



Education Committee - Board of Representatives

Diane Lutz, Chair

Megan Cottrell, Vice Chair

Committee Report

Date: Wednesday, December 19, 2018
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Place: Democratic Caucus Room, 4th Floor Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, CT

The Education Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Vice Chair Cottrell, and Committee Member Reps. Aquila, de la Cruz, Di Costanzo, and Graziosi. Absent or excused were Chair Lutz and Rep. Stella. Also in attendance were Rep. Lion; Superintendent Earl Kim, Hugh Murphy, Clarence Zachery, Steve Falcone and Andy George, BOE; and Michael Gaudiano.

Vice Chair Cottrell called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. E30.013	REVIEW; Board of Education update from Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Tamu Lucero 04/04/18 – Submitted by Rep. Lutz 04/16/18 – Held in Committee 06/18/18 – Report Made & Held in Committee 10/17/18 – Report Made & Held in Committee 11/28/18 – Report Made & Held in Committee	Held
2. E30.023	REVIEW; Snow removal (possible ordinance) at crosswalks between crossing guards and schools related to student pedestrian safety. 11/08/18 – Submitted by Rep. Lutz 11/28/18 – Report Made & Held in Committee	Held
3. E30.026	REVIEW; Attendance Initiatives in Stamford Public Schools and how the Board of Representatives can Help Support this Initiative. 12/05/18 – Submitted by Rep. Cottrell	Held
¹ 6. E30.030	REVIEW; Fiscal Requirements of Board of Education and Opportunities for Process Improvements. 12/05/18 – Submitted by Rep. Miller	Report Made

This item was taken up out of order.

¹ Video Time Stamp: 00:00:44

Mr. Kim, Mr. Murphy and Mr. Zachery explained the BOE budget process and discussed with the Committee. Two handouts were referenced: the SPS Operating Budget [Manual](#) and Budget [Options](#).

- The key principal has been reallocation to offset savings and having a savings mindset instead of a spending mindset.
- It is important to increase sustainability, not cost.
- Personnel cost and class size are the biggest drivers of the budget.
- Special education and transportation are large expenses.
- The BOE has a contingency plan in place, because if the budget is cut, there is no time for new deliberations.
- The maintenance line needs to be increased. The current budget has not caught up with deferred maintenance. When maintenance is deferred too long, it becomes a capital expense.
- Preventative maintenance schedules have been put in a system to produce automatic work orders.
- Stamford graduation rate is above State average. Special education classification rate is just below State average. Stamford is above the benchmark for paraprofessionals required. The amount of litigation cases is very low.

24. E30.028	REVIEW; Requirements/Expectations For Substitute Teachers to Implement Curriculum/Lesson Plans; How SPS Handles Long Term Teacher Absences When Lesson Plans aren't Provided. 12/05/18 – Submitted by Reps. Lutz and Morson	Report Made
5. E30.029	REVIEW; District Teacher Absence Data and Effect of our Substitute Pay Scale on Recruitment of Teachers. 12/05/18 – Submitted by Rep. Morson	Report Made
7. E30.024	REVIEW; Protocol for Hiring Daily Substitute Teachers, Performing Background Checks and Screenings, Procedures in Place for Reporting and Informing Schools District-Wide about Substitute Teacher Misconduct or Suspected Misconduct. 11/08/18 – Submitted by Rep. Lutz 11/28/18 – Report Made & Held in Committee	Report Made

Items 4, 5, and 7 were taken up and discussed together. Mr. Falcone explained the process of hiring substitutes and discussed with the Committee:

- BOE has approximately 1500 teachers and 400 paraprofessionals
- There are 300 substitutes on record currently; they are at-will employees.
- BOE has a budget to hire approximately 20 interns this year who are working on their Master's Degree in Education. These interns can assist with lesson plans.
- Teachers are expected to leave lesson plans and the substitutes are expected to implement lesson plans to the best of their ability, and report back to the teacher.
- Long-term substitutes must be certified if the assignment is more than 40 consecutive days.

² Video Time Stamp: 01:07:45

- Scheduled long term absences allow the BOE to post the position and search for a qualified candidate.
- Stamford teachers are in line with national norm of 94-95% attendance rate, not including long-term absences. Approximately 200 substitutes are needed daily.
- The application process includes: application, screening, short interview.
- The hiring process includes: FBI criminal background check, DCF registry check, educational employer verification check, onboarding process, orientation.
- The procedure has been tightened so that when a substitute is excluded from a school due to a misconduct allegation, that employee is excluded from all schools until a full investigation is completed, and a determination is made about the employee's status ([attached](#)).
- There is not a formal evaluation process for substitutes.
- There are 15 teachers currently out due to the mold issue.
- Once an exclusion is requested, the substitute is contacted immediately to report to BOE HR Department, is put on a leave, and will not work until the investigation is complete. The time this takes varies depending on the complaint.
- Once a year there is a refresher training for the principals regarding how to handle investigations.
- Substitutes can begin working before criminal background check is returned.
- Central Office administration decides when and if a substitute can return to work.
- It is possible for a substitute to be excluded only from certain schools, for example, if the substitute does not work well with younger students, but works well with older students.

Vice Chair Cottrell adjourned the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Cottrell, Vice Chair

This meeting is on video ([Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#))