



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

**Minutes – Board of Education Meeting – March 23, 2020**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mrs. Y. Rivera, President. The meeting was held via ZOOM.

**Present:** Mrs. Y. Rivera, President; Mr. M. Wilcox, Vice-President; Dr. E. Joyner, Secretary; Mr. D. Goldson, Dr. T. Jackson- McArthur, Mayor J. Elicker, Mr. Larry Conaway, Ms. L. Arouna

**Absent:** Mr. N. Rivera

Mr. Conaway led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Rivera announced that she has appointed Attorney Elia Alexiades, Asst. Corp Council, as parliamentarian for this evening's meeting. She asked the public to please mute their microphones since they will not be speaking at this meeting. To Board members she asked them to only speak when they are recognized by the Chair and to speak clearly. This is our first Board meeting via ZOOM with Board members calling in. Mrs. Rivera asked Board members to please limit their comments to a specific topic twice and to please be respectful to each other and respectful of each other's time.

Mr. Goldson wanted to know where the authority comes from to appoint a parliamentarian because it is not in our Bylaws and what role would this person play. Mrs. Rivera noted that it is part of Roberts Rules of Order. Atty. Alexiades responded that the power to appoint a parliamentarian is part of the inherent power of the Chair and it is an advisory position to the Chair. Mr. Alexiades commented further.

Mr. Goldson remarked that he is uncomfortable with a non-Board member joining this discussion and debate; he is uncomfortable that we did not get this information before the meeting but it is typical of what happens here, but he is not going to argue any further at this point unless it interferes with his ability to participate.

Mrs. Rivera announced that she would like to make some changes to the order of the meeting to be sensitive to the City staff that is here. Move the discussions regarding the use of Career High School to the Superintendent's Report and Part-Time Employees, and make the approval of the Personnel Report the last item.

**Approval of Minutes** Mr. Goldson had a few corrections: 1) approval of personnel report states the new position of this person was hired and we just corrected the funding source it was his understanding that this position received a bump in pay, and Dr. Tracey remarked that is incorrect; 2) page 9, Motion 213-20, Keep Position Union, "until further review", he would like these words stricken because they were not part of the motion.

Dr. Joyner made a motion, seconded by Mayor Elicker, to approve the minutes of the BOE



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221-20

**Approval of Minutes  
As Amended**

On the motion by Dr. Joyner, seconded by Mayor Elicker, it was unanimously voted, by roll call, to approve the Board meeting of March 9, 2020 as amended.

**Student's Report**

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Ms. Arouna reported how students are coping during these times. She remarked there is a lot of confusion and disparity on how teachers are dishing out work, how work is being collected and how grades are being inputted. Students are wondering if the marking period is still going to close on this Friday. There has been a lot of good support from teachers and admin sending out emails and doing videos to cheer up students.

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**Superintendent's Report**

*Use of Career High School*

Dr. Tracey remarked that she is going to have Ms. Maritza Bond, Health Director, to speak to using Career High School as an isolated shelter for COVID-19 patients. Ms. Bond deferred to Dr. Dalal to speak to this issue.

Dr. Dalal explained some of the specific proposed uses of Career High School to assist us in this epidemic. This is an unprecedented epidemic. One of the key recommendations coming from public health authorities is that those who have COVID-19 disease must self-isolate. Our homeless population in New Haven and facilities that house them cannot follow the CDC guidance with respect to isolation. It is common public health practice to set up an isolation facility where those who are tested positive for the disease can be grouped together, because they cannot transmit it to each other, and housed until their disease clears, which is about 14 days. Many cases of the disease are classified as mild or moderate and do not require hospitalization. If someone tests positive for COVID, there is an 80% chance that they will be sent back to their homes, however, homeless people have no home to go back to. Therefore, we activated an emergency operations plan, which has been in place for over a decade, that identified Hill Regional Career High School as one of the sheltering locations for those who are impacted by an emergency.

Mr. Rick Fontana, Director of Emergency Operations, explained the decision-making component that was decided regarding the utilization of a shelter. These shelters have been in place before 2009 when he came on board to the City of New Haven. Career was chosen after Hurricane Irene and he explained why it was identified as a regional shelter. Mr. Fontana also mentioned the other shelters that were identified in the City of New Haven which included Hillhouse, Wilbur Cross, Southern and the Moore Filed House as well as some other locations. Mr. Fontana stated that we serve as the host community for the Millstone Nuclear Power Plant.

Mr. Fontana mentioned that we are a part of Region 2, and he explained the other regional shelters that were identified as part of the City of New Haven Emergency Operation Plan.



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These included Ansonia High School, Haddam/Killingworth High School, North Branford High School and Hill Regional Career. Career was chosen because it was near Yale New Haven Hospital and the St. Raphael's Campus, it was chosen because of its location along a main arterial route and it was chosen because it can be compartmentalized easily as well as having a gymnasium that was much better than any of the other schools that they identified during the walkthrough in 2011 during the inspection after Hurricane Irene. This shelter was identified, inspected by the Department of Homeland Security, and identified as authorized to use as a shelter. Mr. Fontana noted that this is still a shelter even though it is being used for medical reasons. Under the national plan, it is clearly an acceptable use. Mr. Fontana explained in detail why they did not have time to have another facility inspected. This came under the National Incident Response Plan, clearly defined, signed and promulgated in 2019 as an identified and approved shelter. It was timing and need because the last thing we wanted to do was to spread the disease any further to our homeless population.

Mr. Goldson stated that this is not a shelter; this is a shelter/hospital/prison and he expressed his dissatisfaction with the decision to use Career as a shelter. He went on at length.

Mr. Goldson also wanted to know about a news report that a person who was being quarantined escaped and ended up in Milford and was being sent back to New Haven for quarantine. He wanted to know if this was true.

Health Director Maritza Bond explained what occurred with the individual that Mr. Goldson asked about. He was in the process of being discharged and he became impatient, and just walked out without the proper clearance. When we were notified about this, we identified that he was to be monitored for a couple of days but he was well enough to be discharged. He is not in our jurisdiction currently and he has been ordered to stay in the jurisdiction that he is in. He will be monitored for the next 72 hours.

Mr. Goldson had a list of questions for Mr. Fontana. One of the questions was about security and how we are going to keep these individuals from leaving whenever they want to leave.

Mr. Fontana remarked we are working with the New Haven Police Department to establish a security plan that will ensure the safety of those individuals inside and the safety of them not leaving the facility. Mr. Fontana stated, with all due respect, that he disagrees with Mr. Goldson's terminology calling it a jail, which it is not. This is a shelter facility with some medical monitoring that will occur inside. Mr. Goldson asked if these individuals would be able to leave whenever they want to and Mr. Fontana commented they will not be able to leave, they will be quarantined there. Mr. Goldson wanted to know what the difference is



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between that and a jail. Mr. Fontana answered that a jail is for criminals and a shelter is for someone who is at risk and we are sheltering them so they do not go out and spread this disease.

Mr. Goldson said that he has a list of questions that he would like answered but not at this time. He read the following Resolution, which he had prepared:

222-20  
Resolution re  
COVID19 Virus

**Mr. Goldson made a motion to approve the following Resolution related to the use of Career High School as a shelter during the COVID-19 Crisis, seconded by Dr. Jackson-McArthur.**

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**Resolution Related to Use of Career High School during the COVID-19 Crisis, 3/20/20**

We the Board of Education respectfully requests that Mayor Justin Elicker reconsiders the use of Career High School as a hospital/shelter for persons infected with COVID-19 and instead identify a more appropriate site for said use.

The school lacks a negative airflow system, teachers and students' personal items are currently stored in the building, and not enough is known about the life and transmission of the virus, as well as potential mutations.

Additionally, the population which will be housed there may be quarantined against their will and can be expected to attempt escape into the surrounding community. The school is not secure enough to guarantee against escapes and is not appropriate to be used as a pseudo prison.

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Atty. Alexiades, Board appointed parliamentarian, remarked that the motion is out of order. Mr. Goldson continued his narrative. Mrs. Rivera remarked the motion was out of order and Mr. Goldson commented that he would like to appeal that decision and bring it to the Board for a vote. Mr. Wilcox seconded the appeal.

Mr. Goldson stated that you cannot deny votes on items that are under discussion. He as a Board member has the right to make motions on any item that is on the agenda. His discussion and motion is germane to the item and he has a right to make a motion. He is asking Board members to support having a vote on his motion to appeal and overrule the President's decision.

Atty. Alexiades commented the Board may vote to appeal the decision of the Chair. Ultimately, the Chair is not obligated to take this advice.



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Mr. Conaway commented that he feels Mr. Goldson has a valid point and it pertains to the topic and the agenda item.

Mr. Wilcox expressed his reasons why he is not in support of this motion or the content of the motion. He feels that the City's emergency officials know the will of the community and the Board on this topic. He is more interested in knowing how we will return the school to use as a school, who will be responsible for the cleanup? He commented that he also does not agree with the wording of the motion. Mrs. Rivera agreed with Mr. Wilcox and gave her reasons why she put this on the agenda and said she is not in support of this motion.

Dr. Joyner also joined this discussion and noted that the motion seems to be written poorly and with prejudice. Secondly, we are overturning the history of emergency declarations where various buildings have been used during emergencies. He continued to explain and commented that he feels it is inappropriate at this time. We have to trust the people who are qualified to make these decisions and trust their judgement.

Mayor Elicker also weighed in. He commented that he and Mr. Goldson have known each other for a long time and he thinks that they would both acknowledge that they have a lot of respect for the process. He understands how Board members feel, however, he feels that Mr. Goldson's introduction of this motion is inappropriate. Mayor Elicker explained his reasons for this in detail. He went on to explain that the public deserves due process and the items that will be voted on. Mr. Goldson did not agree with this and Mr. Goldson interrupted and remarked we are not on the appeal because Mrs. Rivera withdrew her order to not allow it. Mayor Elicker did a recap of what had occurred and asked Mrs. Rivera if she had formally withdrew and Mrs. Rivera commented that she did not formally withdraw.

Mayor Elicker, for clarification, asked Mrs. Rivera if it is her opinion that Mr. Goldson's resolution is appropriate or not. She commented that she has deemed it inappropriate, it was appealed and then she decided to let the votes move forward so as not to continue the conversation around the appeal. Mayor Elicker recapped, so there was an appeal and then a second, so we are now in a discussion around the appeal. Mrs. Rivera commented, no, we are in a discussion around the votes. Mayor Elicker remarked that Roberts Rules allow Board members to appeal a decision of the Chair and it needs to be seconded, and then Board members discuss the merits of the appeal then Board members need to vote whether they approve of the appeal of the decision of the Chair, and that has not been done.

Mr. Goldson, for clarification, commented that we are voting on the resolution. You withdrew your objection so we are now on the motion before the Board. Mrs. Rivera



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commented we are voting on the motion and so far we have Mr. Wilcox, Dr. Joyner and I voting against. We are still in discussion.

Mr. Goldson said he was going to ignore the insults that Dr. Joyner sent his way and he suggested that if we want to talk about proper notice, we should have been made aware of this before this decision was made. He continued to explain. Mr. Goldson commented that he wants the public to know what his position is on this. This vote doesn't overturn his authority to use this school we are just asking him to reconsider. Some of them who are involved with this community want to have their voices heard.

In answer to Mr. Goldson's continuing the argument about not having sufficient notice, Dr. Joyner commented that there are reasons why emergency declarations are called emergency declarations and he explained. We were told, we got an email from Mr. Pinto, and some of these things are taking place at a breakneck pace because this disease is taking place at a breakneck pace. Dr. Joyner said he agrees with Mr. Goldson that we should move on with the vote so we can deal with the substantive issues in addition to this one that we have to deal with as a Board.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur said that she knows everyone is working on this right now and she thanked the Mayor for all he is doing. She doesn't feel we know enough about this; it is airborne to some degree. She wishes that he would consider another location besides an occupied school because this is a contagious urban disease. Dr. Jackson-McArthur wanted to know more about the FEMA cleaning he has referred to.

Mayor Elicker commented that it is his understanding that the CDC has guidelines on how to clean a facility and we would be following those CDC guidelines. Dr. Jackson-McArthur wanted to know what that entails because parents are very concerned. Mayor Elicker remarked he is also concerned, and we want to keep the community as safe as we can to do that. What this means is that homeless individuals have a place to isolate. Dr. Jackson-McArthur wanted to know and if a school has to sit an amount of time after the cleaning. These are questions people are asking.

Mr. Fontana commented that the CDC does provide guidance on cleaning. When this operation is completed that school will be cleaner than it has been in a very long time. He continued to explain the process that will be used. Mr. Fontana remarked that when they leave there that school will look brand new.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur said that we have to make sure that families will feel comfortable when we send their children back. There is a lot of fear here and she's just saying that the community needs to know because they have to be made comfortable sending their children back.



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Mr. Conaway agreed with Dr. Jackson-McArthur and to Mayor Elicker commented that he knows he has a difficult job and he respects what he is doing. He has also been getting a lot of calls about not using Career as a shelter. He feels this discussion had to take place.

**223-20  
Reconsider Career  
as a Shelter for  
COVID-19 Crisis**

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**On the motion by Mr. Goldson, seconded by Dr. Jackson-McArthur, it was voted by roll call vote to reconsider using Career High School as a shelter during the COVID-19 crisis, 5 nays – Mr. Wilcox, Dr. Joyner, Mayor Elicker, Mr. Conaway, Mrs. Rivera; 2 ayes – Mr. Goldson, Dr. Jackson-McArthur, Ms. Arouna. Motion failed.**

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Mayor Elicker asked if it is all right with everyone if Dr. Dulal, Director Bond and Mr. Fontana leave because they have a lot of work to do. Dr. Tracey agreed.

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**Superintendent’s Report (continued)**

*Discussion and Potential Motion to Approve to Pay Part-time Employees from General Funds while awaiting a Waiver to use Special Funds*

Dr. Tracey commented that at a previous BOE meeting she was asked if all staff would be paid and she answered, yes. She then was informed to look into the use of federal funds to pay part-time non-unionized workers who are not on contract and she told this Board that she would look for other solutions as she was awaiting information from the federal government if they would do a waiver for us to pay them. She has not yet heard from them. Through other communications to the Board she asked if general funds could be used to support them in this time of crisis and in text messages it was agreed upon and she informed the Board she would prefer this to come before the full board to be publically recorded. Dr. Tracey remarked that it has been mentioned that she is not in support of part-time workers and that is so far from the truth. She said, “You cannot find a more compassionate individual than I am and her staff can attest to that.”

Mr. Penn spoke to the financial aspects of this topic. He commented that right now we pay approximately \$80,000 per week to part-timers from our general funds and about \$180,000 per week to part-timers from our special funds. If you take out the April break week, the time the crisis started, we have about 12 weeks left to June 12<sup>th</sup>, the original projected end-date of the school year. If we decide to pay part-timers what they would have normally earned from now through the end of the year, the cost is about \$900,000 to the general fund and if we were to take the special funds and move that to the general fund, it would be an additional almost \$2.2million into the deficit. The general funds piece was already in the deficit projection, the special funds piece was not because we anticipated that it would continue to be paid through special funds to the remainder of the year. Mr. Penn continued that the deficit was down \$4.2million. If we went ahead and approved the transfer from special funds to general funds, the deficit would move back up to about \$6.4 million.

Dr. Tracey introduced Ms. Cathleen Simpson, Director of Labor Relations for the City of



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New Haven. Ms. Simpson commented that they have been discussing this with Dr. Tracey and they also have part-timers in the City, not as many as the BOE, and we want to support as many employees as much as we can. We are looking at how long we can keep people on a paid leave and then looking at it on a two-week period basis as we go along. Not knowing how long it is going to be, we are hoping that we are going to be in alignment if we are going to pay every two weeks, instead of having a deadline tonight on how we are going to pay through the end of your school year and our fiscal year.

Dr. Tracey commented there is a motion to approve paying part-time employees from general funds while awaiting a waiver to use special funds. This is not for full-time teachers who work part-time in certain programs; we are not going to pay them part-time pay. We are talking about people working 8-10 hours a week and this is their only salary. The Board has to decide if it is going to be until the end of the year or can we look at it every two weeks. From the State's report, they are projecting through April 20<sup>th</sup> for school's to probably be reopened. Dr. Tracey commented she just wanted the Board to have all the information so they can be informed.

Mayor Elicker, for clarification, many of the part-time employees get paid through special funds, which if they are not working we cannot use, he asked Mr. Penn how much money this adds to the deficit. Mr. Penn responded if we were to switch them over to general funds, it's about \$2.2 million for the duration of the school year. Mayor Elicker then wanted to know if we pay them and they are not working, we have to switch them over, correct? Mr. Penn commented yes, that is correct. Mayor Elicker remarked this is a very difficult time and he feels the same as all the other Board members that we need to support people that are really struggling and he feels the same as other Board members that we have to support these individuals, but he doesn't know where the Board plans on coming up with the additional money. Mr. Penn agreed and commented it is a valid concern especially since we have three months to go through the end of the school year and the opportunities to save our way to that \$2.2 million become limited.

Mr. Goldson asked Mr. Penn how much we are saving in other areas, such as busing. Mr. Penn responded, zero. Mr. Goldson wanted to know how that is possible. Mr. Penn told him because the transportation contract has a clause in it that says it cannot be reduced for non-performance due to governmental action. As a result of the schools being closed by the governor until at least April 20<sup>th</sup>, there is no reduction in the bus contract.

Mr. Goldson said that we are paying some fat cat owner of a bus company who is or is not paying his drivers for a contract that he is not fulfilling at this point, and we are having a conversation about whether we can afford to pay people who make \$8,000 a year. Mr. Goldson went on to talk about the difference between the haves, the administration, and the have nots, paras and part-time workers. He aggressively went on at length comparing



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the salaries of the administration to the part-timers. Mr. Goldson wanted to know what the proposal is from the administration.

Dr. Tracey responded that she is not in any political grandstanding right now. Mr. Goldson took umbrage and said this is not grandstanding it is about people's lives. Dr. Tracey remarked we are not against paying our part-time workers. It is incumbent upon her as a qualified CEO of the school district to give the Board all of the information she can so that the Board can make informed decisions. She explained further.

Mr. Goldson remarked that for the third time the Superintendent has defined who these people are. If the President wants me to add into the motion that these people are not retirees, they are not teachers who are also working part-time, he will be happy to do that. She has made it clear that they are people who are only receiving part-time checks from the school system.

Dr. Tracey remarked that she just learned of some additional information from the Special Ed Director that currently half part-time retirees who are helping with distance learning for special ed are being paid from special funds, so they are covered. She also received a text from Ms. Gaffney, our Head Start Director, that all Head Start personnel need to be paid through special funds. A discussion took place.

Atty. Alexiades asked if there was a motion on the floor, the answer was, yes. Mayor Elicker added that he doesn't feel it is unreasonable for people to know what they are voting on and the language of what they are voting on. Maybe Mr. Goldson, who has a motion on the table that has been seconded and now he is amending that motion to add clarifying information makes sense, he asked Mr. Goldson to read his motion. Mr. Goldson reiterated the background of the motion and commented to pay part-time employees while awaiting approval to waiver special funds.

Mrs. Rivera commented that no one is against paying part-timers. Her concern is what is going to be the implication for the Board of Ed. That is why she wasn't in favor of Mr. Wilcox's version of it bringing it back to every Board meeting and then approve it or not. How is this going to work if we agree to this and schools do not reopen? You can't walk that back. If we say we are going to do it for two weeks and then, hopefully, hear back about special funds and then set it for the next meeting seems to be a little bit fairer and would make more sense given our deficit. That is where her concern is.

Dr. Joyner referenced the text and noted that it was about using general funds as the last resort and it was pending some direction from the federal government that is why he feels that Mr. Wilcox's suggestion is a good one because it would give us time to see if the



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federal government would pay those workers, because two weeks would give us clarity. Dr. Joyner went on in detail.

Mr. Conaway suggested it would also give us a chance to look at if there were any savings with electrical materials/supplies, etc. There could be savings on one side to pay the part-timers on the other side. He agrees that we should pay the part-timers. Mrs. Rivera agreed.

Mr. Goldson repeated the motion, which was outlined on the agenda under the Superintendent's Report. If we get a notification from special funds that we can't do it, we certainly revisit it. Mr. Goldson suggested that to relieve the stress on these employees and to make it easy on ourselves to approve this motion while awaiting the waiver to use special funds. He continued to explain.

Mrs. Rivera commented while we are awaiting a waiver to use special funds and if that never happens, we are on the hook for general funds when this is all over, which could become a problem.

Mr. Wilcox remarked that he agrees that if the bus company isn't bringing kids to school, they shouldn't get paid. The time to discuss that was when their contract was being renewed. He commented that if the motion fails, he is happy to reintroduce the same motion until the pay period in the middle of April, which by that time all of these questions should be answered.

Mayor Elicker suggested we vote on the motion that is on the table.

Dr. Tracey noted that we have been working all day and her staff and the principals have been working getting materials to our students. For the record, in defense of her staff, she knows that they are working hard. She continued to say that they have been working with the Teacher's Union and the Administrations' Union and she continued to explain.

There was a discussion initiated by Mr. Goldson about the motion that was on the agenda and he wanted to know what Dr. Tracey's opinion is on that. Mr. Goldson said that it is a fair question and Dr. Joyner and Mayor Elicker remarked it is not a fair question and there is a motion on the table.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked for clarity on the motion and it was provided.

224-20  
Pay Part-Timers  
From General

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**On the motion by Mr. Goldson, seconded by Mr. Conaway, it was voted by roll call, to pay part-time employees from general funds while awaiting a waiver to use special funds with 5 nays, Mrs. Rivera, Mr. Wilcox, Mayor Elicker, Dr. Joyner,**



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**Funds Awaiting a Waiver to Use Special Funds** Ms. Arouna and 3 ayes, Mr. Goldson, Dr. Jackson-McArthur, Mr. Conaway.  
The motion failed

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**225-20 Approve the Amended Motion** On the amended motion by Mr. Wilcox, seconded by Mayor Elicker, it was voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to pay part-time employees, as described by Dr. Tracey using general funds, if needed, until the mid-April pay period with 5 ayes by Mayor Elicker, Dr. Jackson-McArthur, Dr. Joyner, Mrs. Rivera, Mr. Wilcox, Ms. Arouna and two nays by Mr. Conaway and Mr. Goldson.

*Personnel Report*

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Dr. Tracey asked for approval of the Superintendent’s Personnel Report.

Mr. Goldson asked Dr. Tracey about the paraprofessional resignation on the bottom of Page 1, Shoneace Cunningham. He heard that she rescinded her resignation and asked Dr. Tracey if that is true. Ms. Mack answered that Ms. Cunningham submitted her resignation on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, and her replacement had already been recommended and the position was filled. Mr. Goldson remarked that was only two weeks ago and Ms. Mack commented that Ms. Cunningham rescinded her resignation on March 19<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Goldson commented, with all due respect you cannot fill a position that hasn’t been vacated yet. It is not vacated until we do the blue sheet. He explained his understanding of the situation. He respectfully requested that we pass this over until the next board meeting.

Dr. Joyner remarked that we are a policy making body and we have a personnel department and a superintendent to make administrative decisions and he feels we should all stay in our lane on issues like this.

Ms. Mack added that not only did Ms. Cunningham submit her letter of resignation on March 2<sup>nd</sup> but her last day of employment was March 13<sup>th</sup> and she sent her request to rescind her resignation on March 21<sup>st</sup>.

**226-20 Approval of Personnel Report**

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**On the motion by Dr. Joyner, seconded by Mayor Elicker, it was unanimously voted by roll call vote, with one nay by Mr. Goldson, to approve the Superintendent’s Personnel Report.**

*Educational Continuity*

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Dr. Tracey remarked that when she was asked to serve as Interim-Superintendent in November 2019, who would have thought we would have been faced with such a crisis at this time. Dr. Tracey said that she is very grateful to the Board members who have worked with her throughout this time offering suggestions and compliments on the job she is doing. Her major concern at this time is the health and well-being of her students and their families. We have to think of all their pathways and she explained in detail. We have



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been using Parent Link to communicate with parents and we have been using email, Zoom and other media to communicate with staff. She asked that everyone be patient as we work through a lot of complex issues in these trying times. She thanked her staff, administrators, teachers and all of those who have been working around the clock. She also thanked Sarah Miller who came up with some great ideas from the NHPS Advocates and shared that information with us.

Dr. Tracey added that they are a Comer School District and as such, we deal with no fault, consensus, and collaboration. The closings were determined by the State of Connecticut, the duration of closure will also be determined by the State and, according to a recent conference call with the Governor, schools will be out until April 20, 2020 but this can change in the twinkling of an eye. We have been working with changes on a daily basis and she knows that some teachers are concerned about the repetitiveness of change to get things accomplished.

Dr. Tracey explained in collaboration with Dave Cicarella of the Teacher's Union and Sequella Colon of the Administrators Union we have switched gears from using packets to provide online learning opportunities for students. Our staff is very flexible and some were in schools yesterday, Sunday. Our responsibility, per the State, is to do as much as possible to provide opportunities for learning. Teachers have been asked to set up Google classrooms for online learning.

She continued to say that this morning she reached out to the Commissioner for support for electronic devices and she is happy to report that they are working on supporting all Alliance districts with extra devices. She has taken over this helm, she is not perfect and neither is her staff but we are trying our best to support our students. We have had about 12,000 responses from our families that indicated that 55% of our families didn't have electronic devices. She is listening to Dr. Jackson-McArthur when she talks about the stress that some of our families are experiencing.

Dr. Tracey continued to explain what they are doing at this difficult time to ensure the continuity of learning for students.

Dr. Joyner said, quite frankly, Dr. Tracey and her staff are ahead of the curve. There is more direction and more organization coming out of that office than there is coming out of Los Angeles and New York. He commented that at this time it is really important for us to recognize people who are going above and beyond the call of duty and he appreciates that. Dr. Joyner also complimented Mrs. Rivera on the job she is doing.

At this point, Mr. Goldson interrupted Dr. Joyner and said that he doesn't see a backslapping item on the agenda and we should get back to the business at hand.



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Dr. Jackson-McArthur told Dr. Tracey that today the schools gave out the Chromebooks and the people who received them said it was very streamlined and she is seeing posts on social media with children sitting around their tables with these Chromebooks. This was critical and it was imperative that Dr. Tracey did that.

Mr. Goldson said that he heard today that students will be back on April 20<sup>th</sup> and teachers', students and parents are very confused about what is happening. He explained what he heard from parents and asked if we could have a more definitive answer. He wanted to know if we can get more information and what are we doing to make sure that once we get the word, we can immediately get the system back up and going again, particularly around Career.

Dr. Tracey said the Governor said we are staying in place until April 20<sup>th</sup>. School perhaps may be open but as far as cleaning goes that is up to the health officials. As she said before, things are rapidly changing and what the Governor or the Mayor say today can change, it depends on the situation at hand. She continued to explain.

Mr. Goldson continued to ask about the plan that may be in place. Dr. Tracey told him we always have a plan, we are constantly planning. Mr. Goldson continued to ask what the plan is for the schools to be ready. This conversation continued at length. Mayor Elicker offered to respond if Mr. Goldson agrees. Mr. Goldson agreed and Mayor Elicker explained to the best of his knowledge. Mr. Goldson continued at length.

Mr. Goldson became irate and commented that he can't ask a question without being attacked. He is tired of being insulted and accused of grandstanding because he asks questions that his constituents are asking him. It is unfair and he is not going to put up with it. Someone has to control that and he hopes it is Mrs. Rivera.

Dr. Tracey told him that we are not in this by ourselves. We have a Commissioner of Education that gives us guidance as to what they need to do in this time of crisis. They are preparing guidance for all school systems, not only New Haven, in order to be consistent to what is going on.

Mr. Goldson thanked Dr. Tracey for her answer and said he appreciates it. He mentioned that he got a message from the parent of a senior who wants to know if she is going to set up a Zoom meeting with parents of seniors so that they can ask questions.

Dr. Tracey responded that the State Department is aware of the challenges and the Commissioner of Education has been given full authority to make decisions around what school systems should do around graduation requirements. Mr. Goldson said that the



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parents are asking if they could talk to you and your staff about this because they are very stressed about it.

Mr. Penn pointed out that in the meeting packet for tonight there was a potential quote for about 6500 Chromebooks that is part of our Continuity Plan. He commented that it was part of our capital budget for the 2021 school year so we are accelerating the purchase by a couple of months. We are using State bid for this purchase, which means it did not go out to RFP. He feels it is important that we try to take advantage of this because he feels there will be a lot of districts competing for Chromebooks in the very near future. It is also the recommendation of our IT Director that we do it at this time.

Mrs. Rivera said it was supposed to come out of next year's budget so does that mean we are taking it out of this year's budget. Mr. Penn explained it is a two year budget cycle for capital so we are using the money that is already set aside for capital.

Mr. Pinto remarked that the State is looking to provide assistance for Chromebooks for Alliance Districts and we are also looking at donor asks as well. This request would be to use the capital funds as a third line of defense after we make the determination as to whether the Alliance fund would assist or a private donor.

Mr. Goldson wanted to know if these Chromebooks will be going home with the students and, if so, how do we maintain them.

Mr. Pinto answered some of them would go home with students. This purchase would also give us a replenish rate to move to schools that have been left out. This would make sure that we have a one to one ratio.

Dr. Tracey answered the second part of Mr. Goldson's question in detail to Mr. Goldson's satisfaction.

Mrs. Rivera asked if we get these, will all students have access to them. Dr. Tracey answered, yes, and she explained how they would be distributed.

*Food Distribution*

Mr. Pinto remarked that today we did 3,255 meals at lunch and 3,176 at breakfast. The food distribution project is going exceedingly well. We are at 38 sites across the City; we started with 37 and added Nathan Hale. We were able to shift over from Career to Strong School as of this morning.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked Mr. Pinto about Chromebook and wanted to know if we are helping parents setup for Wi-Fi hotspots. Mr. Pinto told her that Comcast has unlocked all



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of their hotspots which can be accessed if anyone is in the vicinity of one. She also wanted to know if we are making sure that families are given guidance as to how to access these connections. Mr. Pinto assured her that they are doing everything they can to make sure people can access the connections. Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked if they could tell parents that if they don't know what to do we can help them. This discussion continued. Dr. Tracey ensured her that when they sent out the survey they asked about Wi-Fi and 90% of the 12,000 indicated that they had internet access. For the parents without, she asked them to call their schools for more information.

Mr. Goldson said he was getting a lot of texts from parents saying there was supposed to be public participation tonight. Mrs. Rivera said that public participation comments were supposed to be emailed and the idea was that the questions would go to Board members and they would then be addressed afterwards because we don't address the questions at our meetings. Mr. Goldson wanted to know what she meant by addressed afterwards and she answered they will be part of the next meeting's agenda and if there are questions for the district to answer, they will be answered.

Mr. Wilcox wanted to know if it is going to be on the next agenda or in the minutes. Mrs. Rivera answered they will be in the minutes so they will be part of the official record.

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*2020-2021 Budget Update*

*Presented by CFO, Phillip Penn*

Mr. Penn commented that he tried to document, for the Board, where we are in the budget process for 2021. Referring to the budget report, Mr. Penn commented that the Mayor's proposed budget is \$7.3 million short of what we requested, non-Alliance new spend would add \$500K, part-time pay rates estimated at \$500K, so the total mitigation would be an estimated reduction of \$8.3 million. Mr. Penn then went on to the next slide and explained the \$498,000 of items that were not shifted to Alliance. He also explained that this part was mostly for information only and he continued in detail. Mr. Penn also talked about shrinking staff through attrition, managing our turnover and hiring, new transportation schedules to coincide with new starting times at some schools, negotiate furlough days, shift some of the instructional coaches back to the classroom to fill vacancies, shrink administrative staff, identify new grant opportunities for a total savings, across all strategies, of \$8.2 million.

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**Finance & Operations Committee Report**

Mr. Wilcox reported that this committee met and present for approval one abstract and three agreements.

Mr. Goldson referred to agreement #3 with Berchem, Moses & Devlin increasing their budget by \$40,000. He believes that Mr. Pinto mentioned at the F&O meeting that he was



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going to reduce the contract with the only African/American law firm that we do business with and he absolutely disagrees with that. Mr. Goldson mentioned that he called and asked the law firm about this and they didn't know anything about it and that they were given no reason why this contract was reduced. He does not have a problem with increasing the contract with Berchem, but he does have a problem with using money from an already established long term contractor with this district who was given no reason why his contract was being reduced.

Mr. Pinto explained that all of our contracts with the law firms are “not to exceed” contracts. The contract Mr. Goldson is referring to is because it is not being utilized because we do not have many expulsion cases this year. We are simply reducing the purchase order to reallocate some of the money to the Berchem contract because we are exceeding the limit on that contract. For the record, we are reducing one of Berchem's contracts, who are also a local firm, and one of Mr. Philpot's contracts.

Mr. Goldson continued to say that Mr. Pinto did not mention that at the meeting, he only mentioned Martin Philpot who is the only African/American law firm that we do business with. We have been doing business with them for many years. He continued to argue his point.

Mr. Wilcox added it is his understanding that we can approve this item at this time because the wording of the agreement does not say where the money is coming from. By approving this right now, we are just adding to this particular law firm without saying where the money is coming from.

Mr. Goldson remarked that is not what Mr. Pinto said at the meeting. He would like to amend approval of this contract so that the local African/American law firm's contract is not reduced until Mr. Pinto meets with the contractor and they come to a meeting of the minds.

A further discussion ensued to which Mr. Penn provided more information that would result in a negative impact on the budget. Other participants in this discussion included Mr. Wilcox, Dr. Joyner, Dr. Tracey, Dr. Jackson-McArthur and Mr. Goldson.

Dr. Joyner explained to Dr. Jackson-McArthur what the issue at hand was. He remarked that this whole idea of trying to turn people against the Board for various reasons is not productive and he thinks that Mr. Pinto, Mr. Penn and Dr. Tracey are hiring the best people they can find and once we have a professional procurement contract, then we will have some clear standards of how to hire people.

Mr. Goldson alluded to some of Dr. Joyner's remarks and continued his argument.



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On the motion by Mr. Wilcox, seconded by Dr. Joyner, it was unanimously voted by roll call, to approve one abstract and 3 agreements as presented by the Finance & Operations Committee with 4 ayes, Mayor Elicker, Dr. Joyner, Mr. Wilcox, Mrs. Rivera and 3 nays, Mr. Goldson, Mr. Conaway, Dr. Jackson-McArthur, to approve the following FINANCE & OPERATIONS-RELATED ITEMS:

**ABSTRACT**

**227-20** *Open Choice*, in the amount of \$518,220 from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020.

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**AGREEMENTS**

**228-20**  
**Clifford Beers**  
**Mental Health Clinic** An agreement by and between the New Haven Board of Education and Clifford Beers to provide Mental Health Clinicians at the Dr. Mayo School, Fair Haven, Lincoln Bassett, Truman, Martinez and Jepson schools from March 10 to June 30, 2020 in an amount not to exceed \$15,000.

**229-20**  
**Amendment #1**  
**Elicia Lupoli** Amendment #1 to Agreement #95498327 with Elicia Lupoli to change funding accounts by reducing salary of \$55,202 by \$15,202 to \$40,098 from Medicaid Reimbursement Program, Account #2534-5408-56694 and to fund \$15,202 from the Seal CT! Program, Acct. #2512-6239-56694.

**230-20**  
**Amendment #1,**  
**Berchem, Moses**  
**& Devlin** Amendment #1 to an Agreement with Berchem, Moses & Devlin, PC, to increase funding of \$80,000 by \$40,000 to \$120,000 to cover the increased costs associated with legal services from Special Education students and three outstanding litigation matters.

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*Resume Motion re Part-Time Rates for Paras, Bus Monitors,  
& Full-Time Paraprofessionals that Substitute for Teachers*

Mr. Wilcox reported, as you will recall, we postponed this item at our last regular Board meeting to resume at this regular Board meeting in order to get some financial information on the costs involved since we are in a deficit and projecting a deficit for next year as well. Mr. Penn presented some information on that original motion and he explained. Mr. Wilcox called on Mr. Penn to present further information.

Mr. Penn remarked in light of the fact that we are committed to paying out the part-time pay for the next two weeks, and he thinks this is the top priority, it is his recommendation that we table this for a period of time until we have a better resolution of where we are with the part-time pay overall and/or we get to a point where the change in the federal minimum wage will force us to make a decision. He is concerned about the additional burden this will put on the General Fund.



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Mr. Goldson remarked this is his motion and he would like to make some changes to it. Mrs. Rivera agreed.

Mr. Goldson said he would like to subtract out of the motion the substitute teachers' increase, he would also like to delete, at the request of the Paraprofessionals Union, the full-time paras increase because they are currently in negotiations with the administration. His motion now includes only the bus monitors, the part-time paras and parent advocates. Mr. Goldson explained why he is doing this. He sent Board members his updated motion crossing out all of those items. He also sent them a sheet that shows the difference in pay between the different bodies in this administration and that the gap between the full-time workers and the paras, both full and part-time, is growing. He remarked that we should sue the bus company and pay them that way.

Mayor Elicker remarked that he agrees with Mr. Goldson that we should be paying our paraprofessionals more, however, he also agrees with Mr. Penn. Two weeks ago we were working in a different world and we have incredible and financial insecurity facing us and considering our budget deficit that keeps getting larger, he would like to table this item.

Dr. Joyner commented that it is not fair to bring Dr. Tracey's salary into this. He continued to explain in detail. He commented that we should not make rash decisions based on false comparisons. He continued to explain. Mr. Goldson left the meeting before the vote.

**231-20  
Table Item to  
Increase Pay  
Rates for Part-  
Time Paras**

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**On the motion by Mayor Elicker, seconded by Dr. Joyner, it was voted to table the item regarding increases to part-time pay rates for paras, bus monitors and parent advocates for at least until after the April 20<sup>th</sup> date, with 5 ayes, Mr. Conaway, Dr. Joyner, Mayor Elicker, Mr. Wilcox, Mrs. Rivera, and one abstention by Dr. Jackson-McArthur.**

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*Monthly Financial Report through  
February and Deficit Update*

Mr. Penn reported that there are further reductions for transportation ahead and he added more savings could be realized. He continued with his report in detail. Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked if we are saving anything with people not being in the buildings and Mr. Penn answered, yes, and he continued with his report.

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**Governance Committee Report**

Dr. Jackson-McArthur reported that they only worked on the Pandemic Policy. They sent it to our experts in our district but due to the COVID -19 Crisis, they have not had the time to deal with it. Hopefully, we will have the Pandemic document updated and ready by our next Board meeting.



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**Teaching & Learning Committee Report**

Dr. Joyner reported that he and Mr. Conaway have had a number of teleconference meetings and one face-to-face meeting with the six-foot rule. They came up with a couple of documents that they are going to share with the Board regarding the whole child and what it means. They are planning to have a Zoom meeting going forward. Dr. Joyner commented that he is really concerned about our seniors across the district and if they are going to graduate or not graduate. He knows we don't have the answers to these questions but maybe we could ask the guidance counselors what their options are in this crisis. Mr. Conaway is a clinical social worker and if he were not on the Board, he would be a prime vendor to help us with some of the issues we are facing as a school district particularly with our students and our families.

Mr. Conaway remarked that as we move forward we have to communicate with our seniors and our parents, and Dr. Tracey and her staff will take care of that. Mr. Conaway commented that we have to take a deep dive into this distance learning that we are faced with. He noted that we have been talking with our district contact and we are going to have a Zoom call during our next meeting.

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**Head Start Committee Report**

Mr. Wilcox reported that this committee met on March 19<sup>th</sup> via Zoom. They discussed the school shut-down effect on Head Start. Staff has kept in touch with students and families and they have already received notification from the Head Start office that the program can use their funds to pay Head Start staff during their shut down period. One thing that we need to notify everyone of is an active supervision incident in early March where a student at the Mayo Early Learning School was left unattended in a classroom for approximately ten minutes when the class transitioned to an outside play area. The reports have gone to all the relevant groups they have to, based on head Start requirements, and he listed them. Staff was placed on administrative leave pending internal and DCF investigations according to NHPS Head Start policies. It is probably going to result in a corrective action plan but we have not been notified of that yet. He continued to explain.

Mr. Wilcox reported that the good thing is that enrollment is up to 98% and that bodes well for when things reopen.

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**Food Service Task Group Report**

Mr. Conaway reported that this committee met on March 11<sup>th</sup> at Gateway Center with students, community partners, Food Service, he and Mr. Wilcox and we talked about sites during this crisis. Mr. Pinto gave the report earlier with the 38 sites. We will continue to meet and, as a committee, try to do the best we can for the City of New Haven. Mr. Wilcox added that the way we are feeding students now is basically starting the Summer Food Program early. Suffice it to say, plans for summer meals is continuing.



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232-20

Adjournment

On the motion by Dr. Joyner, seconded by Mr. Wilcox, it was unanimously voted, by roll call vote with Mr. Wilcox, Dr. Jackson-McArthur, Mr. Conway, Dr. Joyner, Mayor Elicker and Ms. Rivera voting aye, to adjourn at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Ginger McHugh*

Recording Secretary

## MEMORANDUM

To: New Haven Board of Education  
From: Phillip Penn, Chief Financial Officer  
Date: April 23, 2020  
Re: Summary of emailed public comments for March 23 meeting

We've received approximately 20 emails to the District's Public Comment address, nearly all of which were received in advance of the March 23 meeting. The comments broke down along the following common themes (numbers in parenthesis reflect the number of occurrences; a single message may have covered multiple topics):

- Concerns regarding the use of Career High School as a regional Covid-19 homeless shelter (6).
- Questions regarding Chromebook distribution and online access (3).
- Questions regarding grading for the third and fourth quarter, including differentiation between students that were highly engaged and those that weren't (3).
- Questions regarding when a decision will be made to close schools for the whole year (3).
- Concerns regarding year-end activities for seniors (2).
- Questions regarding the SAT exam (2).
- A question regarding how our WiFi access survey was conducted.
- A question regarding Covid-19 testing of teachers and students before schools would reopen.
- A question regarding the retrieval of personal property, and the return of District property.
- A question regarding the continuation of Special Education services.
- A question regarding continued meal delivery.
- A question regarding continued payments to First Student so they in turn could pay their employees.
- There were also five responders who offered support, advice, and news of what other districts were doing in response to the pandemic.

The actual public comments follow. Some of the comments have been removed or redacted at the discretion of the BOE's attorney where the email contained information that would violate FERPA, HIPAA or both if it was disclosed publicly.