

**WEST WINDSOR-PLAINSBORO REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES**



<u>BOE Committee:</u>	<u>Administration:</u>	<u>Guest/Public:</u>
Louisa Ho (Chair)		
Anthony Fleres	Larry Shanok	
Yu "Taylor" Zhong, arrived 8:03 PM	Lawrence LoCastro	

October 13, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM at Central Office. Topics covered included:

2014-15 Audit. Mr. LoCastro updated the progress made to date; both the district and the auditor have made good progress and no material issues have arisen in regard to any of the standard data. However, as pointed out by Mr. Shanok, some key data is not yet available. The previous day the State of New Jersey confirmed an audit due date of December 7, 2015 while in the same document they acknowledge that data that is to be provided to districts from the State of New Jersey is not yet available and no date for delivery of that data exists.

A tentative plan of action is to review all but the portions of the audit not impacted by the State of New Jersey's inaction, at the next committee meeting. If the state continues to delay, a special board of education meeting may be necessary. There is a risk that the actual submission of a timely audit may be rendered impossible by the State of New Jersey.

Review Agenda Items. The committee reviewed the items and supports their approval. A discussion of the Report of the Secretary allowed an exploration of the workings of the present budget and issues relating to the formation of the next budget. For example, the available balance within the general fund is \$2.4 million lower than a year ago. This suggests lower excess surplus numbers in the future; as a consequence, future levels of tax relief and capital reserve will be lower too.

School Lunches Nationally. A recent news analysis reported that school children in France have the lowest obesity rate in the Western world, yet France has few of the type of lunch meal restrictions required in the United States. French children enjoy tasty four course lunches while their American counterparts are refusing to eat as many meals in school as they formerly ate. One result is a great volume of food tossed in the garbage and, according to the School Nutrition Association, 70% of school meal programs have taken a significant financial hit since the new US mandates went into effect. Our district is currently doing all right financially, but as reported at earlier committee meetings, in the long run the district will have choices to make that may change how lunch looks and costs. The news analysis closed with the observation that French children learn about their food and their healthy eating habits at home to a degree not practiced in the United States.

2016-2017 Budget Progress: As an example of the decisions about to be made for 2016-17, a look at the current transportation department's finances was taken. The cost of regular education routes are up by 7.5%. Special education routes are up by nearly 10%. Shortages of qualified bus drivers appear to more than counterbalance the favorable impact of lower petroleum prices.

Recent meetings at the County Office with two nonpublic school principals were reviewed. The Executive County Superintendent encouraged even greater communication among the schools in the future while noting that WWPRSD had complied with the transportation rules required by the Department of Education.

Another part of the discussion noted some personnel related costs: 1. a recent payroll of the district was \$3.8 million – nearly identical with a year ago. 2. Currently, the number of single employees number 59 more than a year ago while the number of married employees number 41 less than a year ago. Informal evidence indicates that marriages and births are occurring at a noticeable rate implying that these numbers may soon reverse – leading to higher benefit costs for employees and district alike in the future.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, November 10, 2015, 7:30 PM @ Central Office

Topic for Next Meeting

Review Agenda Items
2016-2017 Budget
Audit

Future Topics:

Impact of Recent Legislation
Policies
Transportation