000 schools in the nation that have used this program.

Mr. Vouros asked why we weren't doing this for students in the fifth and sixth grades and younger.

Dr. Jacob hoped to eventually address the younger grades but this research-based program wasn't developed for that age.

Mr. Freedman felt because we have a larger number of counselors available we would have enough staff for the younger grades. He asked who did the training.

Dr. Jacob stated the trainer is from Massachusetts. The training would take 12 days for the high school and 10 days for the middle school.

Mrs. Roche asked what would be sent to parents.

Dr. Jacob said that parental permission would have to be required.

Mrs. Ku asked what would happen with the survey information.

Dr. Jacob said we would collect the surveys which would be anonymous.

Mr. Vouros was concerned that the children understand the seriousness of the survey. The time you give them to talk about this should not be limited.

Dr. Jacob said that three support team members would be in each class for the discussions. They would include teachers and at least a social worker, psychologist or counselor.

Dr. Reed feels an environment where students are cognizant of the traits of depression would be helpful. The teachers discuss their students with each other. At parents meetings we have to acknowledge that these questions are indicators. With the size of our staff we are prepared to give additional support.

Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3 – Reports (continued)

MOTION: Mrs. Ku moved to approve the financial report and transfers for the month ending November 30, 2013. Mr. Vouros seconded.

Mr. Bienkowski reported that all major object accounts were in a positive balance. We know what our transportation and tuition grants will be which is \$289,000 more than when we developed the budget. Under purchased property services some projects will be funded under the Department of Justice Grant. We have had a number of emergency repairs and have spent 62% of our budgeted amount for these repairs.

Mr. Freedman asked if money could be put aside that will help with future large purchases in our budget.

Mr. Bienkowski said we can reserve 1% in our revolving account with approval of the Board of Finance.

Ms. Hamilton said usually the money is expended before the end of the school year. It might be more beneficial to save the money for larger expenses in the future.

Mr. Bienkowski said we don't want to use that money for operating expenses.

Ms. Hamilton suggested modifying the layout of the transfer report in the future.

Mr. Bienkowski said this format comes from the ledger system adopted in 2009.

Motion passes unanimously.

#### Committee Reports:

Mrs. Roche said the policy committee has been meeting regularly and at the last meeting

Ms. Hamilton took over as chair.

Ms. Hamilton said they were currently looking at policies that Dr. Reed said need to be addressed first. Ms. Hamilton reviewed the policy development process and reported that the committee had completed 18 policies which needed to be reviewed by the Superintendent.

They are working with Dr. Bruce Storm, a volunteer retired Superintendent of Schools, and also include staff members for their input.

#### Item 4 – Old Business (continued)

MOTION: Mrs. Ku moved that the Board of Education approve the budget goals for the 2014-2015 as presented. Mr. Vouros seconded.

Ms. Hamilton suggested changes in the order of the goals. Security measures in item #3 should be moved below item #1, mental health should also be under item #1, student success plans should be in item #3, and item #5 planning for future needs should be more specific. She suggested adding to collaborate with the municipal government and also adding a flat budget moving forward this year.

Dr. Reed felt we shouldn't state adding a zero increase as a goal statement because that would be an action the Board could take this February.

Mrs. Leidlein is also in favor of a zero budget but would like to hear what Dr. Reed presents.

Mrs. Ku agreed that it isn't a budget goal.

Ms. Hamilton had heard the frustration about taxes from the community. She doesn't want to lose programs but we must be realistic.

Mrs. Roche didn't feel comfortable giving that direction to Dr. Reed. We need to wait and see the budget that is brought forward.

MOTION: Ms. Hamilton moved to add as #6 to collaborate with the municipal government to look for ways to provide better efficiencies and more transparent operations in administrative overhead areas. Mr. Freedman seconded.

Ms. Hamilton would like to see discussions with school and town personnel on how to do this. An outside organization did a study on this. This is a step by step process. Dr. Reed said he would review the study and proceed with an investigation pertaining to the Board assuming the responsibility for town buildings for cleaning and maintenance. There are implications when thinking about combining services.

Mr. Bienkowski said there is a lot of cooperation with the town such as with the insurance program and the town highway department maintaining our vehicles. The town is on the same software system and we buy our diesel fuel with the town but the town technology systems are entirely different from ours.

Mrs. Leidlein proposed a friendly amendment to add collaborate with the town and explore the ramifications of collaboration regarding better efficiencies and more transparent operations in administrative overhead areas.

Ms. Hamilton said we can review the possibilities of combining services and only make the change if it makes sense.

Dr. Reed said the First Selectman and superintendent need to have these discussions.

Mrs. Roche made a friendly amendment to add "investigate the possible collaboration with the municipal government..."

Vote on amendment: 5 ayes, 1 nay (Mrs. Ku) Amendment passes.

MOTION: Ms. Hamilton moved an amendment to add #7 to have a goal of a zero percent budget increase. Mr. Freedman seconded.

Mrs. Ku felt the job of the Board of Education was to represent the best interests of the students.

Ms. Hamilton said we have to make the reductions and not be forced by another board. We still had trouble passing the budget last year. A lot of tax increase was from the Board of Education budget.

Dr. Reed is not opposed to zero increase if that's the right number. He said it would be helpful to the future superintendent to have the budget goals completed by October 30<sup>th</sup>.

Vote on amendment to add a zero budget increase: 3 ayes, 3 nays (Mrs. Roche, Mr. Vouros, Mrs. Ku) Motion fails.

Final vote on the budget goals: 5 ayes, 1 nay (Ms. Hamilton)

#### Item 5 – New Business

Personnel Item:

Dr. Reed spoke about the resignation for retirement for Jo-Ann Peters-Edmondson.

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved that the Board of Education accept the notification from Jo-Ann Peters-Edmondson of her retirement effective January 3, 2014. Ms. Hamilton seconded.

Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved that the Board of Education authorize the employment of Jo-Ann Peters-Edmondson as Interim Principal of Hawley School through June 30, 2014. During this



six month period she will have five vacation days and be eligible for six sick days and one personal day. Mr. Vouros seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

The Board thanked Mrs. Peters-Edmondson for staying until the end of the school year.

**Appointment of Committee:**

Mrs. Leidlein referred to the Board bylaws on the appointment of committees. Currently there are four committees which are Communications, CIP/Facilities/Finance, Policy, and Contract Negotiations. Coherence is an existing committee. It was recommended to have a security, a special education/gifted education and a technology committee as assignments, not standing committees.

Ms. Hamilton said technology could be part of curriculum and instruction. We also need to have a liaison for the Legislative Council and Board of Finance meetings.

Mrs. Leidlein said Mrs. Ku would be on the Education Connection Board and Mr. Vouros would continue on the AIS Magnet School Committee. She would like the Legislative Council and Board of Finance to send reps to our meetings. Those on the CIP and facilities committee could also be on the Sandy Hook building project committee. The Coherence Committee would be removed.

Ms. Hamilton said it was the responsibility of the superintendent's office to update the coherence report.

Dr. Reed felt this should be a partnership with the superintendent and Board of Education. He agreed with the major committees. If you have a curriculum committee they would give their recommendation to the rest of the Board for approval. Essential committees should be appointed now which includes the security committee.

Ms. Hamilton felt the policy committee could use one more person.

Mr. Freedman would be on that committee.

Mr. Freedman and Ms. Hamilton would be on the CIP/Finance and Sandy Hook building committee.

**High School Auditorium Project:**

Mrs. Leidlein received a communication regarding the high school auditorium.

Dr. Reed was looking into this and felt it was premature discussing this tonight.

Mrs. Leidlein said this could go back to the CIP/Facilities committee. The CIP will be presented to the Board of Finance on January 8.

**Item 6 – Public Participation – none**

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

**Item 7 – Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Kathy Hamilton  
Chair

**Newtown Public Schools  
Memo**

To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Linda Gejda, Assistant Superintendent  
Date: January 2, 2014  
Re: Agenda Item for January 7<sup>th</sup> BOE Meeting: Donation: Travelers "First Tee"  
C: Dr. John Reed

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Dear Board of Education Members,

In January 2013, Travelers Insurance Company reached out to Newtown Public Schools and offered a program for children known as "First Tee". This program has developmentally appropriate lessons and equipment for the instruction of golf at the elementary level. We asked if the company could wait until we had the time to review our physical education curriculum and the First Tee (FT) program to see if there was a "fit" between the two entities.

Newtown elementary PE teachers and I recently met with Bob Geckle, who approached us on behalf of Travelers. Mr. Geckle gave us an overview of the Travelers' proposal and informal feedback on the (successful) implementation of First Tee in the Parks and Rec summer program.

Doug Michlovitz, Hawley PE teacher, researched First Tee and reported to the group that it would be a good opportunity for our students to have access to this program. After our meeting with Mr. Geckle, the PE teachers reviewed the First Tee lessons and Newtown's K-4 PE curriculum to see if, without changing the curriculum, First Tee could be integrated into the district curriculum. The K-4 PE teachers unanimously agreed that FT lessons are compatible with certain units that are currently part of the PE curriculum. The First Tee program could be used to deliver aspects of PE units in grades K-4.

In addition to providing training for our PE teachers at no cost to the district, Travelers is also offering to fund the equipment to teach the program (\$4,000 per school). I am attaching the Travelers' proposal and the PE teachers' outline of the appropriate units (content and skills) that the First Tee program would be connected to.

I am recommending that you accept this donation.

Thank you,

Linda

**First Tee Golf Program/Physical Education Curriculum**  
**NPS K-4 Physical Education Teachers**  
**December 6, 2013**

The first tee program integrates with the following NPS physical education standards:

1. Motor Skills (MS): students will demonstrate competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
2. Responsible and Personal Social Behavior (RB): students will exhibit responsible personal and social behaviors including respect for differences among people in physical activity settings
3. Benefits of Physical Activity/Wellness (AW): students will choose physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and/or social interactions to sustain a physically active lifestyle.

The first tee program integrates with the following units in the physical education program:

Kindergarten:

1. Unit – Striking and Manipulatives: MS2 – demonstrate the emerging skills of catching, kicking, throwing and striking.

Grades 1 and 2:

1. Unit – Striking and Manipulatives: MS2 – Demonstrate key elements for throwing, catching and striking.
2. Unit – Orientation: RB2 – Demonstrate respect for self, others and game rules by participating positively in physical activity settings.

Grades 3 and 4:

1. Unit – Fitness:

AW1 – Understand that practicing activities increases specific skill competence.

AW2 – Experiment with new physical activities.

RB1 – Accept responsibility for one’s own performance without blaming others.



An initiative of the  
Connecticut Golf Foundation, Inc.



***The First Tee National School Program & Newtown Public Schools***

***Head O'Meadow, Hawley, Sandy Hook & Middle Gate***

55 Golf Club Road, Cromwell, CT 06416

(o) 860-882-1660 (f) 860-788-6612 [thefirstteect.org](http://thefirstteect.org)

The goal of the National School Program is to use activity-based learning to provide students with knowledge, understanding, support and opportunities to practice basic golf skills while adopting life-enhancing behaviors in physical education and empowering them to extend these behaviors to their school, home and community lives.

Students learn about these life-enhancing values and habits while engaged in games and golf activities. Simple, easy-to-use rubrics enable teachers to track student progress while making the most of "teachable moments" during physical education classes. Additionally, information is provided to assist teachers with communicating how the core values and healthy habits apply in golf as well as other aspects of students' lives including other school activities and at home.

The National School Program is designed to be implemented as a part of regular, in-school elementary physical education classes and is delivered by school-based physical educators. Schools are provided with a complete introductory golf program appropriate for today's physical education students and teachers. The objectives of the program are to:

- Enable physical educators to introduce golf in a developmentally appropriate manner that is consistent with national standards developed by National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE)
- Develop student appreciation for the positive personal and social values associated with the game with each lesson and extend those behaviors to other areas of their lives
- Engage students in daily lesson activities that lead to motor skill development
- Present golf to students as a lifelong recreation and health-enhancing activity

Thanks to the generous support of Travelers, all associated fees (\$16,000<sup>1</sup>) will be covered. Each participating school receives three tangible products and services:

- 1) Curriculum: adapted from NASPE national physical education standards
- 2) Equipment: developmentally appropriate, modified introductory golf equipment
- 3) Training: professional development for participating physical education teachers through online and in-person training

Implementation would be during the 2014-15 school year with physical educator training completed at a mutually agreeable time prior to the implementation of the program.

The First Tee of Connecticut Contact - Mark Moriarty, Program Director, [mmoriarty@thefirstteect.org](mailto:mmoriarty@thefirstteect.org)

<sup>1</sup> \$4,000 per school is a onetime fee that includes recurring access to Training.



## National School Program

The First Tee National School Program provides elementary schools with a program designed to introduce students to golf, core values and healthy habits. The goal of the National School Program is to use activity-based learning to provide students with knowledge, understanding, support and opportunity to practice basic golf while adopting life-enhancing behaviors in physical education and empowering them to extend these behaviors to their school, home and community lives.

The National School Program is designed to be implemented as a part of regular, in-school elementary physical education classes and is delivered by school-based physical educators. Surpassing involvement of 5,400 schools in 2012, the goal is to reach 10,000 elementary schools by 2017. Schools are provided with a complete introductory golf program appropriate for today's physical education students and teachers.

Objectives of the program are to:

- Enable physical educators to introduce golf in a developmentally appropriate manner that is consistent with national standards developed by National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE)
- Develop student appreciation for the positive personal and social values associated with the game with each lesson and extend those behaviors to other areas of their lives
- Engage students in daily lesson activities that lead to motor skill development
- Present golf to students as a lifelong recreation and health-enhancing activity

Each participating school receives three tangible products and services:

- 1) Curriculum: adapted from NASPE national physical education standards
- 2) Equipment: developmentally appropriate, modified introductory golf equipment



- 3) Teacher Training: professional development for participating physical education teachers.

## Curriculum

The First Tee National School Program curriculum centers on four primary areas: 1) lifelong activity, 2) character and health education – personal and social responsibility, 3) motor skill and concept learning, and 4) developmental approach to learning. Participating students actively engage in a variety of motor skills associated with striking a stationary ball with a long-handled implement to a target. Striking is taught through the basic golf skills of putt, chip, pitch and full swing in gradual progression to align with students' developmental process as teachers move students through 24 lessons throughout the elementary years. Basic skills are presented to students on how to hold, set up, and safely swing a putter and a wedge. Cue word sequences are taught to enable students to better understand the body positions for performing the critical elements of each skill. Students participating in the National School Program will learn the basic motor skill concepts of personal space, force, flow, relationships to objects, and routines.

In addition to the golf skills and concept learning, character and health education are embedded in each lesson. The First Tee Nine Core Values™ and Nine Healthy Habits™ are included as objectives integrated into lesson activities to enhance ease of instruction for teachers and simplify learning for students. The core values and healthy habits are listed below:

- Core Values: honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, courtesy, and judgment
- Healthy Habits: play, energy, safety, mind, family, vision, friends, school, community

Students learn about these life-enhancing values and habits while engaged in games and golf activities.

*“While teaching the National School Program lessons, the confidence level of students improves from beginning to end of the lesson. Many have never tried golf and assume it to be too hard. After going through the lessons they see that it is more than possible for them to play.”*

- Deborah Tyler, Hidden Hollow Elementary, Humble ISD, Kingwood, TX

Simple, easy-to-use rubrics enable teachers to track student progress while making the most of “teachable moments” during physical education classes. Additionally, information is provided to assist teachers with communicating how the core values and healthy habits apply in golf as well as other aspects of students' lives including other school activities and at home.

## **Equipment**

The First Tee National School Program utilizes developmentally appropriate equipment – SNAG®. This equipment is durable, safe and consists of colorful, oversized, plastic clubs, tennis-style balls and a variety of targets. The introductory clubs are replicas of two basic traditional golf clubs, a putter and wedge. The heads are purposefully large and provide a hitting surface proportionately larger than the ball for easy learning and high success. It is available for both right-handed and left-handed students. Schools receive enough equipment to deliver programming to up to 48 students per class. Diagrams showing equipment placement for each activity are included in the curriculum manual for each lesson plan, making set-up easy to understand and accomplish.

## **Educator Training**

The First Tee offers two forms of training for physical educators to get started with or develop their knowledge of the National School Program: online and in-person. The interactive online training includes in-depth information on skills, concepts, core values and healthy habits. Authentic video of actual teacher lessons demonstrating how lessons are implemented with elementary students indoors and outside are included along with excerpts from the curriculum manual, safety protocols and class management, review questions and testing. This training platform is available to all schools participating in the National School Program as a requirement for beginning the program and on a continuous basis so that new personnel may be trained at any time. For new personnel at your school please provide their name, title, email and phone number to Mark Moriarty, (860) 882-1660 or [mmoriarty@thefirstteect.org](mailto:mmoriarty@thefirstteect.org).

As a follow up to the online platform, in-person trainings are conducted by The First Tee Coaches. Arranged through The First Tee of Connecticut, school districts may schedule half-day or after school professional development sessions according to school calendars and in-service days. In-person training sessions include activity demonstrations, hands-on participation, lesson plan review and practice and the opportunity to share best practices among the group. In-person trainings may be schedule by contacting Mark Moriarty, (860) 882-1660 or [mmoriarty@thefirstteect.org](mailto:mmoriarty@thefirstteect.org).

## Newtown Public Schools Memo

To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Linda Gejda, Assistant Superintendent  
Date: January 2, 2014  
Re: Agenda Item for January 7<sup>th</sup> BOE Meeting :  
Comprehensive School Climate Inventory  
C: Dr. John Reed

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Dear Board of Education Members,

The Newtown Public Schools Safe School Climate Committee, in accordance with PA 11-232 (*An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws*), developed a district Safe School Climate policy (# 8-605 adopted by the BOE on 1/10/12). The legislation states that districts must survey students, parents and staff each year to gather feedback on school climate. Part of our district plan outlines the administration and analysis of surveys to students, parents and staff and then an action plan for addressing identified areas of need. Newtown has been surveying students for nearly 10 years using a locally-developed survey. Last year, we also surveyed staff and parents using a state-developed survey. We are in the process of replacing the current surveys with a new, more comprehensive instrument that is in alignment with national standards of school climate.

Dr. JoAnn Freiberg of the State Department of Education has attended several meetings of the Newtown Safe School Climate Committee. She has shared a national survey with the committee and discussed the research behind this national survey. Dr. Tony Salvatore has served as the district Safe School Climate Coordinator and chaired the Safe School Climate Committee since its inception. After several reviews of this national survey, the committee is recommending that the district use the national survey in place of the local and state surveys that have been used in the past. In the words of Dr. Freiberg, this new survey (Comprehensive School Climate Inventory) is "...a long standing, proven valid and reliable instrument."

The survey results are returned within 2 weeks or thereabouts and the analysis that is provided is extremely detailed and will assist in developing goals to improve school climate. The cost for using the instrument, the detailed results and analysis and support is \$9,850.

The entire School Climate Committee is recommending that the district use the Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (CSCI) produced by the National School Climate Center.

If you have any questions, please send them to me and I will research an answer for you, hopefully in time for Tuesday's Board discussion.

Thank you,

Linda





STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



December 17, 2013

JAN - 2 2014

Dear Dr. Reed,

The work to advance school climate improvement is foundational to all school/district improvement, including academic achievement. Research validates this position without compromise. School Climate includes 13 dimensions (attached), and as you can see from this chart includes the work to improve student outcomes on all levels. It is very important to assess these dimensions in valid/reliable ways. The Comprehensive School Climate Instrument does just that. This assessment tool:

- Surveys all dimensions of school climate
- Is a comprehensive, valid and reliable research tool to do so
- Provides a wealth of information about climate for the whole district and individual schools
- Breaks information down by sub-groups
- Can be tailored to your own context
- Is easy to implement (you have to do very little...the NSCC does the work)

I commend you for considering the implementation of this high quality, valid and reliable assessment instrument for the entire district. My fondest hope would be that more districts, and even the entire state, would move in this direction and implement the CSCI. It will provide the rich information about the quality of your school climates to be able to move forward and engage in real change and improvement, no matter how positive the climates are to begin with.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jo Ann Freiberg, Ph.D.  
Education Consultant  
School Climate, Bullying and Character Education  
Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness  
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education  
Connecticut State Department of Education  
25 Industrial Park Road  
Middletown, CT 06457  
Direct Phone Line: (860) 807-2119  
Fax: (860) 807-2127  
joann.freiberg@ct.gov

# I. Introduction




## The 13 Dimensions of School Climate Measured by the CSCI

Dimensions	Major Indicators
<b>Safety</b>	
1 Rules and Norms	Clearly communicated rules about physical violence; clearly communicated rules about verbal abuse, harassment, and teasing; clear and consistent enforcement and norms for adult intervention.
2 Sense of Physical Security	Sense that students and adults feel safe from physical harm in the school.
3 Sense of Social-Emotional Security	Sense that students feel safe from verbal abuse, teasing, and exclusion.
<b>Teaching and Learning</b>	
4 Support for Learning	Use of supportive teaching practices, such as: encouragement and constructive feedback; varied opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills; support for risk-taking and independent thinking; atmosphere conducive to dialog and questioning; academic challenge; and individual attention.
5 Social and Civic Learning	Support for the development of social and civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions including: effective listening, conflict resolution, self-reflection and emotional regulation, empathy, personal responsibility, and ethical decision making.
<b>Interpersonal Relationships</b>	
6 Respect for Diversity	Mutual respect for individual differences (e.g. gender, race, culture, etc.) at all levels of the school—student-student; adult-student; adult-adult and overall norms for tolerance.
7 Social Support—Adults	Pattern of supportive and caring adult relationships for students, including high expectations for students' success, willingness to listen to students and to get to know them as individuals, and personal concern for students' problems.
8 Social Support—Students	Pattern of supportive peer relationships for students, including: friendships for socializing, for problems, for academic help, and for new students.
<b>Institutional Environment</b>	
9 School Connectedness/Engagement	Positive identification with the school and norms for broad participation in school life for students, staff, and families.
10 Physical Surroundings	Cleanliness, order, and appeal of facilities and adequate resources and materials.
<b>Staff Only</b>	
11 Leadership	Administration that creates and communicates a clear vision, and is accessible to and supportive of school staff and staff development.
12 Professional Relationships	Positive attitudes and relationships among school staff that support effectively working and learning together.
<b>All populations (except Elementary)</b>	
13 Social Media	Sense that students feel safe from physical harm, verbal abuse/teasing, gossip, and exclusion when online or on electronic devices (for example, facebook, twitter, and other social media platforms, by an email, text messaging, posting photo/video, etc.).

**NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BUSINESS OFFICE**

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** December 27, 2013  
**TO:** John R. Reed, Interim Superintendent of Schools  
**FROM:** Ron Bienkowski, Director of Business   
**SUBJECT:** Section 10-248a. Unexpended education funds account

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As this issue has been raised again, I've included some suggested motions that will allow this action. This statute that allows the BOE to carry over money from year to year would be a welcome tool in our ability to manage budget operations.

The best way to accomplish compliance with the new statute would be to make it as simple as possible. A copy of the statute is attached for reference.

Have any remaining balance flow to the designated account and allow the BOE, or its designee, the ability to make a request to the Town Finance Director asking for use via payment for any legitimate school expenditure. I would limit it to direct invoice payment for specific school purchases such as technology, building maintenance projects, emergency needs, new program development or implementation, professional studies reviews, engineering needs, or unforeseen needs beyond budget allocations. It would not be used for any current personnel salaries, but may be allowed to be transferred to the BOE's share of the self-insurance medical fund.

Creative applications should also be allowed such as increasing a pension fund payment or paying off an outstanding sewer assessment that would have the effect of reducing continuing future budget requirements for such accounts.

It is not anticipated that any carried over amounts would be that large (certainly not approaching one percent of the budget) that onerous regulations or approval processes would be necessary. Current examples of how the funds could be used are the costs associated with storm and snow cleanups, HOM Generator replacement, 12/14 expenses, any number of delayed building maintenance projects, and or technology infrastructure/obsolescence.

This law is a benefit to the BOE in assuring that the funds approved for education at the referendum will all be used for education.

RB:jm  
Attachment

MOTION

The Newtown Board of Education respectfully requests that the Newtown Board of Finance establish a non-lapsing account for deposit of any unexpended education funds from the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014, and each fiscal year thereafter, not to exceed 1% of the Board of Education's budgeted appropriation. Such request is in accordance with State Statute Section 10-248a, Unexpended Education Funds account.

Any funds expended from the Non-Lapsing Education Fund established by the Newtown Board of Finance under this statute shall be authorized by the Newtown Board of Education.

MOTION

In accordance with State Statute Section 10-248a, Unexpended Education Funds Account, the Board of Education requests that the Board of Finance create a non-lapsing account for deposit of any unexpended education funds from the prior fiscal year. Upon such creation, the Board of Education further requests that any remaining expenditure balance of the current and subsequent fiscal years be deposited into such account with the Board of Education having the ability to spend such funds upon their approval.

**Sec. 10-248a. Unexpended education funds account.** For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011, and each fiscal year thereafter, notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes or any special act, municipal charter, home rule ordinance or other ordinance, the board of finance in each town having a board of finance, the board of selectman in each town having no board of finance or the authority making appropriations for the school district for each town may deposit into a nonlapsing account any unexpended funds from the prior fiscal year from the budgeted appropriation for education for the town, provided such amount does not exceed one per cent of the total budgeted appropriation for education for such prior fiscal year.