

**Budget Work Session
February 22, 2010**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
Fair Lawn, New Jersey
Budget Work Session**

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The Board of Education of the Borough of Fair Lawn, New Jersey, held a Budget Work Session in the Conference Room of the Thomas Edison School, 37-01 Fair Lawn Avenue, Fair Lawn, New Jersey, on **Monday, February 22, 2010.**

The meeting was called to order by President Banta at 7:30 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present

Mr. Banta, Mr. Barbarulo, Mrs. Frenkel, Mr. Gillenson, Mr. Mancinelli, Mr. Rosenberg, Mrs. Yourman
Mrs. Yuskaitis,

Member Absent

Mrs. Wallace

Others Present

Mr. Bruce Watson, Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Judy Moran, Assistant Superintendent
Mrs. Joanne Wilson, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Mrs. Lisa Panagia, Director of Human Resources

Public

There were approximately 9 members of the public present.

Flag Salute

The flag salute was led by President Banta.

Sunshine Statement - Chapter 231, Laws of 1975

President Banta read a statement that advance notice of this meeting, as well as the Agenda, had been distributed in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 231, Laws of 1975 (Sunshine Law).

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SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS AND PRESENTATION

The Governor's State of the State address is scheduled for March 16, 2010. The District expects to receive State Aid funding notices in March 18, 2010. Our budget must be submitted to the County Office by March 22, 2010. The Board of Education and Administration utilized a different meeting structure in this year's budget preparation process. We held more detailed discussions by Committee. The Committees consisted of Personnel, Athletics, Buildings and Grounds, Technology, and an AdHoc Education Committee.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

All Board Members present commented on the structure of the committee budget meetings. The meetings provided them with a better understanding of the complexities of the budget process. They found the experience enlightening and positive. The Board works within the system toward what is best for the children of the District.

Athletic Budget Committee

All programs were reviewed. The committee is looking forward to more meetings such as these.

Buildings and Grounds Committee

The committee looked at cost savings initiatives in the lighting area, windows and boilers in the District. Keeping more projects in-house under the direction of staff members is most efficient. Due to budget constraints, no new initiatives will take place. The best we can do is maintain the physical plant. The Group felt this was a very constructive meeting.

Technology Committee

The budget will sustain our Technology program; reductions will not negatively affect student productivity. Jack Ma, Technology Director, is focused on cost savings for all technology needs. Stretching our budget dollars is the main focus.

AdHoc Education

The committee felt this process was an interesting way to conduct meetings. It was a very productive work session. There was opportunity to consider and explore all views; focused on substantial dollars and sense dialogue. Consideration should be given to using this closed structure for future committee meetings, expanding to topics beyond the budget. Allowed us to be retrospective and look back at some programs we've put in place.

Mr. Mancinelli, Chair of Policy Committee, pointed out our meetings are prescribed in our by-laws. The Board should consider changing the bylaws to accommodate the changes in meeting structure.

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Mr. Watson reviewed the Department of Education guidelines the District is to follow as of today. So far, we are to build the budget on flat State Aid, and no Stimulus funding. Given these parameters, our budget is balanced at a 4.1% tax increase, utilizing an automatic tax cap adjustment. We are receiving new information on a daily basis so these situations and our strategy may change.

The Board was presented with a revised budget summary. The budget is up 2.6% in the general fund, very low growth, and lowers the starting point for next year's budget.

If the State follows through on the reported 15% reduction in State Aid, this will decimate our system. If it is imposed, we will have to cut the budget by approximately \$750,000, in addition to those cuts already made. We are also concerned about Extraordinary Aid funding. We've budgeted flat Extraordinary Aid. If this is reduced, we will have more problems and cuts to make.

We have been notified the State will withhold \$401,283 from 2009/2010. We are appealing this decision/ calculation with the Board's approval. We feel the withheld amount should be \$156,000. Savings from mid-year position cuts, plus other items will make-up for the adjusted amount.

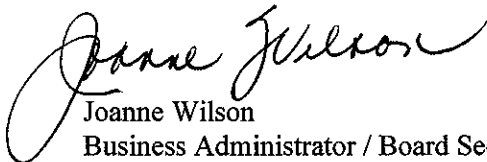
Mr. Watson explained further cuts that will be necessary should we lose the appeal; a combination of abolishment of positions and other planned purchases that will not happen. The positions involved will appear on the next Superintendent's Agenda.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mr. Banta asked for a motion to recess into Executive Session. Mr. Mancinelli moved and Mrs. Yuskaitis seconded the motion to recess at 8:37 P.M. for the purpose of discussing legal matters. All members voted in the affirmative.

**8-0-0
Motion Carried**

Respectfully Submitted,


Joanne Wilson
Business Administrator / Board Secretary