

**March 2, 2021**  
**Board of Finance and Finance Committee**  
**#1 Board of Education Budget Hearing**  
**2021-2022**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Lainie McHugh called the virtual meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. via zoom. All those present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present / absent from the Board of Finance:

**PRESENT**

Lainie McHugh  
Paul Timpanelli  
Michael Barker  
Marty Isaac  
Steve Choi  
Elaine Hammers  
Vincent DeGennaro – Alternate  
Marc Mascola – Alternate  
Christine El Eris – Alternate

**Also present:**

First Selectman Vicki Tesoro; Maria Pires, Finance Director; Kathleen McGannon, Chief Administrative Officer; Cynthia Katske, Chief Administrative Officer, Therese Keegan, Auditor; Dr. Martin Semmel, Superintendent of Schools; Susan Iwanicki, Assistant Superintendent; Paul Hendrickson, Business Manager; Peg Brindisi, Business Office; Lucinda Timpanelli, BOE; Mike Ward, BOE; Jackie Norcel, BOE, Tim Gallo, BOE.; Marie Petitti, BOE; Scot Kerr, BOE; Alison Squiccimarro, BOE; Jeffrey Hackett, Technology Manager; Christina Hafele, Director of Digital Marketing; Dawn Cantafio, Council Chairman; Elaine Adams, Paraprofessional – THS Library.

**Finance Committee Members:** Mary Isaac; Michael Miller; Tony Scinto; Kevin Shively; Lori Rosasco-Schwartz; Ashley Gaudiano; Carole Hans, Alt.

**School Principals:** Marc Guarino, Trumbull HS; Pat Horan, Jane Ryan; Bryan Rickert, Hillcrest; Dana Pierce, Booth Hill; Gary Kunschaff, Daniels Farm; Gina Prisco, Frenchtown; Jennifer Neumeyer, Tashua; Peter Sullivan, Madison; Patricia Frillici, Middlebrook.

The Chairman indicated the First Selectman posted her recommended budget of \$183,876,023 yesterday. This is a 3% increase over the current budget. The First Selectman is recommending the Board of Education receive \$112,269,658, 61% of the recommended budget amount. This represents an increase of \$3,270,776, 3% over the current year. The Town will receive the remaining 39% or \$1,362,282.

The Chairman also indicated that this is the first of the Budget Hearings and all meetings will be done via Zoom. If you want to make a comment, you may do so at the public hearings scheduled for Saturday, March 20 at 10:00 am and Tuesday, March 23 2021 at 7:00 pm. If you prefer, you can e-mail any comments to the following individuals: Phyllis Collier, Board of Finance Clerk, at [pccollier@trumbull-ct.gov](mailto:pccollier@trumbull-ct.gov) or Chairman Lainie McHugh at [lainiemchugh@gmail.com](mailto:lainiemchugh@gmail.com). Please use only these two addresses or we may not receive your comment.

Chairman McHugh turned the meeting over to Dr. Martin Semmel, Paul Hendrickson, Lucinda Timpanelli and Mike Ward.

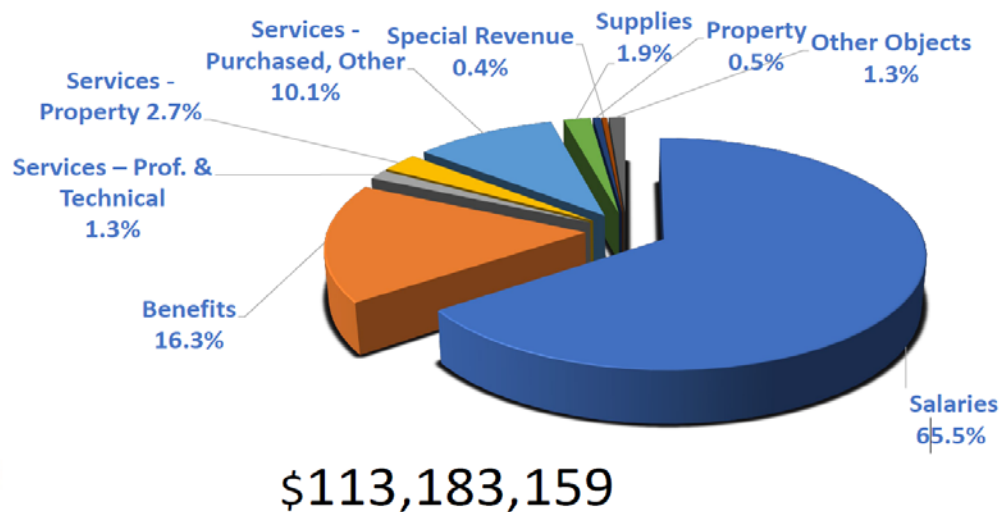
The first issue Dr. Semmel addressed were the Major Goals for 2021-2022. These include the following:

- Rebuilding Trumbull Public Schools (CIP)
- Resolving Structural Issues in BOE Budget – there are a number items that need to be reviewed in depth. (CIP)

He then went on to discuss the BOE request of \$113,183,159 a 3.81% increase vs. the 3% increase of \$112,296,658 proposed by the First Selectman. The 3% increase would be favorable; however, to reach their goals they will need an increase of 3.81%.

Dr. Semmel went on to list the 9 primary budget drivers necessitating the 3.81% increase:

## FY 2021-22 Budget by Expenditure Category



Dr. Semmel is proposing a 3.81% increase in order to accomplish their goals, and he understands that it will impact the mill rate and the tax payers. Although the 3.81% reflects the reduced cost of the insurance benefits from the original request, it is what is needed. At the same time, he has obligations and responsibilities to certain state and federal organizations that need to be addressed; the difference between the 3.81% request and the 3.0% proposal of \$886,501 will impact those obligation and responsibilities, as well as their goals. It was noted that over 50% of the increase comes from transportation and medical benefits. In addition, 91% of the budget comes from salaries, benefits and purchased services. So, you can see that we do not have control over much of our budget.

He also noted that the Board is cutting \$477,166 in teaching positions due to a decline in enrollment and adding \$867,166 for additional positions. The proposed new positions are either those that were cut or represent additional unfunded mandates we are required to have.

There are Special Revenue / Lunch Account deficiencies of \$433,000 that we need to address in the budget this year that were not addressed previously. If the budget does not cover these items, the parents will be liable for additional fees.

## Special Revenue / Lunch Account Deficiencies

<u>Program</u>	<u>Deficiency</u>	<u>% of Increase</u>	<u>*Approximate Increase to Parent Fees</u>
Strings / Band	\$140,000	0.13%	\$125 → \$475
InterDistrict	\$90,000	0.08%	\$3,300 → \$4,360
Lunch	<u>\$200,000</u>	<u>0.18%</u>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$430,000</b>	<b>0.39%</b>	

\*If none of the deficiency is added to the operating budget

Dr. Semmel addressed the transportation analysis next, indicating that a \$917,000 credit was received for school year 2019-2020 was booked in 20-21 resulting in the increase of .84% of the 3.81% budget increase. If not for this issue, we would be at the First Selectman's request.

## Transportation Analysis

\$917,000 credit was received for school year 2019-20, but booked in 2020-21.

**\$917,000 = 0.84% of the 3.81% budget increase**

<u>2020-21 Budget</u>	<u>2021-22 Budget</u>	<u>\$ Increase</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
\$5,179,681	\$6,152,707	\$973,026	18.79%
<u>\$917,000</u>			
<b>\$6,096,681</b>	<b>\$6,152,707</b>	<b>\$56,026</b>	<b>0.92%</b>

In addition, he went on to add that the fees for the Magnet School have risen .22% and the total of fees owed --\$245,000 -- were not included in the previous budget due to a dispute with the City of Bridgeport, We hadn't paid them over several years, and have since resolved this issue. He went on to note that the fees paid to Bridgeport come from the Board of Education; however the revenue received for the Vo-Ag students is paid to the Town.

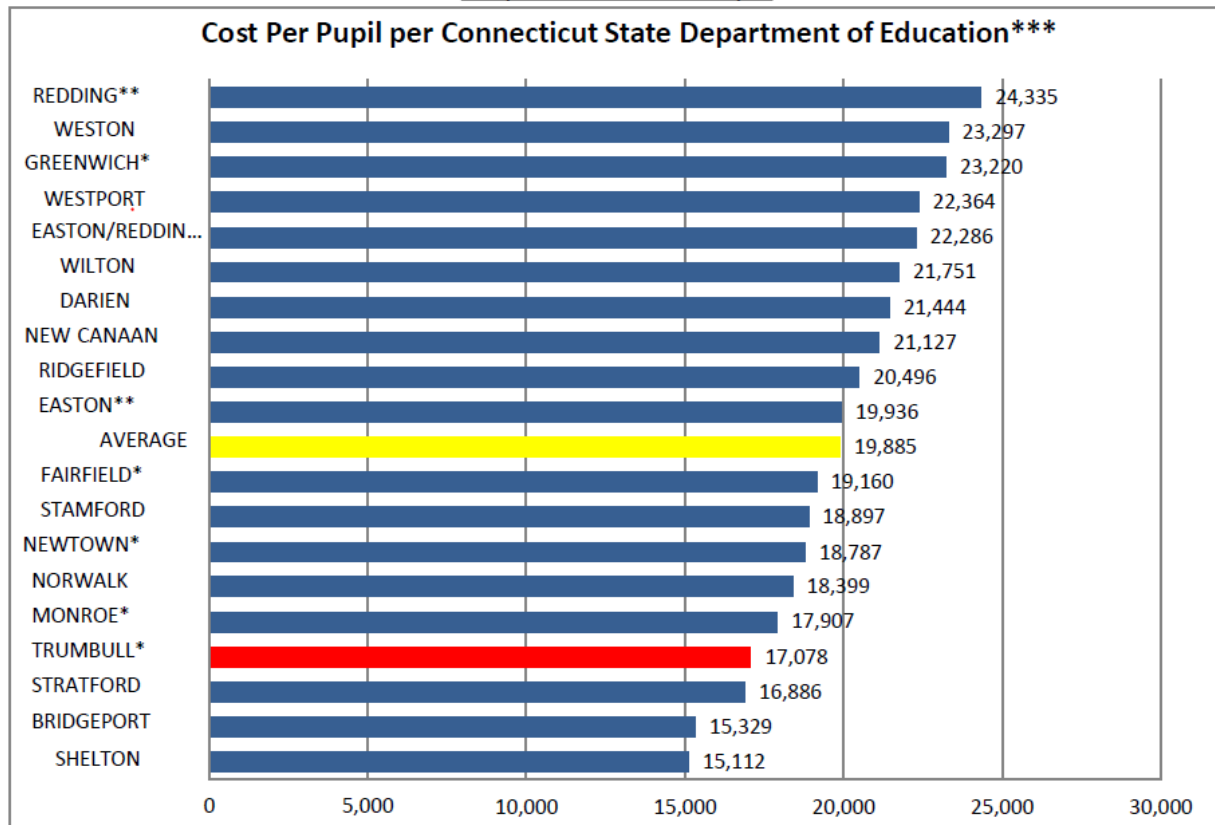
A review of budget increases since 2013 has shown that years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 were particularly low; however, the amounts received over the past three years have been much closer to the actual requests.

## Previous Final Approved Budgets

Fiscal Year	Budget Increase
2013-14	2.89%
2014-15	2.18%
2015-16	2.34%
2016-17	1.77%
2017-18	1.42%
2018-19	3.10%
2019-20	2.50%
2020-21	2.74%

actual requests actual requests According to the Data provided by the October, 2020 CSDE Report the average cost per pupil in the designated area is \$19,885 with Trumbull coming in below the average at \$17,078 per pupil.

**Area School Districts**  
**2019-2020 Per Pupil Expenditures**  
 Data per October, 2020 CSDE Report



\*DRG B district

\*\*Easton Redding have PK-8 schools; they regionalize for high school at Joel Barlow

\*\*\*Based on CT State Department of Education Bureau of Grants Management

In closing, the following summary outlines the increases discussed:

### Summary

Items	\$ Increase	% Increase
Salaries	\$254,891	0.23%
Benefits	\$1,222,671	1.12%
Net FTE Change	\$477,166	0.44%
Special Revenue Accounts	\$430,000	0.39%
Transportation Credit	\$917,000	0.84%
Magnet School	\$245,000	0.23%
All Other	<u>\$610,549</u>	<u>0.56%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,157,277</b>	<b>3.81%</b>

By unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Phyllis C. Collier*

Phyllis C. Collier  
Board of Financer Clerk