

Middletown Public Schools

Middletown, Rhode Island

February 26, 2009

6:30 p.m. – Budget Workshop

MICHAEL S. PINTO CONFERENCE ROOM

Members Present:

Michael F. Crowley, Jr., Chairman

Theresa Spengler, Vice-Chair

Kellie M. DiPalma

William R. O'Connell

Member Absent:

Liana F. Fenton

Also Present:

Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Superintendent of Schools

**Linda Savastano, Assistant Superintendent for Academic and
Technology Services**

Edward Collins, Director of Facilities

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. Administrative staff members present were Vincent Giuliano, Pete Wood, Michael Mancieri and Stephen Ponte.

Reduction in Force – Reduction in Force letters are being sent to 2 administrators, 3 custodians, 4 teacher assistants and 1 clerk. With the exception of the administrators, the school department does not have to comply with the March 1st deadline, but staff still has to be notified that they may not return to their position next year. Mrs. Kraeger stressed that it has nothing to do with performance.

Mr. Crowley testified before the Senate Labor Committee last month regarding changing the notification date. Senator DiPalma has introduced a bill in the Senate to change the date from March 1st to June 1st, when there is a much better idea of what funding will be.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Kellie DiPalma. Recommend the termination of 9 listed personnel. Unanimous vote.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Kellie DiPalma. Recommend displacement of 1 listed personnel. Unanimous vote.

Budget Workshop – This budget reflects the priorities given to the Superintendent by the School Committee, Principals and Budget Subcommittee. Mr. Crowley and Mrs. Kraeger have met with certified staff, teacher assistants and custodians to discuss the budget.

Administration has also met with Kennedy School families, staff and the Core Facilities Committee. Meetings will also be set up with Aquidneck School and Forest Avenue School parents and staff.

Mrs. Kraeger discussed the different sections of the budget. State Operations Aid is reduced and it is unclear what State Aid dollars will be. There is hope that \$300,000 will be carried forward in the revenues line. The School Department is asking the Town Council for \$1 million, which is the maximum 4.75% tax appropriation increase. Impact Aid has increased by \$200,000 as a result of anticipated prior year payments.

There is a budget shortfall of \$2 million. Mrs. Kraeger reviewed the list of possible cuts and the dollar amount associated with them. Closing J.F. Kennedy School would save \$834,447. Items that the School Committee requested to be left in the budget include:

All-day Kindergarten

Gaudet Consumer Science and Tech Ed

English Language Learning

Nurse/Teachers

Foreign Language at Gaudet

Literacy Teacher

Librarian

An item that is incorporated in this budget, but needs restructuring is

the Grade Leaders at Gaudet. If Kennedy School is closed and the 4th graders are brought over to Gaudet, the Grade Leaders will be needed even more. Restructuring the Alternative Learning Program is also being considered.

Currently, there are many fiscal unknowns, including negotiating the Teacher and Teacher Assistant contracts, revenues from the State, student enrollment in September, tax appropriation from the Town and the Stimulus Dollars. The estimated two-year aid to local school districts under Federal stimulus package is \$221,108 for Title I and \$874,652 for special education for a total of \$1,095,760. We need to be careful with the use of this money because this is a short term fix.

Miss DiPalma asked when can we expect to know what percentage will be from the Town Council. Mrs. Kraeger said that they will vote in mid-June. Mrs. Spengler said that these unknowns make it very difficult not knowing what monies will be coming in. She commented that Mrs. Kraeger and administrative team did a great job preparing the budget.

Public Input –

The following individuals addressed the School Committee regarding budget reduction:

David Fontaine, MHS Librarian

David Pritchard, ALP Teacher

Antone Viveiros

**School Nurse/Teachers Donna Byron, Cheryl Rosa, Ellen O'Connor
and Cam Ventura**

Annie Tatorosian – Aquidneck School Parent

Richard Barker

Joanna Bowman, School Bus Driver

**MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Kellie DiPalma. To adjourn from
the Budget Workshop at 8:32 p.m. Unanimous vote.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Clerk