

**SPECIAL MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**SATURDAY,
JANUARY 7, 2006**

A Special Meeting of the East Hartford Board of Education was held on Saturday, January 7, 2006, at the East Hartford Board of Education Administration Building, 1110 Main Street, East Hartford, CT. The meeting was called to order at 8:02 A.M. by Chairperson Hilde Mayranen-O'Brien.

PRESENT Chairperson Hilde Mayranen-O'Brien, Jason Rojas, Jr., Secretary, Robert Damaschi, Karen Howe, Cynthia Reik, Prescille Yamamoto, Ram Aberasturia, Marcus Oladell, IV, Hank Pawlowski, Jr.

ALSO PRESENT Dr. Marion Martinez, Superintendent of Schools
Paul Mainuli, Director of Business Services
Arthur Arpin, Director of Human Resources
Jody Lefkowitz, Director of Pupil Personnel
Al Costa, Director of Facilities
Linda Kauffmann, Supervisor, Elementary Education
Tom Yacavone, Department Head, Voc/Bus.Ed
Pat Perrone, Coordinator, Adult Education
Spencer Clapp, Principal, CIBA
Nancy Moriarty, Supervisor, Early Childhood Programs

Spencer Clapp - CIBA

Dr. Martinez stated it is important that we shine light on host magnet schools.

Mr. Mainuli noted we receive approximately \$900,000 in State grants. We are also reimbursed \$1,200 per student from the State grant for student transportation. CIBA also received a federal grant for approximately \$325,000 for a Latin Studies program and library resource materials. As a host magnet school district, we receive funds from State grants.

Dr. Martinez stated the State Legislature may consider a proposed increase in the transportation grant. The transportation grant funds approximately 60% of the cost for transportation. Presently, the school district will have to cover upwards to \$80,000 of the transportation costs.

Dr. Martinez went on to say that the administration has made a real effort to determine how many students are attending magnet schools outside our district. It's important for East Hartford parents to register their children even though they may be enrolled in a magnet school going out side the school district. Chairperson Mayranen-O'Brien asked if it would be prudent to draft a letter to the State regarding registration of students in magnets. Dr. Martinez stated that we need to ask the State to make some decisions as to the value of magnet schools.

Mr. Damaschi asked how many students come from EHHS and use the CIBA facilities. Can this be costed out. Dr. Martinez stated we are not supposed to use our magnet schools for regular education classes.

**SPECIAL MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**SATURDAY,
JANUARY 7, 2006**

Mr. Aberasturia asked what does it cost taxpayers. Mr. Mainuli stated approximately 1/4 mil rate.

In closing, Mr. Mainuli stated we will continue to meet with Bruce Douglas from CREC to ensure State Legislators are kept apprised of our concerns as a host magnet school district.

Mr. Clapp stated his personal goal is to create a zero-based budget for CIBA and to find out what the unique costs of the IB program are. Graduating classes are getting larger. He noted exams are costly. We pay for testing materials. If we are to change this, we must let families know well in advance.

Mr. Clapp noted we will continue for areas in the budget to save dollars. We are also looking at private foundations and corporations as a source of new funding. We are looking at an increase in projected enrollment for next year.

Ms. Yamamoto asked for a breakdown of "Other Purchased Services". She is concerned that the YTD figures will not be acceptable to the Town Council.

Tom Yacavone – Carl Perkins Grant

He stated there are no deficits in his budget. The major portion of dollars is used for technology. He noted \$70,000 went into new computers. The State requires we allocate 5% of grants for professional development. Dr. Martinez stated if we don't use these dollars, we must return them.

Mr. Yacavone stated that there will be approximately 100 students in job shadowing program.

Mr. Rojas asked if it is necessary to expand the Allied Health Program. Mr. Yacavone responded stating that students selected for the program must meet certain academic criteria and placement in health care facilities is limited.

Dr. Martinez noted we are hoping when we have a Grants Administrator, he/she will be looking into seeking grants for the Allied Health Program.

Pat Perrone – Adult Education

Ms. Perrone stated this is a mandated program. Ninety percent of the budget is mandated. We receive 56.5% reimbursement from the State.

Mr. Rojas asked if we have a relationship with the Housing Authority for recruitment. Regarding External Recruitment Program, the increase is in staff development. If we allocate more dollars in the budget, the State gives us more dollars.

**SPECIAL MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**SATURDAY,
JANUARY 7, 2006**

Ms. Perrone stated we are working very closely with Literacy Volunteers. Dan Cove is a major factor in the success of the program.

Mr. Pawlowski asked for a dollar amount to run the daycare program in the evening.

Board Recess: 9:45 A.M.

(Mr. Rojas left the meeting at 10:00 A.M.)

Linda Kauffmann and Nancy Moriarty – Head Start

Ms. Kauffmann noted we have a \$1 million Federal grant for the Head Start Program. There are currently 226 pre-school students enrolled. We have 12 Certified staff. There are 162 pre-school students enrolled in the half-day program and 64 pre-school students enrolled in the full day program. Families must meet income eligibility requirements.

Ms. Kauffmann noted the Head Start program was reviewed by the federal agency and we received an outstanding score. She commended Ms. Moriarty for her outstanding performance in the Head Start program.

Ms. Moriarty noted we have a fatherhood program that is incredible. We also offer adult literacy programs.

Much of the budget for Head Start is allocated to salaries. Mr. Mainuli noted the Federal amount of the budget for Head Start has not changed.

Regarding the possibility of relocating the program, Ms. Reik asked how many more students could be accommodated. Ms. Moriarty stated no increase in the number of children would take place, but space would allow us to create six-hour classrooms. Ms. Howe asked if expansion would increase our dollars for the program. Dr. Martinez stated we will not receive additional dollars because these funds may be redirected by the federal government to fund NCLB for remedial testing.

Mr. Oladell noted that, in the past, workshops were held in the evening. Ms. Moriarty stated we ask parents in the beginning of the school year what programs they are interested in. We try to accommodate them but parents still do not attend as much as we would like. We provide childcare and food for parents attending the programs. Ms. Moriarty stated the quality of programs does make a difference. East Hartford is a national model however; it is very expensive to operate.

**SPECIAL MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**SATURDAY,
JANUARY 7, 2006**

Ms. Kauffmann noted because of the high quality of the program, we can see the difference in a child's progress. We are working very hard on the pre-K program. We are receiving national recognition. She also noted the other programs located at Willowbrook School complement the Head Start program.

Ms. Reik asked if pre-K programs have gym. Ms. Moriarty stated we incorporate motor skills into the program; i.e., dancing, etc.

Ms. Kauffmann stated she would like to have an increase in the program to move the cost of medically fragile students into another line item. Ms. Yamamoto asked if the nurse is being overtaxed. Ms. Moriarty responded she is not.

Ms. Howe commended Ms. Moriarty for always being prepared and running an excellent program.

Jody Lefkowitz – IDEA and Special Education

Ms. Lefkowitz noted currently there are 1,148 students identified with disabilities. We have a number of structured programs. As we go forward, we would like to reduce the number of them and have some students return to neighborhood schools. However, at this time it is more cost effective to keep them all together. We will continue to evaluate student needs and data.

A question arose regarding previous concerns at Woodland School, and Ms. Lefkowitz stated all issues have been rectified.

We have been doing much more in the area of professional development. Focus has been on special education staff understanding their roles and following more inclusive practices.

Ms. Yamamoto asked that a legend of special education acronyms be provided to Board members.

Dr. Martinez stated we are trying to decrease the overall number of special education students (less than 10%). Dr. Martinez further stated special education has never been funded at the level required to meet state and federal mandates.

Mr. Damaschi (to Mr. Mainuli) requested information prior to January 12th regarding out of district placements. Dr. Martinez believes this should be addressed at the next Finance & Audit Committee meeting. Mr. Damaschi will meet with Dr. Martinez prior to January 12th.

**SPECIAL MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**SATURDAY,
JANUARY 7, 2006**

Ms. Reik – regarding influx of students from Hartford – should we immediately have a PPT to determine if they are eligible for special education? Ms. Lefkowitz stated we are obligated to hold a PPT.

General Questions/Comments from the Board

- Ms. Yamamoto requested additional information on guidance counselors;
- Ms. Yamamoto (to Mr. Mainuli) – re: library books and textbooks – why aren't we buying our textbooks. She would like a line item for all utilities broken down in the budget by school;
- Regarding gasoline in EHHS account – it should be increased;
- Regarding maintenance supplies – why are they spending it on at EHHS; Mr. Mainuli will print an account detail;
- Ms. Reik – re: enrollments at St. Rose and St. Christopher schools – what is the ratio that nurse serves (figures will be provided);
- Ms. Reik – re: teachers having computers in elementary schools – Mr. Mainuli noted this will appear in the 2007 budget;
- Ms. Yamamoto – re: transportation budget – what will the increase be. Mr. Mainuli stated 5%. Mr. Mainuli also noted both bus companies have expressed interest in continuing with us. We should meet with them in the spring to begin negotiations for years four and five on the contract;
- Ms. Yamamoto – re: textbooks account – Program 101 – we have not spent many dollars to date;
- Mr. Damaschi – re: math textbooks - Dr. Martinez noted she understands they are not being used; new math books will be located in the curricula conference room as well as public libraries for viewing;
- Mr. Damaschi noted we should evaluate class sizes at EHHS. He believes there are many classes that are very small – possibly we should consider eliminating those classes. Dr. Martinez noted she is concerned with the level of student proficiency. We need to have small class sizes to teach the basics;
- Ms. Yamamoto stated maybe we should consider having students at CIBA pay for trips;
- Dr. Martinez noted that we may again request Savings Bank of Manchester to provide us with \$15,000 in order to acquire new musical instruments.
- Regarding smartboards – it was noted that they could possibly come from the Chamber or School/Business Partnership. Dr. Martinez will discuss this with both at a meeting next week.

Dr. Martinez stated we will submit our budget to the Town on January 16th. It will go before the Town Council on March 2nd. Dr. Martinez and Mr. Mainuli compiled “tier” recommendations. They cautioned the Board not to make drastic cuts until numbers are more firm. Additional information was requested on pension contributions.

**SPECIAL MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**SATURDAY,
JANUARY 7, 2006**

It was the consensus of the Board to leave the proposed budget as is at this time, but to remove smartboards. Dr. Martinez stated she will write a letter to SBP asking for a mini grant for smartboards.

Mr. Mainuli recommended we bring the Town Council up to date regarding out-of-district tuitions.

Dr. Martinez stated we should have subcommittees identify areas of concern, field questions and forward them to the Superintendent. She will then consolidate to present to the Town Council.

A public hearing will be held during the next Regular Board Meeting. Formal action by the Board will be held at a Special Meeting scheduled for January 23rd, 6:00 P.M., Willowbrook School.

Dr. Martinez referred to letter she wrote to Board members regarding meeting with Terry Madigan for information dinner series. She asked that the Board give direction as to convenient dates.

Approve Request for Overnight Travel to Springfield, MA to Participate in the Basketball Hall of Fame Tournament

(Dr. Marion Martinez)

MOTION

By Ram Aberasturia

Seconded by Hank Pawlowski, Jr.

To approve request for overnight travel to Springfield, MA to participate in the Basketball Hall of Fame tournament.

Motion unanimously carried.

MOTION

By Ram Aberasturia

Seconded by Hank Pawlowski, Jr.

To adjourn the Special Meeting (12:30 P.M.)

Motion unanimously carried.

Recorded by:
Donna Fitzgerald