

## School Budget Ad Hoc Meeting

The School Budget Ad Hoc Committee meeting was called to order on March 20, 2012 in Meeting Room 3C at City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 by council member Colleen Stanley, the Chairwoman of the committee.

Committee members Joseph Scozzafava, Gregg Seabury, Fred Visconti and Michael Haddad were present. Dr. Sal Pasquarella, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. William Glass, Deputy Superintendent of Schools; Ed Aram, Director of Finance for the school administration; Kimberly Mango-Thompson, Human Resources Director/Legal Counsel to the BOE; and David St. Hilaire, Finance Director for the City of Danbury also attended the meeting. BOE members Gladys Cooper, Chairwoman, Richard Jannelli, Kathleen Molinaro, Gary Falkenthal, Phyllis Tranzillo, Shirley Chilian and Sandy Steichen were in attendance. Ex-officio members Wetmore, Levy, Rotello, Teicholz and Cavo were present. Interested members of the public were also in attendance.

Chairwoman Stanley thanked everyone for attending the meeting and stated that members of the public would have an opportunity to speak at the public hearing in April.

Gladys Cooper, Chairwoman of the BOE, stated that the goal is to provide adequate and fundamental educational services to all of the students in the City and to retain teaching staff. Informational flyers providing a brief overview of the budget were distributed. Ms. Cooper discussed some of the cost drivers of the budget. Work continues on the bus and CIGNA contracts.

Dr. Pasquarella advised that everyone was very mindful of the economic conditions. He discussed contract reductions, mobility rates, poverty rates and increased enrollments. A 5.09% increase has been requested. No new programs have been added to the budget.

Ed Aram discussed insurance costs and advised that negotiations continue. Discussions continue with vendors to achieve savings on some of the contracts.

Dr. Glass described the Safe Harbor Program. The program was instituted in one school in Danbury. Great progress was achieved and the program was exported to four (4) other schools. So far, progress is evident in those schools as well. The STEM Program needs two (2) additional teachers to service additional students moving into the program. In the past, the district had fifty-two (52) administrators and is now down to thirty-four (34). Danbury has the smallest administration staff in Connecticut. There was not enough direct supervision of teachers resulting in Cambridge citations and by instituting department heads, the need is partially met.

Chairwoman Stanley and Dr. Sal reviewed and discussed the budget reductions for FY 2011-2012.

Headstart funding was discussed. Council member Scozzafava and ex-officio members Levy and Teicholz spoke in favor of the program.

Chairwoman Stanley thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

**Council member Seabury moved to adjourn at 8:00pm**, seconded by council member Visconti. ***Motion passed by unanimous vote.***

## School Budget Ad Hoc Meeting Continued

12-C

The School Budget Ad Hoc Committee meeting was called to order on April 9, 2012 in Meeting Room 3C at City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 7:35 by council member Colleen Stanley, Chairwoman of the committee.

Committee members Joseph Scozzafava, Gregg Seabury, Fred Visconti and Michael Haddad were present. Dr. Sal Pasquarella, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. William Glass, Deputy Superintendent of Schools; Joe Martino Asst. Business Director for the school administration and Kimberly Mango-Thompson, Human Resources Director/Legal Counsel to the BOE were in attendance. David St. Hilaire, Finance Director and Dan Garrick Asst. Finance Director for the City of Danbury, Wayne Shepperd, Chief of Staff; and Mayor Boughton also attended the meeting. BOE members Gladys Cooper, Chairwoman, Richard Jannelli, Gary Falkenthal, Rich Hawley and Sandy Steichen were in attendance. Ex-officio members Teicholz, Knapp, Colla, Darcy Cavo, Wetmore, Taylor, Perkins, Levy, Curran, Chianese, Rotello and Nagarsheth were present. Interested members of the public were also in attendance.

Chairwoman Stanley thanked everyone for attending the meeting and stated that members of the public would have an opportunity to speak at the public hearing and at the next council meeting.

Mayor Boughton was invited to open discussion. The City cannot direct the Board of Education how to spend the funds allocated. The proposed budget contains a \$1.6M increase to the general fund. The State of CT has increased the ECS Grant in the amount of \$1.7M; however a school improvement plan would need to be submitted in order to secure the grant. Pension contributions and levels of funding were also discussed. The disparity among municipalities for state funding was also discussed. Consideration must be given to the state of the economy and the ability of the taxpayers to bear increased taxes.

David St. Hilaire reiterated the comments of Mayor Boughton and advised that if the ECS Grant falls short, there may be some funds available to make up the difference.

Dr. Pasquarella discussed dental and medical insurance benefits. All options are under consideration. Full day kindergarten and its benefits, fuel oil costs, athletic insurance and pay to participate were also discussed.

At the request of committee member Visconti, Jim Maloney was called upon to talk about Headstart. Headstart is funded approximated by one-half from City funds and one-half by the State. There are 17 classrooms, 4 of which are used for a full day program, with 240 students serviced. Mr. Maloney discussed his concerns that should funding be reduced, layoffs may affect some of the staff.

**Council member Seabury moved to recommend that the City Council accept the mayor's budget for the Danbury Board of Education for FY 2012-2013, seconded by council member Visconti. Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

**At 8:50pm council member Seabury moved to adjourn, seconded by council member Visconti. Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

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Colleen Stanley, Chair

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Gregg Seabury

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Michael Haddad

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Joseph Scozzafava

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Fred Visconti