

**Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, February 4, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in the council chambers, 3 Primrose Street.

D. Leidlein, Chair	J. Reed
L. Roche, Vice Chair (absent)	L. Gejda
K. Hamilton, Secretary	R. Bienkowski
K. Alexander	10 Staff
J. Vouros	8 Public
D. Freedman	1 Press
M. Ku	

Mrs. Leidlein called the meeting order at 7:34 p.m.

Item 1 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to approve the consent agenda which included the minutes of January 23 and 28, 2014. The donation to Sandy Hook School, the donation from Ingersoll Auto of Danbury to the Newtown High School Drama Program, and the resignation for retirement of Jose Lebron, custodian. Mr. Vouros seconded.

MOTION: Ms. Hamilton moved to amend the motion to remove the minutes of January 23, 2014. Mr. Alexander seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Vote on the original motion: passes unanimously.

Ms. Hamilton asked to remove the minutes of January 23 because the correspondence report was not attached. Ms. June stated they are attached to the minutes when posted.

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to approve the minutes of January 23, 2014. Ms. Hamilton seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3 – Public Participation

Lisa Wallace, 43 Mile Hill South, was there representing the PTA presidents and stated they supported Dr. Reed's proposed education budget. It is fiscally responsible and reflects many changes impacting our school district but does keep us whole. Please send it to the Board of Finance without reductions. This statement was endorsed by Maggie Conway, Denise Tramposch, Tracey Jaeger, Marabeth Pereira, Rebekah Harriman-Stites, Vickie Ricks, Stephanie Burns and her.

Jen Scarangella, 14 Morehouse Road, was there in support of the Newtown Middle School budget and spoke on behalf of the Newtown Middle School PTA Executive Board. They respectfully request that the Board of Education not make any changes in the proposed middle school budget prepared by Mr. Einhorn and endorsed by Dr. Reed. Mr. Einhorn has already taken into account declining enrollment by removing four teachers which is the equivalent of one cluster. Further cuts would mean a further reduction in staff and another increase in class size. We respectfully request that you endorse it as submitted.

Item 4 – Reports

Correspondence Report: Ms. Hamilton read the attached list of correspondence.

Chair Report: Mrs. Leidlein met with Dr. Erardi. She also met with John Kortze from the Board of Finance which will be discussed later in the meeting.

**Superintendent's Report:**

Dr. Reed stated that he will be using a consultant to aid in the recruitment and selection of the high school principal.

Dr. Erardi and Dr. Abbey are in agreement. He will use Dr. Jackie Jacoby as the consultant since she has a comprehensive understanding of our school system.

There were no committee reports.

Mrs. Leidlein introduced First Selectman Pat Llodra spoke about security and collaboration with the police department.

Mrs. Llodra reviewed the steps taken to determine a short term solution to security in the schools. The State legislators and State Police created a model for School Safety Officers (SSO). The School Resource Officers (SRO) are greatly valued in the curriculum. Our short term plan this year was to use police officers on an overtime basis. The SSO's have been piloted in other districts. She prefers to not have full uniformed police in the schools. The cost is not sustainable. If we assigned permanent police in the elementary schools we would have the challenge of how to incorporate them into the department the rest of the year. We decided to use the overtime option this year. Because we didn't get the COPS Grant we decided to look into having SSO's. We went to North Branford and Enfield to see their programs. The North Branford officers are supervised by the Board of Education and Enfield's are supervised by their police department. She recommends using SSO's in the schools to be compensated at an hourly rate and continue the SRO's at the intermediate, middle and high schools.

Mrs. Ku asked the difference in pension plans.

Mrs. Llodra said the Town police are full time with benefits. The SSO's already receive retirement benefits so they would just receive an hourly pay.

Ms. Hamilton asked if they have the power to detain someone.

Mrs. Llodra said they could but not arrest anyone.

Ms. Hamilton asked if they could get the North Branford policies.

Dr. Reed said the next level of planning is looking at the state standards and security that will be the norm. Decisions about security at Sandy Hook School will lead us to see what is transferable to the other schools. We have a partner in the Town to deal with this situation.

**Item 5 – Old Business****Discussion of 2014-2015 Budget:**

Mr. Bienkowski reviewed the summary of updates to the budget books.

Mr. Freedman referred to the donation of services for technology installation and asked for an estimated cost of that time.

Dr. Reed said we don't know what the cost was. We will call the contributors and ask whether they have that information and attach a dollar estimate to their hours.

Mrs. Amodeo said the advanced security technology project is still ongoing. She doesn't think they can give us a complete estimate but may be able to let us know what they expended to date. Cisco was here many Saturdays and Sundays and this time was donated by their employees.

Mr. Freedman felt it would be good for the community to know the significance of the donation.

Ms. Hamilton asked if Mr. Pompano could attend the meeting Thursday night. She asked for clarification on security dollars and if it is all included in the .75% decrease or are we counting on grants to supply most of that.

Dr. Reed said the direction from the Town was to separate the security budget from our budget. Anything that is a new expense is all in a separate budget looked at separately by the Town.

Ms. Hamilton asked to review the security budget.

Mr. Bienkowski said the \$324,525 is in the Superintendent's budget and would fund 11 unarmed security guards and nine armed which is the total number we had in police this school year. To bring it to a full armed level have \$151,000 from the SERV Grant and \$57,000 from the DOJ Grant. The total on Mr. Pompano's sheet is \$540,000, of that, \$324,000 is in the budget. We would have to fund \$216,000 from other sources which are the SERV Grant and DOJ Grant. This would drop the overall need to \$7,013.

Dr. Reed said the expenditure can be arranged with the other boards. It should be a separate document. Mrs. Llodra said that budget would also be adopted by the Selectman and Board of Education.

Mr. Freedman feels it is important for the public to know the number they will vote on. He wants to have a conversation on sustainability over the next years.

Mrs. Leidlein said she would email other boards suggesting a task force be formed to investigate that issue.

Dr. Reed said that possible adjustment if we receive the DOJ Grant include \$207,500 for partial locking mechanism replacement, \$67,856 for voice over IP for the intermediate school, and \$22,000 for partial special education tuition reimbursement.

Ms. Hamilton asked if we would have an answer on the DOJ Grant before the April vote.

Dr. Reed felt we would.

Mr. Bienkowski said they reviewing our submissions now. There is no indication there is any concern for our proposed expenses.

John Reed said if our goal is to try and minimize things he would consider the replacement of the truck, pay the sewer assessment, initiate the contract with strategic plan consultant and the enrollment study costs being undertaken in this year's budget. The population study should come from the enrollment the second week in September.

Ms. Hamilton asked about the \$511,000 grant we haven't spent yet.

Dr. Reed said it was given to us for specific expenditures.

Mr. Bienkowski said these expenses occurred prior to June 30. All items were very specific expenses.

Dr. Reed said that Mrs. Llodra and Mr. Tait speculated some type of security account could be established.

Mrs. Leidlein questioned the increases in teachers at the high school since 2007. The enrollment since then has been flat and this year there are three less students than in 2007. She asked why we had more science teachers than in history, English or math.

Mr. Dumais said outside the science department teachers teach 5 classes and inside the science department they teach 4 classes because they also teach a lab. Science class sizes are a maximum of 24 and other areas have a maximum class size of 30 students. The health class is taught by a science teacher.

Mr. Freedman said since 2006-07 there are 13 additional teachers at the high school with only three more students. This is a significant increase in staffing but is not balanced with the enrollment.

Mr. Dumais said much is based on student choices. Not all positions affect class size. Culinary had to be modified to accommodate students. As interventions and programs change we need to modify. Not all will go to classroom instruction.

Ms. Hamilton said we needed 9.8 teachers to fill the requirement for the high school addition. It was based on a different enrollment figure. She questioned the number of staff added.

Mr. Vouros felt it would be helpful to discuss course requirements in 2006-07 which would affect the staffing number.

Mr. Dumais stated decisions are made according to student requests and class size. We could look at how class size has changed over the years and pull out pieces not directly related to classes.

Ms. Hamilton requested that the Board have a copy of the security report.

Dr. Reed preferred to wait until the consultants reviewed the report.

#### Board of Finance Communication:

Mrs. Leidlein met with Mr. Kortze regarding his letter. She asked for the enrollment data she received is shared with the other Board members. The letter asked how we were going to address enrollment and building usage. The facilities study will be completed in March 2015 and the enrollment study will be completed by November 1, 2014. A decision will be made using that data. We need to present it to the Board of Finance on March 12 or 13. She asked Dr. Reed to have a document for them.

Dr. Reed said the Board of Education has to define the school systems needs. We aren't going to open Sandy Hook School until August 2016 and he assumed the possible closing of a school will have to wait until then. For many scenarios there could be redistricting. We should engage the community with this information. We also need to talk about if the building will be leased, sold, or given to the Town for another use with the possibility of getting it back to reopen as a school.

Mrs. Leidlein said Mr. Kortze also address the non-recurring account. She asked to see what other towns were doing.

Mrs. Ku provided examples from other towns.

Ms. Hamilton said there was a statute about consolidating town and board of education services.

Dr. Reed said Dr. Erardi would have discussions with Mrs. Llodra on this topic.

Ms. Hamilton asked Mrs. Leidlein to forward her information to the Board of Finance and Board of Education members.

Approve minutes January 30, 2014:

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to approve the minutes of January 30, 2014. Mr. Vouros seconded. Vote: 5 ayes, 1 abstained (Ms. Hamilton)

Item 7 – Public Participation

MOTION: Mrs. Ku moved to go into executive session for the discussion of a leave request and invited Dr. Reed. Ms. Hamilton seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 8 – Executive Session

Item 9 – Public Session

MOTION: Mr. Freedman moved to grant the leave request for the staff member for the remainder of the 2013-2014 school year. Mr. Vouros seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to adjourn. Mr. Vouros seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 10 - Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.10:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Kathy Hamilton  
Secretary

BOE Communications Report, 2/4/2014  
 Kathy Hamilton, Board of Education Secretary

<b>From</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>
Jason Hiruo	01/23/2014	Invitation to Lunarfest 2014
Kristen Stolfi	01/24/2014	Confirming presentation of the student based Eco Challenge project at the March 4 <sup>th</sup> BOE meeting
Karen Banks	01/25/2014	Article regarding "farm to school" nutritional meals.
Mark Ankers	01/27/2014	Question about voting
Nicole Barnhart	01/28/2014	Inquiring to interview some municipal board members about budget for journalism class
Doreen Trimarchi	01/29/2014	Question about school delay/cancellation phone calls
John Kortze	01/30/2014	In response to Debbie's invite to a joint BOE meeting. Most of the BOF could not make the proposed date. He stressed the importance of working collaboratively to help the public understand the concerns of both the BOE and the BOF so that we can better plan for the future. Also, requested class and enrollment data (3 <sup>rd</sup> request).
Michele Hankin	02/04/2014	Request to support the superintendent's budget

<b>To</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>
Stacie Doyle	01/28/2014	Answering question about MS Spring conference schedule.

**Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on Thursday, January 23, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. in the Lecture Hall at Newtown High School.

D. Leidlein, Chair	J. Reed
L. Roche, Vice Chair	L. Gejda
K. Hamilton, Secretary	R. Bienkowski
K. Alexander	10 Staff
J. Vouros	40 Public
D. Freedman	5 Press
M. Ku	

Mrs. Leidlein called the meeting order at 6:32 p.m.

Item 1 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved to approve the consent agenda which includes the minutes of January 7, 2014, the Newtown High School field trips, the donations to Sandy Hook School, the leave of absence for Orlando Callands, custodian, the leave of absence for Terry Dunn, security officer, and the resignation for Charles Dumais, principal of Newtown High School.

Mr. Alexander seconded.

Ms. Hamilton moved to remove the minutes of January 7, 2014. Mrs. Roche seconded.

Ms. Hamilton referred to page 5 and asked to change the wording at the end of the first sentence to read, “which went into effect for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011.”

Mr. Freedman seconded.

Vote on amendment: motion passes unanimously.

Vote on minutes: motion passes unanimously.

Item 3 – Public Participation – None

Item 4 – Reports

Correspondence Report: Ms. Hamilton read the attached correspondence report.

Chair Report: Mrs. Leidlein said the Board agreed with the recommendation of Jonathan Costa to postpone the retreat. The Public Building and Site Commission requested a joint meeting with Svigals tentatively set for February 5 or 19 to see the plans for the new Sandy Hook School. She asked member to let her know if they can attend the Board meeting on February 18 as there were two members who could not be there.

Superintendent’s Report:

Dr. Reed stated that he would be meeting with Dr. Erardi next Friday.

There was a meeting this week regarding Connecticut school-based health centers and the possibility of having one in the Newtown schools. Jim Maloney is the director of this program in our area. This program may be looked at as a support structure after the SERV Grant ends. Regarding the high school principal search, he is recommending the Board hire a consultant to do the search.

Financial Report and Transfers:

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved that the Board of Education approve the financial report and transfers for the month ending December 31, 2013. Mr. Vouros seconded.

Mr. Bienkowski reviewed the attached financial report and transfers. We spent \$5.5M during December and we expect to receive funds through excess cost and agency placement grants for out of district tuition.

Motion passes unanimously.

Dr. Reed acknowledged the resignation of Chip Dumais and thanked him for what he has done for Newtown High School. He is a profoundly intelligent person with a great work ethic who had a very comprehensive vision for Newtown High School which had an important impact on the improvement at the school. He wished him well.

#### Committee Reports:

Ms. Hamilton said the policy committee met January 21 and reviewed the comments from Dr. Reed and the administration. We will need to have a short meeting to address the committee charges and the high school graduation policy. There was no CIP meeting. She, along with Mr. Freedman and Mr. Faiella, attended the Legislative Council meeting when it was presented. She received a letter from the Legislative Council about the high school auditorium. Regarding the Sandy Hook School building project she received information from Julia McFadden regarding a new website where the public can find updates on the project. That website is <http://www.sandyhook2016.com/demo/index.html>.

#### Item 5 – New Business

##### Preschool Tuition:

MOTION: Mr. Freedman moved that the Board of Education approve the preschool program tuition rate of \$2,000 per year for a half-day, four-day a week program to begin with the 2014-2015 school year. Mrs. Roche seconded.

Dr. Reed stated that this was in the budget. Action was requested so parents could be notified well in advance of next year. Mr. Freedman moved that the Board of Education approve the preschool program tuition rate of \$2,000 per year for a half-day, four-day a week program to begin with the 2014-2015 school year. Mrs. Roche seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Vouros asked how many students attended the preschool program.

Mrs. Leidlein said there were 25 non-disabled and 29 special ed students in the program. We would look to enroll a similar number next year.

Ms. Hamilton hoped we would track ourselves with other programs offering the same to keep in line with the cost.

Motion passes unanimously.

##### Board of Finance Communication:

Mrs. Leidlein spoke about the communication from the Board of Finance asking for feedback regarding continuing a dialog with the Board of Selectman so that economies of service could be found. They provided a draft of a regulation for the nonlapsing account for the Board of Education. They also wanted us to provide enrollment data by grade and discuss data present at the Board of Finance meeting regarding enrollment, Board of Education spending over the last years and a timeline for the enrollment study. They asked when we could have a joint meeting with them. They have one on February 10.

Mr. Freedman was in favor of meeting with them.

Mr. Alexander felt we should wait until after our budget presentation to them which may answer their questions.

Mrs. Ku referred to their charts and graphs which we need to address before they are published. She wasn't sure she agreed with the way they have been presented.

Ms. Hamilton felt it was beneficial to meet with them sooner. We should put together a package for a presentation to them. We need to make note of special requirements by grade.

February 10 is not a good date for her.

Mrs. Roche asked Dr. Reed's opinion.

Dr. Reed stated that the Board of Education has committed to conduct an enrollment study to be contracted in June. The study will be completed by November 1. The Board of Education in their goals is going to engage in strategic planning a part of which will be to define the future space needs of the school system. Upon completion, which is March 2015, the Board will be in a position to plan the use of unused space with the other Boards. He expects a tremendous turnout of people as we begin to define the impact of enrollment on Newtown schools. Space solutions will be debated regarding the possible alternative uses. He cautioned that the impact of 12/14 on this year's enrollment data make it more difficult to make inferences about enrollment trends. He thinks fewer people moved here because of the tragedy and we experienced some families withdrawing children because of the aftermath of the tragedy.

Mrs. Ku said if we schedule a joint meeting we need to meet as a whole to decide what we want to do on several of these issues.

Mrs. Leidlein would poll the Board for potential meeting dates.

#### Item 6 – Presentation of Superintendent's Recommended Budget

Dr. Reed spoke about the students taping the meeting. There were students from the Tech Club and Austin McChord who is a graduate of Newtown High School and owner of one of the fastest growing businesses in Connecticut. He has six students from our high school who are working for him with more expected. Dr. Reed began his presentation which is attached.

#### Item 7 – Elementary School Budgets

Principals attending include Barbara Gasparine, Christopher Geissler, Kathy Gombos and Hawley Lead Teacher, Roxanne Melaragno, in Jo-Ann Peter's absence.

Ms. Gasparine said these are status quo budgets which preserve current programs. No new programs or staffing are requested. She acknowledged that enrollment has declined and prior to identifying the location of the two unspecified teaching positions to be eliminated we need to see enrollment data through June and early July before decisions are finalized. Head O'Meadow just enrolled seven new students. We have a significant need for support staff for the SERV Grant and security staff is greatly valued.

Dr. Gombos said our budgets are focusing on teacher growth and student learning with sensitivity to the social and emotional growth of the children.

Mr. Vouros asked about the kindergarten program this year.

Mr. Geissler was satisfied with kindergarten this year which also includes explained time for various programs.

Ms. Hamilton asked what projected numbers we were using for kindergarten next year.

Dr. Reed said we are using our numbers which is 116 students less than Dr. Chung's middle range projection.

Ms. Hamilton said there was a 20% increase in the number of students from kindergarten to first grade at Hawley and Head O'Meadow as asked for data to support this increase.

Dr. Reed stated that we use the persistence factor based on five years. This budget reflects the reality of experiences that some of our students have had. The trauma at Sandy Hook School was different. Class size in some grade levels will be lower at Sandy Hook.

Mrs. Ku questioned the professional development growth shifting from outside to spending more time inside school.

Dr. Gombos said that part of the State mandate is that it be more individualized and in small groups. We use substitutes to allow teachers to observe other teachers teach. We do a lesson study planning and teach the lesson. There is a lot of collaboration between teachers during the school day.

#### Item 8 – Reed Intermediate School Budget

Anne Uberti, principal, said that declining enrollment is the biggest change in her budget. She will lose three teaching positions. The mental and physical well being and safety of students and staff is being met. Professional development was reduced because there are workshops in-house. Teachers need more time for collaboration and professional conversations. This is particularly important because of the impact of 12/14.

Mrs. Roche asked about the schedule for next year.

Mrs. Uberti said it was not completely finished and feels she has been able to improve the schedule by reallocating a position.

#### Item 9 – Public Participation – None

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to adjourn. Mr. Vouros seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

#### Item 10 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Kathy Hamilton  
Secretary

**Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in the council chambers at 3 Primrose Street.

D. Leidlein, Chair	J. Reed
L. Roche, Vice Chair	L. Gejda
K. Hamilton, Secretary	R. Bienkowski
K. Alexander	5 Staff
J. Vouros	5 Public
D. Freedman	2 Press
M. Ku	

Mrs. Leidlein called the meeting order at 7:33 p.m.

Item 1 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 – Approve Minutes of January 17, 2014

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved to approve the minutes of January 17, 2014. Mr. Alexander seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3 – Pupil Personnel, Special Education and Health Budgets

Julie Haggard gave an overview of the areas she supervises.

Ms. Hamilton asked for information on the IDEA Grant.

Mrs. Haggard explained the grant.

Mr. Freedman referred to the out of district tuition increases and asked if there have been studies to see if we can provide services in our district.

Mrs. Haggard said there are times students have needs we can't meet. What we budget for does not always meet the number of students we have to provide for who are identified during the next year or move into Newtown.

Ms. Hamilton asked the status of the preschool program and cost.

Ms. Haggard said that there is one class at Head O'Meadow School and two were moved to the high school last year. Currently we haven't made any definite decisions on moving the program. She would get the cost information.

Ms. Hamilton felt it would be best to have the program in one location.

Dr. Reed said the new Sandy Hook School is being designed to house the preschool program.

Mrs. Ku asked if special ed costs are beyond what is projected would the excess cost grant go up.

Mrs. Haggard said it is uncertain but we generally receive the same amount of reimbursement. Mrs. Ku asked if it came back directly to the district.

Dr. Reed said we get the money back the year we are incurring the cost and is applied against costs.

Mr. Bienkowski said the State has capped the amount. We've estimated 75% for the current and the next year.

Ms. Hamilton asked about the STARR Program enrollment and cost.

Mrs. Haggard said this program meets the needs of the more medically fragile population. We have one tuition student and two Newtown students. The cost has a lot to do with the excess cost grant. She will project the cost and provide that to the Board. All placements are decided by PPTs.

Mr. Vouros said the GATES committee is still in the process of meeting.

#### Item 4 – Middle School Budget

Tom Einhorn spoke about middle school goals with safety and security a priority. He asked for continued support for the Readers Workshop program and the technology needed for testing. Regarding the declining enrollment we will reduce the clusters from ten to nine with a reduction of four teachers. Classes are expected to have 23 students. The ninth cluster would have four teachers with 50% seventh grade and 50% eighth grade.

Ms. Hamilton asked how students in both grades would be grouped in the same class.

Mr. Einhorn said there would be consideration about the students placed in those classes. It has been done effectively in the past.

Mr. Vouros asked about the technology at the middle school, virtual desktop and the impact on the three computer labs as well as the status of the 11 Smartboards from Sandy Hook School.

Dr. Reed said we have a thin client solution at the middle school with 106 computers involved. We thought we solved some computer challenges last March. We did upgrades over the summer but have had some challenges emerge. Dell doesn't have the answers. Citrix will be at the school on February 3 to see if they can resolve the issue. If not, we will move away from these older models. If we have to discard those computers we will look at the proposed distribution of replacement computers. We also have a situation where we received a \$100,000 grant from the State but we have to spend \$200,000 on technology to get the grant. A portion of the grant funds will be used to replace 32 laptops on carts at the middle school and we will be increasing a larger number next year.

Mr. Freedman asked if we have sufficient technology in this budget to handle what we need for testing.

Mr. Einhorn said part of our request was to add 50 laptops to support the testing. We also look to create more mobile labs.

Ms. Hamilton asked where we stood regarding the testing.

Mr. Einhorn said that once students are logged in, they are functioning. It's more of an initial network connection problem in the beginning. He's confident we will be okay and doesn't think it's a bandwidth problem. The IT department is coming over each morning to take care of any issues.

Mrs. Leidlein asked if there was a solution.

Dr. Reed said there is a plan to resolve the issues with the thin client solution within a prescribed amount of time.

Mrs. Leidlein asked if students brought their own devices and if that was welcomed in the classroom.

Mr. Einhorn said there was a lot of Smartphone usage along with tablets. We encourage students to bring them in as they are an effective learning tool.

Mr. Vouros asked about the Smartboards from Sandy Hook School. Dr. Gejda said there was some installation over the break which was done free of charge. Some equipment had to be ordered with additional installation within the next two weeks. Staff members are using them who can help train when the additional ones are installed.

#### Item 5 –Newtown High School

Mr. Dumais said they have a couple of small increases which are for a gymnastics coach and an additional 12 work days for the director of guidance. There has been a decrease in the reduction of requests for art classes. We had a retirement in that department and decided to not replace that position at this time.

Mrs. Ku asked about the decline in course registrations in art.

Mr. Dumais said at the end of summer we've tried to run some art elective classes by combining sections of classes.

Ms. Hamilton requested a list of every class offered with the teacher, department and enrollment.

Mrs. Leidlein asked the enrollment requirement to be able to keep a course running.

Mr. Dumais said there is no Board policy on minimum enrollment.

Mrs. Leidlein stated that the past seven years has remained relatively flat and staffing in other grades has declined while staffing at the high school has increased with 9 FTEs since 2007. She asked why staffing was increased and for what positions.

Mr. Dumais said it has more to do with programs that have changes in staffing. Regarding NEASC, it was to catch up because we were deficient. Also, in 2010, the graduation requirements increased by two credits.

Mrs. Leidlein asked for a summary of what facilitated the changes in staffing.

Dr. Reed said we also have students who want to maximize what courses they want to take which becomes a scheduling challenge.

Ms. Hamilton said the high school expenses have gone up by \$2M and asked why.

Mr. Dumais said we have a great number of programs compared to the other Newtown schools which gives the high school the largest increase.

Mr. Freedman asked for a list of the responsibilities of the assistant principal.

Dr. Reed said that for the next few years we have to be attuned to the needs of the students of Newtown because of what happened a year ago. The work responsibility for staff is labor intensive. We have a commitment to the parents of Newtown to be proactive in working with students and families. We've seen the needs growing. The number of special education referrals is increasing.

Ms. Hamilton asked for a document identifying every line item in the budget by department area.

Mr. Bienkowski stated that what Ms. Hamilton shared had been prepared in that format by Bob Tait and currently doesn't exist.

#### Item 6 – Continuing Education

Mrs. Ku asked how much the Smart Program enrollment has increased.

Mrs. Gellis said we started with 75 students and at times it has gone to 210 and back down to 150 students.

Mrs. Leidlein asked if there were any additional students from Sandy Hook needing the booster program.

Mrs. Gellis said we would be having the booster program again this summer. A number of Sandy Hook students went to both programs last summer.

Mrs. Roche thanked Mr. Alexander for preparing the budget newsletter which was a goal of the Communications Subcommittee.

Mrs. Leidlein thanked Mr. Dumais for his leadership at the high school over the years and especially after December 14.

Item 7 – Public Participation – none

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved to adjourn. Mrs. Roche seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 8 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Kathy Hamilton  
Secretary

**Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on Thursday, January 30, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in the council chambers at 3 Primrose Street.

D. Leidlein, Chair	J. Reed
L. Roche, Vice Chair	L. Gejda
K. Hamilton, Secretary (absent)	R. Bienkowski
K. Alexander	5 Staff
J. Vouros	3 Public
D. Freedman	3 Press
M. Ku	

Mrs. Leidlein called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

Item 1 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 – Curriculum and Technology Budgets

Dr. Gejda spoke about the areas of curriculum, instruction and assessment. The budget drivers for staff and program development, the professional growth program, contracted services and textbooks are attached.

Mr. Freedman noted the textbook increase of \$26,000 and thought it was high number considering we are using computers.

Dr. Gejda said the cost of an online license may be the same as purchasing textbooks. It's not as cost free as it might appear to use online resources.

Mr. Alexander said the textbook increase has been lower. What is different for next year?

Dr. Gejda stated that because we have new standards we waited before we purchased books for the intermediate school.

Mr. Freedman questioned the cost for Ipad training and why we couldn't use staff to train.

Dr. Gejda said we aren't paying for the expert to come in and train. It is still part of the donation we received.

Mrs. Leidlein said that regarding the State's discussion about postponing the common core she asked how that will affect us and impact the teacher evaluation program.

Dr. Reed said the proposal pertaining to teacher evaluation has to be acted upon by the State Board of Education.

Mrs. Leidlein asked if the State is postponing things was there was room for us to do the same.

Dr. Gejda said we have a revision cycle regardless of what the standards are. We will take the field service test for SBAC.

Technology:

Mrs. Amodeo spoke about her requested budget without equipment and salary which is a \$94,953 increase over last year. This increase is due to \$50,000 restored to contracted services that had been covered by a donation in the 2013-2014 school year and \$28,000 for our anti-virus software which expires in the 2014-2015 budget year. Requested money for equipment replacement includes \$287,150 for obsolete equipment, \$67,856 for Voice over IP

for one remaining school, \$76,750 for priority requests from building administration and \$15,000 for mobile technology to better position the district for the Smarter Balanced assessments.

Mrs. Ku asked if she had enough staff since there have been no staff increases over a number of years.

Mrs. Amodeo said they are stretched thin. The overtime is just enough to get through the summer. She said every piece of equipment is used on a daily basis. She added money for mobile units for the testing.

Mr. Alexander asked if the computers that need to be replaced due to obsolescence would support the testing.

Mrs. Amodeo said some are eight years old and would need to be replaced before the testing.

Mrs. Leidlein asked if the testing required desktop computers or laptops.

Mrs. Amodeo said the middle school used laptops for NWEA. They also work for the testing.

### Item 3 – General Services

Mr. Bienkowski said that general services includes all administrative functions to run the district including security, substitute teachers, degree changes for staff and salary allowances. We are down 11.92%.

Dr. Reed said we have been asked by the First Selectman for alternative funding for some continued police presence in each school. A plan is in place to use officers who would go through a special state training program and be armed. We are planning for nine of them. We would maintain the same number of security officers which is 17 that are presently in place. We've been asked to put this in a separate budget so everyone can work together to educate the public on this emerging cost center. We look for help with the various boards. We want to help the residents understand we are undertaking a new program and that security is a relatively new function. We assume the SRO's at Reed, the middle school and the high school will remain in place. He assumes there will be a problem-solving group, including First Selectman Llodra, to work on this. Our current budget has 11 security guards with six from the SERV Grant for a total of 17.

Mr. Alexander feels we are looking at security as a budget item and it's not. We have to figure out what we need. If we add a budget section for armed services it will be difficult to remove. He wants a longer discussion. He thinks officers in schools are more of a benefit than armed security but he recognizes the cost. Do we have a system in place to encourage students to feel more comfortable with the police? That's a benefit to the system which is not being discussed. The Board should discuss if it is acceptable to have non police officers in our schools.

Dr. Reed stated this is a well thought out recommendation predicated on the notification that having police in each school is not provided by the Selectman's 2014-2015 budget. Our security committee voted last May that this was a viable option to pursue.

Mr. Alexander questioned if the Board actually has a choice to make and if there needs to be a policy change.

Mr. Freedman also feels this needs a broader discussion. Security shouldn't be questioned.

Dr. Reed feels for the next year or two it is imperative to maintain security in this or similar fashion.

Mrs. Roche said the security amount of \$216,000 is out there. If it's non-negotiable and the budget fails, we will have to find that money.

Dr. Reed said we need to be joined in a discussion with our partners.

Mrs. Leidlein said the idea was to have it separate because it was the result of an event. What is the total cost once we receive money from SERV and DOJ grants if we have armed security guards?

Mr. Bienkowski said that amount would be \$540,000 if there were no grants involved. If we only use the SERV Grant we would need \$65,000. With the DOJ Grant our cost would be \$7,000. If approved, the DOJ Grant would be for six months.

Mrs. Roche said if we assume this responsibility it will be with us forever. When we don't have the grant it will affect our bottom line for a long time.

Mrs. Ku feels we need public conversation on this important conversation. When we adopt the budget at what point do we address this? There needs to be time for the problem solving team to come together.

Dr. Reed said it's important to explain to the public how we have been spending.

Mr. Freedman hoped for a five-year plan.

Dr. Reed said it was important to concentrate on the needs and solutions that unifies us as a town. We expect the justice grant to be approved. The architects hired DVS for security recommendations for Sandy Hook School. They also are going to make recommendations for the other schools. We recently received the report from John Jay. There is a security committee going to look at the recommendations. This will be the next phase.

#### Item 4 – Plant

Mr. Alexander asked about the removal of two custodian positions.

Mr. Faiella said we would eliminate those at the elementary level and have a rotating schedule to compensate for those positions.

Dr. Reed said we've been fortunate because our custodians do additional work such as painting and some repairs besides the normal custodial work.

#### Item 5 – Benefits

Mr. Bienkowski provided an overview of the benefits area. We have an ASO program which provides administrative services and we self-fund claims for our employees. Being self-funded we save 8% to 10% each year. Over all savings has been approximately \$1.9M over the last three years. Savings over next year range between \$600,000 and \$800,000.

#### Item 6 – Transportation

Mr. Bienkowski said we will maintain a van used at the high school. All-Star has three years to go under their contract and the MTM contract will be up the end of this school year. A new item in this budget is to provide \$22,000 for late bus service at the middle and high schools.

Mrs. Leidlein asked the history of the number of buses we had and if a study could be done to see if the number of buses could be reduced with declining enrollment.

Mr. Bienkowski said the number of buses needed comes down to where students live and the schools they need to attend. If three students get off at a particular stop instead of four students, it does reduce mileage. This entire system was recalibrated last year with four less buses.

Item 7 – Information from Previous Board Meetings

Dr. Reed said we have the data that showed we moved up to 120<sup>th</sup> in per pupil expenditures. The change was made on line the night of the budget introduction. He used that statistic talking about a level of rankings over time. He used that statistic to infer we are a cost effective district and not that we are under-funded. The ranking changes mainly because of decline in enrollment and slightly because we began getting aide due to the tragedy. Dr. Gejda provided the information that was requested at the previous meeting.

Item 8 – Public Participation

Michelle Hankin, 16 Greenleaf, stressed the need for the Board of Education to share the facts with the other boards and the community. They need to understand what they are supporting. Security is important. Our town together suffered. The Town and Board of Education should be sharing costs. Mrs. Llodra put \$200,000 into contingency for police officers. Also, the Town gave \$150,000 to private schools as a gift. Education shouldn't have to suffer because of the cost for security.

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved to adjourn. Mr. Alexander seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 9 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Debbie Leidlein  
Chair

# DONATIONS

To BOE for Approval on February 4, 2014

2/4/2014

SHES

V. & R. Smith, Sandy Hook, CT

\$250.00

Total

\$ 250.00

\$ 250.00

SHES Library

Newtown Public  
Schools

\$ -

\$ -

Total

\$ -

\$ -

NPS Teachers

\$ -

\$ 250.00

\$ 250.00

## Additional Consent Agenda Item

February 4, 2014

TO: John Reed

FROM: Charles S. Dumais

Please accept the donation of \$7,500 from Ingersoll Auto of Danbury to the Newtown High School Drama program. The money will be deposited into the *Drama Activity Account* and is to be used exclusively for the production of the **Peter Pan Musical**. This is a very generous gift to the Newtown High School community. Thank you.

hand delivered 11:00am

JAN 31 2014

Town of Newtown  
Board of Education  
3 Primrose Street  
Newtown, CT 06470

To whom it may concern:

I would like to inform you, that I, Jose Lebron would like to begin the process of retirement with the Newtown Board of Education. At this point, due to my work restrictions I am not able to continue to work in the capacity that I was previously.

Please note that as of 2/3/14 I would like to be officially considered a retired employee.

Sincerely,



Jose Lebron

BOE Communications Report, 2/4/2014  
 Kathy Hamilton, Board of Education Secretary

<b>From</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>
Jason Hiruo	01/23/2014	Invitation to Lunarfest 2014
Kristen Stolfi	01/24/2014	Confirming presentation of the student based Eco Challenge project at the March 4 <sup>th</sup> BOE meeting
Karen Banks	01/25/2014	Article regarding "farm to school" nutritional meals.
Mark Ankers	01/27/2014	Question about voting
Nicole Barnhart	01/28/2014	Inquiring to interview some municipal board members about budget for journalism class
Doreen Trimarchi	01/29/2014	Question about school delay/cancellation phone calls
John Kortze	01/30/2014	In response to Debbie's invite to a joint BOE meeting. Most of the BOF could not make the proposed date. He stressed the importance of working collaboratively to help the public understand the concerns of both the BOE and the BOF so that we can better plan for the future. Also, requested class and enrollment data (3 <sup>rd</sup> request).
Michele Hankin	02/04/2014	Request to support the superintendent's budget

<b>To</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>
Stacie Doyle	01/28/2014	Answering question about MS Spring conference schedule.

**TOWN OF NEWTOWN**  
**SCHOOL SECURITY PERSONNEL**

**ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES (2013 – 2014) :**

POLICE OVERTIME:

3 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (ONE OFFICER AT EACH) = \$30,000 PER MONTH X 10 MONTHS = \$300,000

1 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (SANDY HOOK AT MONROE) \*\* = \$10,000 PER MONTH X 6 MONTHS = \$ 60,000

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST USING POLICE OVERTIME subtotal \$360,000

YOUTH OFFICER AND SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS = full time assignment backed up by overtime = \$ 243,000

Grand Total \$603,000

\*\*Reflects cost for 6 months only, January 2013 to July 2014. The first months of police costs for Chalk Hill (SHS) were covered by a grant.

\*\*Town of Monroe is supporting the cost of the officer stationed at the entry to the campus.

**RECOMMENDATIONS (2014-2015) :**

Create a cadre of School Safety Officers (SSO) compensated at an hourly rate. The work assignment is school day/year.

Continue School Resource Officers (Youth Officer) at Reed, Middle and High Schools.

Longer- term planning needed to address personnel needs and costs going forward.

**Security Projects - Projected Costs and Funding Sources through December 31, 2014**

Security Personnel	Estimated Cost	Funding Source				
		BOE	Grants	Donations	Local	
Un-Armed Security Personnel	\$365,103	\$365,103	\$260,914		\$0	\$143,680 currently funded by SERV grant
Staff Training	\$4,000	\$4,000			\$0	\$117,234 anticipated to be funded under DOJ grant
Security Services	\$8,000	\$8,000			\$0	Total \$260,914
Staff Mileage	\$300	\$300			\$0	
Security Supplies	\$2,900	\$2,900			\$0	
<b>Total Security Personnel</b>	<b>\$380,303</b>	<b>\$380,303</b>	<b>\$260,914</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	
<b>Building Hardening</b>						
Interior Door Locksets	\$731,000		\$390,700			Part of the \$511,016 to Town surplus in fiscal 2012-13
			\$340,300			Anticipated to be received from DOJ grant
<b>Total Lock Sets</b>	<b>\$731,000</b>		<b>\$731,000</b>			
Two-way Radios	\$163,322		\$99,767	\$63,555	\$0	In progress
Emergency Drills - all schools	\$18,000			\$18,000	\$0	Completed 9/17/13
Emergency Drills - all schools	\$13,000				\$13,000	Scheduled 5/14/14
Exterior Alert System	\$47,457		\$65,831		-\$18,374	Under discussion
Protective Film for Windows	\$347,500		\$305,000	\$30,000	\$12,500	Partially Completed
Bollards	\$23,000		\$25,002		-\$2,002	Pending
Surveillance Cameras (NMS, RIS, HAW, HOM, MG)	\$336,099			\$336,099	\$0	In progress
Hub Switching for Cameras	\$52,680		\$52,680		\$0	In progress
Keyless Entry	\$136,512			\$136,512	\$0	Completed
Labor (NMS, RIS, HAW, HOM, MG)	\$62,000			\$62,000	\$0	
VOIP for RIS & NMS	\$121,793		\$121,793		\$0	Pending
Ready Packs for ERT - All Schools	\$1,500		\$1,500		\$0	
Maintenance & Licensing for radios, surveillance cameras and keyless entry	\$12,000		\$12,000		\$0	Pending
NHS Surveillance Camera Upgrade	\$37,866		\$37,866		\$0	Pending
NHS Surveillance Cameras - Exterior	\$101,607		\$101,607		\$0	Pending
NHS Surveillance Cameras - Interior	\$137,991		\$137,991		\$0	Pending
NHS Surveillance Cameras - Stadium	\$65,571		\$65,571		\$0	Pending
<b>Total NHS Cameras</b>	<b>\$343,033</b>		<b>\$343,033</b>		<b>\$0</b>	
<b>Total Building Hardening</b>	<b>\$2,408,896</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,757,606</b>	<b>\$646,166</b>	<b>\$5,124</b>	
Code given to Press and/or Public if used with them: Project A: In Progress; Project B: Completed; Project C: Scheduled; Project D: Under Discussion;						
Project E: Partially Completed; Project F: Pending						

**Security Projects - Projected Costs and Funding Sources for 2013-14**

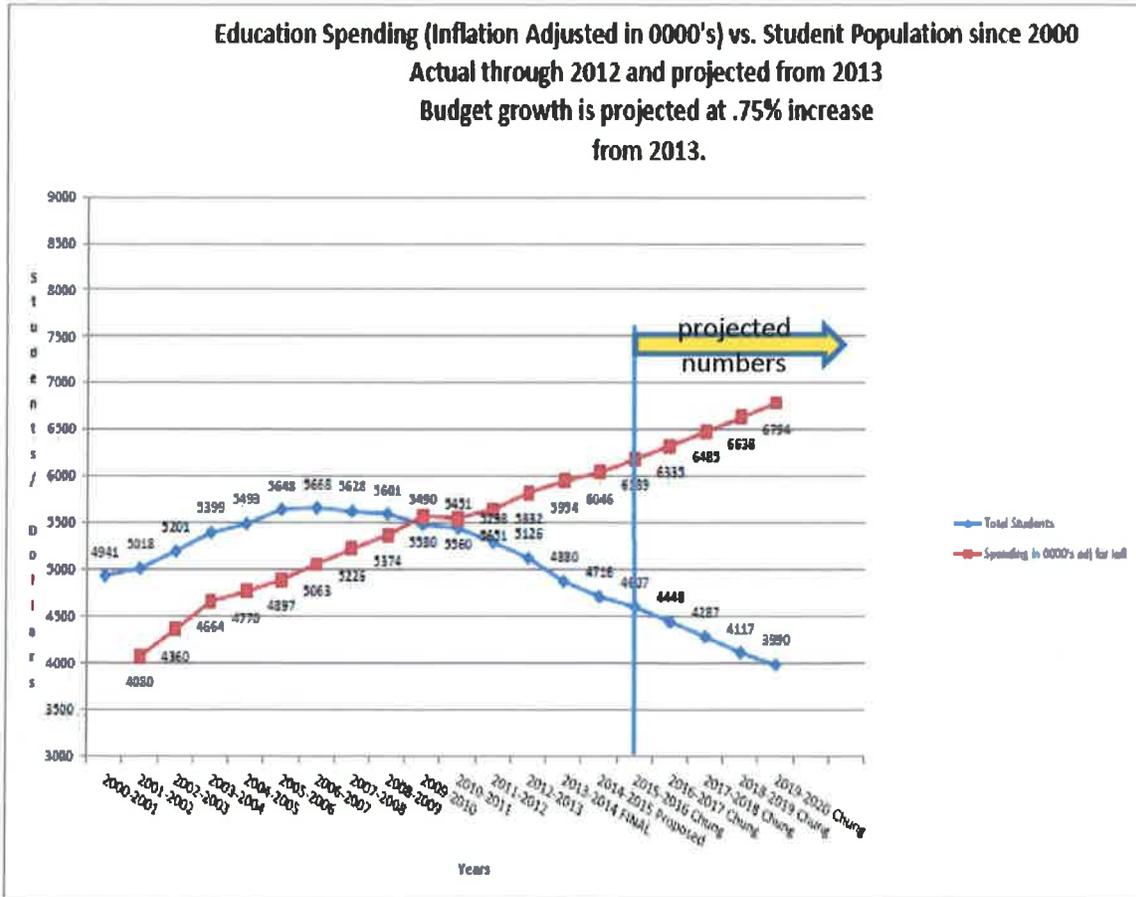
	<u>Estimated Cost</u>	<u>BOE</u>	<u>Grants</u>	<u>Donations</u>	<u>Local</u>
<b>Building Hardening</b>					
Interior Door Locksets	\$731,000	\$390,700			<i>Part of the \$511,016 to Town surplus in fiscal 2012-13 Anticipated to be received from DOJ grant</i>
		\$340,300			
Total Lock Sets	\$731,000	\$731,000			
<b>Projects</b>					
Project A	\$163,322	\$99,767	\$63,555	\$0	In progress
	\$336,099		\$336,099	\$0	In progress
	\$52,680	\$52,680		\$0	In progress
Project B	\$18,000		\$18,000	\$0	Completed 9/17/13
	\$136,512		\$136,512	\$0	Completed
	\$62,000		\$62,000	\$0	
Project C	\$13,000			\$13,000	Scheduled 5/14/14
Project D	\$47,457	\$65,831		-\$18,374	Under discussion
Project E	\$347,500	\$305,000	\$30,000	\$12,500	Partially Completed
Project F	\$23,000	\$25,002		-\$2,002	Pending
	\$121,793	\$121,793		\$0	Pending
	\$1,500	\$1,500		\$0	
	\$12,000	\$12,000		\$0	Pending
	\$37,866	\$37,866		\$0	Pending
	\$101,607	\$101,607		\$0	Pending
	\$137,991	\$137,991		\$0	Pending
	\$65,571	\$65,571		\$0	Pending
<b>Total Building Hardening</b>	<b>\$2,408,896</b>	<b>\$1,757,606</b>	<b>\$646,166</b>	<b>\$5,124</b>	

	2007-2008	2008-2008	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	Total adds and subtracts	2014-2015 1717 (+1) Proposed	Total teachers in subject
Enrollment	1719 (+1)	1704 (-15)	1731 (+27)	1731	1744 (+13)	1764 (+20)	1716 (-48)			
Staffing total	126.46	127.5	131.04	134.24	136.18	136.11	136.11			
Art	0.4							0.4	-1	2
Business Ed				-1.2				-1.2		2.8
Work Ed		-1	-0.4		0.2			-1.2		0.2
English				0.4		-0.4		0		17
World Lanuage	0.4	0.1	1	0.2				1.7		13.4
Health		0.5		0.8	-0.5			0.8		2
Fam. & Con. Sci	0.85	0.15						1		3
Math	0.75							0.75	-0.2	15.8
Music								0		3.4
PE	0.1	0.25						0.35		6
Science	1	1	1	0.8	1			4.8		23.8
History	0.5		1		1			2.5	-0.2	17.8
Tech Ed				0.8		0.4		1.2		6
Flex/ Tap	-0.2	0.5	1.5	0.2				2		3.57
Classroom									-0.2	0.2

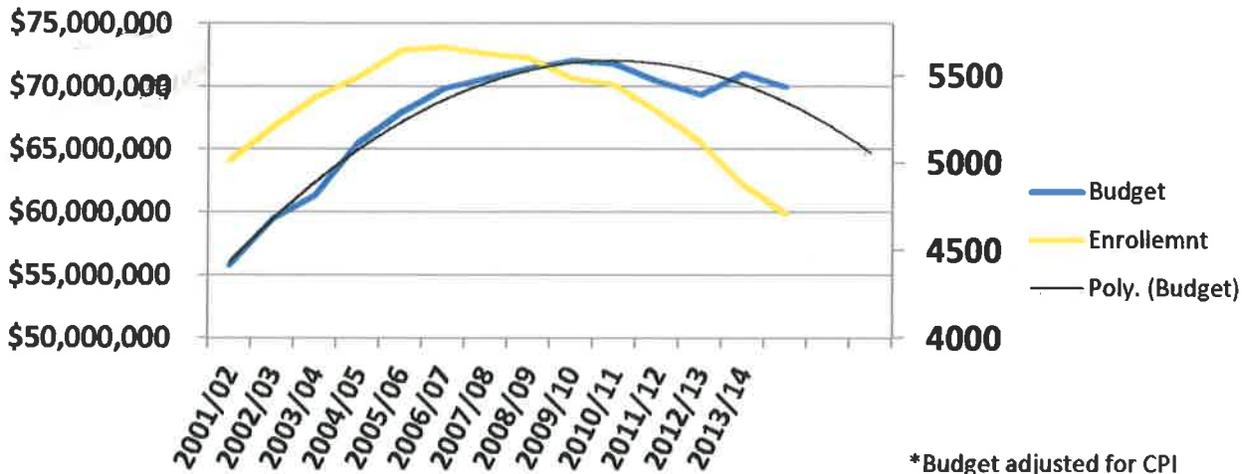
credits +2  
science and elective

financial literacy  
course req. for grad.

# Projections

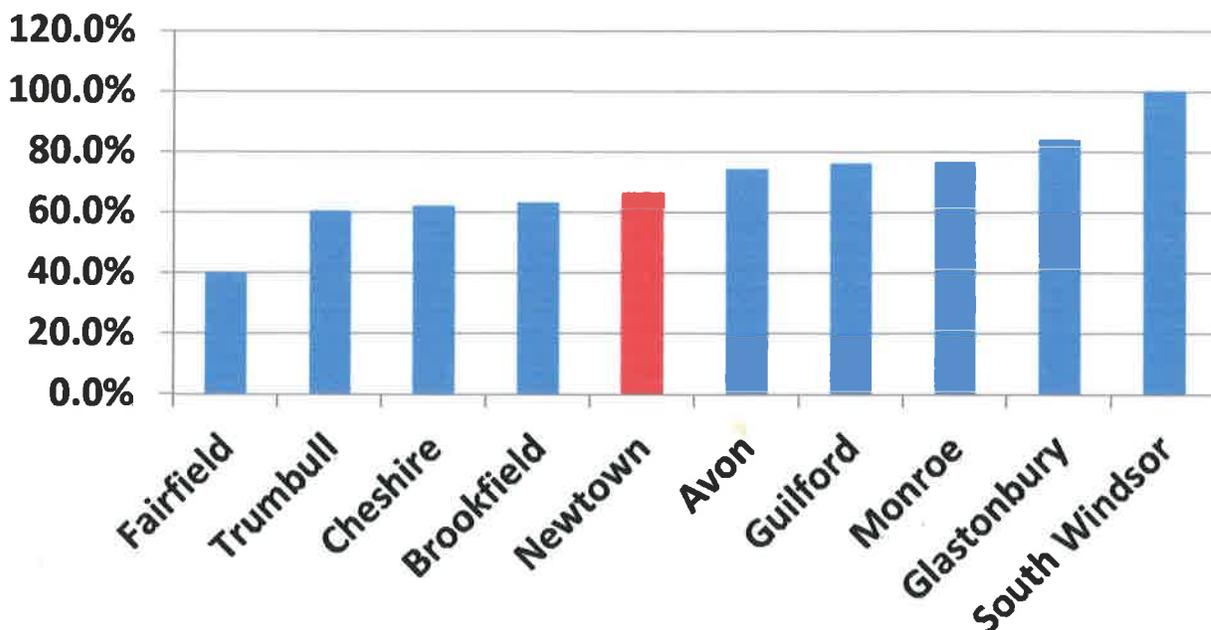


## Newtown BOE Budget (adjusted\*) and Enrollment

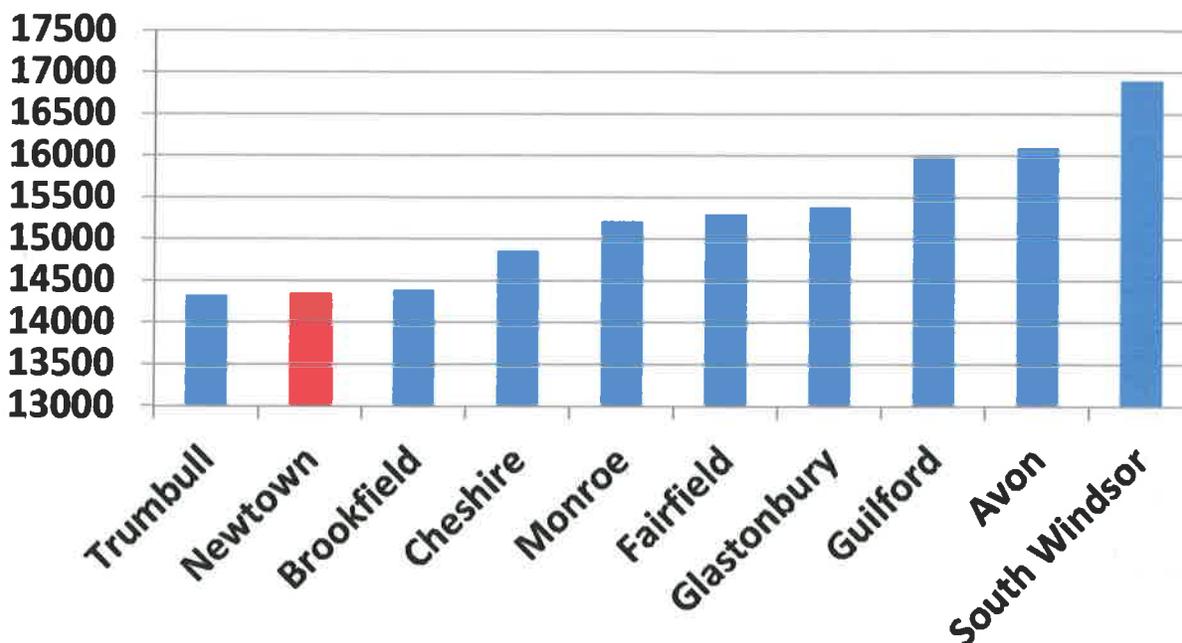


2/4/2014 Michelle Ku for BOE consideration

**DRG-B Districts**  
**Per Pupil Spending Increase: 2001 to 2014\***



**DRG-B Districts**  
**Per Pupil Spending**  
**Based on Proposed 2014/15 Budgets**



2/4/2014 Michelle Ku for BOE  
 consideration

2001/02 data obtained from CT SDE website  
 2014/15 data obtained from individual district  
 budgets as of 1/29/2014

# 2014/15 Budget Requests

DRG- B District Requests	
School District	Requested Budget Increase
Amity	3.10%
Avon	2.77%
Brookfield	4.66%
Cheshire	5.00%
Fairfield	3.78%
Glastonbury	4.41%
Greenwich	2.1%
Guilford	4.38%
Madison	2.03%
Monroe	2.63% requested/ 2.22% BOE approved
New Fairfield	2.74%
South Windsor	1.94%
Trumbull	3.69%

Fairfield County District Requests	
School District	Requested Budget Increase
Bethel	3.49%
Danbury	3.97%
Weston	2.71%
Seymour	3.50% BOE approved
Redding (PK-8)	-0.64%
Ridgefield	3.34%
Wilton	4.66%
Westport	6.51%