

**BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
PERSONNEL & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

DATE: October 9, 2024
LOCATION: Walsh Intermediate School
SUBJECT: Collaboration & Innovation Center (Room 112), 185 Damascus Road, Branford, CT
Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting

ATTENDANCE

HERE	ATTENDEE	AFFILIATION
Y	Meaghan DeLucia, Committee Chair	Board of Education
Y	Peter Berdon	Board of Education
Y	Judith Barron	Board of Education
Y	Adam Greenberg	Board of Education
Y	Marie McNamara	Board of Education
Y	Ellen Michaels	Board of Education
Y	Ram Shrestha	Board of Education
Y	Shawn Tiernan	Board of Education
Y	Laura Troidle	Board of Education
Y	Dr. Christopher Tranberg, Superintendent	Central Office
Y	Allison Moran, Assistant Superintendent	Central Office
Y	Blaize Levitan, Chief Operating Officer	Central Office
N	Charles Cicarella, Jr., Student Services Director	Central Office

Others present:

CALL

- 01** The meeting was called to order at 8:00 PM by Meaghan DeLucia.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments made at this evening's meeting.

APPROVE MINUTES

- 02** A. MOTION (Barron/Greenberg) to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2024, 2024 Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- 03** A. **2024/2025 Monthly Finance Reports**
a. **2024/2025 Special Education Tuition & Transportation Monthly Expenditures**
b. **Personnel Report**

In his report this evening Mr. Levitan reported/discussed/highlighted the following:

- Almost every contractual agreement is fully encumbered, (transportation and vocational tuitions were done today).
- Special Education is largely encumbered. We are working closely with the team and are within \$10,000 of one another in tuition and \$40,000 in transportation (normal lag).
- The Operating Budget will also see impact of all of the encumbering, we are at 87% of the budget used, compared to 74%.
- Spending patterns are in alignment with what we would be expecting.
- We are working with Jim Finch and Kathryn LaBanca from the Town's Finance Department to access the non-lapsing fund that we set up for ESS and sub costs (\$437,000) and the sub cost is largely encumbered.

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DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS (Continued)

- The same things continue to provide budget pressure. It is important to note the Special Education budget is essentially fully projected through the end of the year.
- Next month we will be adding actual projections to the monthly report that will be based on the number of payrolls that are left on expenses that we need to have encumbered to give an estimated available balance as of June 30th. A vacancy would show up as fully encumbered and will have a more accurate number as we fill it.
- Special Education projected a very tight available balance at the moment. They are fully encumbered for their known expenses. It is still early, but we are “feeling okay,” but anything can shift in terms of tuition by large dollars with very little notice.

Capital

- There is one small balance of \$4,662 from 2021 for doors that is expired. This amount will be returned to the Town.
- There are projects that we need to fully execute before this year or they will have to be returned to the Town.
- We are in a confident place; we have approximately three years’ worth of capital that we need to execute.
- The vehicle has gone out to bid.
- There are “three buckets” of old door money that need to go before the Board of Selectman at their next meeting for bid waiver.

Grants

- On next month’s Personnel & Finance meeting agenda there will be a Grant workshop.
- We had to file a waiver for the Title I funding for last year based on the amount that was executed, Title I has an 85% spend requirement in the first year of the grant and IDEA has an expectation but not a requirement.
- Grant management was difficult due to COVID, due to the amount of random money that was being “thrown at administrators” over and over through different ESSER appropriations. We are now being returned to entitlement funding and we are assigning a team with grant management roles.
- The food service has its own fund. There is a fund balance that is managed by the BOE with half a million dollars currently in it. When we are building the budget for 2026 we will be asking the Board to budget the fund balance. This has its own capital (kitchen equipment replacement, Kiosks at BHS, purchase of vehicle, etc.). We have most of the cash flow mapped out month to month and forecasted.
- When we asked the State if we could use the fund balance to preempt negatives, we were told no.

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DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS (Continued)

Personnel

- Personnel changes have passed peak hiring season.
- Recruitment of paraeducators remains the largest vacancy that we are dealing with.
- There is a slower time of transition, the total number of active leaves and how it impacts the sub budget over time.
- The vision of the monthly report is that it becomes inclusive and helpful to the Board for context of how many vacancies we have, how many positions are currently filled vs. how many positions are budgeted and where vacancies sit, including a matrix of retirements and leaving staff.

04 COO Updates

Among the items that Mr. Levitan discussed in his report this evening were; the Town's completion of the single audit. Mr. Levitan stated that a singled audit is required to be filed with the State of Connecticut, the 2023 audit was due December 31st but it was filed in July 2024. One finding that was expected which was the reconciliation of the General Fund not being done since December 2022. The District has been working with Jim Finch and Kathryn LaBanca from the Town and will be developing a procedure similar to what the Town does. Part of the reason for the delay was Central Office restructuring (five different Finance Managers in eight years). Central Office has now created a Financial Analyst position (will do reconciliations), restructured accounts payable structure and have done our own internal audit (process clean-up).

ADJOURN

- 05 MOTION (Michaels/Barron) to adjourn.**
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Ms. DeLucia adjourned the meeting at 8:29 PM.

The next Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting will be
November 13, 2024, at 7:00 PM at Walsh Intermediate School
Collaboration & Innovation Center (Room 112)

Respectfully submitted,
Meaghan DeLucia
Secretary

Prepared by,
Kerry Eyrich