Call to Order

Dr. Crevecoeur called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. and stated that Committee members were in attendance as listed above.

He reviewed the order of the agenda and noted that any questions on the presentations would be discussed during public comments at the end of the meeting.

Review of January 10, 2017 Minutes

Corrections:
Page 2: Paragraph 2 – replace the with these.

** MS. LAMB MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 13, 2016 AS AMENDED WITH CORRECTIONS AS NOTED.
** MS. ALONSO SECONDED THE MOTION.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Update on Draft 504 Manual-Ralph Valenzisi, Chief of Technology, Innovations, Partnerships

Mr. Valenzisi provided the background and overview of the 504 procedures, referred to the draft of the Special Education Manual, and highlighted the following charts and fielded questions and comments from the members.

The Norwalk Board of Education’s Manual was developed to provide educators and parents with general information regarding the implementation of Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) provides:

No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States.... shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.
Section 504 is a federal anti-discrimination statute which protects the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance, including public schools and protects all persons who:

• have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities
• have a record of such an impairment, or
• are regarded as having such an impairment

Section 504 requires a school district to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. Under 504, FAPE is defined as regular or special education and related services that are designed to meet the student’s individual needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met. In addition, a student with a disability, as defined by Section 504, is entitled to receive an equal opportunity to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities.

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) is a component of the United States Department of Education. OCR enforces Section 504. Its role includes receiving complaints from parents and students, conducting compliance reviews and providing technical assistance to parents, school districts and schools upon request. It is important to note that in general, OCR does not review educational decisions so long as the school district complies with Section 504’s procedural requirements.

Mr. Valenzisi then highlighted the following charts from the presentation:

**Status of 504 June 2016**

- Need for consistency throughout the district
- Need for professional development for all stakeholders
- Paper based system needed to be automated
- Need for vertical articulation and better communication when moving from school to school

**How Does the District Implement Section 504?**

1. Child Find – Referral Process
2. Evaluations
3. 504 Coordinator and Building Level Coordinators
4. Insure Proper Composition of 504 Teams
5. Standards for Eligibility
6. Services and Accommodations
7. Extra Curricular Activities
First Steps

- Get an inventory/baseline
  - Students with 504's
    - 338 students with 504's only
    - 1,671 students with IEP's
  - Expertise or experienced district personnel
- Build a professional development plan
  - Professional development for Guidance Counselors, Social Workers, Nurses in August and November
  - Initial review of changes with principals
- Develop consistent processes
  - Use of 504 direct
  - Rewrite of process manual
- Update the Procedures Manual
  - Focus Group

Next Steps

- Completion of Procedures Manual and Forms
- Development of annual and ongoing training in Section 504 for all stakeholders
  - Administration
  - 504 team members
  - Teachers
  - Resources for schools to share with parents
- Community Outreach
  - New website
  - Parent workshops to create better knowledge and awareness

Mr. Valenzisi thanked the members of the committee as follows:

Thanks to....

- Chelsey Docimo
- Christine Brown
- Maureen Sullivan
- Steve O'Connell
- Alissa Erotopoulos
- Shirley Mosby
- Danielle Tagariello
- Christina Guerra
- Medard Thomas
- Donna Patchen
- Marsha Moses
Special Education Budgets - Mr. Tom Hamilton, Chief Financial Officer

Mr. Hamilton provided an overview that this update was in to address issues brought up by this Committee. He noted that there are a lot of moving parts of the budget and reports of spending or not paying providers were not necessarily correct. He explained that they have worked through the management process of billing and he introduced Kristin Karczmit, Budget Director to present the Finance update.

Ms. Karczmit delivered the presentation and outlined new procedures and processes:

Purpose of the SPED Development Fund:
- The Special Education Development Fund shall be used exclusively for the purpose of implementing the priority recommendations of the 2015 CREC Audit/Review of Norwalk Special Education Services.
- The Fund will enable the development of new service delivery models and programs for specialized instruction necessary to provide Norwalk students with special needs a full continuum of Scientifically Research Based Interventions (SRBIs).
- Current services are skewed toward over-reliance on one-on-one paraprofessional services (Aides and AB As) and contractual services (out-of-district placements). It is necessary to create a continuum of professional services within the District and a service delivery model for each placement category before students can be transitioned from their current IEP mandated placements.
- The Fund entails a greater investment in special education teachers while paraprofessional services and contracted expenditures are reduced and repurposed over a three-year period of time.

New Procedures: Current
- Vendors payments are current
- Contracted Services template created - Contracted Evaluations template created
- OOD Placements template created
- Independent Educational Evaluation template created
- Settlement Terms Summary form
- Moved all positions to the correct departments from the SPED budget, including moving the Nurses to Operations and moving Guidance Counselors to the school based budgets
- Weekly meetings with SPED and Finance scheduled to review SPED budget
- ST weekly meetings with SPED and Finance scheduled to review contract process
- Date stamp employed for all incoming invoices and signed contracts
- All billing to be handled by Finance SPED Account Specialist
- Use of SASID # (State Assigned Student ID) on all correspondence, tracking and billing
- Vendors required to now include SASID #, invoice date, unique invoice # and service date on all invoices submitted for payment (notice sent to vendors)
- Hired a dedicated Finance Account Specialist responsible for all SPED expenditure tracking by student, service and institution/vendor. Responsible for filing SEDAC-G (excessive cost reimbursement); paying/auditing of all invoicing timely/maintaining accurate records/vendor relationships
- Will soon hire a dedicated administrative professional responsible for the management of student contracts, invoices, services, and payment

The following updates of the budget were presented:
# SPED Development Fund Budget

**Year 1: 2016-2017  Account 15652000**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Object Code</th>
<th>Object Description</th>
<th>Location/ Project</th>
<th>Original Allocation</th>
<th>Recommended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5 FTE Tracey ES</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>$31,814</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5 FTE Brookside ES</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>$31,814</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 FTE NHS</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>$38,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment Growth: (elementary to middle grades) necessitates increase of IEP-related professional services (4)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td></td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$101,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Teacher: Teach-to-One Math Program at Nathan Hale, Grades 6-8</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$69,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>Consulting Services</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracted services: High Roads for NHS ED program (8 students) &amp; CREC for Wolfpit Autism Program (7 students)</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>Consulting Services</td>
<td>05/49</td>
<td>$294,305</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Spending FY 2016-2017**

$1,200,000 $1,127,255

**Carryover to FY 2017-18: Enrollment Growth Funding**

$72,746

**Total SPED Development Funded for Year 1**

$1,200,000

---

**Footnotes:**

101 Carryover to fund for next school year
## SPED 2017/2018 Budget Changes: SALARIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excludes SPED Development Fund</th>
<th>2016-2017 BUDGET</th>
<th>2017-2018 BUDGET</th>
<th>VARIANCE</th>
<th>% CHG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDE</td>
<td>$5,322,392</td>
<td>$5,702,037</td>
<td>$379,645</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSIST SUPERVISORS/CENTRAL ADMIN/NON-CERT HOURLY/SECRETARY/CLERKS</td>
<td>$1,367,959</td>
<td>$1,337,984</td>
<td>$(29,975)</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CERTIFIED</td>
<td>$7,716,044</td>
<td>$5,203,846</td>
<td>$(2,512,198)</td>
<td>-33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHERS</td>
<td>$7,903,205</td>
<td>$8,878,173</td>
<td>$974,968</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICAL THERAPIST</td>
<td>$43,889</td>
<td>$44,937</td>
<td>$1,048</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSES</td>
<td>$1,430,948</td>
<td>$14,000</td>
<td>$(1,416,948)</td>
<td>-99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBSTITUTES</td>
<td>$95,000</td>
<td>$95,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL SALARIES &amp; SUBSTITUTES</strong></td>
<td><strong>$23,879,437</strong></td>
<td><strong>$21,275,978</strong></td>
<td>$(2,603,459)</td>
<td>-11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Footnotes:**
- Reduction in Certified Salaries is due to a transfer of the Guidance Counselor positions from the SPED budget to the School based budgets in FY 2017-18.
- Reduction in Nurse salaries is due to these positions being transferred from the SPED to the Operations budget in FY 2017-2018.
## SPED Development Fund Budget

### Year 2: 2017-2018  Account 15652000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Object Code</th>
<th>Object Description</th>
<th>Location/Project</th>
<th>Original Allocation</th>
<th>Recommended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired Start Up Costs (Sound Bridge PK-5)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$175,000</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism Program at Wolfpit School (continuation from 16/17 CREC)</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>Consulting Services</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$490,988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; Transition costs Norwalk Teachers (salaries &amp; Benefits) to assume responsibility for NHS &quot;High Roads&quot; E.D. classrooms</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement MS demonstration &amp; training site offering a full continuum of services (defer implementation)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED School Compliance &amp; Quality Case Mgr in ES (1)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>12 ES</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation / Assessment Coordinator (3/4 funding)</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>$81,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5 FTE (Tracey ES is the current 16-17 location)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>$31,814</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5 FTE (Brookside ES is the current 16-17 location)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>$31,814</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 FTE (NHS is the current 16-17 location)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>$63,627</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 FTE (location TBD)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>$63,627</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5 FTE (location TBD)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>$31,814</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enrollment Growth: (elementary to middle grades) necessitates increase of IEP-related professional services</strong></td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td></td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$222,695</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Additional Budget Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Object Code</th>
<th>Object Description</th>
<th>Location/Project</th>
<th>Original Allocation</th>
<th>Recommended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPED Teacher Teach-to-One Math Program, 6-8 (2nd teacher)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$72,126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD - 3/4 funding</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>Consulting Services</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED Office Support Staff (Contract Secretary)</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OOD Coordinator</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional Development (3/4 funding)** .............................................. $75,000

**Special Education Office Support Staff** .............................................. $75,000

**TOTAL** ........................................................................................................ $1,200,000.00

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City of Norwalk  
Board of Education  
February 14, 2017  
Page 7 of 9
SPED Process flowchart Example

PPT Meeting Hold & Recommendation for Contracted Services, Contracted Evaluation, Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE), or Out of District Placement Recommended

Contracted Services Recommended
- Special Ed Admin completes “Contracted Services” Google Form (See Document 1 Attached)
- Administrative Assistant generates “Contracted Services” Contract (See Contract 1 Attached)
- Vendor contacts NFS with any questions otherwise helps sign & returns the contract
- Stacey Heiligenhauer & Tom Hamilton sign the contract
- Vendor contacts NFS & vice versa if needed

Contracted Evaluation Recommended
- Special Ed Admin completes “Contracted Evaluation” Google Form (See Document 2 Attached)
- Administrative Assistant generates “Contracted Evaluation” Contract (See Contract 2 Attached)
- Vendor contacts NFS with any questions otherwise helps sign & returns the contract
- Stacey Heiligenhauer & Tom Hamilton sign the contract
- Vendor contacts NFS & vice versa if needed

Out of District Placement Recommended
- Special Ed Admin completes “Out of District Placement” Google Form (See Document 3 Attached)
- Administrative Assistant generates “Out of District Placement” Contract (See Contract 3 Attached)
- Vendor contacts NFS with any questions otherwise helps sign & returns the contract
- Joe Russo & Tom Hamilton sign the contract
- Vendor contacts NFS & vice versa if needed

Independent Evaluation Approved
- Special Ed Admin completes “Independent Educational Evaluation” Google Form (See Document 4 Attached)
- Administrative Assistant generates “Independent Educational Evaluation” Contract (See Contract 4 Attached)
- Vendor contacts NFS with any questions otherwise helps sign & returns the contract
- Joe Russo & Tom Hamilton sign the contract
- Vendor contacts NFS & vice versa if needed

City of Norwalk
Board of Education
February 14, 2017
Page 8 of 9
There was discussion on the staffing and class sizes. Ms. Heiligenthaler explained that there was a partnership with CREC, and further explained that the class size for K-3 is eight, and it is district placement through the PPT process, and the goal is to use the NPS Behavior Specialists where there are adequate trained personnel.

There was discussion on Compliance Administrator and Assessment Coordinators. There was also discussion on 504 plans and case load levels, and it was noted that this is being worked on as there are no precise guidelines from the state to refer to.

Public Comments

Dr. Crevecoeur asked to keep within the three minute time limit in order to have enough time for questions/answers.

1. Joanna Cooper thanked the staff and Committee for all the improvements that were much needed and essential for the district for special education system and procedures. She asked about legal fees and training/transition costs. Ms. Heiligenthaler explained the rationale, case loads and support procedures. Ms. Cooper again thanked the Committee for allowing her to speak, and she thanked the Interim Assistant Director and staff for their work in addressing issues with the comprehensive list.

2. Robin Keller introduced herself as an attorney and offered suggestions on the procedures in relation to the CREC recommendations. She asked about the number of teachers, encumbrances and budgeting Medicaid payments. She explained that there is a loss of thousands of dollars in Norwalk by not including Medicaid payments. There was discussion about forms and signatures and suggestions to increase the parent trust by assisting in the forms completion.

Dr. Crevecoeur thanked all for their attendance and noted that further questions can be addressed at the April meeting that will focus on the CREC report.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox,
Telesco Secretarial Services