

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

**DATE:** January 8, 2025  
**LOCATION:** Walsh Intermediate School  
Collaboration & Innovation Center (Room 112), 185 Damascus Road,  
Branford, CT  
**SUBJECT:** Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting

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**ATTENDANCE**

<b>HERE</b>	<b>ATTENDEE</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
Y	Meaghan DeLucia, Committee Chair	Board of Education
Y	Peter Berdon	Board of Education
Y	Judith Barron	Board of Education
Y	Adam Greenberg (Virtual)	Board of Education
Y	Marie McNamara	Board of Education
Y	Ellen Michaels	Board of Education
N	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: Kim Castoro, Director of Business Services (Virtual)

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**CALL**

**01** The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM by BOE Chair, Peter Berdon.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

**APPROVE MINUTES**

**02** A. MOTION (Greenberg/Barron) to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2024 Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting.  
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY (by all BOE members attending in person and virtually)

**DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

**03** **A. 2024/2025 Monthly Finance Reports**

This evening Mr. Levitan reported/discussed/highlighted the following: we are at a point where we are very encumbered and pretty much major expenses that we know about should be reflected in the budget, Kelly Services and Effective School Solutions (ESS) is fully encumbered, we are overstating right now because we have the non-lapsing fund that the Town will reimburse us totaling \$437,000, we should now have some stability in the health insurance benefits line (has been causing the big swings), there is nothing left in the budget to cause the large dollar swings other than the health insurance and personnel costs, the actual change in encumbrances is just another \$200,000 in additional spending, electric rates did increase 30% (for both the District and the Town), sub utilization remains high (a pressure point on the budget that we are tracking), Charles and his team have a very accurate number

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**DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS (Continued)**

and they are looking to be overspent by about \$187,000 in out of district tuition and transportation combined.

**Capital**

Mr. Levitan reported the following; the overall balance was reduced by nearly half a million dollars, two projects were extended by the RTM, one balance of \$3,000 was returned because the project was complete, we do have a rough estimate for the BHS roof and skylight system which basically approached ten million dollars for the whole thing, the goal is to go for the interim and get the funding provided so the grant process could be started for a roof (gets reimbursed, it's an eligible expenses, it's a non-priority grant so you don't have to wait until the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline), reimbursement rate is around 30/35%, skylights are usually ineligible but because they are so integral to the roof our interpretation with Antinozzi is hopefully we are eligible (could be significant as it would be more than a million dollars back on that piece). Mr. Levitan concluded his Capital report by stating that Brendan Leddy, Facilities Director, is lining up contractors working with Kim Castoro to put some things out to bid so we could do some summer work.

**Food Service Fund**

Mr. Levitan continued his report by stating; the fund is doing what it is supposed to be doing (generally sustaining its balance), the projection for every month is basically within net positive (about \$50,000), the negative student balance is approaching \$7,728, Chartwells does send out a reminder every week to families (this time last year we were at \$7,000 in the first two months), the reduced participation rate especially for breakfast is very low (one in five eligible students are getting their free breakfasts), we are working to restructure how we offer breakfasts with a test pilot, we are sending reminders that even though "your" fee is reduced it is actually free.

**Personnel**

Mr. Levitan concluded this portion of tonight's report by stating, we have filled a few critical special ed positions over the last month - the major certified vacancy, Instructional Coach is still in interviews. The Talent Services Team is putting together a recruitment strategy for the upcoming expected peak season hiring, we will be changing things a little bit on how we advertise, partner with universities for career fairs and get out more visibly.

**04 B. COO Updates**

Among the items that Mr. Levitan provided an update for this evening were; coordinating the single audit with the Town (it was due in December, the Town has filed an extension, historically the Town files for an extension), our piece of it (the education component) needs to be done by January 31<sup>st</sup>.

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**05 C. FY26 Budget Resolutions**

This evening Mr. Levitan discussed and highlighted the following; as part of the budget vote the Board is also approving some resolutions that allow for the Superintendent to formally accept certain types of large funding opportunities and for the COO and Director of Business Services to appropriate it to the proper accounts.

Mr. Levitan discussed how the resolutions would pertain to acceptance and appropriations of the following; Federal and State Funds, Funds from the Branford Community Foundation, Donations from Booster Clubs and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA's) and Non-Profit Originations.

**ADJOURN**

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

Mr. Berdon adjourned the meeting at 7:42 PM.

The next Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting will be  
February 12, 2025\*, at 6:30 PM at Walsh Intermediate School  
Collaboration & Innovation Center (Room 112)

\*Please Note: This is a combined Budget Workshop/Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting

Respectfully submitted,  
Meaghan DeLucia  
Secretary

Prepared by,  
Kerry Eyrich