

PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Special Meeting Minutes

Special Meeting Title: Board Budget Development Session

Date: Thursday, February 8, 2018

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Plainville High School Learning Commons
Plainville, CT

Attendees: Michael Giuliano, Deborah Hardy, Nicole Palmieri, Laurie Peterson, Andrea Saunders, Chair, Crystal St. Lawrence, Becky Tyrrell, Kathy Wells and Foster White

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Maureen Brummett, Ed.D., Superintendent
Steven LePage, Asst. Superintendent
Sam Adlerstein, Director of Business and Operations

Early Departures: None

The Board's Budget Development meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM by Chair Andrea Saunders.

Dr. Brummett reviewed this evening's agenda. She reminded the Board that all decisions made are aligned with the school's vision statement.

Dr. Brummett began by reviewing the list of staffing reductions and gave an overview of the budget reductions put forth on January 24th. She stated that current projections for contributions to the Health Insurance fund would require an additional budget increase which will incur further staff and program reductions. That said, she reviewed the list of reductions with additional items to consider:

Items for reduction put forth at January 24th BOE meeting:

- ▶ One Elementary classroom teacher
- ▶ CCJEF annual dues (no payment)
- ▶ Reduce RAMP summer school (serve fewer students and grade levels, i.e., grades 1, 2 & 3)
- ▶ Reduce length of special education summer program from 6 weeks to 5

In addition:

- ▶ **Adjust FTE amount by one teacher, salary sub-totals and offset from CREC rental income in addition to YMCA rental income**
- ▶ **Reduce 7% increase to 3% increase in Workers' Compensation based on CIRMA analysis**
- ▶ **Reduce one high capacity color copier in Central Office (coming off lease)**
- ▶ **Further reduce phone expense including wireless hotspots, in addition to reductions already made for new phone system**
- ▶ **Reduce matching Adult Education printing as required by grant, reduced Central Office printing**

The proposed new budget for 2018-19 is as follows:

BOE Approved 2017-18	Superintendent Proposed 2018-19	\$ Increase	% Increase
\$35,503,096	\$36,060,351	\$557,255	1.57%
	+ Health Insurance increase	\$1,326,561	5.31%

This new proposal is an additional savings of \$71,900 or 0.20% from original proposal.

Program Enhancements for 2018-19 Achieved through Resource Reallocation includes:

- ▶ Add a School Resource Officer for PHS (in kind service)
- ▶ Add additional Math teacher at PHS to support College Prep course (offset by elimination of Science position)
- ▶ Add Indoor Track Team

Dr. Brummett then asked that the Board consider the addition of the following three items.

She stated that the SRO would be added to the Plainville Community Schools' through a partnership with the Town and the Plainville Police Department and would be housed at Plainville High School. However, the SRO would be available to all schools. This individual would patrol and provide a policing function, will work proactively to solve problems, and will work in partnership with the school community. The SRO would also provide support to school administration for any school discipline investigations that result in a police referral for a criminal investigation. The SRO would also support teachers in curricular areas (i.e., search and seizure, forensics, safe driving, etc.).

An additional Math teacher will be needed to help support the College Prep course. (this would be offset by the elimination of the Science position)

Further, Dr. Brummett stated that Indoor track is one of the most cost effective athletic programs in a school and that Indoor track also allows for a continuation from Cross Country to Outdoor track. It gives student athletes another option to participate in another activity during the winter. She also stated that the district would be able to offset costs by reducing allowed games, allowed scrimmages, and equipment costs.

Mrs. Saunders then asked for the Boards input. Discussion then ensued as follows:

- ▶ Michael Giuliano stated that he doesn't feel right putting the addition of an SRO and Indoor track team to the public when jobs are being reduced.
- ▶ Foster White stated that the district is in need of an SRO as State laws are changing. He stated that expulsion laws are changing whereby requiring school systems to expel students and having them taught at home. This would incur a huge expense to the district. He feels that an SRO can capably handle such situations before a problem escalates into an expulsion matter. He also feels that the SRO would be invaluable with regard to substance abuse, which is running rampant throughout the country. Mr. White stated that Mr. Medic reported that the High School is experiencing higher than average tardiness and absences. He again stated that the SRO would be trained in these kinds of problems and that the position is definitely warranted.

Further, Mr. White stated that Plainville High School had an Indoor Track team until 2007 when it was eliminated from the budget. He stated that the cost is minimal and adds a well-rounded package to the school system. He commented that spring sport athletes can train with winter sport athletes, which is a win-win situation.

Dr. Brummett asked Mr. Farrell how many students are interested in Indoor track. He replied that approximately 50 students responded that they are interested.

► Nicole Palmieri has a concern with the addition of the SRO and Indoor track, feeling that at a time when individuals are being laid off, it is not right to add. She also questioned the laws governing expulsions.

► Mr. LePage stated that laws are changing and will therefore be placed in upcoming policy changes which he will share with the Board.

► Michael Giuliano thinks it is a bad idea to add these items at this time due to uncertainties. He feels that police officers are under fire all the time and it would be a good way to bring the respect of students to all officers, but it is not the right time to do this.

► Mrs. Saunders asked why the Board heard about this position at budget time and heard nothing about the need beforehand. She asked how the Board could let teachers go then add an SRO. With the decrease in ECS dollars and insurance which is a big hit, the Board needs to carefully place funds in different areas.

► Deb Hardy stated that the Board is giving the kids what is needed to further their education.

► Crystal St. Lawrence stated that the SRO is not just a want. An SRO connects with students and is very beneficial to the district. She stated that the Board should think very hard about adding this position.

► Mr. White stated that it's the Board's job to oversee the education of its students. With substance abuse issues increasing, students can get the help they need and the things they don't have. This individual (SRO) would be proactive in our schools and would also be a resource. This individual could also direct students/families to other support systems. Unfortunately, the environment in which we live dictates the need and this person will positively deal with the many problems at hand.

► Ms. Palmieri asked what the Board was willing to sacrifice.

► Mrs. Hardy stated that the intention is not to take away from their educational responsibilities, but due to the uncertainty of the times, maybe these particular items could be placed on hold until things get better.

► Mr. Giuliano agreed with Mrs. Hardy stated that it is all about the timing. Maybe these items can be added down the road but at this time he doesn't see either item as a necessity.

► Mrs. Tyrrell stated that there are many responsibilities of a Board Member, which includes the hiring of a Superintendent. She stated that it is the Board's obligation to trust in this professional's recommendations and to follow her recommendations. It is the Superintendent who discusses and weighs the needs of a school system. In this case, Dr. Brummett has discussed the hiring of an SRO, at the High School Principal's request, and feels there are legitimate reasons why this position is needed. Mrs. Tyrrell feels it is something that the Board should wholeheartedly consider given both Dr. Brummett and Mr. Medic's reasons. This holds true for Indoor track as well.

► Mr. White stated that the Board should not micromanage. The Board must rely on its administrators, who are the professionals with educational expertise on how to run a school

system correctly, and to do what is right. Mr. White said he feels very strongly about what has been put forth this evening and asks the Board to accept what was presented.

► Mr. White stated that the Superintendent and Administration work long and hard to provide the best services for Plainville students.

► Mrs. Saunders stated that it is the job of the Board of Education to educate children within an appropriate budget. She stated that the Town Council and the Board have different roles and the Town Council will cut the budget but won't micromanage.

► Mr. Giuliano stated that he understands the role of the Superintendent and Administration but why have a Board if they will rubber stamp everything.

► Mrs. Tyrrell stated that the Board does not rubber stamp everything. The role of the Board is to discuss and make decisions that will benefit the children. She commented that saying an SRO is not an effective use of money is untrue, as other items have been cut from the budget. If the SRO is not approved then the Board should put back the High School's Tech Ed. position.

► Mr. Giuliano agrees that the role of the Board Member is to discuss and to do what is right for all.

► Nicole Palmieri stated that the Board needs to be conscious of the taxpayers as well.

► Mrs. Tyrrell stated that if taxes need to be raised, the recommendations should come from the taxpayers who should decide.

► Mr. White stated that he agrees with Mrs. Tyrrell and the Board should present what is needed. He feels that taxpayers should be given a chance to say what they want. The Board is required by law to give the students in Plainville the best education they can give.

► Kathy Wells stated that there is a lot of learning going on in the Plainville School System and an SRO can help. She stated that sometimes children go astray. The school system needs a person who is trained and who can help. In many ways, an SRO is just as important as a Math teacher.

► Foster White stated that 5 years ago, he would not have wanted an SRO in Plainville but times are changing and he has changed his mind. He asks that the Board put the idea out to the public. He stated that education is an investment in the community. It is the Board's obligation to put forth what the administrators feel is necessary. He commented that we live in a democracy and asks the Board to present a budget that was put forward this evening.

► Laurie Peterson again asked why the Board is taking on the role of parents.

► Dr. Brummett stated that under the law. The school district is obligated take on the role of parent when students are in school.

Dr. Brummett stated that the SRO position was presented to the Board years ago and had quite a bit of support. However, it did not come to fruition. She understands that this is a bad year and that the insurance situation is the albatross. She reminded the Board that the Math teacher position and Indoor Track directly impacts students and the SRO has tremendous benefits to students as well.

At that time, Mrs. Saunders asked for the Board's input as to what to put forward:

Becky Tyrrell: Include all...Math teacher, SRO and Indoor track

Crystal St. Lawrence: Include all...Math teacher, SRO and Indoor track

Foster White: Include all...Math teacher, SRO and Indoor track. Need to give public the choice.

Kathy Wells: Include all...Math teacher, SRO and Indoor track

Michael Giuliano: Include Math teacher, no to SRO and Indoor track

Nicole Palmieri: Include Math teacher, no to SRO and Indoor track

Laurier Peterson: Include Math teacher, no to SRO and Indoor track

Deborah Hardy: Include Math teacher, no to SRO and Indoor track

Andrea Saunders: Include Math teacher, no to SRO and Indoor track

Mrs. Saunders stated that the Board will meet on Monday evening to vote on the budget. She asked fellow Board Members to take the weekend to think about their decisions.

Dr. Brummett stated that she will ask Chief Catania to attend the meeting to discuss the SRO position.

Nicole Palmieri thanked Dr. Brummett for all of her hard work during this budget process.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY NICOLE PALMIERI TO ADJOURN. THE MOTION WAS
SECONDED BY MICHAEL GIULIANO. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.
The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM**

Respectfully submitted,



Joan Calistro

Recorder of Minutes