

DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 22, 2019

Present: Gladys Cooper, Richard Jannelli, Kate Conetta, Emanuela Palmares (by phone)

Also Present: Joseph Martino, Kevin Walston, Dr. Sal Pascarella, Dr. Kara Casimiro, Kelly Truchsess, Tom Ross (DHS), Erin Daly (Pembroke, NEA), Joe Britton, Senator Julie Kushner, Mayor Mark Boughton

The committee meeting was called to order at 6:00pm.

R. Jannelli discussed the need to assemble a coalition of stakeholders (administrators, BOE members, City Council members, parents, residents, teachers, students, staff) in order to lobby the state for education funding. Stakeholders would become educated on specific talking points and do advocacy work in the community and up in Hartford.

Dr. Pascarella discussed two urgent and specific asks needed right now: \$2.4M in additional state funding and \$500K for pensions.

E. Palmares discussed including immigrant representation at the Capitol to reframe the state's view of Danbury as more similar to Bridgeport, New Haven, etc.

Mayor Boughton discussed possible alignment on a state level initiative with Waterbury or Stamford and the need to get our legislative delegation in front of Hartford leadership. He agreed to kick back special education "Excess money" to the BOE (reimbursement from the state is issued to the city). Suggested the city could help fund a website dedicated to building community awareness/support around lobbying efforts. Facebook also suggested for communications.

Senator Kushner advised coordinating legislative meetings now as there is a 10-day window before formal budget talks begin. She suggested that constituent letters would be helpful.

G. Cooper inquired about getting the News Times involved.

G. Cooper moved, seconded by K. Conetta, to adjourn the April 22 Community Relations Committee Meeting. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 7:10pm.

Kate Conetta