

Berlin Board of Education
Finance and Operations Committee Meeting
April 16, 2024
MINUTES

In Attendance: Peter Zarabozo, Chair
Julia Dennis
Adam Salina

Also in attendance: Brian Benigni, Superintendent of Schools
Jeff Cugno, Director of Operations
Ashley Dorsey, Director of Finance

I. Call to Order

Mr. Zarabozo called the meeting to order at 7:01 am.

II. Budget Discussion

Mr. Benigni provided an update on the ongoing budget process. The budget referendum is scheduled for Tuesday, April 30. The committee discussed what the administration is doing to communicate to the parents and other stakeholders. Mr. Benigni noted he will be attending the upcoming PTO meetings to discuss the Board of Education's budget and to address any questions that may arise. As of today, the proposed cuts are still committee recommendations and are subject to change once they have been vetted and discussed with the entire board. The group also discussed year end funding.

III. Allowing Children of Employees to Enroll in the Berlin Public Schools

Mr. Benigni discussed a plan to allow the children of non-resident staff members to enroll in the Berlin Public Schools. The committee reviewed sample policies from attorney's Shipman and Goodwin, and sample policies and documents from the Bethel Public Schools; a Connecticut school district that currently offers this benefit to their staff. This would be a tuition based program with an annual review. The committee believes this would help address teacher recruitment and retention, and will make a recommendation to the full Board of Education to review a policy. A tuition rate is in discussion and has not yet been established.

IV. Set Objectives for 2024-2025

The Committee reviewed and revised the 2023-2024 Committee Objectives for the 2024-2025 school year. Objectives are as follows:

1. Review the current budget process, including ongoing discussions with stakeholders, and make recommendations for changes/improvements as necessary.
2. Coordinate with the Town on capital, building, and site budgeting to support effective long-range planning.
3. Review the financial impact of the District's plan development and strategies for recruiting and retaining high quality educators and staff.

V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:32am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley L. Dorsey
Director of Finance