



Education Committee - Board of Representatives

Diane Lutz, Chair

Megan Cottrell, Vice Chair

Committee Report

Date: Wednesday, June 19, 2019
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. de la Cruz, Di Costanzo and Graziosi. Absent or excused were Chair Lutz and Committee Member Reps. Aquila and Stella. Also present were Reps. DePina, Nabel, Summerville and Zelinsky; Andy George, Frank Cerasoli and Jackie Heftman, Board of Education; Dr. Lucero, Superintendent of Schools, and several members of the public.

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

Item No.	Description	Invitee(s) or Designees
-----------------	--------------------	--------------------------------

The Committee first considered Item No. 2.

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|-------------|
| 2. E30.038 | REVIEW; Process followed by the Board of Education for Speakers at the Public Hearing held on May 20, 2019
05/22/19 – Submitted by Rep. DePina | Report Made |
|----------------------------|---|-------------|

Rep. DePina explained that the purpose for this item was because approximately 95 people showed up to speak at the public hearing, but many of her constituents did not feel that they had an opportunity to speak, although they had signed up to speak prior to other members of the public.

Mr. George and Ms. Heftman discussed this with the Committee as follows:

- This was an unusual meeting since it was a public meeting about reallocation; this was preceded by a meeting with teachers and administrators which had run late.
- The public hearing began at 6:15; The Board of Education President, Andy George, asked at the onset that if people were to speak about a topic that had already been addressed, to please cede their time to permit others to speak about other topics.
- The speakers proceeded in the order they had signed up; after an hour, he asked if anyone speaking about a different topic wanted to speak; for the next half hour, a different topic was addressed; and then they returned to the original topic
- The Board of Education had previously announced that the meeting would end at 9, but it went on until 9:30.
- Mr. George understands how upsetting his interruption of the process was and spoke with the people at Domus about this and about how people felt

disenfranchised; if he had realized people would have felt that way, he would not have done it;

- He understands that some people left without speaking.
- Minorities often do not have an opportunity to get to these meetings, and need to be able to be heard when they do take the time to attend.
- The aim was to try to let everyone speak.

1. E30.039 REVIEW; Discussion of Special Education Costs. Held until
05/28/19 – Submitted by Dr. Lucero September
4-0-0

Dr. Lucero and the Board of Education members reviewed this with the Committee as follows:

- Since they are over budget for this year, Dr. Lucero has started to look at the projections for next year; the numbers were very high.
- The BOE came to the determination that they are \$1.7M over budget for contracted services and out of district costs, and \$614,000 under budget for transportation. The Board of Education presentation on this data is [attached](#).
- The Board of Education is trying to address this issue through budget cuts now.
- 85% of their budget is employees.
- \$750,000 is the amount that was cut by the Board of Representatives.
- They have cut administrative staff to address some of the budget shortfall.
- They are looking to increase efficiencies as ways to cut costs.
- The District has a legal obligation to meet the educational needs of special needs students.
- State reimbursement, for out of district placements, keeps going down statewide.
- The District began to learn this in February and started to freeze the budget in March.
- The BOE budget has gone up an average of 2.4% annually since the 2013/14 fiscal year, but the special ed budget has gone up 6.4%.
- Some students' needs must be addressed out of the district.
- There is a revolving door for paraeducator positions.

A motion to hold this item until September was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 4-0-0 (Reps. Cottrell, de la Cruz, Di Costanzo and Graziosi).

Vice Chair Cottrell adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Cottrell, Vice Chair

This meeting is on [video](#)