

**DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BOARD BUDGET WORKSHOP  
FEBRUARY 6, 2019**

Present: Rachel Chaleski, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Patrick Johnston Frederick Karrat,  
Emanuela Palmares, Ralph Pietrafesa, Farley Santos, Amy Spallino

Absent: Richard Jannelli, David Metrena

Also Present: Dr. Pascarella, Joe Martino, Kelly Truchsess, Kim Thompson, Kevin Walston, Kara Casimiro, Anne Mead;  
City Council Members Robert Taborsak & Warren Levy.

The Chairperson, Patrick Johnston, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and turned the meeting over to Mr. Martino.

**Mission and Belief Statement**

Our mission is to develop in all children the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which will enable them to live a productive and self-fulfilling life and engage in responsible citizenship in a global society.

**Beliefs**

- Children are our first priority.
- Education decisions and actions should be based on BEST practices in the field of education.
- Partnership between parents, educators, students and community is important for students' success.
- All children can learn.
- High expectations and accountability for all.
- Educators should provide varied experiences and instructional opportunities to meet student's individual needs.
- Schools should provide safe and productive learning environments based upon mutual respect, trust and cooperation.

**State of Connecticut Budget Concerns**

- The District will work closely with our elected officials to continue to monitor the State budget process.
- This budget assumes flat state funding for 2019-20 due to the financial condition of the state. However in the 2019-20 the new state ECS formula shows an increase in educational aid to Danbury of approximately \$1,000,000.

**Key Budget Elements**

- Enrollment
- Impact of additions
  - 7th Grade at Westside Middle School Academy
  - Growth at Danbury High School
- Alliance/ECS funding from the State of Connecticut
- Overview of 2019-20 Budget
- Address ongoing needs of our Special Education and ELL students

**Enrollment Trends**

- While CT total public school enrollment has steadily declined over the last decade, Danbury's has steadily increased.
- Total school enrollment for Danbury Schools has increased 5.7% over the last 5 years, and 13.2% over the last 10 years.
- Steady rate of increase appears to be levelling off.
- PK-12 Enrollment projections see medium to high projections for continued increase in enrollments; low projection for leveling off in enrollment.
- Cost per student: Danbury remains far below the State, Norwalk & Stamford levels.

## **Alliance/ECS Program**

- Danbury received \$9.4 million in 2018-19, which helped address several key instructional areas:
  - Fully implement all-day Kindergarten District-wide.
  - Provided additional intervention support in reading.
  - Increased our ELL support using a Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol model (SIOP).
  - Increased our Bilingual Teachers to provide additional support to non-English speaking students.
  - Provided one full time social worker at each elementary school.
  - Provided additional administrative support.
  - Middle School Department Chairs.
  - Provided additional Math Specialist at K-5 Level.
  - Instructional Supplies for the Common Core.

## **Salary Accounts**

This includes the following:

- \$3,492,734 in salary increases and (\$875,000) Projected Retirement Savings

Program Improvements:

### **Elementary Schools**

- 2 Elementary Classroom Teachers \$140,000
- 2 Elementary Art, PE and Music \$140,000
- 4 Elementary Math Coaches \$280,000
- 3 ESL/Bilingual K-5 \$210,000
- Park Ave Asst Principal no longer in grant \$65,087

### **Middle Schools**

- 0.5 Middle School Math Interventionist \$35,000
- 1 Middle School Safety Advocate \$21,000
- 2 Westside M.S. Grade 7 \$196,000
- 1 Pupil Personnel Westside M.S. \$70,000

### **Danbury High School**

- 5 High School Teachers \$350,000
- 1 Dean of Freshman Academy \$70,000
- 1 Counselor \$70,000
- 1 Technical Support Analyst \$35,000 Special Education
- 4 K-12 Special Education \$280,000
- 1 Pre-K Special Education \$70,000
- 1 Special Education Reading Consultant \$ 70,000
- 2 Speech and Language Pathologists \$140,000

## **Staffing Projections and ECS Planning**

As part of the anticipated legislative approval process Danbury is scheduled to receive an additional \$1 million dollars. The increased resources are required to reduce the academic achievement gap and must be part of our district wide improvement efforts:

- Danbury High School Increase Graduation Requirement
- Social, Emotional and Behavior Supports k-12 (Counselors, Social Workers)
- Elementary Classroom Teachers (Enrollment)
- Provide Additional Support Services for Interventions, Special Education and Bilingual Students.
- Special Area Staffing (Art, Music, and Physical Education)
- Reading and STEM supports

## **Employee Benefits**

Employee Benefits are budgeted at \$29,688,605 for 2019-20 which represents an increase of \$1,306,800 or 4.60%

- The health insurance renewal for **2019-20 is 4.8%** or \$1,203,695. This amount is based on the following:
  - We continue to see low renewal based on our High Deductible health plans
  - The district has also seen below average claims when compared to national trends.
- Workers Compensation
  - The district continues to see increases in workers compensation renewal due to higher claims.

## **Budget Overview**

### **Services and Fees**

- Services and Fees are budgeted at \$5,851,842 for 2019-20, which represents an increase of \$351,072 or 6.38%.
  - Our largest area of increase is in our Special Education Tutors account, which is driven by contractual raises and IEP requirements. The increase of \$128,512 is based on mandated special education requirements and salary increases.
  - Increase our Occupational Therapy support services due to increased caseloads at our preschool level.

### **Budget Overview Transportation and Tuition**

- Utilities and Repairs are budgeted at \$1,097,432 for 2019-20 which represents an increase of \$5,187 or 0.47%.
  - Refuse account is also increasing 3.5% based on our current contract.
- Transportation and Tuition are budgeted at \$14,043,908 for 2019-20, which represents an increase of \$474,199 or 3.49%.
  - We are in the 3th year of our contract with Student Transportation of America which includes a 3.5% increase in transportation costs.
  - All propane bus fleet which has reduced cost and cut CO2 emissions
  - Special Education Transportation is also increasing based on contract increases.
  - Special Education tuition costs are rising due to increases in placements and tuition increases.

## **Budget Overview**

### **Supplies**

- Supplies are budgeted at \$5,076,804 for 2019-20, which represents an increase of \$329,398 or 6.94%.
  - The District and City have locked fuel costs for the 2019-20 school year
  - Bus fuel cost increase of \$35,600
  - Heating oil costs increase by \$24,777
  - Due to the new construction project at Danbury High School and Westside Middle School we are increasing our electric budget for these locations.
  - The District is increasing resources for our science program at the k-5 level in order to support the new science standards.

## **Budget Overview**

### **Equipment Dues and Fees, and Adult Ed**

- Equipment and Program Improvements are budgeted at \$736,666 for 2019-20, which represents an increase of \$250,000.
  - This increase is for security improvements in several of our schools and to receive additional state funding for the next round of school security grants
- Dues and Fees, Adult Education and Bilingual are budgeted at \$432,046 for 2019-20, which represents a flat budget.

## **Total Budget Request**

**\$139,967,101 or 5.85%**

- **\$490,000 Danbury High School Expansion**
- **\$1,267,000 Enrollment Growth**
- **\$5,974,101 Operational Budget increase**

**Upcoming Dates**

- Community Forum on the Board of Education Budget March 20, 2019 at 6:00 at Rogers Park Middle School
- Mayor's Budget Presentation April 2, 2019 at City Hall
- City Council Education Budget Committee meeting TBA at City Hall
- City of Danbury's Final Budget Adoption May 7, 2019

**Our Challenge**

- to provide a quality education for all students.
- to successfully pursue additional federal, state and foundational grants to serve our students and staff.
- to pursue regional purchasing in coordination with the city and area school districts.
- to locate additional cost savings in contracts and in general services.
- to provide time for professional development for our faculty and staff.

G. Cooper moved, seconded by R. Pietrafesa, to adjourn the February 6, 2019 Board Budget Workshop. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

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Gladys Cooper, Secretary