

Finance and Facilities Meeting Minutes January 30, 2018

Attendees: Dr. Walter Willett, Sam Adlerstein, Christina Plourd, Jeff Schroeder

1. Shared Services

- a. With Town of Tolland – An exploration of what makes sense and what can be combined will be undertaken by the Shared Services Ad Hoc committee between the Town of Tolland and the Tolland Board of Education (BOE) with its first meeting in mid-February. The ideal functions for sharing are those where existing synergies exist in reality and not just on paper, where one or both bodies are inefficient and where both bodies can work together as a team.
- b. With Other Boards of Education – Collaboration with other school districts for buying common goods are in place to build consortium buying power; the Superintendent will explore additional cooperative relationships with other superintendents. An investigation into the feasibility of a Special Education cooperative to defray costs will be undertaken.
- c. Transportation – The Tolland School District transportation contract expires after the 2018-2019 school year. Options discussed include the following:
- d. First student and other bus companies – requests for bids will be sent to interested bus companies.
- e. Share transportation with other towns – two options exist: contract a bus company to share between two towns or co-own a bus fleet with another town. The Superintendent will reach out to other districts to see if there is interest in sharing transportation and if synergies exist to reduce the cost over not sharing transportation. The Tolland School District may require too many bus runs and buses for each bus run to make the timing of the bus runs work (start and end times for school day) or make the sharing economical.
- f. Single owned transportation – This option would require capital to purchase buses and a depot, hire mechanics and other support personnel for the owned buses, insurance and other expenses that may make this option uneconomical. The usable life of the buses would have to be weighed in this option.
- g. Bus consortium for purchasing power – The transportation may already be at state contract prices.
- h. Transportation consultant – A transportation consultant could be contracted to determine the best path forward for Tolland.

2. Unfunded mandates – A process to determine the most expensive unfunded mandates was discussed. One option was to force-rank each unfunded mandate into high, medium and low cost/personnel buckets. The unfunded mandates in the high group would then be fleshed out in more detail to work out ways to mitigate the costs and personnel required. Unfortunately, many unfunded mandates appear to come from the legislature without an understanding of the costs to the local Boards of Education.