

## **NOVEMBER 25, 2025 SPECIAL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **CALLED TO ORDER**

Ms. O'Hara: Called meeting to order.

### **OPENING CEREMONIES**

Pledge of Allegiance.

### **ROLL CALL**

Ms. O'Hara: Ken Marcucio, here; Rebecca O'Hara is here.

### **Also Present:**

Dr. Matthew Conway, Superintendent of Schools.

### **PUBLIC PORTION**

Ms. O'Hara: I believe there is no one from the public.

Dr. Conway: Correct.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion that the Finance Committee approve the minutes from the July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025 meeting.  
Passed with a motion made by Mr. Ken Marcucio and a second by Ms. Rebecca O'Hara.**

**Rebecca O'Hara                      Yes**

**Ken Marcucio                        Yes**

Mr. Marcucio: Motion to approve.

Ms. O'Hara: Second. Motion carries.

### **REVIEW OF '27 BUDGET**

Mr. Trainor: So, timeline, I would like to have one more meeting before the holidays. We have an initial starting point. So, as of yesterday, all the information that we currently have is in here. We are going to run through some of the highlights.

Ms. O'Hara: I believe there's today and one in December. But I don't see it here.

Mr. Trainor: December. It may not be on our calendars yet.

Ms. O'Hara: We scheduled two days, this one and another one. Usually, it pops up in the calendar and I didn't see it yet. But we'll figure it out today before we go.

Mr. Trainor: In December, I am not going to be in the office from the 11<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup>. The initial kickoff will tell you where we're at. The second one will solidify that everything in here, the vacancies, special ed, transportation, teacher contract. These numbers are really rolling because a special ed kid can come in, can go out. We can have someone leave. So, everything that I have

as of yesterday is this budget. In a week, the numbers can be a little bit different. But for the most part everything is in here with all the information that we have as of yesterday.

So, a couple big things this year, the teacher's contract, we're going to walk through that, the increase of the teacher's contract. We're right now asking for 6.41 percent. Of that 6.41 percent, the teacher's increase is 2.47. So, that brings the remaining increase for the other stuff is just under four percent. So, I guess we'll start with the teachers.

Mr. Marcucio: So, this is just for the one year?

Mr. Trainor: One year. So, I did the same model that we used last year. This is all interactive. We can click. We can make changes. But we want to change the art supplies at Irving. We make the change. We refresh and everything connected. So, the first thing I want to walk you through is just a layout of how we start this budget process. We start with the salaries that we have and everything from their position to any supplemental case. This salary tab includes everything in the district, every staff member, every funding source, whether they're hourly. This document is quite large.

But this is the basis for us. This is where we start. And then as we start going through, there's other tabs in here. We have two salary pivot tables. One that shows every account line. And the total of the individuals in that line. So, this line item could count, it's a million dollars. This is Irving and it's the salary elementary. This includes all of the elementary teachers in that line. And this is all derived from this sheet.

This is our account. One thousand is our operating account. I can add in there. In here, you saw the fund and then the source. This, as an example is a grant. Two thousand our are federal grants. Three thousand are State grants. So, all of this information ties up into these operating pivot and grants. So, you see the list of grants. We have our current as of yesterday, special ed. Each individual student's contract goes up somewhere around five percent. Some are three. Some are seven. I've done a general rule of thumb. Another big thing to discuss for special ed, our fiscal year starts July 1<sup>st</sup>. From July 1<sup>st</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>, we had 12 changes in special ed. We had seven kids move in and six kids move out. That could change in two weeks. It could change in three months. But the number we budgeted right now as of today, 11/25, we're at one additional kid.

But prorated amounts come into play in here. Because students start in October, we're not billed the whole annual contract. These numbers are annualized. If this student moves in in October, we may pay 150,000. And this comes all into my quarterly reports that we do every week, every month, but this is what annualized cost is anticipated at. I have our transportation stuff, the regular type buses, the ESY buses, what the daily cost is, the number of buses, the school days that we have. We have the teacher increase. So, this is where I wanted to start. With everyone we have in district, regardless of funding source, there's going to be an increase of 708,000. The operating piece of that is 504,000. So, those new contracts for teachers that we passed, the operating impact is 504,000.

So, that's with everyone where we have here today. This is the teacher matrix. So, the teacher contract still has to be approved by City Hall. If they come back and change it, all we have to do is update this matrix with the new figures and the budget will auto adjust. These are the new figures that was there.

Ms. O'Hara: So, the \$504,000 is the increase in our operating budget for the teachers? When it says in here federal and State grants increase, does that mean that we are getting that increase from the federal grant?

Mr. Trainor: That's what our increase is.

Ms. O'Hara: But the federal grant stays at the same.

Mr. Trainor: We don't know our grant allocations.

Dr. Conway: So right now, there is no State ECS. I was just explaining. No increase in ECS or ECS Alliance for the second-year budget.

Ms. O'Hara: That's why it's showing that right there. Okay.

Dr. Conway: Again, State Department of Ed is lobbying. CABE will lobby when you went to your delegate convention. It was in that packet as well. All of these entities are going to be lobbying the legislature and the Governor, the speaker of the house, the increase of the ECS funding.

Mr. Marcucio: Do we make the budget based on that?

Dr. Conway: That is correct. Anything that we're able to get down the road, we'll be able to make adjustments. Right now, this would be solely on anybody doing their budget today, solely on the municipality for the increase, so, that's the only place today.

Mr. Trainor: So, as an example. Let's say, we'll take Alliance. We have four million and change in Alliance that can be utilized, supplies, benefits, salaries, property, purchase services, right. If our salary goes up to 3.9, just in Alliance, that leaves us 100,000 toward the other stuff without factoring any other increases in supplies, purchase orders. So, it's reallocating funds. And that's what the conversations we'll ultimately have if, you know, the salary increases, if not leaving room for supplies, purchases, all these things. So, where do we have to adjust. Some things were paid out of Alliance this year for a laptop. Next year we may not have funds from Alliance for laptops because of salary so we look to title one, title four.

Dr. Conway: I think what's important here is because right now with the State, there is no scheduled increase in ECS. We have teachers in Alliance. So, I think we have to add the final four, then I think we have to have these core people, it should not be in Alliance, but every district was forced to put them in Alliance because we're not getting money from our municipality. I think we need both numbers visible, so that here's the ask if we're getting any increase in Alliance say 167,000. Here's the ask if we're not getting that increase. We have to have both.

Mr. Marcucio: The raise in the contract it says the average is four percent.

Dr. Conway: No, the first year in the contract, it's really around nine percent in the first year because we took away two steps and gave them a step increase. So, it's really about on average eight to nine percent in that first year.

Mr. Marcucio: How come we gave them so much?

Dr. Conway: Because we're way below. We're still below. The districts around us went up. So, when you look at our continuous district and our DRG district, they went up. We still didn't catch it. That's overall budget.

Mr. Trainor: Districtwide budget, everything.

Ms. O'Hara: That's the increase. I thought you meant that was for the teacher's contract.

Mr. Trainor: The teacher contract is in there.

Ms. O'Hara: Teachers were 2.47.

Mr. Marcucio: So, you're saying it's nine percent this year.

Dr. Conway: Yeah, eight to nine percent. For '26/'27 school year is when it takes the nine percent. Their new contract doesn't take affect until July 1<sup>st</sup>, which is the budget we're building.

Mr. Marcucio: Thank you. So, what's the second year?

Dr. Conway: Then it drops down to your normal around three percent after that.

Mr. Marcucio: So, that was four percent because of that first year?

Dr. Conway: What average is four percent. It's about 20 percent over four years. It averages about five percent a year. Every community is doing it. We have to remain competitive. We're not going to be able to keep teachers. They're sitting here meeting with me and I share the salary.

Ms. O'Hara: Right.

Mr. Marcucio: I thought every year we gave three percent. So, how did we fall behind. It's hard to believe.

Dr. Conway: It's reality though. Ansonia's starting salary is 60 grand now. We still didn't catch up. We're still 3,000 below them. That's everybody around us, they're going up. We're in the middle of the path by doing what we're doing. We're at the bottom of the DRG. Now we're in the middle of the DRG.

This past year, we did very little new hiring. Very little. Lowest in the number of years. When I say we lose them, I lose them before I hire them once I show them the salary.

Ms. O'Hara: Yeah.

Dr. Conway: Everybody is looking for teachers now. We're very fortunate in terms of our staffing for teachers. We have eight paraeducator openings, but for teachers we're okay. But I've lost multiple sitting right here at the table. Now, you're going back to the drawing board. Okay, who is next. And then during the year our gym teacher first New Haven and then New Haven lost him before he ever started, Orange picked him up. But that was a \$9,000 difference.

Mr. Marcucio: Can you give us the salary of the Towns that you're talking about?

Dr. Conway: Yeah, absolutely. We have all of that from negotiations.

Ms. O'Hara: So, as of right now, we're looking at a 6.41.

Dr. Conway: So, you're saying the increase, from '25/'26 to '26/'27, the average teacher's increase on that salary schedule will be in the eight, nine percent rate. So, you're 2.47. So, if the average increase for a teacher in that first year of the NEW contract, say eight percent, the question is, why is that only have 2.47?

Mr. Trainor: That's the increase from the teacher's alone.

Dr. Conway: That's the teacher contract, teachers alone. Just the teachers.

Mr. Marcucio: So, you said the 2.47 percent is just teachers.

Ms. O'Hara: So, when you factor in.

Mr. Trainor: Because you also have just the operating budget. We have teachers, teachers in that teacher contract that are paid out of grants. That's just one segment of the overall increase.

Mr. Marcucio: Now, how did you get the 2.47?

Mr. Trainor: 504,000 divided by the 1.3 million dollars.

Dr. Conway: It's a 2.47 increase of the total budget. Of the 6.41 the percent will increase. In that 6.41 for the teacher salaries is 2.47.

Mr. Trainor: The dollar value of the 504,000 is 2.4 percent of the overall.

Dr. Conway: Can we go back to last years and look at what the teacher salaries were for '25/'26.

Mr. Trainor: Just teachers?

Dr. Conway: Yes. Just operating.

Mr. Trainor: 78,000 is this year's salary. 83,000 is next year's salary in the contract.

Mr. Marcucio: For who though?

Dr. Conway: So, it's 521,000. So, if I take those two numbers that you do have for teacher's salaries for '26/'27. It's 521,000, 409.59. And we didn't take any teachers out or put any teachers in.

Ms. O'Hara: And what is that percentage?

Mr. Trainor: I don't have that number.

Mr. Marcucio: I just don't understand how it could be 2.47 if they got an eight percent increase.

Mr. Trainor: Because that's the increase on the overall task. Because it's just one piece of the overall district budget.

Mr. Marcucio: Yeah but that one piece should be eight percent?

Mr. Trainor: No. We're talking about the overall district versus one group. We have five other union groups that also have increases. We also have supplies, purchasers.

Dr. Conway: What he's not saying is that that 2.47 represents the increase from this year's teachers to next year's teachers. What he's saying is – the 2.47 represents the total, 6.41 percent increase, right. 2.47 of the 6.41 represents the district, last year teachers and this year teachers. Not their salaries year over year.

If you want to compare this year teacher salaries and the percent difference to next year teacher salaries that percent difference just with teachers, not talking about the operating budget today as a whole.

Mr. Trainor: And that's because not all increases on this matrix are flat at eight percent. The people at the top did not make out as well as people in the middle. So, we have 15 steps. We have 112 people.

Dr. Conway: Your steps for example, you're getting just –

Mr. Marcucio: What's the average percent?

Dr. Conway: 6.51. The people at the top are getting like two or three percent tops. They're not getting the eight or nine percent. They're getting a general wage increase once you're at that top step. That line item only, just for the teacher salary line item that 504 represents the increase into '26/'27 for that one line item. And I think that's the change at the presentation will show both. But of the total, 21-million-dollar budget. So, if I take the 504 which represents the increase of last year teachers' salaries to this years and I divide it by the 21,759,204, right. I'm going to get 2.31.

Mr. Marcucio: Yeah, but what do you get when you divide that by last year's scale.

Dr. Conway: Do you mean line 11?

Mr. Marcucio: That's very deceptive there.

Dr. Conway: What's deceptive. Robbie will put labels next to it so that we have both there so that other people will be looking at it maybe a little differently. They're going to be saying, go to total budget, what does that represent. That's where the 2.47 comes in. So, of the total due budget of 21 million and teacher's salary in the new budget represents 2.47. If somebody is going to ask both the 6.41 budgets teacher's salaries, 2.47 of the total budget.

Mr. Marcucio: This current year.

Dr. Conway: We're going to do this current year and next year and you'll see, maybe this will better explain them.

The number is going to be 521,409. And the percent is going to be 6.507.

Mr. Trainor: There's a different formula you have to do.

Mr. Marcucio: Just show it for next time.

Mr. Trainor: Okay.

Dr. Conway: So, we're going to show both. What you're asking for, so everybody can see, it's an average 6.51 percent difference between last year's salaries for teachers and this year salaries for

teachers. We can do that with paraeducators too. We can do it with everybody. But of the total budget it is, it represents 2.47.

I think that's where Robbie was saying it's apples to oranges. That 2.47 has nothing to do with their raise. It simply has to do with of the increase in the 21 million, how much of that is teacher salary versus paraeducator salary versus supplies.

Mr. Trainor: And then we've got athletic, these are the non-salary supplies, paperwork, final forms, software, transportation for leadership events, football. So, this is what Jen has requested on top of the salary supplies and transportation.

So, another thing I wanted to discuss is the insurance waiver and the longevity payments are built into the budget. Last year we had a budget approved of 20 million and two and change. They upped it based on the unemployment and the insurance waiver. I built back into our budget. This is part of the 6.4 ask. We will be showing what those numbers are.

Our approved number was 22 fifty something. So that was after we went this time this year, this was soup to nuts including everything. The total combined was 193,000. What we're asking for this year for next year is, based on who we have, we're asking for 183,000. People either change longevity. So, they don't take them out insurance. We pay them out based on our funds, keep track like 1,800 bucks.

Ms. O'Hara: You're adding the two together. The numbers you added before.

Mr. Trainor: Correct. So, we are paying our staff 1,800 to stay in the City.

Dr. Conway: They changed it this past year in this budget where they increased the amount that they gave us. We have to check with the City how they want to record that. It's part of our overall ask. Because if they give us zero, we're back to paying the waiver ourselves in our budget. I don't want to do that.

Mr. Trainor: So, if we took that 200,000 out of the ask, our percent would go from 6.41 down to say 5.3 or whatever that math is. Here's our ask of 5.4. Here's the insurance and longevity at 200,000. We're asking for two numbers for that. The 20 and we're asking for the 200,000 grand to pay that. I built it into the budget because my conversation with Brian last year was, you need to build this into your budget. So, that's what I built in.

Mr. Marcucio: Are you going to send that sheet before our next meeting.

Mr. Trainor: Yes, I can do that. So, this comparison tab, we have insurance waiver right here. So, in '24, we didn't budget. In '25, we budgeted this. The actual at the end of the year came in, we paid this. For '26, we budgeted this, the actual for this year is only through October. That's what I budgeted.

So, this sheet compares three years' worth of information. This line specifically is based on that salary tab and matrix. So, this is a formula that an individual is being paid out of this account. So, there's a three-year narrative of where we come, where we are today and where we're going tomorrow. You can't do a three percent increase across because our needs yesterday are different

than they are today. They're going to be different tomorrow. So, that's how we go through each of these line items.

Dr. Conway: He has put so much detail into this. And we're pulling it from the actual numbers. If this is salary, the actual salary in, it's pulling from a sheet that is salary in it for that person. And if that person leaves and somebody else comes in, in the meantime, he's going to make the adjustment of what that new person actual salary is.

Ms. O'Hara: I think we did schedule a meeting to do it at lunchtime. Schedule anything before the 11<sup>th</sup> before December 11<sup>th</sup>.

I don't even know this will be the same committee.

Mr. Trainor: So, any changes that happen from now until our next meeting will be put in this sheet. I found out a para had resigned. I can now change that from a step three to a step one because all paras come in at a step one. So, we save \$2,000.

Dr. Conway: Our number in going to reflect all of that in the end. So, there's no guesswork in this other than inflation of the contracts that we think might be a five percent increase and they come in higher.

Mr. Trainor: I don't think it would be relevant for this reason. We are making a budget for the future.

Dr. Conway: Yeah, for this reason it wouldn't be. Because what you're going to see is what we're saving. So, if a teacher leaves or a para and somebody else comes in and replaces them throughout the year, we're going to make that change here before you vote on the budget.

So, the only change that won't be reflected is from April on for example.

Mr. Marcucio: I'm talking about the monthly sheet.

Dr. Conway: I see what you're trying to say. We're just trying to figure out the best way to do it. There could have been another change that somebody else came in at a higher rate.

Mr. Marcucio: The Delta column, could there be another column the actual savings.

Mr. Trainor: But it's part of that. Giving an example. From July 1<sup>st</sup> of this year through September, we had 184 changes and people, individual people. We had 184 changes in four months, one month of school. So, all of that gets factored in because you're being paid out of operating. Doc's position was paid out of a grant. I'm taking Doc's position. So, now you have multiple funding sources with multiple changes. So, to track all of this would be an extensive amount of work. Can we do it, yes. Do we know how to do it, yes. But having the manpower to having present all of that to follow all of these changes is really –

Dr. Conway: He has that number in the salaries in the system because of how this is set up. So, he'll always have that number in salaries.

Mr. Marcucio: But we don't get to see it.

Dr. Conway: It's in the monthly report.

Mr. Trainor: The monthly report will show because we're going to be under budget about 20 grand at the end of the year. With the positions that aren't filled, we already budgeted for them and we're anticipating hiring them. If you sought 20,000 versus 120,000 the conversation would be what would be done with this money. Nothing. Because if we hire this person tomorrow that 120,000 drops to 90,000. So, these are all conceptual numbers. They're not actual hard numbers.

Mr. Marcucio: What I'm saying is the sheet that you get monthly is misleading. What happens to that number at the end of the year. What does it show. You know, like Delta is 200,000 at the end of the year. Where does that show.

Dr. Conway: This year you guys put it into the non-lapsing account so that we had money for this year. So, last year, you put the balance into the non-lapsing account. So, here's salaries. This is the monthly report. So, here's salaries. You budgeted 13,056. This is this year's budget. Estimated cost to the end of the year right now is 13,101. So, am I correct in what you're asking is what's the difference between this column and this column. Because here's the total down here of all the columns. So, this is specific to salaries. And that's teachers, paraeducators, whoever the salary in the operating budget. This is what we budgeted. Here is what we're projecting end of year. That could change tomorrow. That's the problem with these.

So, benefits same thing. What we budgeted, this is what we're projecting to end of year. If it was to end today.

Mr. Marcucio: That's ours in the whole system.

Dr. Conway: You got it.

Mr. Trainor: Now let's say one of those salaries we don't hire for six months. That 13,101 in the savings is 30 grand for not hiring for half the year. The estimated cost becomes the actual cost. The actual cost is going to be 13 million 740,000 because that position was never filled. But we have to keep it in the budget so if we hire someone, that number doesn't jump.

Mr. Marcucio: Why do we have a deficit there?

Mr. Trainor: We don't. We're actually 32,000 to the good. Because we have positions that we budgeted for that are empty.

Dr. Conway: You have a deficit there.

Mr. Trainor: Because at some point we hired someone that was more expensive.

Mr. Marcucio: So that should be negative.

Dr. Conway: No, overall, it's positive. On just for salaries, it's a negative. That was only people hired not really reflecting people leaving. There wasn't a one for one always.

Mr. Marcucio: I'm not sure what you're talking about.

Dr. Conway: We stopped using that on the appointment list because it was misleading.

Mr. Marcucio: You stopped recently?

Dr. Conway: Yeah. Last year when this came up again all last year, we were told to stop it. But it is in your report. It's here. So, right now, if the year were to end today, I can't even say that, Robbie, because this doesn't reflect the vacancies. Correct.

Mr. Trainor: Correct.

Dr. Conway: So, if there was a vacancy for two weeks while we were hiring somebody to replace somebody, this number doesn't reflect it. This number reflects everybody's salary that was in the operating budget today encumbered. And then anybody who replaced somebody since we built the budget initially, their salaries are in here in place of the person that they replaced if that makes sense. So, we're over by 45,000.

But if there was a vacancy for a couple of weeks, somebody could come in at a higher rate once they replaced them, which is going to increase the right-hand side. They could come in at a lower rate and that will decrease the right-hand side.

Mr. Marcucio: What's under purchase services?

Mr. Trainor: Special ed. They're budget is 3.5 million.

Dr. Conway: Every contract is different for those extra kids. So, we might have lost a kid at 170,000 a year, but we gained a kid at 150,000 a year.

Mr. Marcucio: So, if you pick up a kid and you don't lose a kid shouldn't that go up like over 100,000. So, what are you saying by that going down?

Mr. Trainor: That one of multiple contracts that we budgeted for are not going to come in at that rate. So, we work with a company called Solene (phonetic) to help with the special ed population. We have two individuals from that contract. That's what we budgeted for. When the year started, we only needed one. So, we budgeted 100,000 grand but we're only going to spend 50,000. That's all factored into all contracts, substitutes, constellations, Solene (phonetic). These are all of the companies that we utilize is to come in and work with our students, our staff, these are contracted services. So, we have probably 15 contracts with various different companies. They're all in this other purchase services.

Mr. Marcucio: Okay. So, when are we going to meet, December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Trainor: First week in December. December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Dr. Conway: Does that work for you?

Mr. Marcucio: That's okay for me.

**ADJOURN**

**Motion the Finance Committee adjourn its meeting. Passed with a motion made by Mr. Ken Marcucio and a second by Ms. Rebecca O'Hara.**

**Rebecca O'Hara                      Yes**

**Ken Marcucio                        Yes**

Mr. Marcucio: Making motion.

Ms. O'Hara: Second.

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Marianne Samokar

Recording Secretary