

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Tolland High School Library  
One Eagle Hill  
Tolland, CT 06084

SPECIAL MEETING

7:30 – 10:00 P.M.

AGENDA  
March 19, 2014

**VISION STATEMENT**

*To represent education at its best, preparing each student for an ever-changing society, and becoming a full community of learning where excellence is achieved through each individual's success.*

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 12, 2014

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2 minute limit)

*The members of the Tolland Board of Education welcome members of the public to share their thoughts and ideas at this time. When appropriate to do so, members of the Board and the administration may respond to comments during "Points of Information". However, in consideration of those in attendance and in an effort to proceed in a timely manner, follow-up discussion may need to take place outside of the meeting setting.*

D. POINTS OF INFORMATION

E. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

F.1 Technology Plan

F.2 2014/2015 Board of Education Budget – Possible Action (No Enclosure)

F.3 Status of the 2013/2014 Budget (No Enclosure)

F.4 Proposed School Calendar – 2014/2015

F. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

G. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

H. BOARD ACTION

I.1. Board of Education Meetings – Proposed Location Changes

I. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2 minute limit)

*Comments must be limited to items on this agenda.*

J. POINTS OF INFORMATION

K. CORRESPONDENCE

L. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

M. EXECUTIVE SESSION- Personnel Matters

N. ADJOURNMENT

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Tolland High School  
One Eagle Hill  
Tolland, CT 06084

REGULAR MEETING – March 12, 2014

Members Present: Mr. Sam Adlerstein, Chair; Mr. Patrick Doyle, Vice Chair; Ms. Kathy Gorsky, Secretary; Ms. Karen Moran, Mr. Robert Pagoni, Mr. Tom Frattaroli, Mr. Steve Clark, Mr. Joe Sce, and Mr. Al Fratoni.

Administrators Present: Mr. William Guzman, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Kathryn Eidson, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Mrs. Jane Neel, Business Manager, Ms. Dominique Fox, Principal, Tolland High School; Mr. Tom Swanson, Principal, Birch Grove; Ms. Margot Martello, Assistant Principal, Tolland High School.

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M.

The Board members and the public had an opportunity to interact with each other about why they were in attendance this evening.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 26, 2014 – Regular Meeting

Mr. Pagoni noted that the following changes should be made:

Under item F.2, 2<sup>nd</sup> to the last paragraph, the following sentence should be added after the 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence, “Mr. Pagoni stated that making this decision on SBAC without bringing it to the Board of Education was like when the Board was not counseled regarding when the administration changed athletic conferences.

Under item F.2, 2<sup>nd</sup> to the last paragraph, the 5<sup>th</sup> sentence should be, “Mr. Guzman said that he did not see anything in the regulations that required him to inform the Board.”

Mr. Clark motioned to accept the minutes as amended. Mr. Doyle seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

March 12, 2014 – Special Meeting

Ms. Gorsky motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2 minute limit)

Jessica Narkawicz, 86 Apple Road, thanked everyone and noted that she appreciated the work that has been done. It has not gone unnoticed. Everyone agrees that they want to give the children the best education possible in an environment where they can discover new things and feel safe. She supports all-day kindergarten and believes it should be built on a strong foundation and asked the Board to consider moving forward to implement this priority.

Jadey Long, 64 Robbie Road, supports all-day kindergarten. She believes that they are already a year too late in its implementation. It should have been funded with the implementation of the common core curriculum. The common core standards were designed to unify education and make it so that all kids had the same expectations and learning standards. Tolland’s

kindergartners will fall short if they only have a half day. One can always find a reason not to implement all-day kindergarten and she challenged the Board to find a way to provide this for the children of Tolland.

Michael Lindsey, 72 Timber Trail, commented that he chose to build his home 18 years ago in Tolland rather than Glastonbury. The cost to bring all-day kindergarten to Tolland is minimal but the jump start the children will have will make a world of difference. Less than 10 towns have a budget less than Tolland's and this is abhorrent. All-day kindergarten is long overdue and needs to be in place. The priority needs to be to get kids educated and the sooner they can get into the curriculum the better. He hopes the Board will vote for all-day kindergarten.

Cathy Gramling, 15 Andrew Way, is a kindergarten teacher in Tolland. She is in attendance to hear what is going on, be a resource, and answer questions. With the common core curriculum and what is expected of them, she believes the kindergarten students now have a 1<sup>st</sup> grade curriculum.

Kim Hollenbach, 76 Anthony Road, is a kindergarten teacher in Tolland. She is also willing to answer questions, explain what children need, and discuss what is expected of children.

Carmella Littell, 40 Woodland Street, is a kindergarten teacher in Tolland. She commented that if the Board is seriously considering offering all-day kindergarten that it does it right. Get the information needed and paraprofessional support in the classrooms. She is concerned about the level of stress children are experiencing. Common core standards are great and everyone wants the children to excel but at what cost. She wants her children to be in school and enjoy it, not come home crying because they do not understand something or it's too hard because they do not have time to grasp a concept before moving on to another. Teachers need time to listen to the children.

A resident commented that she hears the request for all-day kindergarten and believes it is a priority but does not know if this is the right year to do it. She has been attending the meetings and has concerns about things she has heard from the curriculum side. This includes not having a consistent writing program from grade to grade, anthology which is outdated, a lack of the availability of motivational books at various levels, and a math curriculum which has been developed by teachers. Developing curriculum versus a program is night and day and the curriculum is lacking many items. She believes there should be an advocacy for current materials and professional development. If all-day kindergarten is implemented, she wants to see it done right and is unsure if there are funds to do it right. She would like to know what Tolland's vision is and believes there should be a global umbrella of what a student should look like and what they will have when they walk away. Parents should not have to shop for teachers; there should be consistent delivery.

Peter McCann, 30 Holly Road, asked if the Board has spoken to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers to see what needs they have and if the half-day kindergarten program can meet those needs. If the first grade teachers are overwhelmed because their students are not prepared, Tolland will lose some of those teachers. His daughter is in first grade and is having a great experience.

Kevin Kasai, 33 Wildwood Road, believes full-day kindergarten needs to be done the right way. He asked if the half-day program is being done the right way. If a paraprofessional is needed for

the full-day program, how many are needed for the half-day program. If the district is going to stay with half-day, it will need more paraprofessionals.

Mr. Kasai commented that the common core is based on 900 hours. The extended day is 495 hours in Tolland leaving 405 hours for each of the 152 kids to make up. The first grade teachers get the kindergarteners from the half-day. There is no way they can do the curriculum. Kindergarten is the new first grade. He went on to say that the town manager has changed his mind and now believes that full-day kindergarten should not be put off for another year. With half-day, a kindergarten student who has difficulty learning will be either passed by or put into special education. Teachers of the first, second, and third grades will be stressed and it will be a rude awakening when parents see the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade scores.

Kate Vallo, 72 Tolland Green, commented that the focus should be on student-teacher ratios, and the importance of student learning and curriculum as a whole. Social and emotional growth and development is the foundation for later learning. If there is not the luxury of full-day kindergarten, the half-day kindergarten teachers need to be supported and able to spend time with children by adding resources such as paraprofessionals. Teachers need time to effectively work with students in the classroom.

Liz Chounicki, 10 Old Farms Road, commented that she believes half-day kindergarten is best for next year. She is concerned about the greater needs of all students in grades K-12. There is no math curriculum or continuity from K-12. Teachers are writing curriculum during school hours and the students are losing instructional time with their teachers. Substitutes are being used but it is not quality learning. The focus should be on all students K-12, the teachers' needs, and providing professional development.

Suzanne Kasai, 33 Wildwood Rd, read a letter that teacher Katie Manfre wrote to the Board. Ms. Manfre teaches full-day kindergarten in East Hartford and advocates the full-day kindergarten program.

David Garritt, 23 Rudansky Lane, thanked the Board members for serving and has developed an appreciation for the work they put in. No one would volunteer to serve on the Board if they did not care about the educational system.

Rebecca Risely, 103 Mountain Spring Road, advocated for all-day kindergarten. She still believes it is the right course of action. She seconded Mr. Garritt's comments and thanked the Board for its service. She is interested in becoming a volunteer and would like to learn about opportunities to do so at future meetings.

A resident commented that she is in favor of all-day kindergarten. She would like to see her child grow up in Tolland, go to college, and return to the town like she did. She is interested in volunteering and thanked the Board for all of its work.

D. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Mr. Sce congratulated the staff and faculty of Tolland High School. The school received a rating of Excelling by the state. Further, he noted that Tolland schools far exceed the level of education of towns with greater per-pupil spending.

Ms. Gorsky noted that she received letters from six residents in support of all-day kindergarten and letters from others who are not Tolland residents. One resident expressed concern that there needs to be a focus on curriculum this year rather than all-day kindergarten. Ms. Gorsky thanked those who offered to volunteer their service.

Mr. Doyle noted that many comments were in regard to volunteering. They are planning a meeting for next week to finalize the scope of the project at the middle school and more information will be forthcoming. He added that he is the father of a first grader and his experience has been that the first grade teachers are excellent and added that there is an adjustment period in having 1<sup>st</sup> graders attend school all-day. Mr. Doyle would like to know the benchmarks in terms of class size and paraprofessionals for implementation of all-day kindergarten. Mrs. Gramling explained that class size would be an important part as well as the help of paraprofessionals. They have been working without paraprofessional assistance this year. In kindergarten, students come in at different levels and paraprofessionals can really help in this regard. While a paraprofessional in each classroom would be great, a half-day paraprofessional would be another option. In terms of class size, ideally there would be 17 students. The paraprofessionals in the classroom now are only for the special education students. Mr. Guzman noted that different scenarios were previously presented for all-day kindergarten and asked for Mrs. Gramling's input on these. She responded that all-day kindergarten is where they should go and the teachers would be willing to bump up the class size to have 8 teachers with paraprofessionals or 9 teachers and no paraprofessionals.

Mr. Pagoni, in response to the comment from Ms. Narkawicz, explained that if the Board does not implement full-day kindergarten now, then time, money, and effort will be spent to fix things. In turn, everyone will pay if this is not implemented. He asked the kindergarten teachers to describe their typical day with 19 students and asked if they are able to spend quality time with the kids. He also asked if this would improve with full-day kindergarten assuming the same student/teacher ratio or if another ratio would be better. One of the teachers responded that anyone can visit to see what a typical day looks like in the classroom. It is very challenging to address the needs of differentiated learners. Mrs. Gramling described a typical day. As a teacher, she has to keep those who are at a higher level challenged and busy so they enjoy attending school every day. The scenarios for all-day kindergarten were reviewed. Mrs. Gramling added that with all-day kindergarten, one can build the foundation and identify issues so that they may be appropriately addressed.

Mr. Guzman noted that his staff is processing 115 questions and preparing the responses. In addition, they will present the curriculum plan along with its history and the plans going forward. This is anticipated to be presented on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Adlerstein commented that each of the 115 questions did not have to be answered if they could be consolidated and addressed in the plan. He wants to be able to see where material is being purchased, how the decisions are being made, and what resources are needed. Mr. Guzman believed that the direction was for anyone with questions to submit them. They would be remiss if they did not answer the questions and provide the plan. If the 2 or 3 questions border on the same topic, they can consolidate those into one response but they want to respond to specific questions, do their due diligence, and present to the Board what was requested. The questions will be posted online.

E. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT - Aiyla Zahid - none

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

F.1. Tolland High School Accreditation – Visiting Committee

Mr. Guzman noted that the visiting team will be at the high school March 23<sup>rd</sup> through March 26<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Fox and Ms. Martello reviewed the NEASC Accreditation presentation including why one seeks accreditation, the standards, the process, the role of the visiting team, what is involved, the reports, follow-up and the role of the Board. (Attached)

Ms. Fox thanked all those who have assisted in this process. The process allowed for a greater understanding for everyone.

Mr. Frattaroli asked who funds the process. Ms. Fox noted that the district is a member of NEASC and the district funds the accreditation visit. She believes the school is ready. It was clarified that this accreditation is not connected with the state.

F.2. SBAC Testing Schedule Calendar – AP Test/UConn Courses

Mr. Guzman noted that the testing schedule was reviewed. He noted that there is ample time between the dates of the AP exams and UConn finals and the SBAC test administration and the schedule provides optimal opportunity to prepare for the AP exams and the UConn courses.

Ms. Martello, solicited input from the teachers and other parameters when creating the schedule. She did not believe it would be sound judgment to hold the SBAC testing in May. Further, all 11<sup>th</sup> graders have to test so if there is an absence, time will be needed to administer make-ups.

Mr. Pagoni commented that he values what they staff has done but added that the administration has not done everything it can for the kids. In regard to the last statement on the memo (attachment F.2), he believes it should be stricken. While the staff worked hard to put the puzzle together, it does not mean that it is the only answer. There could have been other ways to do this and he does not think this is the best answer especially given the number of folks who attended the Board meetings and complained. The test has to be done on the computer and completed by June 6<sup>th</sup>. He believes that somewhere in May they could have figured out a way to do this. Like one of the parents said to him, the battle is lost – they did not listen to them (the parents) at all. The administration just justified its original plans. Mr. Pagoni noted that he had to represent the people who voted him in and agreed with those folks who had that observation.

Mr. Guzman noted that he wrote the memo (attachment F.2) and stands by it. He believes this administration has thoroughly investigated all options to try to present a cohesive and comprehensive testing schedule to meet the needs of everyone they are responsible for. It is a comprehensive plan taking everything into consideration. The plan took a great deal of time. It was looked at it, questioned, and ultimately it was decided that it is still the optimum plan which addresses the needs of every student in this high school based on the input from staff.

Mr. Pagoni responded that the Board should have been asked to weigh in on this. In regard to the fact that Mr. Guzman could not find it in the regulations and thus the

Board did not need to be consulted, Mr. Pagoni disagreed. Mr. Guzman replied that the idea of SBAC testing vs. CAPT testing was brought to the Board on February 13, 2013, a date which Mr. Pagoni chaired the meeting. It was discussed at that time that there would be an SBAC field test in spring 2014. Mr. Pagoni commented that things change and there is a different group on the Board now. One cannot look back. Ms. Gorsky added that there were only 3 people who had concerns. The Board and Mr. Guzman were generous in telling parents that if they choose to opt their students out that they should do what they need to do. She does not believe that for most people it was an issue. Mr. Pagoni responded that if only 2 people brought it up, they still have a valid argument if they were right. Ms. Gorsky noted that a decision had to be made that would affect students in the most positive way and the administration did the best that it could with it.

**F.3. 2013/2014 School Calendar – Adjustment Recommendations**

Mr. Guzman noted that right now, the last day of school is scheduled to be Friday, June 20<sup>th</sup>. He asked the Board that rather than go into the final week of June and disrupt graduation and vacation plans, that the Board give him the authority to shorten the school year by up to 3 days. If there is a cancellation of another full day of school, he would have the authority to keep the last day as June 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Pagoni motioned to make this action item I.3 based on his prior experience. Mr. Doyle seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

**F.4. 2014/2015 Board of Education Budget**

Mr. Adlerstein explained that the question for Mr. Guzman last week was that if the 3.44% passed, what other potential scenarios exist that would make it possible to fund some of the priorities.

Mr. Guzman distributed the FY 2014-15 Budget Cost Impact Scenarios document. He explained that he was tasked with determining if some possible changes between now and June 30<sup>th</sup> would have a high probability of being realized. The items listed were identified. The original insurance rate increase was 11.6% with a 2 point differential. This is due to the reserve in the self-insurance account that was taken out. In the current budget before the Town Council, the number is 11.6% minus the 2 points that were taken out of the reserve. Based on the claim experience, the 11.6% has been lowered to 10.0%. This information was provided by Steve May, the insurance consultant.

In terms of the other accounts, the bus contract is out to bid and will be back on March 28<sup>th</sup>. If those numbers come in less than 5%, some money will be picked up. Otherwise, they will have to find the money to make up the difference between the actual and the 5% projection. There are currently seven people who plan to retire and there may be up to 3 more. Each retiree allows them to pick up \$9,772 so this may be a factor as well. Under the HSA, the district projects 10 more people will switch to the plan which would make \$48,480 available. The Special Services budget is projected to have an 82% reimbursement from the state and this is not projected to change.



In terms of health insurance, a number is presented in November and is carried forward. In May or June, the district receives the actual number effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. The estimates are provided by the insurance consultant, Steve May, and are based on actuarial calculations. It is believed that sometime in May or June, the health insurance number will be less than 10% - historically it has gone down. Every percentage point has a value of \$45,867. Mr. Guzman predicts that the number will drop from 10% to 7.1% by June 30<sup>th</sup>. He met with the Town Manager and Mr. May to discuss this and how this could be pushed forward. One way to look at it is as floating a loan. If the Board says they want to utilize the \$133,000, that means that on June 1<sup>st</sup> instead of the insurance dropping to 7.1% it comes in at 8.1%, then the full \$133,000 would not be realized. The difference would have to be paid in the 2014/15 year to replenish the account. ECHIP will want some assurance that the program is being funded appropriately. This is the caveat of the \$133,000 figure. Mr. Guzman explained how the monthly numbers are reviewed. It is a 12 month estimate. When the actual numbers become available, they are used in the calculation.

Mr. Adlerstein asked how much it would be to fund all of the priorities on the list. Mr. Guzman distributed the scenarios document (attached). Two figures that are not on this document are the resource officer (\$110,000) and technology (\$67,000).

Mr. Adlerstein noted that to fund all of the priorities would cost \$439K. The FY 2014-15 Budget Cost Impact Scenarios indicate that the best possible that could be found is \$284,183. He reviewed the accounts and highlighted the following.

The budget for the certified substitute teachers is increasing as is the spending for on-line services and legal services. Mr. Adlerstein would like to look at these and other accounts to see where money could be found. A general discussion took place.

Ms. Moran motioned to extend the meeting past 10 PM. Ms. Gorsky seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Adlerstein highlighted the office supply account. In 2013, it was \$29k and now it is \$44k. He wants to find items that can be cut without hurting the schools. A brief discussion of utilities took place and Mr. Guzman added that it is not an obligation to fund the reserve this year so that potential exists. In terms of large equipment charges, Mr. Adlerstein asked if this could come from the capital fund. Mr. Guzman explained that it was in the 2014/15 capital plan but it had to be taken care of this year. In turn, it needs to come from the operating funds. To pull it from non-operating funds they would have to go to the Town Council to see if there are any balances left over from previous projects. This is what was done to fund the high school dugouts. They are in contact with the insurance company to learn if there is coverage. Mr. Adlerstein commented that he would like to scrub the accounts to see if additional money can be found without affecting operations. He would like to see scenarios.

Mr. Guzman explained that the concern of the Town Manager and the insurance consultant is, in reference to the \$133K, that if it is not realized, the account needs to be replenished. Given the seriousness of taking those kinds of dollars out of the account, the Insurance Consultant is suggesting that the Board pass a resolution saying that if the

\$133K is not realized that it will be paid back in the 2014/15 year. If you are going to rely on that number and utilize it, ECHIP will want a resolution stating that if it is not realized that the Board will replace the difference.

Mr. Adlerstein explained that they have to put the best plan possible together now but need alternate plans.

Mr. Guzman explained that this Board's budget is to meet the educational needs of the school district. Initiatives are not included in this budget. From day one it was a level services budget and came out to 3.44%. There are some assumptions in the 3.44% that are big assumptions that they are working hard to meet. On top of that, he is being asked to scrub the accounts and come up with another \$230K. If the Board wants to underfund accounts, they can do that. Mr. Adlerstein responded that they do not want to underfund accounts but want to look for opportunities to include some of the priorities. Mr. Sce commented that they did this last year and this year there was still over \$300K saved. Every year, they cannot keep saying there is extra money. Mr. Guzman explained that they are using \$340K to meet next year's obligations. Right now, it could be spent on computers, materials, supplies and other needs. Mr. Sce asked why they did not use them to meet the needs and say that 4.5% would be needed next year. Mr. Guzman replied that this year, he never presented a budget. He was directed to present a level services budget. All of the exercises done were for a level services budget.

Mr. Pagoni noted that one option is to take a certain percentage from everything that could be touched and let the administration figure it out. He asked the kindergarten teachers which of the all-day kindergarten scenarios they would prefer. One teacher asked if it would be possible to have part time paraprofessionals. The scenarios were reviewed and the teachers selected the option of 9 teachers with no paraprofessionals and a class size of 17 students.

Mr. Adlerstein noted that if \$439K can be found, priorities (all-day kindergarten, the resource officer, pay-to-play, and technology) could be funded. A brief discussion of the resource officer took place. Ms. Moran noted that on the school tour, Ms. Fox noted this as a priority. Mr. Guzman would like to see a uniformed state trooper as the resource officer for a number of reasons.

Mr. Pagoni inquired about curriculum. Dr. Eidson reviewed the current per pupil numbers in the budget. Mr. Adlerstein commented that the Board has not received any funding requests for curriculum. She noted that each coordinator submitted a budget but was told that only a level funded budget was being considered. She explained that funds are needed for many areas including substitutes so they can work with the teachers to learn the pedagogy. A tremendous amount of free resources are now available online. One can buy something but the teachers need to know how to use it in the classroom. Dr. Eidson noted the manipulatives and non-fiction literature are needed. Paper is needed to print out online items for student to use. There are some units they are looking at but not a large series in the range of \$400k. A discussion regarding substitutes took place. Mr. Guzman distributed the following document, "Gov. Malloy seeks input of teachers, parents, and administrators on common core."

Governor Malloy is proposing \$14.6M for training and coaching of educators. If this passes, there will be money that the district can apply for going forward.

Mr. Guzman will review the accounts and present the information to the Board. He would like the Board to consider passing a resolution regarding the \$133K discussed. Mr. Adlerstein explained that the every June, the Board makes adjustments. This Board would like to do it differently. In March, the Board will say that it will fund the top priorities and take the risk as plan A. In June, it may say that it cannot afford what it planned in March. Mr. Guzman explained that if the Town Council goes forward with a 3.44% and it does not pass referendum, everything changes. In June, there will be adjustments for a number of factors. Mr. Pagoni asked what the ramifications would be if the Board rejects the resolution. Mr. Guzman will look into this.

G. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

Ms. Moran noted that the Board of Education meetings would be held in the schools from now on rather than in the Council Chambers. She explained that it will be more beneficial and that the meeting locations would rotate through the schools. The next meeting is scheduled to be held at TIS. Mr. Clark commented that the Board is a state body and should have a formal meeting location and disagreed with this plan. A straw poll was taken and 5 members were in favor of the meetings being held and rotated through the schools. Ms. Moran motioned to move Board of Education meeting location to item I.4 for action. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. Mr. Adlerstein, Mr. Doyle, Ms. Moran, Ms. Gorsky, and Mr. Frattaroli were in favor. Mr. Clark and Mr. Fratoni opposed. Mr. Sce abstained. Motion carried.

Mr. Clark noted that at last night's Council meeting, there was nothing specific discussed regarding the Board but they are considering opening the town charter.

H. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT - none

I. BOARD ACTION

- I.1. Board Policies  
Policy and Administrative Regulation 5060 – Non-Discrimination (students)  
Policy and Administrative Regulation 5171 – Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Mr. Pagoni motioned to pass Policy and Administrative Regulation 5060 – Non-Discrimination (students). Ms. Moran seconded the motion. Mr. Adlerstein, Mr. Doyle, Ms. Gorsky, Ms. Moran, Mr. Frattaroli, Mr. Clark, and Mr. Fratoni were in favor. None opposed. Mr. Sce abstained. Motion carried.

Mr. Pagoni motioned to pass Policy and Administrative Regulation 5171 – Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Ms. Moran seconded the motion. Mr. Adlerstein, Mr. Doyle, Ms. Gorsky, Ms. Moran, Mr. Frattaroli, Mr. Clark, and Mr. Fratoni were in favor. None opposed. Mr. Sce abstained. Motion carried.

- I.2 Request for Authorization to Transfer Funds

Mr. Doyle motioned to approve the request for the transfer of funds (\$69,158) from account 178, Certified Regular Ed to account 187, Substitutes. Ms. Gorsky seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

I.3 2013/2014 School Calendar Adjustment Recommendation

Mr. Pagoni motioned to pass the 2013/2014 School Calendar Adjustment Recommendation to modify the last three days if needed. Mr. Doyle seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

I.4 Change of Meeting Location

It was decided that there needed to be further discussion on this topic. Next week's meeting will be held at the High School.

Mr. Pagoni motioned to postpone action on this item. Mr. Doyle seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

J. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A resident commented that there were more than 3 parents who were not in favor of SBAC testing. She encouraged them to share their opinion but they did not think anything would change and did not want to cause trouble for their child.

A resident thanked the Board for all its work. In regard to the NEASC presentation, it is voluntary but every school participates. NEASC impresses upon the schools heterogeneous grouping but he believes the more levels in the schools, the better the education for the students. Further, heterogeneous grouping does not encourage rigor. The district does not have to do everything recommended by NEASC just as the Board should do what is best for the students in Tolland.

A resident commented that if the Board does not put the priorities in the budget it submits to the Town Council, then the Town Manager cannot support them. At the March 4<sup>th</sup> combined meeting, Mr. Field asked the Board to return with additional improvement items and indicated that they may be able to find the money and encouraged the Board to do so.

A resident commented in regard to the Town Manager's budget proposal and his comment that if the Board wants all-day kindergarten, it should be done in the next fiscal year. The Board should build on this positive momentum.

A resident commented that she has been impressed with the building of trust among the Board, the Town Council, and the public. The Council has extended its hand in asking for priorities and the Board should take advantage of the resource and the opportunity to build trust.

A resident agreed with Mrs. Littell and noted that teachers need time to plan.

A resident commented that she would like to see the district get more appropriate types of materials for the student so that issues can be pinpointed and the students can be provided with the appropriate tools. She advocates the priorities of improved curriculum and the resource officer.

K. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Mr. Sce noted the Board is getting 3.44%, a getting a higher budget this year. It will most likely get a lower budget next year.

Mr. Pagoni noted that he appreciates the public for attending and participating.

Mr. Adlerstein appreciates those who came in regard to all-day kindergarten. Everyone is here because they want the best for the schools.

Mr. Doyle commented that in years past, it was a conversation of how to cut with the least amount of damage. A different conversation took place this year. Today we are talking about improving or keeping as robust as possible the level of services for students. The citizens sit above the Board and the Town Council. The public's participation has made a big different in the conversation.

L. CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Gorsky addressed this under item D.

M. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Budget\*
- Meeting Locations\*
- Technology Plan Presentation\*
- School Calendar for 2014/15\*
- Status of the Budget\*
- Leave of Absence Report
- Healthy Food Certification
- Curriculum Plan

\*These items are scheduled to be on the March 19, 2014 BOE meeting agenda.

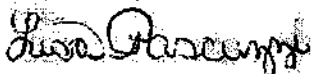
N. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Clark motioned to go into executive session at 11:12 PM for the purpose of discussing personnel matters. Mr. Fratoni seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

O. ADJOURNMENT

The Board returned to public session at 11:38 pm. Steve Clark motioned to adjourn the meeting. Karen Moran seconded the motion. All were in favor. None opposed. None abstained. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Pascuzzi  
Clerk

**TO: Members of the Board of Education**

**FROM: William D. Guzman**

**DATE: March 19, 2014**

**SUBJECT: Technology Plan**

Adam Sher, Director of Technology and Carolyn Tyl, Science Coordinator will present on the status of Technology in the District. The presentation will focus on the informational and data processing capabilities as well as the current educational uses of technology in the classroom.

WDG/ja

**TO: Members of the Board of Education**

**FROM: William D. Guzman**

**DATE: March 19, 2014**

**SUBJECT: Proposed School Calendar – 2014/2015**

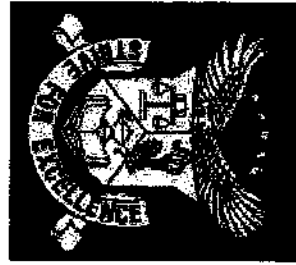
Attached for your review is the proposed school calendar for 2014-2015. The calendar has 183 school days with the first day of school being August 27, 2014. Four additional Professional Development half-days have been added to the calendar bringing the total to seven half-day sessions falling on September 24, October 29, January 28, February 25, March 25, April 29, and May 27. The tentative last day of school falls on Monday, June 15, 2015.

The Administration recommends approval of the 2014-2015 school calendar.

WDG:jp

# Tolland Public Schools

2014-15



**August/Sept. (24 days)**

M	25	26	27	28	29	F
T	1	2	3	4	5	F
W	8	9	10	11	12	F
TH	15	16	17	18	19	F
F	22	23	24	25	26	F
M	29	30				

**October (21 days)**

M	6	7	8	9	10	F
T	13	14	15	16	17	F
W	20	21	22	23	24	F
TH	27	28	29	30	31	F

**November (15 days K-8)**  
(16 days 9-12)

M	3	4	5	PTC-HD	PTC	F
T	10	11	12	13	14	F
W	17	18	19	20	21	F
TH	24	25	26	27	28	F

**December (17 days)**

M	1	2	3	4	5	F
T	8	9	10	11	12	F
W	15	16	17	18	19	F
TH	22	23	24	25	26	F
F	29	30	31			

**January\* (19 days K-8)**  
(18 days 9-12)

M	5	6	7	8	9	F
T	12	13	14	15	16	F
W	19	20	21	22	23	F
TH	26	27	28	29	30	F

**February (18 days)**

M	2	3	4	5	6	F
T	9	10	11	12	13	F
W	16	17	18	19	20	F
TH	23	24	25	26	27	F

**March (22 days)**

M	2	3	PTC-HD	5	6	F
T	9	10	11	12	13	F
W	16	17	18	19	20	F
TH	23	24	25	26	27	F
F	30	31				

**April (16 days)**

M	6	7	8	9	10	F
T	13	14	15	16	17	F
W	20	21	22	23	24	F
TH	27	28	29	30		

**May (20 days)**

M	4	5	6	7	8	F
T	11	12	13	14	15	F
W	18	19	20	21	22	F
TH	25	26	27	28	29	F

**June (11 days)**

M	1	2	3	4	5	F
T	8	9	10	11	12	F
W	15	16	17	18	19	F
TH	22	23	24	25	26	F
F	29	30				

**DATES**  
August 27, 2014  
June 15, 2015  
June 15, 2015

First Day  
\*Last Day  
\*THS Graduation  
\*TENTATIVE

**NO SCHOOL**

**HOLIDAY =** ○

**INSERVICE =** □

- August 25-26 Teacher Inservice
- September 1 Labor Day
- October 13 Columbus Day
- October 14 Teacher Inservice
- November 7 K-8 Conferences (PTC)
- November 10 Veterans' Day
- November 11 Teacher Inservice
- November 27-28 Thanksgiving
- December 24-January 2 Winter Break
- January 19 Martin Luther King Day
- T.B.D. \*\*THS Mid-Semester Day
- February 16-17 Mid-Winter Break
- April 3 Contractual Holiday
- April 13-17 Spring Break
- May 25 Memorial Day

**HALF DAYS = HD**

- September 24 K-12 Teacher Inservice
- October 29 K-12 Teacher Inservice
- November 6 K-8 Conferences (PTC)
- November 26 Thanksgiving
- January 28 K-12 Teacher Inservice
- February 25 K-8 Conferences (PTC)
- March 4 K-12 Teacher Inservice
- March 25 K-12 Teacher Inservice
- April 29 K-12 Teacher Inservice
- May 27 K-12 Teacher Inservice
- June 15 Last Day of School

\*If there is no school on the PTC scheduled for Thursday or Friday, Nov. 6 or 7, the make-up day will be Nov. 13 and 14. If school is closed on the PTC scheduled for Wednesday, March 4 (1/2 day of school), the make-up day will be Monday, March 9 (1/2 day).

**PTC = Parent/Teacher Conferences\***

**HD = Half Day**

**LD = Last Day**

\*\*There will be an inservice meeting day for high school staff only on the day after the first semester ends.  
**No School for High School students.**

Note: If school cancellations occur, efforts will be made to make up days on other than Spring Break.





**TO: Tolland Board of Education** **I.1**  
**FROM: Karen Moran**  
**Chair, Communications Committee**  
**DATE: March 19, 2014**  
**SUBJECT: Board of Education Meetings – Proposed Location Changes**

The proposal is to hold our Board of Education meetings in each of the four schools on a rotating basis. The main objective is that this offers the opportunity for us as a Board, as well as residents attending our meetings, to “experience” our schools. It also offers a more welcoming atmosphere for residents/parents to participate in the meeting.

We would forego the "live" feed capability in the council chambers. I did contact the production manager at Comcast and she could not give me any viewer data for our meetings. However, my educated guess would be that we do not get many viewers, and the pros of holding our meetings at the school outweigh the cons.

This location change could be done on a trial basis for the remainder of the school year, and revisited to review our assessment of the process.

Below is a list of upcoming meetings and suggested locations going forward:

April 9: BGP Library  
April 30: TIS Library (rescheduled from 4/23)  
May 14: BGP Library  
May 28: TIS Library  
June 11: TMS library (testing done)  
June 25: THS Library

# MEETING MINUTES

## TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL HICKS MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER 6<sup>th</sup> FLOOR COUNCIL ROOM MARCH 11, 2014 – 7:30 P.M.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jack Scavone, Chairman; George Baker, Vice-Chair; Richard Field; William Eccles; Paul Krasusky; Jan Rubino and Ben Stanford

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Steven Werbner, Town Manager; Michael Wilkinson, Director of Administrative Services; Lisa Hancock, Director of Finance and Records; Beverly Bellody, Human Services; Clem Langlois, Public Works

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Jack Scavone called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Recited.
3. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Observed.
4. **PROCLAMATIONS:** None.
5. **PUBLIC PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** (*on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council*) (*2 minute limit*): None.
6. **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:**
  - 6.1 Consideration of a resolution concerning an application for the 2014 Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program and discuss amendments and approval of the Town's Program Income Reuse Plan. Town staff will also update the Town Council and public on the 2012 Housing Rehabilitation Program.

George Baker read the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Federal monies are available under the Connecticut Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program, administered by the State of Connecticut, Department of Housing pursuant to Public Law 93-383, as amended; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapter 127c, and Part VI of Chapter 130 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Commissioner of Housing is authorized to disburse such Federal monies to local municipalities; and,

WHEREAS, it is desirable and in the public interest that the Town of Tolland make application to the State for \$400,000 in order to undertake a Small Cities Community Development Program and to execute an Assistance Agreement therefore, should one be offered.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Town of Tolland Town Council:

1. That it is cognizant of the conditions and prerequisites for State Assistance imposed by Part VI of Chapter 130 of The Connecticut General Statutes; and,

2. That the filing of an application by the Town of Tolland in an amount not to exceed \$400,000 is hereby approved, and that the Town Manager of the Town of Tolland is hereby authorized and directed to file such Application with the Commissioner of the Department of Housing, to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required by the Commissioner, to execute an Assistance Agreement with the State of Connecticut for State financial assistance if such an Agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, rescissions, and revisions thereto, and to act as the authorized representative of the Town of Tolland.

Mr. Werbner advised that prior to the submission of a Small Cities Community Development Block Grant application, municipalities are required to hold at least one public hearing to offer citizens the opportunity to comment on the Town's housing and community needs and discuss specific project activities in the areas of housing, economic development or community facilities which could be part of the Town's application for funding. Towns are also required to comment on the community's current 2012 Small Cities activity and provide their comments and approval of the Program Income Reuse Plan. The town is going to submit an application for \$400,000 for the elevator portion of the Library project. A floor plan was provided to the Council members. The elevator will connect the bottom floor to the Town Hall, which is presently not accessible to the disabled.

Ms. Bellody said they are excited to get an elevator from the first level to the second level. Tecton Architects were able to implement the elevator into the plans.

Ms. Bellody also updated on the current town-wide housing rehabilitation program. She provided the members with a listing of the projects that have been completed. Some of the projects include plumbing, roofing, carpentry, septic repair on three of the projects, smoke detectors, chimney repair and removal, and insulation. She believes they can do three more projects with the monies left. She reminded that they need to incorporate the resolution for the Program Income as well.

Rick Field motioned to open the public hearing; Seconded by Ben Stanford. All in favor. None opposed.

No public comment. A straw poll was conducted of all those in favor of this resolution: 6 in favor. 0 opposed.

Rick Field moved to close the public hearing; Seconded by Jan Rubino. All in favor. None opposed.

George Baker made the motion to accept the resolution as presented above, and to include the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, Program Income is defined in federal regulation at 24 CFR 570.489 (e) which specify that program income is the gross income received by the jurisdiction that has been directly generated from the use of Community Development Block Grant Program.

**WHEREAS**, Examples of program income include: payments of principal and interest on housing rehabilitation or business loans made using Community Development Block Grant funds; interest earned on program income pending its disposition, and interest earned on funds that have been placed in a revolving loan account; net proceeds from the disposition by sale or long-term lease of real property purchased or improved with Community Development Block Grant funds; income from the use or rental of real property that has been acquired, constructed or improved with Community Development Block Grant funds and that is owned (in whole or in part) by the participating jurisdiction or subrecipient;

**WHEREAS**, The Town of Tolland will generate Program Income from it's current activity, Housing Rehabilitation Program, of which after the approved projects have been completed, there will be additional funds remaining in that account;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Town Tolland Council that the following Program Income Plan and Program Reuse Income Plan is hereby approved and further authorizes, Town Manager Steve R. Werbner, to sign such document.

Seconded by Rick Field. All in favor. None opposed.

- 6.2 Discussion and approval of a Resolution to apply for a DEEP Open Space grant and purchase a 67.59 acre parcel owned by Keystone Enterprises at 119 Bakos Road for \$675,900.

Jan Rubino read a summary of the purchase, which was prepared by Linda Farmer who was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

The subject property located at 119 Bakos Road has been walked and evaluated by the Conservation Commission and a previous Land Acquisition Advisory Board and deemed a sensitive, strategic parcel that should be protected. After years of discussion with the landowners, they have agreed to sell the parcel to the Town for \$675,900.

This 67.59 acre property contains a 6 acre pond that is both spring-fed and partially filled by a small dam of Cemetery Brook. A long, driveway leads to the pond. This property is in the Shenipsit Lake Public Drinking Water Supply Watershed and would be considered Class I watershed if owned by a water company.

The Conservation Commission has been reviewing this parcel in Ex. Session for many years and has given the Land Acquisition Advisory Committee high recommendation for acquisition, grant submittal and preservation. They are currently preparing a specific recommendation letter for the grant, which they will endorse with approval of a Resolution for the grant at their meeting on March 13th. A goal of the Conservation Commission has been to provide sufficient land in corridors to promote habitats and safe movement for wildlife, both along ridgelines and stream corridors. With the earlier acquisition of Campbell Peaceful Valley, Stoppleworth, Knofla (across the street) and Schindler/Schmidt Conservation Areas, this corridor will be protected in perpetuity.

The DEEP Open Space Grant submission is due on March 31st. Up to 50% of the value is eligible for funding. However the recommendation is to purchase this property not dependent on receipt of this grant. Currently we have \$1,034,809 remaining in the passive open space account for purchases of this nature.

Rick Field motioned to open the public hearing; Seconded by Ben Stanford. All in favor. None opposed.

**Dick Knight of 31 Bonair Hill Road (and member of the Conservation Commission)** – He has been familiar with this property for about 15 years or more. He read a draft of the recommendation from the Conservation Commission. They highly recommend the purchase of this important and strategically located property. Its preservation will provide many levels of protection to surface water quality, aquatic habitat, forest habitat, wildlife and visual esthetics. He provided background on this property, and discussed its many attributes. He said the best way to get a picture of this property is to visit it in the summer.

**Rich Bozzone of 9 Elm Road** – He asked Ms. Rubino if there was a grant available from the State, and if it could be accessed after the purchase of the property. Ms. Rubino said yes to both.

A straw poll was conducted of all those in favor of this resolution: 8 in favor. 0 opposed.

Rick Field moved to close the public hearing; Seconded by Ben Stanford. All in favor. None opposed.

Ms. Rubino commented that she had the opportunity to walk this property a few years ago, and it is so beautiful. She reminds the community that Tolland has some wonderful walking trails. This purchase is amazing and she is in support of it. She congratulated the Conservation Commission and Linda Farmer for a job well done, and for their work.

Mr. Baker updated that the PZC unanimously endorsed this acquisition as well.

George Baker read the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Tolland has identified the 67.59 acre Keystone Enterprises (Knofla) property on Bakos Road as a "high priority" for preservation on the Open Space Plan in the Plan of Conservation and Development; and

WHEREAS, the property is on Cemetery Brook in the Shenipsit Lake watershed; and

WHEREAS, preservation of this property will expand an existing wildlife corridor.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby authorizes the Town Manager, Steven R. Werbner, to enter into a purchase and sale agreement for the 67.59 acre Keystone Enterprises on Bakos Road at the price of \$675,900 to submit a DEEP Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant.

Jan Rubino motion to accept the resolution as presented. Seconded by George Baker. All in favor. None opposed.

**7a. REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE TO THE COUNCIL:**

**7b. REPORTS OF TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS:** Mr. Clark, BOE Liaison, said the BOE will be meeting tomorrow night for a regular BOE meeting, and that there will be a presentation from the THS Principal regarding the accreditation process. He said there was a meeting last week regarding the Common Core. Mr. Ackert was present to answer questions and concerns. Also, tomorrow at 12:00 p.m., there will be a public hearing regarding this, which may be broadcasted on Channel 98 on Comcast.

Mr. Clark also advised that due to scheduled budget meetings, the BOE has changed their meeting schedule as followings:

The meeting scheduled for March 26<sup>th</sup> has been rescheduled to March 19<sup>th</sup>; and  
The meeting scheduled for April 23<sup>rd</sup> has been rescheduled to April 30<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Rubino was at the BOE meeting, and commented that there was a lot confusion and discussion regarding the s-back testing. Mr. Baker said the PZC had a public hearing and they approved some new zoning regulations. There was also discussion on medical marijuana dispensaries. Discussion occurred on the plans and desires to bring more business into the town. There was some discussion on a potential Meet & Greet for Tolland business owners. There will be a joint meeting on April 24<sup>th</sup> with the PZC and the Tolland, Coventry and Mansfield EDCs. Mr. Eccles said the date for the Business Meet & Greet has been set and it is April 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 8:30 a.m. at the Fire Training Center.

**8. NEW BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):**

8.1 Discussion of Charter Revision Commission.

Mr. Scavone said they were interested as group to find out how they would go about doing revisions to the Charter. Mr. Werbner advised that Rick Conti, Town Attorney, was here to provide information. Attorney Conti also prepared a detailed Charter Review Checklist for the Council members. Mr. Werbner said this is a highly regulated process by state statute. It is not an easy process; it is a lengthy process and could be a costly process in terms of the administrative aspects. The Council can appoint a Charter Revision Commission of up to 15 people, and they have 16 months to complete their work. The Council can give them guidance in terms of what they suggest be looked at, but the Commission is free to look at anything they deem appropriate in terms of the Charter. There are a variety of public hearing requirements and reporting requirements to the Council. The Commission will then submit their final report. If the Council does not approve it in the form they submit, there is the possibility of a referendum on the items that were not accepted.

Mr. Field said he believes there are some things in the Charter that should be looked at. His examples include: staggered terms, longer terms, appointing ZBA instead of electing, some financial constraints. He wanted to know if the other members were interested in looking at this. He believes the Charter was last revised 10 – 15 years ago.

Mr. Conti advised that the last Charter revision was driven by bond counsel. Mr. Eccles agrees with Mr. Field. The items he mentioned are worthy of consideration. The Council as a whole needs to decide if they are serious about this and then say “go”. Mr. Scavone said there isn’t a lot of time left in this term, and if they wanted to do it, they would need to start something soon. Mr. Werbner said one of the obvious keys is finding the members.

It was determined that the Council will think about it, and will talk about it at the next meeting. Mr. Werbner said they would need to look at the cost of all of this. Mr. Field said he wants to make it clear that he has no intention of getting rid of the referendum. Mr. Scavone asked the members to compile a list of things they would like reviewed, so that he can forward it to Mr. Werbner. Mr. Werbner will also provide a list of items they believe to be a problem (ex. public hearing requirement for appropriations). This will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

8.2 Appointments to vacancies on various municipal boards/commissions: None.

9. **OLD BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):** None.

10. **REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER (A WRITTEN REPORT SHALL BE PROVIDED THE 1<sup>ST</sup> MEETING OF THE MONTH ONLY):** Mr. Werbner said they are starting the budget process. He submitted his budget today and it is on-line. The first budget workshop is tomorrow night, and there are two workshops the following week. There is a public hearing on March 26<sup>th</sup> at the THS. The process will move quickly over the next two weeks. The Council will adopt their budget on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

11. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

11.1 February 20, 2014 Special Meeting Minutes: Jan Rubino moved to adopt the minutes; Seconded by Ben Stanford. All in favor. None opposed.

11.2 February 25, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes: Ben Stanford moved to adopt the minutes:

Rick Field *amended* the minutes as follows:

*Rick Field motioned to exit the Executive Session at 8:55 p.m., Seconded by Ben Stanford. All in favor. None opposed.*

***Rick Field motioned to add the purchase of the Knofla property located at 119 Bakos Road to the March 11, 2014 agenda as a public hearing item; Seconded by Jan Rubino. Jack Scavone; Richard Field; William Eccles; Paul Krasusky; Jan Rubino and Ben Stanford all approved. George Baker abstained.***

Seconded by William Eccles *as amended*. All in favor. None opposed.

- 11.3 March 4, 2014 Special Meeting Minutes: Jan Rubino moved to adopt the minutes; Seconded by George Baker. All in favor. None opposed. William Eccles abstained.

**12. CORRESPONDENCE TO COUNCIL**

*(See Attached)*

- 12.1 E-mail from Rebecca Risley re: Feedback on joint meeting;
- 12.2 E-mail from Brenda Falusi of 72 Pepperwood Drive re: Town budget;
- 12.3 E-mail from Susie & Gary Lotreck of 12 Holly Road re: Lotreck public participation via e-mail for 3/4/2014 TC/BOE Joint Meeting;
- 12.4 E-mail from Patricia Martineck re: Parent commentary on BOE meeting; and
- 12.5 E-mail from Diane Clokey of 29 Tolland Farms Road re: BOE Budget.

**13. COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILPERSONS: None.**

**14. PUBLIC LISTED PARTICIPATION** *(on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council)*  
*(3 minute limit):*

**Rich Bozzone of 9 Elm Road** – Once the Charter revision goes forward can anyone in the town introduce changes to the Charter? Mr. Conti said yes. Mr. Bozzone believes it is important that the residents are aware of the process.

**Dick Knight of Bonair Road** – He remembers what happened with the last two Charter revisions. No matter what you say, there will always be suspicion. The quicker you act, the better off you are. You cannot underestimate the effort by the participants involved in the appointed Commission. Your time is very short to get this done during this term.

**15. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Paul Krasusky motioned to go into Executive Session at 8:20 p.m., thus ending the Regular Meeting of the Town Council; Seconded by Rick Field. All in favor. None opposed.

- 15.1 Executive Session to discuss pending legal matter.

The Council exited Executive Session at 8:56 p.m.

16. **ADJOURNMENT:** Rick Field moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by George Baker at 8:57 p.m. All were in favor.

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Jack Scavone, Council Chair

Michelle A. Finnegan  
Town Council Clerk

## Scavone, Jack

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**From:** Beck <bekka7373@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 05, 2014 9:26 AM  
**To:** jscavone@tolland.org; jrubino@tolland.org; weccles@tolland.org; pkrasusky@tolland.org; rfield@tolland.org; bstanford@tolland.org; gbaker@tolland.org; swerbner@tolland.org; boardofeducation@tolland.k12.ct.us  
**Subject:** Feedback on joint meeting

Hello,

I would like to start by saying I realize what a difficult job you all have in crafting a budget that considers everyone's needs. Add to that, it's on a volunteer basis of your personal time and you should all be applauded for your service. I have seen an amazing effort on the part of the BOE and I'm so encouraged by the feedback from the TC last night.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to what the residents are saying and taking the important facts on the issues into careful consideration. I want you to know it's honestly and whole-heartedly appreciated.

I realize that when we are passionate about something we are deeply concerned about we can become extremely exuberant. I care about this town and our schools and it's my heartfelt desire to see and experience Tolland as a strong community we can all be proud to call home, moving forward to implement initiatives for the betterment of our citizens and students.

Kind regards,

Rebecca Risley



**Scavone, Jack**

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**From:** Brenda Falusi <bfalusi@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 04, 2014 8:06 PM  
**To:** towncouncil@tolland.org  
**Subject:** Town budget

I am sitting in the TC/BOE meeting and Paul just said we need to know what we support for the budget.

I am letting you know I support an increase in the town budget, more than what I see right now.

Please put forth a budget that we can start investing more into our Town.

Simple.

Brenda Falusi  
72 Pepperwood Drive

Very simple

Sent from my iPhone

**Scavone, Jack**

---

**From:** Susie Ghantous Lotreck <gslotreck@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 04, 2014 6:51 PM  
**To:** town council@tolland.org  
**Subject:** Lotreck Public Participation via email for 3/4/2014 TC/BOE Joint meeting

Good evening Council,

In case I miss getting to the public participation tonight at your joint meeting, I write on behalf of Gary and myself to advocate for all council members to support the recommended education budget for 2014/2015 that has been presented to you by the Board of Education.

In May 2014, both Gary and I want to be able to vote on a % increase in our town taxes that fully incorporates the BOE recommended budget which represents level service budget and was approved by their board members.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susie and Gary Lotreck  
12 Holly Road  
Tolland, CT 06084

## Scavone, Jack

---

**From:** Patricia martineck <p.martineck@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 04, 2014 2:31 PM  
**To:** sadlerstein@tolland.k12.ct.us; sclark@tolland.k12.ct.us; pdoyle@tolland.k12.ct.us; afratoni@tolland.k12.ct.us; kmoran@tolland.k12.ct.us; tfrattaroli@tolland.k12.ct.us; kgorsky@tolland.k12.ct.us; rpagoni@tolland.k12.ct.us; jsce@tolland.k12.ct.us; jscavone@tolland.org; gbaker@tolland.org; rfield@tolland.org; jrubino@tolland.org  
**Cc:** -weccles@tolland.org; bstanford@tolland.org; pkrasusky@tolland.org; superintendent@tolland.k12.ct.us; keidson@tolland.k12.ct.us; lcoulom@tolland.k12.ct.us  
**Subject:** parent commentary on BOE meeting

The energy of last weeks meeting at the Board of Education was festering, as the parents, BOE, and the district engaged in a tug of war style dialogue over the concepts of standards, the practicalities of common core curriculum (CCC) implementation, and the new testing methods. The district, along with parents, are shifting, and liking it or not, based on expectations that are perceived beyond their control, standards set by state and federal mandates. The balance of power is tenuous teetering in bigger courts as parents wrestle with loyalties to state methods and the individual rights of their children around standardized testing, even the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) as of lately has adopted this platform.

The change, awkward and uncomfortable, like an adolescence whose parents inform them, in no uncertain terms, "to get a job" and the teens retort, "after I get to the next level". A school that has defined itself and its standards so readily in one way with Connecticut Mastery Tests (CMT) scores, is being asked to expand into the seemingly unknown with perceived undefinable measures, SBAC'S. The comfort zone is all a bit shaky, pre test jitters I guess, what really are CMT scores anyway when they are considered outdated?

One of the central questions that stands out for me me and based on the tone of last nights meeting, is why does the common core curriculum seem like a marginal unknown to the educational community in Tolland? Most, parents, teachers, board members, and administrators, would concede that they knew "IT WAS COMING", at least by last year, particularly when the principles made public appeals to the board to staff curriculum specialist in budget meetings. Measures to beef up curriculum were minimally initiated until this school year 2013-2014. Teachers are out of the classroom and children are losing instructional time. Is it a reaction to an unacceptable mandate, a put off, a lack of acknowledgement, or a wait and see attitude that has hindered change? Was apathy guiding bigger decisions because of failing budgets, undefined state measures, poorly sided politics, or that CCC was such a massive undertaking with limited organizational guidelines that it well beyond the resources of staff?

So here we are and, "HERE IT IS", and the reality, it is now encroaching, seeping, and chipping away at the psyche of the educational structure in Tolland. Is there blame to be had at the state and federal levels, the boards, the tax payers, the parents, the teachers, the administrators or perhaps last years budget or the town budgets? Is it all so easily explained as another underfunded venture in an underfunded town in an underfunded state? Was it let happen so parents would be up in arms that children would loose instructional time for CCC? Where was the foresight, on federal, state and local levels, to see the anticipated needs and organizational supports to initiate this transition to the new curriculum a few years back?

I do not have much cause or reason to have any or all of these questions answered publicly, or have it explained to me, at this point we are all a bit put upon, but I do sustain the action of the question, and I implore consideration of the process. Undeniably the causal relationships are quite strong in this chain of events, retrospectively predictable, yet still insightfully strained and suffering. Yet from this dialogue strategic targeting is initiated. Sensitivity needs to be had in the communication, and if doors are nailed shut, then it is time enough to start prying them open. When it comes to the future and sustainability of our children there is no choice except to proceed with an openness to act soundly with a well thought out plan and positive intension.

Listening carefully, one would have attained that half the plan was already articulated by both teacher, administrator, and parents. I would simply speculate that the "curriculum" people, both parents and teachers alike, need stronger communication to sort through confusion, discriminate details, share, dialogue, and plan. I suspect that teachers and parents have a lot more in common then apart, and I do trust that "curriculum" people can make appropriate decisions and figure this out, direction is needed now with designated leadership on middle levels, training opportunity, materials, and parent volunteer supports. I think the board can help out, but I don't feel that this, in any way, will solve the problems unless people step up.

I have faith that Tolland education is fundamentally sound and sustainably competitive, teacher performance is exceptional despite the obstacles, and parents powerfully supportive, yet I continue to question where resources, man power, and materials will come from in the future, and how the program can comprehensively sustain quality, when per pupil spending is marginally moving with the fast rate of inflation. To illustrate perspective when I first moved here 12 years ago one of the biggest questions the board was proposing was whether to add a 2 million dollar pool onto the new high school, today people are graveling over how to use \$150,000 for implementation of academically mandated services, CCC, a have too, or preparing for the the near mandated services of FT K, which has essentially become a necessary detail of CCC. At what point did this turn into a drought?

Additionally the demands on the system is exponentially compounding in this in your face, high speed style of the informational age. Ideas are free floating in iClouds, technology and communication have become ammo for quick learning and rampant change bringing the unimagined to live, and everyone, everywhere wants to be apart of it. These days the price of progress is only a \$500.00 device and one tap away from one more child making it to high achiever status and one delayed child making it in the norms.

Leaving that meeting in a rather frazzled parental state, I needed a moment of escapism and idealism, my educational utopia, Finland, the best system in the world, child centered, tech friendly, systematic early childhood programs who teach three languages, science, math, music and art are one, well trained, adored and respected teachers, cost effective, children's individualized special needs are meet, and NO TESTING, boy life would be a lot easier. Reality did set in knowing I can't speak Finnish and it is colder there, then here. I'm certain the American education system won't be abandoning testing methods any time soon, their competitive spirit keeps them way too busy sizing their neighbors up, and rising healthcare cost, for teachers, is not so much a local issue in Finland, as it is for us back in the town trenches. I do respect and appreciate my teachers, certainly valuing the need for them to be well trained, just the way any good Finnish person. At least a good part of CT has gone to full day K as early childhood has become a state initiative, one can only hope, it is a matter of time in Tolland. As I pulled into my driveway, with a deep breath and a sigh of relief, I realized, I'm home, in my cozy little house, in a cozy little town, in the quietest corridor of CT surrounded by people I love.

My catharsis, concluding that the frenetic nature, of the public school educational culture on a collective, systematic level can exist around me, but it does not have to exist in me, nor do I have to reinforce the baggage of the system on my child or family. Is it easy to do? NO and despite this perspective shift, am I still somewhat affected? YES. My message for everyone involved, students, teachers, parents, administrators, voters, is that opting in and opting out, whether it is taking a test, writing curriculum, speaking out, making budget proposals or cuts, listening to parents, sitting in a long board meeting, giving feedback to the state, calling up the Feds, writing a policy, casting a vote, dissipating a stress, buying a computer, expressing a need, confronting an abuse, or following a mandate, is our conscious choice every single moment of every single day, there is nothing that can stand apart from it and it is what defines our moments of presence.

My final rhetorical question, is based on Angela Duckworth's educational research who expounds the concept of grit as a predictor of success in students, grit defined as resilience in the face of failure and the ability to sustain deep commitment and loyalty of interest over many years. Does the Tolland community, ready or not, in agreement or not, and liking it or not, have the grit to take on the challenges and changes of CCC, and get the job done by putting the real problems out on the table, looking honestly at faults, and sustaining interest and loyalty to bring the concepts of commonness and core to life with vision and personal interpretation from what they have known in the past to what they strive for in the future into this sweet, little, quiet, east of the river town in CT as there very, very, very own?

In my opinion judging from the grit from last weeks meeting, I think I have reason to suspect so.

Patricia Martineck

**Scavone, Jack**

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**From:** DIANE CLOKEY <dbclokey@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 04, 2014 5:32 AM  
**To:** jscavone@tolland.org; gbaker@tolland.org; rfield@tolland.org; jrubino@tolland.org;  
weccles@tolland.org; bstanford@tolland.org; pkrasusky@tolland.org  
**Cc:** boardofeducation@tolland.k12.ct.us  
**Subject:** BOE Budget

Dear Councilors:

I am unable to attend tonight's joint meeting on the BOE budget, but I want to thank you for your constructive participation in the process so far and ask that you continue your work toward a referendum question that does not mean further loss of either education or municipal services.

I have been either a participant in or an observer of this process since the referendum was instituted. The work that this BOE has done - in four months - to dig in to all of the costs associated with education in town, as well as developing a vision for what improvements would be prioritized, is unprecedented. It has been encouraging to see so many of you join them at the meetings that have already taken place.

Make no mistake, the losses in the district in the last 10 years have been significant. I have a junior, an 8th grader, and a 4th grader and can bear witness to the threadbare staff trying to cope with the chaos being imposed on them by all of the demands of completely revamped curriculum standards, an overhauled evaluation system, and a much-too-hurried testing scheme being thrown at them all at once.

Please continue the partnership that you have begun with the BOE; providing the leadership we need to make Tolland both a great place to live and and great place to grow up.

With gratitude,  
Diane Clokey  
29 Tolland Farms Rd.