

Town of Plymouth

80 Main Street, Terryville, CT 06786
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Board of Finance

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1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Jim Kilduff, Chairman called the special meeting on April 8, 2025, Board of Finance meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. in the Assembly Room. Members in attendance: Victoria Carey-Vice Chairman, Jennifer Brunnoli, Eugene Croce, Tony Osipiak, and David Sekorski. Also Present: Brian Falcone, Superintendent - Plymouth Public Schools, Matthew Tencza, Business Manager - Plymouth Public Schools, and Patrick Perugino. Board of Education Member
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Jim Kilduff, Chairman led the group and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **Notice of Fire Exits** – Jim Kilduff noted the Fire Exits for the record.
4. **Take action on Board of Education Sinking Fund request**

Matthew Tencza, Business Manager - Plymouth Public Schools distributed for perusal and discussed in detail Plymouth Public Schools/School Improvement Projects – School Year 2024-2025 and Plymouth Public Schools Sinking Fund Balance Pg. 1 of 2 as follows:

MOTION:

Tony Osipiak made a motion, seconded by Jennifer Brunoli to approve the installation of a chain link fencing along both sides of the existing outdoor basketball court, tying into existing fencing that was installed last year at Plymouth Center School at a cost of \$7,650.00

VOTE:

Motion passed unanimously

DISCUSSION:

Tony Osipiak stated would support this project to enhance the educational environment at that school.

MOTION:

Vicky Carey made a motion, seconded by Dave Sekorski to replace and reconfigure sinks in boys and girls bathrooms, both upper and lower, at Harry S. Fisher Elementary School - cost of cabinetry \$9,150.44, new sinks and faucets \$2,571.48 for a total cost of \$11,721.92

VOTE:

Dave Sekorski - Yes
Jennifer Brunoli - Yes
Vicky Carey - Yes
Eugene Croce - Yes

PLYMOUTH, CT
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
RECEIVED FOR RECORD
2025 APR 14 PM 12:47
TOWN CLERK

Tony Ospiak – No

Passes 4 to 1

DISCUSSION:

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated we have four bathrooms - all are in rough shape, safety issues, mirrors off walls we have to address, do not feel comfortable with the way they are and briefly elaborated.

Jennifer Brunoli questioned if this was a different quote.

Matthew Tencza, Business Manager - Plymouth Public Schools noted a different quote broken down and briefly elaborated.

Tony Ospiak asked whether we should be renovating a school – that future economic conditions may force that same school we renovated to be closed and briefly elaborated.

Eugene Croce questioned if they are handicap accessible.

Matthew Tencza, Business Manager - Plymouth Public Schools – Yes

Eugene Croce questioned the roofs that need repairs.

Matthew Tencza, Business Manager - Plymouth Public Schools we have multiple roofs that need to be done and briefly elaborated.

Eugene Croce questioned re. Roof time/frame

Matthew Tencza, Business Manager - Plymouth Public Schools stated roofs are millions and I don't anticipate enough in sinking fund ever to cover roofs.

Tony Ospiak questioned why the sink was not prioritized earlier.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated we were hoping at the end of fiscal year we would have enough money to take on some of these projects and we don't.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent read into record an email received from Waterbury Public Schools after we already created a budget, increasing our rates - raise in tuition – read as follows: Attached, please find a memo regarding the upcoming increase in tuition rates for special education services provided by Waterbury Public Schools. The Waterbury Board of Education has approved the new rates, which will go into effect on July 1st for the Extended School Year (ESY) 2025 and the 2025-2026 School Year. Please review the attached memo for a detailed breakdown of the changes. Pg. 1 of 3

Brian Falcone, Superintendent, mentioned the possibility of closing a school but questioned its feasibility, noting enrollment is projected to increase over the next 10 years. He highlighted the school's inability to meet needs such as occupational and physical therapy, intervention groups, and appropriate student placements across various grades and briefly elaborated.

MOTION:

Vicky Carey made a motion, seconded by Jennifer Brunoli to close existing openings along the gymnasium bridgeway at Plymouth Center School. By removing existing metal rails and enclosing the openings with a three-section panel (lower solid, middle safety glass, upper open air). (Cover stairs on both sides going down) This design will keep the visual integrity of the space while providing significantly greater safety to our students for a cost of \$38,535.00

VOTE:

Dave Sekorski - Yes
Jennifer Brunoli - Yes
Vicky Carey - Yes
Eugene Croce - Yes
Tony Ospiak - Yes

Motion passed unanimously

DISCUSSION:

Tony Ospiak stated it is a safety hazard. Although, it has been in existence and no one has been hurt. Noticed when on tour/visit every time I noticed a student and/or students - was always with professional staff. I decided to follow the recommendation of the professional staff.

VOTE:

Motion passed unanimously

Matthew Tencza, Business Manager - Plymouth Public Schools requested to approve a small contingency. The quote was received back in February and noted tariffs/pricing. The total amount of \$65,000 will be returned to the sinking fund for any unused funds.

MOTION:

Dave Sekorski made a motion, seconded by Vicky Carey to fund three projects for an amount not to exceed \$69,506.

VOTE:

Dave Sekorski - Yes
Jennifer Brunoli - Yes
Vicky Carey - Yes
Eugene Croce - Yes
Tony Ospiak - Yes

Motion Passed unanimously

Brian Falcone, Superintendent distributed for perusal and discussion OPERATING AGREEMENT AND PROCEDURES BETWEEN THE BOARD OF FINANCE AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE TOWN OF PLYMOUTH REGARDING A NON-LAPSING CAPITAL EXPENDITURE SINKING FUND AND C.G.S.A. § 10-248A UNEXPENDED EDUCATION FUNDS ACCOUNT Effective May 21, 2024

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated went into Chatgpt AI - listed key differences and it broke down the changes. With revised language understanding now the former MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) is null and void. How this money is utilized has shifted from the town and Board of Finance to the Board of Education and briefly elaborated.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated still wants to bring everything to the Board of Finance for feedback and briefly elaborated.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated we don't intend to use that money to offset our budget only for emergency purposes and briefly elaborated.

Matthew Tencza, Business Manager - Plymouth Public Schools stated we have only used that money to reinvest back into our infrastructure, and working together we have done a lot of good things and we want to see that continue.

Vicky Carey stated would like some agreement to move forward, re. Attorney.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated the importance of checks and balances in place and briefly elaborated.

Vicky Carey requested please send a copy to Capital Improvements Committee for perusal.

5. Continue Pass Thru of Budget FY 2025-2026

Brian Falcone, Superintendent distributed copies for perusal. Some highlights were:

CAPSS

❖ **Budget Increases as of April 8, 2025**

The Average Superintendent Recommended Budget Increase = 5.60%
The Average Board of Education Adopted Budget Increase = 5.31%

❖ **Contractual Increases Within Current Operating Budget**

Grand Total 2024-2025

\$24,236,417

Grand Total 2025-2026

\$25,973,028

Difference

\$1,736,610

% Change 7.17%

❖ **4.33% Budget Increase**

Eliminations & Cuts

Certified Faculty	\$194,791 (Salary & Benefits)
Non-Certified Faculty	\$136,241 (Salary & Benefits)

❖ **Proposed Budget Eliminations**

Total = \$347,536

Total Amount Eliminated From The Budget = \$678,568

❖ **Budget Additions**

Total = \$101,845

Noted: One-time purchases originally pulled out of the budget to lower the total increase needed.
We planned to purchase these items with the remaining funds from the 2024-2025 operating budget.

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| • School Lunch Debt | = \$ 16,000 |
| • Technology Infrastructure Items | = \$ 77,000 |
| • Middle School Reading Program | = \$ 35,000 |
| • Districtwide Phone Hardware Upgrade | = \$115,000 |
| • Board of Education Meeting Recording Hardware* | = <u>\$ 25,000</u> |

Total one-time purchases originally pulled out of the budget = \$268,000

*Will not have the funds to complete

**4.33% Increase Budget Request Breakdown
Board of Education Budget**

Current BOE Adopted Operating Budget	\$26,775,293	
2025-2026 Original Submitted Budget	\$28,969,920	
Budget Eliminations	\$ 678,568	
Excess Cost Reimbursement	\$ 458,918	
Budget Additions	<u>\$ 101,845</u>	
2025-2026 Budget total	\$27,934.279	
Increase from the 2024-2025 Budget	\$ 1,158,986	4.33%

Concerns

Unexpected items that were not budgeted for and will lead to additional position eliminations:

- Health Insurance was budgeted at a 9% increase and has come in at an 11% increase=\$100,000
- Employees life-changing circumstance adjustment in health benefits = \$35,000
- Special Education student outplacement tuition and transportation = \$175,000
- Special Education outplacement tuition and expense increases = ?

Impact of Receiving the Mayor's Recommended 2.85% Increase

4.33% Board of Education Proposed Increase	\$27,934,289
2.85% Mayor's Recommended Increase	- \$27,538,388
Unexpected Items That Were Not Budgeted	- \$ 310,000
Total Board of Education Budget Cut	\$ 705,901

In total, the Board of Education could be eliminating a possible 14 to 15 positions.

Tony Ospiak questioned whether is a math tutor the same as a math coach.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated "No" Tutor is working with children.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated security at Terryville High School, cutting the teacher of the deaf, still contracted services (savings on benefits/salary deferential).

Vicky Carey noted that sometimes there are kids that have parents that are deaf and briefly elaborated.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent noted when the High School is open in the evening, appropriate to monitor schools, noted the evening security position, and briefly elaborated.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated 6 students that receive special services for hearing average 18 hours a week and briefly elaborated.

Tony Ospiak questioned whether are you basing the potential job cuts on your current request or the Mayor's recommendation.

Brian Falcone stated these numbers are all based on the 4.33% budget increase of \$27,934,289,

Brian Falcone, Superintendent noted upcoming meetings and briefly elaborated.

Tony Ospiak questioned health services / the number of nurses in schools.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated we have one nurse in each one of our schools, and substitute nurses and briefly elaborated.

Tony Ospiak questioned if the Board of Education gets charged whenever they need a police officer.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated we don't call on their services too often only when we need support for some basketball games, soccer, and graduation, and briefly elaborated.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent questioned why we have one SRO at schools - but questioned why at community events - why then do we need four officers for example graduation, and briefly elaborated.

Tony Ospiak questioned whether the check goes to the town or does it go to the Extra Duty Fund or general revenue. (Follow-up)

Dave Sekorski questioned Special Education Outplacement reimbursement from the State of Connecticut.

Matthew Tencza, Business Manager - Plymouth Public Schools stated budget number there is as the budgeted number that's in there is net of my estimate.

Matthew Tencza, Business Manager - Plymouth Public Schools noted a brief discussion took place regarding Excess Cost Reimbursement.

Matthew Tencza, Business Manager - Plymouth Public Schools noted Education Cost Sharing is looking to increase it by 2B and briefly elaborated.

Dave Sekorski questioned the amount/estimate.

Matthew Tencza, Business Manager stated this year's number – we were supposed to be reimbursed at a rate of 76%(est). We were reimbursed at 62% noted State sets aside this many dollars, costs continue to come in – noted they're still only giving us this many dollars and they're just dividing it out, close with my calculation yearly and we came in at a little over \$100,000, this year only coming in at 63%, and briefly elaborated.

Dave Sekorski clarified this is an estimate of what you will get back.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent clarified the \$175,000 - Special Education Student outplacement tuition and transportation - did not include money we may get back from that and briefly elaborated.

Matthew Tencza, Business Manager stated there may be money – pot is only this big, and just because our costs go up that does not mean we'll get money back and briefly elaborated.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated respect whatever number we get – costs going up, needs and eliminating positions, we want to keep programs in place, classrooms intact for our kids.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent stated important to have quarterly meetings, meetings on a more consistent basis, and briefly elaborated.

Jim Kilduff stated Board is formulating ideas on the budget, noting big-ticket items, focusing on the whole budget, and pieces still coming together - The Board of Finance will give consideration and briefly elaborated.

Brian Falcone, Superintendent complimented the work Matthew Tencza, Business Manager has done, re. Froze the Board's budget, noting tighter than it has ever been, and briefly elaborated.

Dave Sekorski stated would like to know the impact of changes, of any moves, and/or support, some high impact or not, and briefly elaborated.

Eugene Croce noted we need to see changes/moves, etc., and briefly elaborated.

6. Public Comment

Melanie Church, 328 Main Street, Terryville, CT - Take the revenue back, this gives us the money for the town, noted the general fund is for the taxpayer, and we need the programs for the kids.

7. Correspondence

None

8. Board Member's Comments

Dave Sekorski - None

Jennifer Brunoli - None

Vicky Carey - Distributed scoring for capitals.

Eugene Croce - None

Tony Osipiak - Complimented Superintendent and Business Manager, walk-thru school, very helpful and changed one of my votes to “yes”.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business of the Board of Finance, a motion was made by Dave Sekorski seconded by Jennifer Brunoli to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. This motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Yokubinas

Michele Yokubinas
Recording Secretary

