

The Regional District 13 Board of Education held a District Meeting on Monday, June 1, 2015 in the library at Strong School, 191 Main St., Durham, CT. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Hicks, and Dr. Onofreo

Members absent: Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Renninghoff

Also present: Dr. Veronesi, Mr. Melnik

Mrs. Flanagan called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Hicks read the Call of the Meeting and the Return of the Call.

Mrs. Flanagan asked for a motion to elect a moderator.

Mr. Hicks moved that Jim Finley be elected moderator. Mr. Parmelee seconded. Motion passed.

Mrs. Flanagan thanked the members of the Board, Dr. Veronesi, and Mr. Melnik for the work they have done during the budget season.

Mrs. Flanagan gave a brief overview of the May 4th budget proposal. Mrs. Flanagan also reviewed changes in the budget and stated reductions do not impact students. Mrs. Flanagan stated that the Board has a responsibility to reduce the cost per student and not maintain empty buildings. She also asked for the public's support and stated that it's the Board's responsibility to provide a quality education to the students of District 13.

Mr. Finley opened the floor to questions.

Mr. Maros of Durham asked about providing benefits and asked about union contracts being open to negotiate.

Mrs. Flanagan stated that there are six unions. The Board is moving towards a high deductible health plan. Two unions have agreed to this. The Board also negotiates employee co-pays and if necessary will change insurance carriers to reduce costs.

Mr. Maros also asked what percent the insurance costs have gone up.

Mr. Melnik stated the increase was 7%.

Mr. Maros stated that there are creative ways to work with employees regarding claims.

Alma Elder of Middlefield admired the Board for the work they have done. She encouraged the Board to make a more detailed budget.

Mr. Melnik provided Ms. Elder with a copy of the detailed budget book and advised her that the budget books are available in the town halls and town libraries.

Mrs. Flanagan stated that each Board member has one and they would be available to go over the information with her if she wished to do that. Mrs. Flanagan also stated that the budget book is very transparent.

Mr. Parmelee of Durham stated that there is more scrutiny with the town budget than with the school budget. He also addressed state funding and activity fees at the high school. He would like to vote on the union contracts and stated the public has no say.

Mr. Fulton and Mrs. Flanagan explained the budget process and stated that there were a number of opportunities for the public to attend and comment at BOE meetings.

Mr. Stengal of Durham referred to slide 18 in the April 8<sup>th</sup> budget proposal. He has requested that the Board include the average class size for core classes and AP classes at the high school on next year's presentation.

Mr. Willett of Durham would like to know where the District is rated in comparison to other towns. He also asked for an explanation of the decline in in-house tuition and of Special Education Excess shown on the budget analysis.

Mr. Melnik explained that the declining tuition is from MTA. There is a reduction in the number of paying students. Mr. Melnik also provided Mr. Willett with an explanation of the Special Education Excess stating that there are a number of students who qualify for state reimbursement. It is a capped grant and the District gets a percent of that grant.

Mr. Maros of Durham asked if the reduction under capital was for completing work on the sports complex.

Mrs. Flanagan explained that the reduction under capital was to defer capital reserve for the track, turf, tennis courts, water on the lower field and water tank inspection.

Mr. Finley asked if there were any further questions. There being none Mr. Finley asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting

Mr. Parmelee moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Maros seconded. Motion passed.

Mr. Finley adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m. to Referendum on Tuesday, June 2, 2015.