

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION
PLAINVILLE, CONNECTICUT
THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2024**

Special Meeting Topics: ► **Continued Review of Superintendent's Proposed Budget FY2024-25**

Place and Time: Plainville High School Learning Commons @ 7:00 PM

Members Present: Jered Bruzas, Cassandra Clark, Roberta Lauria, Vice Chair Rebecca Martinez, Crystal St. Lawrence, Chair Becky Tyrrell, and Foster White

Rachel Buchanan and Lori Consalvo attended the meeting via Zoom

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Brian Reas, Superintendent of Schools
David Levenduski, Asst, Superintendent of Schools
Sam Adlerstein, Director of Business and Operations
District Administrators: Aimee Roberts and Kevin Ross

Early Departures: None

Board Chair Becky Tyrrell called the special meeting of the Plainville Board of Education to order at 7:05 PM. She then called upon Superintendent Brian Reas to discuss the Superintendent's Proposed Budget for FY2024-25.

Superintendent Reas presented a PowerPoint in answer to further proposed questions asked by members of the Board of Education at their January 23th meeting. Mr. Reas stated that he has included all budget materials from all Board discussions as well as the link for asking questions. Social media and other communications will direct residents to the appropriate webpage.

ESSER Staffing

\$1,065,185 of salaries were planned as offsets to Board of Education expenditures in FY24. Some of these positions were removed early. Those remaining for the most part support special needs in a variety of areas across the district.

Contractual and ESSER Impact

Staffing Formerly ESSER	\$ 869,711
Non-Staffing Formerly ESSER	\$ 108,004
Total Contractual and ESSER Impact	\$2,701,799
Total % of 23-24 Budget	6.27%
Superintendent's Budget	5.59%
Difference	\$ 294,160

FY24 Budget vs. Actual Differences

Mr. Adlerstein stated that we routinely scrutinized accounts for potential of overrunning the budget. Budget differences are closely managed. Favorable differences are not often solidified until later in the year. In some years we freeze budgets (spending becomes centrally controlled). In all years, spending is closely managed.

FY24 Staffing Positions Differences

Most of the position differences relate to ESSER funding and Special Education needs, have been noted throughout budget workshops. In addition, a kindergarten teacher, security officer (Wheeler) and athletic trainer were added with the Board's approval. Position differences total unfavorable to the budget \$19,254.

2101 Health Insurance

The Connecticut Partnership Plan updated their rate forecast on January 25th, from range of 4-7% to a range of 3-5%. In discussion with the town, we were asked to stay with 5% at this time, with likely upside coming in March. We will then finalize rates in early March, 2024.

	Potential Reduction	% Difference	Increase	% Increase
Health Insurance—Superintendent's Budget	0	0.00%	\$336,271	5%
Health Insurance	-\$67,254	-0.16%	\$269,017	4%
Health Insurance	-\$134,508	-0.31%	\$201,763	3%

Current Employee Tenure

Some concern has been expressed pertaining to employee turnover within PCS. Could we be provided with the following data; Employees hired in 2023, employees with 1-2 years of service, 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years and 20+years. For the following categories: Administrators Certified Teachers, Custodians/Maintainers, Office Professionals, Paraprofessionals, Nurses, Other Non -Bargaining. A Bar chart was created to answer the questions received.

Teachers:

1-5 Years 31.33%
6-10 Years 17.17%
11-15 Years 14.16%
16-20 Years 16.31%
21-25 Years 15.45%
26-30 Years 4.29%
31-35 Years 1.29%

Paraprofessionals:

1-5 Years 64.20%
6-10 Years 19.75%
11-15 Years 7.41%
16-20 Years 2.47%
21-25 Years 1.23%
26-30 Years 1.23%
31-35 Years 2.47%
Over 35 Years 1.23%

48.50% of teachers and 83.95% of paras have been with PCS for under 10 years

Discussion among the Board ensued.

Mrs. Tyrrell asked Board Members to give their perspective on the budget:

Rebecca Martinez: This is a risky budget. They knew the fiscal cliff was coming and would be high. Feels this is an adequate budget.

Crystal St. Lawrence: Feels there is nowhere to cut. She is in favor of the presented budget.

Foster White: Is concerned that more SEL/mental health supports are needed. Hopes there are more grant opportunities to help support these needs. Commented that Pre-K-grade 2 health needs are significant. Overall, he feels the proposed budget is adequate. Should move forward with a vote and bring this budget to the Town Council.

Jered Bruzas: He understands that this is a no fluff, bare bones budget with only core essentials, but is still concerned about the sticker shock when bringing the MSP Renovation Project to the voters at the same time. He is concerned people will push back. He is also concerned that there could be a reduction in teachers should the budget not pass.

Cassandra Clark: Stated that this is definitely difficult. It would certainly be detrimental to cut teachers. Asks if there are outside agencies that could help support SEL/mental health issues. Cornerstone is already in place.

David Levenduski: Mr. Levenduski stated that we have to be careful as we cannot bring in outside agencies unless they work in a different capacity than staff.

Rachel Buchanan: This is a bare bones budget yet it is almost 6%. We knew it was coming.

Lori Consalvo: We are at the bare minimum. We knew it was coming and is concerned that this isn't enough. She is in favor of this budget.

Roberta Lauria: Would like more time to review the information and to understand what's in play. She would also like to hear from stakeholders before making a decision.

Becky Tyrrell: Everyone is concerned about the impact and it puts the Board between a rock and a hard place. She hopes that the health insurance rate will come down, which could help decrease the budget.

Further discussion ensued.

No action was taken at this meeting.

Mrs. Tyrrell stated that the Superintendent's proposed budget of 5.59% will be moved to the Board's Regular Business meeting on February 12th for an official vote.

Mr. White reminded everyone of the Day on the Hill festivities which will take place on March 13 at the Bushnell and LOB in Hartford. Anyone interested in attending should contact Joan Calistro who will register those interested.

Dates of Middle School Project Presentation and Forums:

February 5 Public Hearing, Council Chambers, 7:00 PM

February 6 Presentation at the Public Library 9:30 AM

February 6 Public Forum at the Middle School (Auditorium) with a tour of the building 7:00 PM

February 7 Presentation at the Senior Center at 12:30 PM

February 8 Virtual Presentation (public)

February 13 Town Council will set the referendum date, Council Chambers, 7:00 PM

Tentative Referendum Date is Tuesday, March 19

FOSTER WHITE MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 PM

Respectfully submitted,



Joan Calistro

Recorder of Minutes