



Education Committee - Board of Representatives

Megan Cottrell, Chair

Marc Aquila, Vice Chair

Committee Report

Date: Wednesday, April 21, 2021
Time: 7:00pm
Place: Meeting was held remotely

The Education Committee met as indicated above. In attendance was Chair Cottrell, Vice Chair Aquila, and Committee Member Reps. de la Cruz, Di Costanzo, and Stella. Excused was Rep. Sandford. Absent was Rep. Graziosi. Also in attendance was Rep. Curtis and Rep. Nabel; Dr. Tamu Lucero, BOE Superintendent; Ryan Fealey, BOE Director of Finance; Amy Beldotti, BOE Assistant Superintendent; Rebecca Hammon, Jackie Pioli, Jackie Heftman, and Jenienne Burke, BOE; and one member of the public.

Chair Cottrell called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

| Item No. | Description | Committee Action |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 4. E30.060 | REVIEW; Health Insurance Costs for the Board of Education. 03/03/21 – Submitted by Rep. Cottrell 03/08/21 – Moved to Pending | Report Made |

¹A motion to take up Item E30.060 out of order was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 5-0-0 (Reps. Cottrell, Aquila, de la Cruz, DiCostanzo, and Stella in favor).

Chair Cottrell explained that she put this on the agenda because there are key items which drive increases to the BOE budget and health insurance is one of those. The BOF approved a \$10M cut to the BOE budget and various reductions were related to health insurance.

Mr. Fealey reviewed his presentation and there was discussion.

- There were \$2.2M in healthcare reductions within the BOF budget cuts.
- The net increase to the BOE budget is now 2.8% after the BOF cuts.
- The current estimated increase this year in the State Partnership Plan is 6.25% over the current year's premium.
- Healthcare increases are rising at a faster rate than overall BOE increases.
- The State Partnership Plan is the best option at the present time.

¹ Video Time Stamp: 00:01:15

- ²¹. [E30.061](#) REVIEW; Reduction of Offerings of AP Classes at Stamford High, Including Enrollment Statistics Involved in Courses Offered and Courses Cut, and Comparison of AP and other Course Offerings and Enrollments at Stamford High, Westhill, and AITE. 04/07/21 – Submitted by Clerk Nabel **Report Made**

Rep. Nabel explained that she put this on the agenda to make sure cuts do not reduce the offerings for students who want to try AP courses or are on track to take more AP courses.

Dr. Lucero reviewed the Stamford High School (SHS) presentation and there was discussion.

- There are three advanced tracks in SPS with the potential to earn college credit:
 - Early College Experience (ECE)
 - Advanced Placement (AP)
 - International Baccalaureate (IB)
- SHS is the only school that offers all three.
- If a student wants to attend a program that is only offered at one high school, the student can choose to attend that high school instead of their districted school.
- The SHS team reviews these courses every year to make determinations over which will be appropriate to offer. Sometimes there are several similar classes with only a few students in each, so because of this courses may be cut. One AP course was cut at SHS.
- When an AP class is taken, a student must obtain a score of either 4 or 5 in order to get the college credits. The ECE and IB tracks allow for college credit with a minimum class grade of B minus, and does not rely on a single test score.
- IB programs are growing in popularity and are looked upon highly by many colleges.
- It is important to make sure parents and students are well informed about the courses offered.
- Dr. Lucero asked Representatives to encourage parents to talk to their child's guidance counselor about any concerns in order to get the correct information about classes.
- Dr. Lucero will get the enrollment numbers of these classes to the BOR.

- ³². E30.062 REVIEW; Update on how Things are Going in Stamford Public Schools with Return to In-Person Instruction, Vaccinations for Students, and Other Concerns Regarding how the Ongoing Pandemic Is Affecting the Schools. 04/07/21 – Submitted by Rep. Cottrell **Report Made**

Dr. Lucero gave an update and there was discussion.

- As of Monday most hybrid students have returned to in-person school five days per week.

² Video Time Stamp: 00:19:50

³ Video Time Stamp: 01:03:50

- In mid-March elementary and middle schools returned to in-person five days per week, and less than 10 students each in the elementary level and middle school level chose not to return to full time in-person.
- High school Distance Teaching and Learning Academy students could not return to full-time in-person and this was explained to parents and students. Each student has a separate course schedule and it would have been extremely complicated to combine schedules.
- The students are doing very well with masks, hand sanitizing and distancing.
- Dr. Lucero works with Dr. Calder, Mayor Martin and the City's medical advisor Dr. Yoon to stay on top of things.
- The City has someone who is running COVID data specifically on the Stamford public schools.
- Students ages 16 and up and their families had the opportunity to be vaccinated this past Saturday, and over 600 students participated. At minimum they will be ready for their second dose in early May.
- Stamford follows State requirements for air quality in all schools.
- For mold prevention in schools, more air is brought into the buildings two hours prior to the start of the day, and one hour after the day ends.
- COVID prevention and mold prevention in facilities are two separate measures and what works for one does not necessarily work for the other.

43. [E30.063](#) REVIEW: Support Program for Paraeducator to Obtain a Teaching Certification. **Report Made**
04/07/21 – Submitted by Reps. Stella and Curtis

Rep. Stella explained that he put this on the agenda to review if a certification program for paraeducators could solve the problem of teacher shortages, and there was discussion.

- Paraeducators are invested in our school system, but daily substitutes are not necessarily invested.
- There may be paraeducators who have college degrees and would like to be teachers. How can the City make it easier for them to become certified and be part of the solution?
- The two main issues with many teaching certification programs are 1) the difficulty of paying for tuition and 2) difficulty taking time off from work to attend classes.
- Stamford is slated to participate in the Teacher Residency Program for the upcoming school year. It grants paid tuition and time to take classes.
- After certification is obtained, Stamford is required to offer the candidate a teaching position.
- If the candidate accepts a position, there is currently no stipulation that they must remain in the position for a minimum amount of time or require reimbursement to Stamford. The BOE could choose to put in this stipulation.

Chair Cottrell adjourned the meeting at 8:30pm

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Cottrell, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).