

RTM Education Committee  
Place: Darien Town Hall, Room 206  
Start: 7:33 pm

Members Present:

Clara Sartori, Ed Washecka, Liza Lucas, Sheila Sherwood, Petr Marousek, Janet Grogan, Curtis Butler, Barbara Thorne (left at 8 pm), Ann Reed (left at 8 pm), Sarah Neumann, Theresa Vogt, Carolina McGoey (arrived 9 pm)

Members Absent:

Lucy Fiore, Jay Hardison, Peter Riordan

Call to order:

Clara Sartori called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm with a quorum.

Agenda:

Consideration of questions to ask BOE ahead of the meeting on January 15th.

General Comments:

User format is not friendly. Budget book is produced by the administration.  
Would love to know more detail about the \$7MM in out-placement costs for Darien.  
Desire to have more transparency to reduce questions and concerns regarding the cost.  
Need to understand costs and inflation of costs over the years and in the future. Need to understand the costs driving the \$7MM. Our costs compared to our DRG. Concern over details per child made available to the public. Need to understand the amount we are spending per disability to understand the need to hire specialists in our district to possibly reduce future out-placements.  
Disagreement on the committee over the type of information that should be made available.  
We would like to see budget vs actual numbers on an annual basis.

School psychologists:

Do we need 4 psychologists or can we use school counselors instead? We would like more information as to what they will be doing and why we need them. Comparison to other schools in our DRG. What has changed and why do we need them? How much time is spent in PPTs, how much is actually being spent helping children in need. Would like to know if it is necessary due to a regulatory change.

RC 1: Darien High School

Concern over \$ allotted to substitutes. Rate per diem has increased. Question over the "voucher system" and what teachers are covering other teacher's classes to not have to hire a substitute.

RC 2: Fitch Academy

No questions

RC 3: MMS

No questions- big ask is the guidance counselors

Elementary School RC's:

School psychologists.

RC 11: Athletics

Concern that the “deep dive” was not as thorough as possibly needed. Looking for more information on how much we pay per sport. Questions over inequity over cuts, over number of players, dollars spent per sport, number of coaches, etc. We would like to know how much is donated. We should be having a larger strategy in place to cover costs (such as ice hockey).

RC 12: Maintenance

Line item 470 security- is this enough? Should we be spending more? What is the strategy for security and the administration. What information can we have on this?

RC 13: Music

Piano moved into capital.

RC 14: Art

No questions

RC 15: Technology

What are the annual maintenance costs for the ipads for the HS?

RC 16: Administration

Question on legal services \$.

RC 17: Health

No questions

RC 18: Personnel

Budget control line item: covers costs of hiring personnel due to unexpected enrollment, etc.

RC 19: Curriculum

How many are administrators and how many are student facing?

RC 20: Finance

What would the costs be for open.gov?

RC 21: Library

No questions

RC 22: Technology

No questions. Great detail.

RC 23: Summer School

Where are the revenue detail for this?

RC 24: Special Education

How many children do we serve? Looking to invest in specialists to save on future out of district costs. What are the costs per child for out of district? What is a unilateral placement?

RC 25: Fixed Expenses

Transportation costs are not clear.

RC 26: Early Learning Program  
Questions on the 5 day program vs 4 day.

Questions -

Why are there 6 secretaries for Special Education- is it necessary? Yes possibly for the paperwork for all of the IEP's.

Could they provide details for clubs and councils. \$ in budget primarily for stipends for faculty advisors.

Legal budget- Is there a FOIA log?

OPEB revenue distribution? Pension expenses.

Question on air conditioning at Holmes and Hindley? Upgrading electrical panels- costs associated- to allow air conditioning.

Do we have 3 bids for all of our outside contractors? Mike Lynch would know.

We will have committee members not present submit questions for Tuesday's meeting with the BOE. Sarah and Clara to combine notes and questions.

Adjournment:

Theresa Vogt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ed Washecka seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 9:28.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Neumann  
RTM Education clerk