

**EAST HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
EAST HAVEN HIGH SCHOOL BOARDROOM
35 WHEELBARROW LANE
EAST HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06513**

**TUESDAY, MAY 27, 2008
6:20 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mrs. Vitale, Mr. Finkle, Mr. Hammell, Mr. Hennessey, Mr. Inglese
Mrs. Padua and Mrs. Vineyard

ABSENT: Mrs. Geraci-Anastasio and Mr. DeNuzzo

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Serio, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Martorella, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Meoli, Administrative Director to the Superintendent
Mrs. Acquarulo, Director of Pupil Services
Mr. Rizza, Director of Finance

1. OPEN MEETING

Mr. Hennessey called to order of the Finance Subcommittee at 6:30 p.m.

2. Discussion on Fiscal Year 2008-09 Budget

Mr. Serio explained that they had taken the 2008-09 budget and cut approximately \$1.4 million. He spoke about grade levels and enrollments and how they were trying to balance the first grades with the principals. Mr. Serio stated they had gotten a little “risky” with the business office in trying to cut the \$1.4 million and had dug into the benefits and fuel. Some staffing and curriculum initiatives were on hold right now as far as purchasing new materials. He stated that anything listed in parentheses on the report meant that there was a minus.

Mr. Rizza spoke about the bids for cleaning and security. He was looking for some competitive pricing. He had looked at electricity, gas and how the facilities were heated. Mr. Rizza spoke about the Town and Board using a consultant and that consultant being paid by the Town and not the Board. They would be bidding for electricity in the later part of August. He spoke about oil and gas and how there would be the possibility of going to uninterrupted gas to heat their buildings.

There was some further discussion on the budget and staffing. Mr. Hammell asked if anyone was going to lose their job right now. Mr. Serio stated no, but when someone leaves, they would take a closer look at the numbers rather than run classes of 13 or 14, they would have a couple of classes of 20 or 21. There were certain things he wanted to do at the Middle School and some of those shortage areas needed to be acted upon right away or they would lose these people to other districts.

Mr. Serio stated there were a lot of activities at the end of the year and it was hard to find a night when everyone could make a meeting. He wanted to bring these numbers back to them as they change. He stated the Board had already given him permission to start the hiring process. He would like to continue doing this to make sure they were properly staffed prior to the opening of school in August. He felt they would save money when people retired and they would also save monies on negotiations. Currently, there was only one bargaining unit that was pending and needed to be settled. The savings on negotiations would be \$300,000 which was for negotiations and for retro-pay. This goes back with the operating budget.

Mrs. Vitale stated they needed to address some type of consolidation in their district because of the 11 schools they had which were “budget busters”. Mr. Serio stated he did not see them consolidating for this September, but they could not put it off too long because the budget process begins in October. He stated that one of the things he found difficult was that East Haven had a tough time with change.

Mrs. Padua asked how many years out did he project this taking place. Mr. Serio responded it would depend on classroom availability and class size. They had checked into all-day kindergarten this year and found they were short on classes.

Mr. Finkle asked when they would be bringing the numbers to the Board for approval as far as the budget. Did he anticipate giving the Board anything? Mr. Serio stated by the next meeting – the first meeting in June. **This way the Board would have time to digest the budget. If they had any questions or thoughts, they could email him or call him. Mr. Hennessey asked if they could get a report on Special Education. Maybe she could let them know how many kids were in-district and out-of-district. Mrs. Acquarulo would put a report together.**

Mr. Inglese asked if they had special education kids out-of-district and in different states. Mrs. Acquarulo replied yes and spoke about the different costs associated with different cases. He asked if they had to pay for housing that went along with the educational cost. No, just the educational costs. There was discussion on whether they had to pay these costs and why. If a child was sent to High Meadows, did the Board have to cover the cost of this? Mrs. Acquarulo stated no, that that school was a district unto itself. It was a unified school district. They also didn’t have to pay for kids in the prison system.

Mr. Finkle asked Mr. Serio if he was ready or prepared to tell them what his plans were for restructuring Central Office with Mr. Martorella retiring. There was reference to the amount on Page 2. Mr. Serio stated if they were going to keep the position of Assistant Superintendent, then that figure needed to be higher than what was in the budget currently. He would have to look at some kind of reconfiguration, but would have to wait until they made a decision on the Assistant Superintendent and then jointly discuss some of these initiatives with

his directors and see if there was any restructuring in Central Office that they could do. They could see if it was possible to trim back some costs or make up for the funding of the three positions. He would be reviewing the organizational chart with the possibility of rearranging some of the duties and sharing some of the duties. He could not see himself coming back with one full body less. He would come back to them with a proposal that would fit into this budget.

Mr. Finkle asked about the non-certified salary of the aides with a proposed 72% reduction. He asked what the total number of aides would equate to. Mr. Serio stated around 12 positions. There was discussion on the other aide positions including library aides which had increased. The increase for library aides was due to a couple of new hires this past year and the secretarial contract being ratified. Mr. Finkle asked if this included all the retro pay factored into it. Mr. Rizza responded yes.

3. Any other business that might rightfully come before this subcommittee.

There was no other business discussed this evening

4. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Finkle made a motion to adjourn the Finance Subcommittee meeting and it was seconded by Mr. Hammell. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

**MR. THOMAS HENNESSEY, CHAIRPERSON
FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE**