**Board of Education**

**Administrative Staffing Ad Hoc Committee**

**45 Westminster Road**

**Canterbury, Connecticut**

**Approved 9-12-2017**

**Date:** Tuesday, June 13, 2017 Time: 5:00 PM

**Place:** Dr. Helen Baldwin School Library

Dr. Helen Baldwin Middle School

45 Westminster Road, Canterbury, CT

**Attendance**: Leticia Velasquez, Committee Chairperson, Walt Petruniw*, ex officio* BOE Member, and Vivian Thumser (arrived 5:15 PM).

**Others present:** and participating in the discussions were Dr. Lois DaSilva-Knapton, School Superintendent, as well as four members of the public (plus some other later walk-ins arrived after meeting started).

**Committee Meeting Agenda and Discussions**

1. Establishment of Quorum and Call to Order.

-Chairperson Leticia Velasquez started the meeting at 5:10 PM.

1. Discussion regarding administrative staffing, budget issues and comparison of student costs.

* Board of Education (BOE) members, the superintendent and the general public contributed or otherwise participated in the discussions.
* Connecticut Department of Education website was referenced and a list of surrounding towns enrollment and cost per students were compared with more affluent towns. Also discussed were the dollar amounts spent for Administrative and Support Services for FY 2010-2011 through FY 2014-2015. The cost shown ranged between $762,578 and as high as $860,861. However, what made up or was meant by “support services” covered was unclear during the discussion. Canterbury showed its student’s enrollment at 494 students at a cost per student in the amount of $19,134. A handout was provided showing the information obtained from the website.
* Some discussion noted that the above figures did not reflect the total number of students enrolled through the school district. The BOE is responsible for the elementary school, the middle school, the high schools, magnet schools and outplaced students which current is 734 students (which would clearly reduce the cost per student figure).
* Discussion about a regulation that a certified person (that refers to principals and superintendent) that are required to be on the grounds followed. However, Canterbury has designated lead teachers that fill in during any absence of the principals and superintend for emergency purposes. Canterbury has a full time superintendent, two full time principals, and a full time special education director. A breakdown of what the special education director duties were listed to include evaluation four in-house special education personnel, as well as a school psychologist, and a guidance counselor. The director is also responsible as a case manager of Canterbury Special Ed students in the high schools and in the school district. There are about 70 students covered under special education by the school district (noted as not a firm number). Furthermore, the director also assesses incoming preschool children prior to their eligibility to enter the Pre-K Program (referred to the “Birth to Three” children).
* Vivian Thumser spoke about the *Connecticut School Finance Project, School Finance 101, An Introduction to how public schools are funded in Connecticut.* That covered the ECS formula and information about its calculations, and that it doesn’t fund all students based on their learning needs, and as a result some cities and town receive less than they should, while other cities and towns receive more than they should from ECS. In short she referred to the system as being broken.
* Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) was discussed and that at the end of the fiscal year it goes away. However, the MBR is expected to be debated during the special sessions of the Connecticut Legislators currently in progress. Currently ehe school district is at 0% budget increase. The BOE has to stay at zero until the laws change. Issues about contract and cuts were mentioned.
* Vivian Thumser said she did a great deal of research. She outlines how the grants for Title I and II were implemented. Basically saying words to the effect that the Federal Government provides monies to the State, which in turn was passed to the school districts. There are also other contributions from private citizens that contributed into the mix. She spoke of about various programs such as the *2010 Race to the Top, Connecticut Common Core and No Child Left Behind* as problematic programs. She commented that the State of New York and the State of Massachusetts opted out of assessment testing, whereas the State of Connecticut sought out grant money to get involved into the programs, and now the results is there is the State’s commitment to continue without the money to support the initiatives. She offered that we cannot blame our administrators for this condition; it was forced upon us once the State accepted the grants. The State accepted the money when there was no curriculum with the thought there would be money. As with Title I and other programs we do in kind services because of the grants, but we provide more services than we are funded for by those grants.

1. Roundtable discussion.

* In addition to the above discussions, the public expressed their concerns about higher wages, contracts for the administrators while others are laid off. Those financial matters affect others to include those laid off, the children and families.
* The next committee meeting scheduling depends on what the legislators do during their special session. It is anticipated that a meeting may be held on July 11th at 6 PM. Location to be determined (whether it is held at the school or the town hall).

1. Adjournment.

* The meeting was adjoined at 6:07 PM in respect to the scheduled BOE meeting to be held in the school library.

Respectfully Submitted,

Walt Petruniw