

Board of Education Regular Meeting

Monday, February 8, 2010 7:00 PM

Preston Veterans' Memorial School Library, 1 Route 164, Preston, CT 06365

I. Call to Order	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
II. Pledge of Allegiance	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
III. Approval of Minutes	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
IV. Public Communications and Comments	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
V. Board of Education Committee and Other Reports	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
VI. Superintendent Reports and Recommendations	Speaker (s) : Dr. Welch: Superintendent
VI.A. BOE Expenditure/Projection Report	Speaker (s) : Dr. Welch: Superintendent
VI.B. Preston Cafeteria Profit and Loss Report	Speaker (s) : Dr. Welch: Superintendent
VII. New Business	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
VII.A. Votes Required	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
VII.B. Discussion	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
VIII. Old Business	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
VIII.A. Votes Required	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
VIII.B. Discussion	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
IX. Information	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
X. Executive Session	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
XI. Date and Time of Next Meeting	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair
XII. Adjournment	Speaker (s) : Pauline Andruskiewicz: Chair

Board of Education Regular Meeting

January 11, 2010 07:00PM

Preston Veterans' Memorial School Library

1. Call to Order

Deborah Burke-Grabarek called the meeting to order at 7:01PM. **Members Present:** Daniel Harris, James Jancewicz (left the meeting at 8:05PM), Charles Raymond, John Moulson and Sandra Gauthier. Pauline Andruskiewicz arrived at 7:03PM.

Also Present: Dr. Welch; Superintendent, Gloria Homiski; Recording Secretary, Ivy Davis; Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Special Education, Kathryn Walsh; Principal PVMS, Ray Bernier; Principal PPMS, Michael House; Supervisor of Building and Grounds, Patricia Hibbard; Transportation Supervisor. **Audience:** Amy Campbell, Andrew Rodman, Gail Smith, Sally Kropp (Kropp Environmental), Carolyn Pryor (Kropp Environmental), Brian Emanuelson (DEP), Thomas Casey (Fire Chief), Robert Congdon (First Selectman), Christopher Eident (Mystic Air Quality), Debra Maitoza, Lisa Converse, Penny Patch-Bartnicki, Tate Tomis, Susan Strader, Sandra Bosko, Charles Dzurenka, Stacy Wilbur and Megan Bard (The Day).

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Minutes

Moved, to approve the minutes of 12/14/09 as presented. Gauthier/Burke-Grabarek. Moulson, Raymond, Andruskiewicz in favor. Harris abstained. Jancewicz opposed. Motion Carries.

4. Public Communications and Comments

Dr. Welch introduced Sally Kropp from Kropp Environmental, Fire Chief Casey, Brian Emanuelson from DEP, and Christopher Eident from Mystic Air Quality.

Chief Casey explained that his investigation covered three areas: extent of oil release, origin of release, and cause. It was determined that 5778 gallons of oil were released. The origin of the leak was in the filter assembly at boiler #2. The cause of the spill was due to the failure of the filter assembly on boiler #2.

Sallie Kropp of Kropp Environmental addressed the Board and its audience members. She explained in detail the process by which her company has been locating the spilled oil, and cleaning up the site. She explained that all necessary precautions have been taken to ensure the safety of our children and staff members. A detailed explanation of Kropp's work to date can be found on the district website, as well as in Central Office and the office at PVMS.

Representatives from Mystic Air Quality and CT DEP were available to answer any and all questions concerning the spill and its affect on our building and daily operations.

CIRMA, the Town's insurance company, is handling the ongoing investigation of this matter.

Moved, to take a brief recess at 8:15PM. Andruskiewicz/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Pauline Andruskiewicz reconvened the meeting at 8:22PM.

The CSEA Grievance was tabled until the February meeting of the BOE.

5. Board of Education Committee and Other Reports

6. Superintendent Reports and Recommendations

Dr. Welch explained that the FY11 budget will remain as it is this year (10,456,162.00) and was last year.

The Board will not seek an increase nor will it require one due to declining enrollment and teacher retirements. The Proposed Budget will be presented in March 2010.

Dr. Welch presented his 2009-2010 goals for the benefit of the new board members.

6.1. BOE Expenditure/Projection Report

January Budget Status Report

6.2. Preston Cafeteria Profit and Loss Report

7. New Business

7.1. Votes Required

Budget Transfer

Moved, to authorize the Superintendent to transfer a total of 105,000 from the Special Education line item to Total Purchased Services and Total Other Purchased Services in order to cover projected deficits in the following areas: Equipment Repairs (25,000), Building Improvements (15,000), and Alternative Transportation (65,000). Andruskiewicz/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

7.2. Discussion

Financial Software bids will be opened publicly on Tuesday, January 12th. Once a Financial Package is purchased, the committee will concentrate on filling the joint Financial position for the Town and BOE.

8. Old Business

8.1. Votes Required

8.2. Discussion

9. Information

10. Executive Session

11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

12. Adjournment

Moved, to adjourn the meeting at 9:00PM. Burke-Grabarek/Gauthier. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Crisis—
A Terrible
Thing to
Waste

Connecticut's Budget Dilemma
and the Opportunity for Reform

Prepared by

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Connecticut General Assembly

March, 2009



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Representative Reynolds gratefully acknowledges the contributions of State Comptroller Nancy Wyman and former Secretary of the Office of Policy & Management William Cibes in the preparation of this report.

Introduction

Connecticut is facing its greatest fiscal crisis since 1991. The national economy has had a dramatic impact on state budget revenues, thus driving the state into major deficits. We are paralyzed by many of the public policy challenges before us. Combined with the emergence of daunting demographic realities and unchecked growth in major programs, Connecticut is in the midst of a “perfect storm” that could be crippling in historic proportions.

However, our current fiscal state and our limited capacity to address it are, in many ways, self-imposed. This paper will reveal a history of policies and practices and a reluctance to make tough decisions that have exacerbated and contributed to our fiscal crisis. Our own actions—and inaction—have made us more vulnerable to the national recession, fueled the pace of our economic decline, and ensured that we will emerge from it long after the rest of the nation.

But this dilemma presents an opportunity to pursue a blueprint for change that, if pursued, will help the state endure and emerge more quickly from future economic downturns and embolden us with the resources and disciplined systems necessary to address our greatest public policy challenges.

Most importantly, this blueprint argues that our future is a story for which we must be the authors. Our future is now written for us as we react to crises and external forces, while lurching from budget to budget and election to election. This crisis is an opportunity to set our state on a course of our own choosing. This crisis is a chance for leaders—in both parties and from both the executive and legislative branches—to exert courageous and visionary leadership to fundamentally change the way state government works.

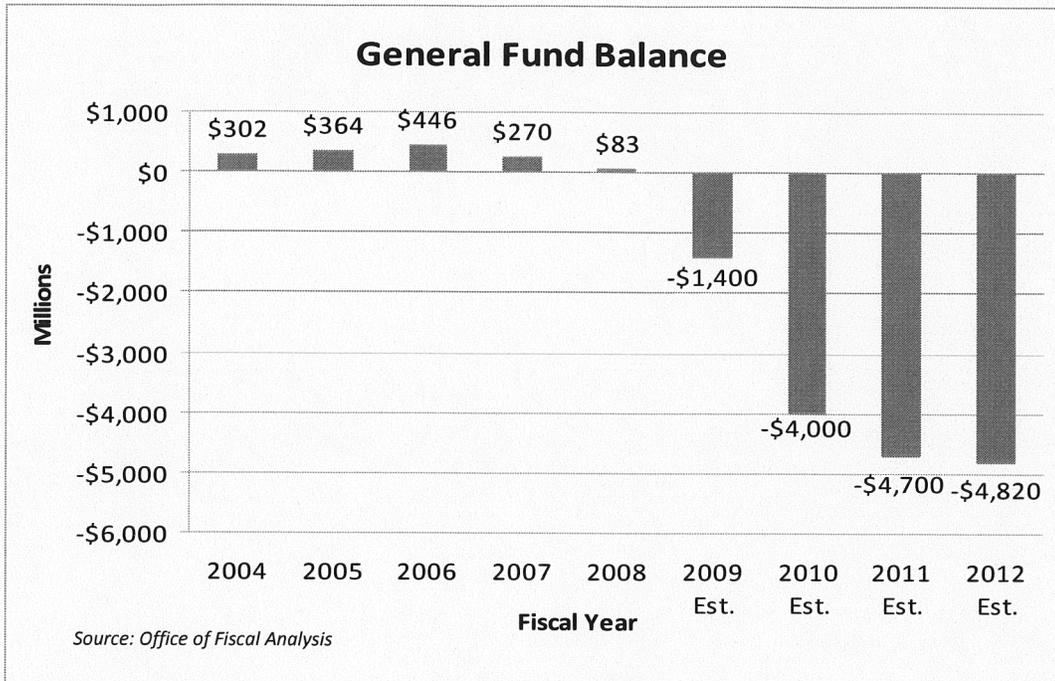
After all, a crisis is a terrible thing to waste.

Background

The FY 2009 budget has a projected deficit of nearly \$1.4 billion. The FY 2010 budget has a projected deficit of \$4 billion (21.4% of the budget), and the FY 2011 budget deficit is estimated at \$4.7 billion (24.2%). Together this results in a projected deficit of \$8.7 billion for the next biennium.¹

The sheer size of the FY 2010 - FY 2011 deficit is unprecedented in total dollars, although the combined FY 1991 and 1992 deficits that led to the income tax were larger as a percentage of the total budget.²

During the annual budget accountability report presented by the Office of Fiscal Analysis in November, 2008, the legislature learned that revenue declines—much of which can be attributed to the national recession—accounted for just over one-half of the projected FY 2010 deficit. The remaining one-half of the deficit was the result of increased spending on new and existing programs and structural holes created by using one-time revenues, such as surplus, for ongoing expenses.³



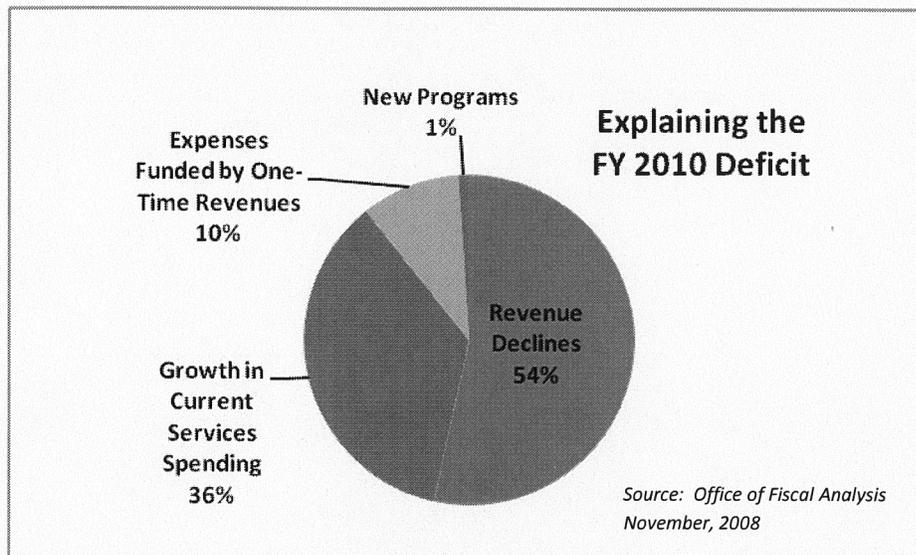
In other words, our own decisions over many years—and not just the national recession—are responsible in a significant way for our current and projected deficits. Therefore waiting out the recession will not be enough. We must begin this session to advance long-term strategies for government, budget and tax reform.

The most significant driver in the FY 2010 deficit is declining revenues. Historically, the state budget enjoyed average revenue growth of 3.8% per year (\$620 million). The revenue forecast for FY 2010 is -8.6%, a decline of \$1.4 billion—a total one-year drop of \$2 billion.⁴

Increased spending in four major areas is also a major driver in the FY 2010 deficit, accounting for a total of \$945 million or 25% of the deficit. These four areas of growth occurring between FY 2009 and FY 2010 are:

1. State Employee Wages & Benefits—increase of \$453 million
2. Medicaid—increase of \$245 million
3. Debt Service—increase of \$163 million
4. Local Education Grants—increase of \$84 million⁵

Connecticut’s ability to create jobs has only eroded over time. Business growth has been flat, while it increased nationally and in the northeast. The job growth we have enjoyed has occurred disproportionately in low-paying industries.⁶



Between 2000 and 2030 in Connecticut: The state’s population is expected to grow only 8%, while the nation will grow by nearly one-third. The elderly, intense users of health and human services will increase by nearly 70%. The population between age 18 and 64—those who will pay for these increased services—will shrink. The school age population will remain flat or decline.⁷

The state’s lack of success on the economic development front does not bode well for the immediate future. In the last recession Connecticut lost jobs sooner and took much longer to recover them than the rest of the nation. Connecticut lacks a long-term, innovative and visionary economic development strategy.

Most Connecticut families are worse off now than at the start of the last recession. Connecticut was the only state in which real income of the poorest 20% of families *fell* since the late 1980’s. Our middle income families had the second smallest gain in average income in the same period. However, our wealthiest 20% experienced a 45% increase in average real income, the second highest increase in the country.⁸

The economic success of our wealthy residents is not to be criticized. After all, many of our citizens aspire to such success and much of our income tax (including capital gains) revenue comes from these households. However, we need a strategic economic development plan that will ensure opportunity for the vast majority of our citizens who are not wealthy.

The national recession and resulting deficits, combined with these demographic and economic trends, and exacerbated by the policies and practices to be outlined below make for a “perfect storm.” This dilemma presents a unique opportunity to change business as usual.

Agenda for Reform

The 2009 Session must be remembered for launching a new era of reform. The Governor and legislature can ensure that the coming decade fundamentally changes the way state government works.

We can dramatically alter our budget practices and policies. We can permanently change the dynamic between state and local government. We can enact historic and comprehensive budget and tax reform. We can enhance the legislature's oversight role in a number of areas.

If we act boldly, we will address our greatest public policy challenges and successfully endure future recessions.

What is Connecticut doing—or failing to do—that has handicapped our capacity to address long festering public policy issues? What current policies and practices have exacerbated the budget crisis?

How can Connecticut fundamentally change the way state government works and embark on a new era of reform?

The Agenda for Reform will review the origins of our budget dilemma and make recommendations for addressing them in the coming decade.

The reform agenda proposes changes in ten major areas:

1. Long-Term Planning
2. Performance & Accountability
3. Spending
4. Spending Cap
5. Tax Policy
6. Tax Expenditures
7. Unfunded Liabilities
8. Indebtedness
9. Budget Reserve Fund
10. Accounting Methods

Some elements of this reform plan have been discussed for years. State Comptroller Nancy Wyman, State Treasurer Denise Nappier, and selected legislators from both parties have been sounding the alarm about many of these worrisome trends and the need for reform.

Now is the time to seize the momentum created by the crisis and these forward-thinking leaders and combine these varied strategies into a comprehensive reform agenda that will force a historic shift in the way state government works in Connecticut.

I. Long-Term Planning

It has been decades since Connecticut was truly committed to comprehensive long-term and strategic planning. Long-term planning is a “comprehensive plan for five years or more that outlines broad long-range goals and objectives for the state.”⁹ Strategic planning “measures progress and assesses how state agencies are meeting these broad goals.”¹⁰

Simply said, *long-term and strategic planning represents a dynamic process of determining where we want to go as a state and how we will get there, and measuring progress towards achieving desired outcomes.*¹¹

The Government Performance Project¹² grades the states on their performance and practices in management and governance. Connecticut is routinely rated one of the worst in the nation for comprehensive and long-term planning capabilities. In a recent study only two states had lower ratings than Connecticut.¹³

In a survey of 65 state agencies conducted by the Office of Policy & Management (OPM), it was found that only five agencies engaged in what could be truly described as strategic planning.¹⁴

The plans that were in force existed as “silos,” that is they were not developed in the context of a statewide vision and strategic plan and were not prepared in concert with agencies with overlapping public policy responsibilities.

When Connecticut engages in planning, it is:

- (a) lacking a singular vision for the state,
- (b) lacking overarching goals that the plan seeks to achieve,
- (c) compartmentalized, fragmented, single-agency, or focused on narrow policy areas,
- (d) inadequately staffed and resourced,
- (e) episodic and fails to endure with changes in leadership,
- (f) advanced without adequate and quality data,
- (g) lacking “teeth” to ensure implementation,
- (h) largely irrelevant to the budget process, or
- (i) fails to mandate performance measures to ensure accountability and results.¹⁵

The state budget has become Connecticut’s primary means of planning, but a budget is simply a tool to advance long-term strategic goals. In Connecticut the budget is the goal in and of itself.

Through a disciplined and visionary planning process, led by the Governor and supported by the legislature, Connecticut can:

- (a) pursue a future of its own choosing,
- (b) avoid the cost of bad results,
- (c) reduce its vulnerability to external economic forces,
- (d) establish consensus on funding priorities and make uninterrupted progress on the most important issues,
- (e) encourage cooperation between different agencies and branches of government,
- (f) increase efficiency of spending and reduce duplication of services,
- (g) link budgets to outcomes and ensure accountability for results,
- (h) improve transparency and public confidence in government, and
- (i) in times of budget crisis provide a tool for making thoughtful budget cuts with a scalpel, rather than through uninformed and arbitrary across-the-board cuts.¹⁶

The Governor and legislature must act in the 2009 session to establish the foundation and infrastructure for a long-term planning process, and our leaders must commit themselves over the long-term—politically and statutorily—to the agreed upon process and all of its obligations.

We must establish in law a statewide long-term and strategic planning process. The process must consist of best practices outlined in the 2007 report of the Program Review & Investigations Committee and the Council of State Governments *State Governance Transformation* initiative.

We must establish an oversight body, the *Council on Connecticut's Future*, to oversee the planning process. The Council would be chaired by the Governor, provide for gubernatorial and legislative appointments, and be housed in OPM in a reconstituted Division of Planning & Government Performance.

We must give the Council, led by the Governor, unprecedented authority to articulate a vision for the state, to establish overarching goals consistent with that vision, to require agencies to develop strategic plans and budgets aligned with the state plan, and to make agency budgets dependent on compliance with planning obligations and established performance and accountability measures.

II. Performance & Accountability

Most taxpayers are willing to pay their fair share. However, anger and resentment results if they feel they are sending “good money after bad.”

Connecticut largely uses “cost-based” budgeting in which agencies submit a modified version of the current year’s budget and then lobby the Governor and legislature for a percentage increase. There is no requirement that commissioners systematically justify what they already have, nonetheless the increase. There is no requirement that they demonstrate that the programs currently funded even work, and there is inadequate data to conduct such due diligence.

Therefore, the legislature is left to choose between approving unjustified budget growth, cutting services arbitrarily, raising taxes, or some combination of these poor choices. This leads to uninformed debate over what to cut, what to tax and what percentage to increase the budget—avoiding the truly necessary and more strategic decisions.

According to a report produced by the legislature’s non-partisan Program Review & Investigations Committee, “there is no link, analysis, or evaluation of how each agency’s spending is tied to overall state policy or how well each agency is performing in reaching any statewide goals.”¹⁷ This makes it very difficult to build public and political support for major investments in key public policy areas.

If Connecticut adopted Results-Based Accountability (RBA) we could begin to change this. Use of RBA, in the context of a long-term, strategic plan, would drive decision-making and justify investments and reductions. Such a system would allow Connecticut to reprioritize its spending by investing in “high-value” spending and reducing “low-value” spending.¹⁸

Connecticut must “budget for outcomes.” How much revenue will we have? What outcomes matter most? How much should we spend to achieve each outcome? How can we best deliver each outcome? How will we demand accountability in performance? How will we measure progress, success or failure?

Without such data, how will the Governor and legislature make informed decisions about what to cut to resolve the deficit? If compliance with RBA principles was mandated for all agencies, we would know what programs were working and which ones were failing to deliver the intended results.

Instead of spending cuts being across the board, uninformed and arbitrary to “share the pain,” our reductions would be strategic and we would avoid areas with a high return on the state’s investment.

Debating the false choice between reducing spending and cutting taxes rarely leads to concrete change. RBA would bring sanity and accountability to state budgets. It is an innovative model of planning, budgeting and monitoring to ensure government spending is efficient, effective, transparent, and accountable for results.

Over time RBA would help make state programs accountable for results, require agencies to collaborate, save taxpayers’ money, inform budget decisions, build confidence among voters, and better meet the needs of our fellow citizens.

We must adopt a multi-year plan to transition state agencies to mandated use of RBA, beginning with programs that are major cost drivers in the budget.

We must require all programs to have clearly articulated goals for the populations they serve, specific outcomes to be achieved, established benchmarks to measure progress towards the outcomes, and overall program performance measures.

We must charge the Governor, through a Chief Performance Officer in a re-chartered OPM Division of Planning & Government Performance with advancing this initiative.

We must enhance the state's capacity for data collection and analysis, and utilize the untapped potential of the state's CORE-CT system for linking spending with outcomes.

III. Spending

Aggregate state spending has grown at startling rates in recent decades. Many of these investments were prudent and necessary. However, ***some major drivers in the state budget are growing at rates that are simply unsustainable with no concrete plan for addressing the unchecked growth.***

Nearly 75% of all General Fund spending in FY 2009 is in four areas:

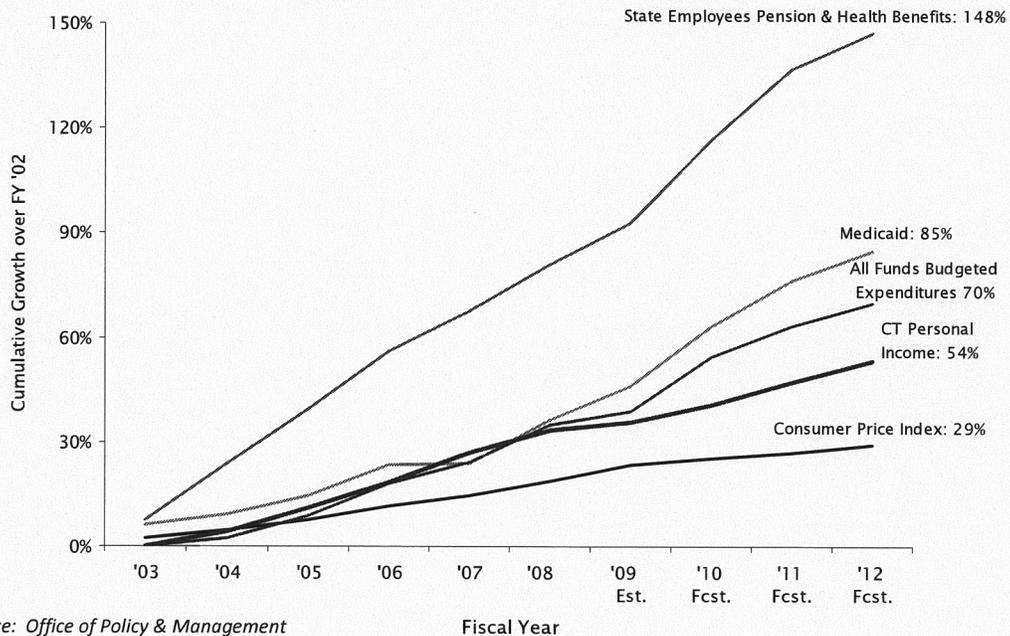
1. State Employee Wages & Benefits—\$4.9 billion (29%)
2. Medicaid—\$3.7 billion (22%)¹⁹
3. Local Education Grants—\$2.4 billion (16%)
4. Debt Service—\$1.5 billion (9%)²⁰

Between FY 2003 and FY 2012 when the CPI is projected to increase 29%: Total state spending is projected to grow by 70%. Expenditures on state employee pension and health benefits are projected to increase nearly 150%—more than double that of the overall budget.²¹

Medicaid, which provides critical health care programs to the elderly and poor, is projected to increase 85%. Medicaid is one of the largest line item in the state budget at \$3.7 billion for FY 2009.²² State health care costs for all programs increases by at least 10% per year with no plan to slow the growth.²³ State agency energy costs have risen 135% from FY 2000 to FY 2008, with no comprehensive energy plan underway.²⁴

The Department of Social Services annual budget and the Department of Children and Families budget have grown quickly to over \$5 billion and nearly \$1 billion per year, respectively, without commensurate improvements in the lives of our neediest families and most vulnerable children and elderly.

Growth in Significant State Expenditures



We must develop and implement a long-term, strategic plan for the state and Results-Based Accountability for the budget, as discussed earlier, to prioritize funding, to justify the reduction or elimination of programs, to eliminate waste, and to improve efficiency.

We must mandate that major state programs be subject to independent review (similar to the Department of Social Services budget review now underway by a third-party secured by the State Comptroller) to advance agency reorganizations and program reform.

We must build a more diverse and complimentary strategy for providing human services in a more cost-effective manner by bringing together government, community providers, and philanthropic communities.

We must enact health care reform and adopt strategies for containing economy-wide health care cost increases.

IV. Spending Cap

The Connecticut General Assembly adopted spending cap legislation in 1991 to garner political support necessary to enact the income tax. The cap allows state spending to grow from one year to the next by the greater of a five-year average growth in state personal income or the percentage increase in inflation during the preceding 12 months.

The spending cap applies to all appropriations, except: debt service payments, grants to distressed municipalities, first year expenditures on federal or court mandates, and transfers of unappropriated surplus to the Rainy Day Fund, state employee retirement fund, or debt service. The cap may be exceeded with an emergency declaration of the Governor and approval of at least 60% of members of both the House and Senate.

The voters approved a Constitutional amendment in 1992 adopting a spending cap and directing the legislature to define the key terms and definitions governing the cap. However, the legislature has never adopted updated definitions. Therefore, the statutory cap passed in 1991 contains the operative language defining how the cap will be calculated and implemented, which contributes greatly to the cap's structural weaknesses.

A spending cap can be good public policy, and it has slowed the growth in state spending in many areas. However, Connecticut's cap is poorly designed and increasingly unworkable. As a result, it is routinely ignored. For example, Governors Rowland and Rell issued "emergency" declarations, supported by the legislature, to exceed the cap in 8 of the last 11 fiscal years for a total of \$3.6 billion of spending above the cap.

What's more, the spending cap's flaws have resulted in additional "spending" through budget techniques that circumvent statutory restrictions, while giving the appearance of a "cap" on spending—leading to greater taxpayer obligations over the long-run.

For example, the cap has increased our dependence on borrowing for small projects and ongoing expenses, since debt service payments are exempt from the cap—costing taxpayers much more in the long-run. Total debt service as a percentage of the state budget has nearly doubled in the last two decades from 5.3% of state spending in FY 1988 to 10.4% in FY 2008.²⁵

The current cap design encourages "outside the cap" spending through the use of revenue intercepts that restrict specific revenues to non-lapsing funds that provide funding for specific programs without the need for annual appropriations (e.g. Citizen's Election Fund).²⁶

In the FY 2007 budget, nearly \$2 billion was in special, non-appropriated funds, nearly \$1 billion more than in FY 1997.²⁷ Ironically, the spending cap on the growth of "appropriated" spending has actually resulted in less of the state's spending being appropriated and subject to annual approval by the Appropriations Committee, thus reducing budget transparency and accountability.

The existing cap encourages a shift in the state's economic development incentives from grants and loans to tax credits, exemptions and deductions—tax expenditures that do not count as appropriations and are not annually reviewed or publicly scrutinized.

Our spending cap discourages the state from claiming all federal funds to which it is entitled, since most federal funds count towards the cap. Only 16% of Connecticut’s total state and local revenue comes from the federal government—the third lowest share among all states. The state’s relative wealth will always be a factor in our share of federal funds; however, the state has not maximized its full federal funding eligibility.

Connecticut must live by its spending cap law or reform it so that it is workable and capable of achieving intended results. Failure to do so will perpetuate the practice of routinely exceeding cap, increasing borrowing, leaving federal funds on the table, and using budget gimmicks to spend outside the cap. Collectively, these habits have led to a misleading representation of spending growth, less transparency, and greater obligations on the part of taxpayers.

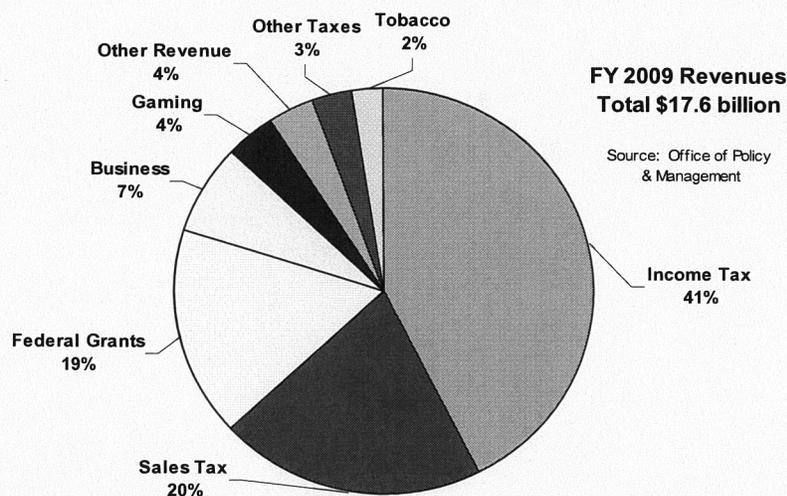
We must charge the Program Review & Investigations Committee to conduct a study of the impacts of the spending cap and its effectiveness in achieving its original purposes and to make recommendations for reform.

V. Tax Policy

Connecticut’s tax system is antiquated and has failed to keep pace with the dramatic shifts in the economy. **We need a tax system that is modern, aligned with the new economy, less volatile, more reliable, more equitable and fair, and far less dependent on the property tax.**

The top five revenue sources in FY 2009, accounting for nearly 90% of total revenue, are:

1. Personal Income Tax—\$6.7 billion
2. Sales & Use Tax—\$3.4 billion
3. Federal Grants—\$3.1 billion
4. Businesses Taxes—\$1.1 billion
5. Gaming Revenue—\$677 million²⁸



Given our dependence on income and sales taxes, which together account for two-thirds of all revenue, we must ensure that these taxes in particular are structured in a thoughtful, fair and more equitable fashion.

The income tax is relatively progressive for low income earners. However, it is essentially flat for all others and must be made more progressive. Also, it does not mitigate for the relative regressivity of the state's sales, property and other taxes.

The sales tax must be modernized to reflect our changing economy, which continues to move from product-based to service-based, from local businesses to multi-state and multi-national corporations, and from local stores to on-line sales. The sales tax rate could be lowered by eliminating some of the \$2.6 billion in exemptions that have little strategic public policy justification.²⁹

In Connecticut the local property tax collects more revenue than any other tax—local or state. When accounting for all local and state tax revenue, the property tax accounts for \$7.8 billion (39%), income tax for \$6.4 billion (32%), and sales tax for \$3.5 billion (18%).³⁰

Connecticut ranks second—at 31%—among all states in the share of its state and local own-source general revenues that come from the property tax.³¹ This results in an unfair burden on low and middle income families and on businesses and incentivizes towns to make poor economic development decisions.

This dependence on the property tax has also crippled the capacity of our largest cities to attract businesses and families and to improve their schools and quality of life. However, enduring property tax relief can only be achieved if it is preceded by comprehensive tax reform and spending cap reform.

Comprehensive tax reform will not only achieve reliability, equity and fairness, but it will also make other objectives possible that will bring sanity and accountability to our budget process, while achieving savings over the long-term.

For example, tax reform and the resulting revenue stream could reduce unfunded liabilities, build the Rainy Day Fund, eliminate structural deficits by no longer using one-time revenues for on-going expenses, and reduce borrowing and the resulting debt service obligations—all of which would reduce taxpayer obligations in the long-run.

Most importantly, this reform and the enhanced revenue stream will make property tax relief an enduring reality. The state would finally be in a position to ensure full funding of the statutory formula grants to towns (e.g. Payment-In-Lieu-of-Taxes for state-owned property) and assume responsibility for major mandates, such as special education.

This major shift of responsibility from local to state government is necessary to reduce our dependence on the property tax, to achieve greater fairness and equity for taxpayers, to avoid

budget practices that cost taxpayers more in the future, and to provide fertile ground for new strategies in economic development, regionalization, and smart growth.

When new taxes are established, there is not always public policy justification for them. For example, the Business Entity Tax and the Real Estate Conveyance Tax were adopted more for their revenue generating capacity, rather than for their ability to advance strategic public policy objectives.

We must adopt tax policies that conform to principles of a high-quality state revenue system proposed by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL):

- a. Aligned with state's long-term, strategic goals;
- b. Ensures stability, reliability and sufficiency;
- c. Improves equity and fairness and minimizes regressivity;
- d. Diversifies and balances revenue streams;
- e. Complements local government revenue systems;
- f. Responsive to interstate and international competition;
- g. Transparent and accountable to taxpayers;
- h. Broadens the tax base to reduce tax rates.

We must conduct and act on the findings of a Tax Incidence Analysis to examine the local/state tax system to evaluate how well it is conforming to the principles of a high-quality state revenue system, particularly adequacy, reliability, fairness, equity, transparency, and diversity.

We must adopt comprehensive tax reform to achieve the NCSL principles and to align the revenue infrastructure with the state's new long-term, strategic plan proposed earlier.

We must allow property tax relief to become a reality by fully funding grants to municipalities, adopting smart growth principles, making the state responsible for major mandates like special education, eliminating mandates where possible, and offering generous incentives for the regionalization of municipal services.

VI. Tax Expenditures

Tax expenditures are tax credits, exemptions, and deductions that give preferential treatment to taxpayers through the tax code. Examples include the sales tax exemption on energy efficient products, the income tax deduction on contributions to the state's college savings plan, and tax credits for businesses.

Many tax expenditures advance worthy public policy goals. However, unlike appropriated expenditures, tax expenditures are rarely revisited and become permanent revenue losses for the state. ***Rarely do these tax policies get re-examined in light of changing economic conditions and evolving public policy needs, and most never receive a routine assessment of their strategic value to the state relative to the revenue lost.***³²

Total “spending” through tax expenditures exceeds \$5 billion per year.³³ If tax benefits are to be offered, resulting in an erosion of the tax base, then there must be greater accountability and transparency.

Our dependence on tax expenditures has grown dramatically, often as a means of “spending” while avoiding the spending cap. The number of credits against the corporation tax has increased from 11 when the cap was passed to 29 now. The amount claimed has increased nearly 100-fold.³⁴ Of the 116 exemptions to the sales tax, nearly 50 (42%) were added since the spending cap was adopted. Nearly a quarter of state “spending” is now through preferential tax expenditures.³⁵

We must conduct a cost-benefit analysis of all tax credits, exemptions, exclusions, and deductions and sustain only those that advance critical interests as articulated in the state’s strategic plan.

We must not approve future new tax expenditures without a formal analysis of the costs and benefits.

We must require measures, like Results-Based Accountability with appropriations, to determine if the economic impact and benefit to the state justifies the lost revenue.

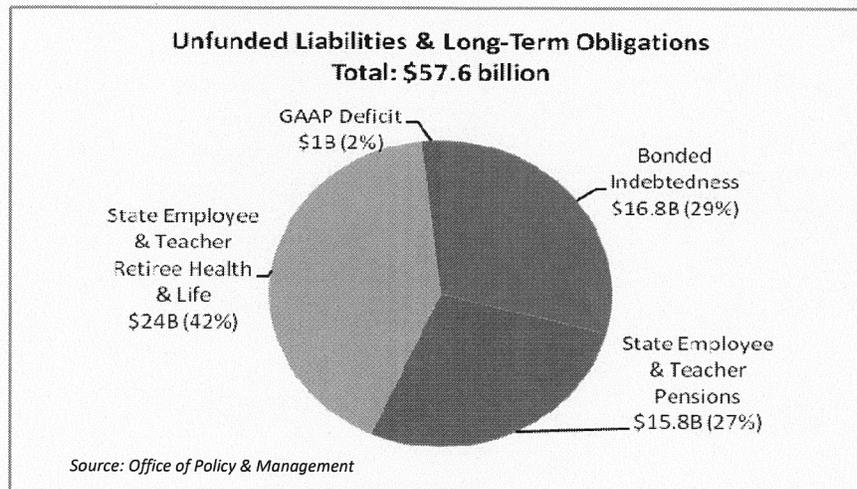
We must make the distribution of tax benefits more transparent and publicly reported and make more tax expenditures subject to caps on the total amount that may be claimed each year.

VII. Unfunded Liabilities

Unfunded liabilities represent what the state is obligated to pay in the future in the form of pensions, health insurance, and other benefits for teachers and state employees. Connecticut’s unfunded state pension liabilities for teachers and state employees are nearly \$16 billion. Compared to all other states, we are dead last at only funding 56% of this obligation.³⁶

Our unfunded liability for “other post-employment benefits” (OPEB) like health and life insurance for teacher and state employee retirees is \$24 billion. Again, we rank dead last among all states by funding almost nothing towards this obligation.³⁷ Together this is a total unfunded liability for pensions and other retiree benefits of \$40 billion—more than our entire biennial state budget.

This trend in future obligations is simply unsustainable. Unfunded liabilities represent claims against future state revenues. We can phase in funding for these obligations now or prepare for increased taxes or program reductions in future years. Given the rising cost of health care, it is reasonable to expect these obligations to increase well beyond the rate of inflation if no action is taken.



We must increase annual contributions to the OPEB Trust Fund for health insurance obligations for state employee and teacher retirees using funds from future surpluses.

We must adopt a 25-year plan to address the unfunded liability of state employee pensions.

We must avoid early retirement incentive programs if they exacerbate the state's pension liabilities.

We must adopt and honor a stricter policy of directing budget surpluses to the Budget Reserve Fund and unfunded liabilities.

We must work with the unions to consider changes to pension and retiree health plans for new hires in future contracts.

We must adopt health care cost containment strategies to reduce OPEB liabilities.

VIII. Indebtedness

The Connecticut Constitution requires that we have a balanced budget. Unlike the federal government, the state cannot ignore a deficit. However, this does not mean that we cannot—like the federal government—take on crippling debt.

Connecticut's bonded indebtedness now totals \$17 billion—ranking Connecticut third highest among all states in per capita state debt. ***Debt service is now one of the largest line items in the state budget*** after only state employee wages and benefits, Medicaid, and Local Education Grants.

Debt service is projected to grow \$156 million between FY 2009 and FY 2010, adding greatly to projected deficits.³⁸ In 1988, 5.3% of state spending was spent on debt service. By 2007 it had more than doubled to 11.4%.³⁹ In FY 2007 Connecticut spent \$1.8 billion on debt service. By 2010, debt service could approach \$2.2 billion per year or over 12% of the budget.⁴⁰

If the same share of the budget went to paying off debt now as in FY 1990, there would be nearly \$1 billion more today to build the Rainy Day Fund, pay off debt, reduce unfunded liabilities, or make strategic program investments.⁴¹

School construction grants often account for one-half of total bonding in a given fiscal year. Although such investments are “high value,” the generosity of the program relative to other states and the lack of accountability and controls by the legislature and State Department of Education have led to crushing debt for state taxpayers.

For example, municipalities are allowed to return to the state for up to three times for increased bond funds for the same project. The Commissioner of Education is given inadequate statutory authority to require that municipalities meet basic requirements in enrollment projections, educational merit, and local approvals before grants are approved by the legislature. Lastly, the system encourages growth in deferred maintenance on the local level and an emphasis on new construction rather than renovation and expansion—leading to increased dependence on bonding at the state level.

We must develop a long-term, statewide capital improvement plan that is aligned with the state's long-term, strategic plan proposed earlier.

We must evaluate and approve bonding requests based solely on how they will advance the strategic goals and most critical needs identified in the above plans.

We must establish the State Comptroller's proposal to establish a Debt Affordability Committee to review bond requests and make recommendations to the Bond Commission.

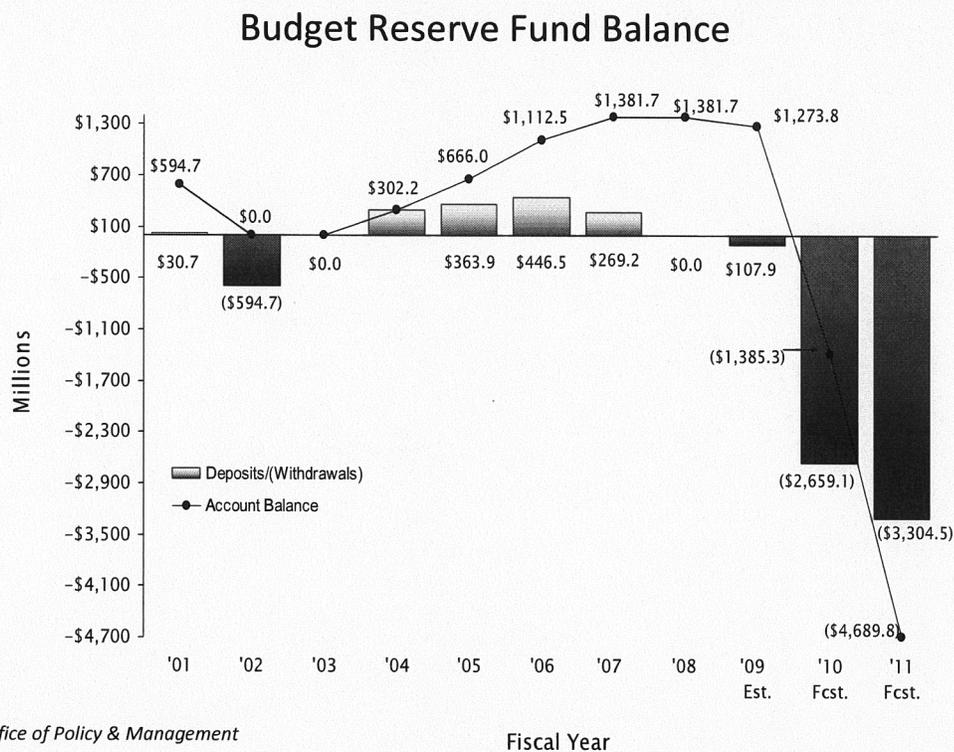
We must enhance the Commissioner of Education's authority over school construction grant requests to increase scrutiny of projects and to focus on school projects of greatest need.

We must cease the practice of using bonding for small amounts that are more appropriately funded through the budget appropriations process.

IX. Budget Reserve Fund

The state's Budget Reserve Fund (BRF), sometimes called the "Rainy Day Fund," exists to help the state endure economic downturns and avoid reacting to them in ways that may exacerbate the decline.

State law allows the BRF to equal up to 10% of net General Fund appropriations. The Rainy Day Fund now has a balance of nearly \$1.4 billion, which is 81% of the full statutory capacity or \$330 million short.⁴² The state's failure to meet this statutory threshold is largely the result of using surpluses in good years to fund ongoing programs, rather than for building the Rainy Day Fund.



For example, \$290 million in FY 2007 surplus, \$480 million in unspent FY 2008 funds and another \$16 million of FY 2008 transferred revenues are now funding ongoing expenses in the FY 2009 budget. This leads to structural deficits that must be addressed in subsequent years. As a result, nearly \$800 million of the projected FY 2009-11 deficits is a result of these "budget gimmicks" that only delay the need to address revenue shortfalls.⁴³

This session we are forced to not only address the impact of declining revenues as a result of the national recession, but we must also address the structural deficits created by our own budget choices.

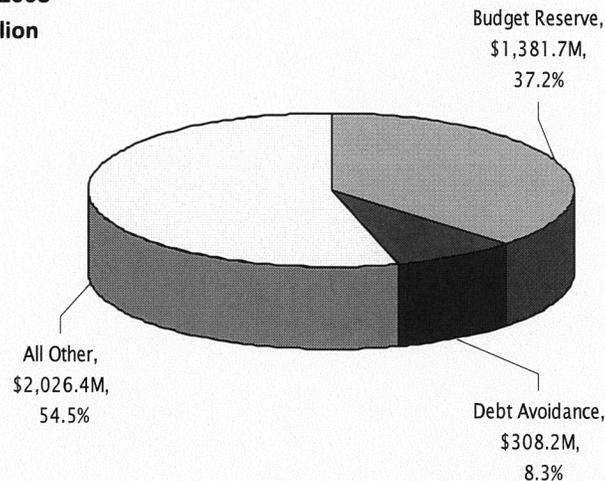
Between FY 2004 and FY 2008 the state enjoyed cumulative surpluses of \$3.7 billion. However, only one-third of it was deposited into the Rainy Day Fund and only 8% to reduce debt. More than half of it was used for future program expenditures and other purposes.⁴⁴

We must mandate by law that all surplus funds be used to build the Rainy Day Fund and, when the statutory threshold is reached, all remaining surplus be used to reduce unfunded liabilities or debt.

We must amend state law to allow the Budget Reserve Fund to grow to an amount equal to 15% of net General Fund appropriations.

We must adopt the State Comptroller's proposal to require minimal mid-year deposits to the Rainy Day Fund when surpluses are projected.

**Use of General Fund Surpluses
FY 2004 – FY 2008
Total \$3.7 Billion**



X. Accounting Methods

Connecticut does not abide by Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) established by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). GASB is an independent organization that establishes standards of accounting for state and local governments, collectively referred to as GAAP.

GAAP standards are used by the state for federal auditing purposes, bond issuances, and selected reports by the State Comptroller. However, the standards are not honored in the budget process. Connecticut develops budgets and prepares financial statements based on a modified cash basis, rather than a modified accrual basis required by GAAP. This leads to a less than honest and transparent system of reporting the state's true financial state and future obligations. It also leaves the state budget vulnerable to manipulation.

According to the Government Performance Project, "(Connecticut's) unusual way of keeping its books has made it somewhat easier to hide from the truth. Connecticut accounts for . . . revenue streams as quickly as possible, while taking the opposite approach with its expenses."⁴⁵ Abiding by GAAP would likely reveal millions of dollars in artificially buoyed funds.⁴⁶

GAAP is necessary to rebuild public trust and to enhance accountability and transparency. Businesses and municipalities are already required to abide by these principles. State government should hold itself to the same high standards. Conversion to GAAP was mandated in state law in 1993, but has been repeatedly postponed by the Governor and legislature because of the impact on the budget. GAAP would, in essence, decrease any year-end surplus and increase any deficit. Over the past three fiscal years the annual GAAP deficit has averaged \$1 billion per year.⁴⁷

We must enact legislation mandating a multi-year conversion to GAAP for development of the budget and preparation of financial statements.

XI. Conclusion

The unprecedented budget deficit projected for FY 2010 – FY 2011 will ultimately be addressed with deep cuts in programs, delays in new programs, state employee layoffs and concessions, depleting the Rainy Day Fund, increased taxes and fees, agency eliminations and consolidations, budget gimmicks, borrowing, use of one-time revenues for ongoing needs, federal stimulus funds, and other strategies.

However, if this is the sole result of the 2009 session, we will have "wasted" a crisis. Let this be the year we act with courage and foresight by getting serious about these structural issues. Let this be the year we accept that local and state government as we know it can never be the same again. **Let this be the year we launch a decade of reform** by advancing many of the strategies proposed previously.

The importance and magnitude of these strategies require that the legislature enhance its oversight role. **The legislature must assume greater responsibility for oversight, monitoring, evaluation, and legislative remedy** in the areas discussed above. This can begin by requiring the Appropriations and Finance Committees to meet quarterly, throughout the year, to fulfill these roles outside the pressure and narrow focus of a legislative session.

The Governor and legislature have an unprecedented opportunity to make their mark on state history for which future generations will be grateful. Let the 2009 session launch a new and historic era of reform in Connecticut. **Let the change begin with us.**

End Notes

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- ¹ Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut General Assembly
 - ² Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut General Assembly
 - ³ Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut General Assembly
 - ⁴ Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut General Assembly
 - ⁵ Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut General Assembly
 - ⁶ *Connecticut 2020*, Connecticut Economic Resource Center, November 2008
 - ⁷ *2008 Fiscal Accountability Report*, Connecticut Office of Policy and Management
 - ⁸ *Follow the Money*, Connecticut Voices for Children
 - ⁹ *State Long-Term Planning*, Program Review and Investigations Committee, December 2007
 - ¹⁰ *State Long-Term Planning*, Program Review and Investigations Committee, December 2007
 - ¹¹ *State Long-Term Planning*, Program Review and Investigations Committee, December 2007
 - ¹² The Government Performance Project is independently conducted and financed by *Governing* magazine and the Pew Center on the States
 - ¹³ Government Performance Project, 2005
 - ¹⁴ *State Long-Term Planning*, Program Review and Investigations Committee, December 2007
 - ¹⁵ *State Long-Term Planning*, Program Review and Investigations Committee, December 2007
 - ¹⁶ *State Long-Term Planning*, Program Review and Investigations Committee, December 2007
 - ¹⁷ *State Long-Term Planning*, Program Review and Investigations Committee, December 2007
 - ¹⁸ *Transforming Government*, David Osborne, The Public Strategies Group
 - ¹⁹ The Medicaid line item includes both state and federal funds. When federal reimbursements are received, they are counted as General Fund revenues.
 - ²⁰ Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut General Assembly
 - ²¹ *2008 Fiscal Accountability Report*, Office of Policy and Management
 - ²² Office of Policy and Management, State of Connecticut
 - ²³ *Transforming Government*, David Osborne, The Public Strategies Group
 - ²⁴ Connecticut Office of Policy and Management
 - ²⁵ *State Spending Cap Needs Some Repair*, Connecticut Voices for Children
 - ²⁶ *State Spending Cap Needs Some Repair*, Connecticut Voices for Children
 - ²⁷ *Coping with the Cap*, Connecticut Voices for Children
 - ²⁸ Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut General Assembly
 - ²⁹ *Building a Reliable, Fair and Accountable 21st Century Revenue System*, Connecticut Voices for Children
 - ³⁰ Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut General Assembly
 - ³¹ *Follow the Money*, Connecticut Voices for Children
 - ³² *Follow the Money*, Connecticut Voices for Children
 - ³³ Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut General Assembly
 - ³⁴ *Coping with the Cap*, Connecticut Voices for Children
 - ³⁵ *Coping with the Cap*, Connecticut Voices for Children
 - ³⁶ *Beware Those Sleeper Taxes*, The Connecticut Economy
 - ³⁷ *Beware Those Sleeper Taxes*, The Connecticut Economy
 - ³⁸ Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut General Assembly
 - ³⁹ Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut General Assembly
 - ⁴⁰ *Coping with the Cap*, Connecticut Voices for Children
 - ⁴¹ *Follow the Money*, Connecticut Voices for Children
 - ⁴² *2008 Fiscal Forecast*, Office of Fiscal Analysis
 - ⁴³ *Building a Reliable, Fair and Accountable 21st Century Revenue System*, Connecticut Voices for Children
 - ⁴⁴ *2008 Fiscal Accountability Report*, Connecticut Office of Policy and Management
 - ⁴⁵ Government Performance Project, 2005, independently conducted and financed by *Governing* magazine and the Pew Center on the States
 - ⁴⁶ Government Performance Project, 2005
 - ⁴⁷ Office of the State Comptroller, State of Connecticut

LAW OFFICES

SIEGEL, O'CONNOR, O'DONNELL & BECK, P.C.

150 TRUMBULL STREET
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06103
(860) 727-8900
FAX (860) 527-5131

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14 EUGENE O'NEILL DRIVE, SUITE 202
NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT 06320
(860) 442-4747
FAX (860) 442-4714

PLEASE REPLY TO HARTFORD OFFICE

Matthew K. Curtin, Esq.
mcurtin@siegelconnor.com

January 26, 2010

VIA EMAIL (welchj@prestonschools.org)

Dr. John Welch, Superintendent of Schools
Preston Public Schools Central Office
325 Shetucket Tpke
Preston, CT 06365

RE: Town of Preston Budget Appropriation for Education in Fiscal Year 2011

Dear Jack:

You communicated to me that, pursuant to Public Act 09-1, § 19, the Preston Board of Finance reduced the Board of Education's ("BOE") fiscal year ("FY") ending June 30, 2010 budget by the amount of funds received by the BOE in FY 2010 from the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund ("SFSF") pursuant to Title XIV of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 ("ARRA"). Specifically, the Board of Finance reduced the BOE's FY 2010 budget in the amount of \$436,130, from \$10,456,162 to \$10,020,032.

You have asked me whether the Board of Finance must budget, at a minimum, \$10,020,032 for education in FY 2011.

Brief Answer

Yes, the Board of Finance must budget, at a minimum, \$10,020,032 for education in FY 2011.

Applicable Law

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-262i(d) provides:

For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2010, and June 30, 2011, the budgeted appropriation for education shall be no less than the budgeted appropriation for education for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, minus any reductions made pursuant to section 19 of public act 09-1 of the June 19 special session.

SIEGEL, O'CONNOR, O'DONNELL & BECK, P.C.

Dr. John Welch, Superintendent of Schools
Preston Public Schools Central Office
January 26, 2010
Page 2 of 2

Public Act No. 09-1, §19 provides that a town's Board of Finance may reduce its FY 2010 budgeted appropriation for education by an amount of up to the limit of the funds received directly from the SFSF pursuant to Title XIV of the ARRA for FY 2010, provided that upon passage of the municipal budget prior to June 30, 2009, the Board of Finance failed to account for the direct provisions of the ARRA to the BOE.

Analysis

Before considering reductions in the FY 2011 budget due to receipt of ARRA funds, the FY 2011 budget appropriation for education must equal, at a minimum, the budget appropriation for education in FY 2009, *i.e.* \$10,456,162. See Conn. Gen. Stat. 10-262i(d).

However, because the Board of Finance reduced the FY 2010 budget by the amount of stimulus funds received, the FY 2011 education budget need not equal the FY 2009 education budget. Instead, the BOE budget appropriation must equal, at a minimum, the BOE budget for FY 2010, *i.e.*, \$10,020,032.

If you have any questions concerning this letter, please feel free to contact me.

Very truly yours,



Matthew K. Curtin



Mystic Air Quality Consultants, Inc.

1204 North Road (Rt. 117) Groton, Connecticut 06340

December 31, 2009

Mike House
1 Route 164
Preston, Connecticut
06365

Re: Veterans Memorial School odor post clean-up fuel spill.

Dear Mr. House:

As requested on December 29, 2009, Mystic Air Quality Consultants, Inc. conducted an indoor air quality investigation at the facility referenced above. A follow-up investigation was conducted on December 31, 2009.

Sampling was conducted in the boiler room and the adjacent areas that odor was noticed from recent spill.

Sampling was conducted in the Superintendent's Office, Principal's Office, and the hall way adjacent to boiler room, gym and the boiler room.

All areas sampled were under 1 PPM, which is under the OSHA limits for regulated VOCs. The door to the boiler room should be kept closed to restrict the odors to the boiler room area.

Survey results:

December 29, 2009

Superintendent's Off. 0.0 PPB
Hall adjacent to B.R. 81 PPB
Boiler Room 3091 PPB

December 31, 2009

Superintendent's Off. 0.0 PPB
Hall adjacent to B.R. 8.0 PPB
Boiler Room 5587.0 PPB
Principal's Off. 8.0PPB
Gym 490.0PPB

Sincerely:

Christopher J. Eident R.S., CSP, CIH, CEO

Communications (24 hours):

Office: (860) 449-8903

website: www.mysticair.com

FAX: (860) 449-8860

e-mail: maq2@aol.com

Toll Free: 1 (800) 247-7746



Mystic Air Quality Consultants, Inc.

1204 North Road (Rt. 117) Groton, Connecticut 06340

January 26, 2010

Preston Veteran's Memorial School
325 Shetucket Turnpike
Preston, Connecticut 06365
Attn: Mr. Michael House
Facilities Department

Re: Limited and Directed Ambient Air Measurement for #2 Fuel Oil

Date of Survey: January 22, 2010

Locations: Preston Veteran's Memorial School
Main Office, Classroom 29 and Classroom 37

Encl: (1) Ambient Air Sample Results

Dear Mr. House:

As requested, on January 22, 2010, Mystic Air Quality Consultants, Inc. conducted a limited and directed ambient air sampling for #2 Fuel Oil at the school referenced above. The sampling was conducted to ascertain the levels of fuel oil inside the school after a previous oil spill in the boiler room.

Results reflect conditions only at the time samples were taken and may change based on conditions that may occur outside or inside the building. Sampling for #2 fuel oil consisted of charcoal tubes (100/50 mg sections, 20/40 mesh) connected to a low flow sampling pump. The pump was calibrated at 0.2 liters per minute and was placed roughly 3-5 feet off the ground.

Environmental Health Laboratory (EHL) analyzed the samples. EHL is accredited by the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA).

Currently the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) do not have a Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL) for diesel fuel (#2 Fuel Oil), but the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) have a Threshold Limit Value (TLV) of 100 mg/m³ for vapor and aerosol.

The State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection has a few guidelines for the release of #2 Fuel Oil. For soil contamination if the total petroleum hydrocarbon level exceeds 500 parts per million then additional soil should be removed. For ambient air measurements although not documented in publications the recommended guideline that the DEP requires are for ambient air levels in buildings to be below 1 ppm.

Communications (24 hours): _____

Office: (860) 449-8903

FAX: (860) 449-8860

Toll Free: 1 (800) 247-7746

website: www.mysticair.com

e-mail: maqc2@aol.com

Ambient Air Results

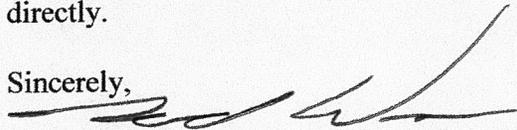
Sample Number	Location	Exposure Time	Flow Rate lpm	Air Sample Volume (Liters)	Lab Result mg/m ³	Lab Result ppm
1	Classroom 37	0719-1503 (464 Minutes)	0.2	92.1	<0.27	<0.040
2	Classroom 29	0725-1508 (463 Minutes)	0.2	92.6	0.75	0.11
3	Main Office	0729-1500 (451 Minutes)	0.2	90.2	<0.28	<0.041
4	Blank	----		-----	<25.0 ug Detection Limit	----
Recommendation (Guidelines)	----	----	----	----	100 mg/m³ ACGIH	<1 ppm State of CT DEP

Based on the sample results all ambient air measurements were below all current guidelines. Please refer to **Enclosure (1)** for the laboratory results and chain of custody.

Please note, however, that certain individuals may exhibit hypersensitive or allergic symptoms in environments where there are contaminants below set standards or detectable limits.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

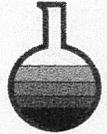
Sincerely,



David Wiseman, MS, CIAQP, CIAQC, CIEC
Compliance and Inspection Services

LABORATORY ANALYSIS REPORT

ESIS Environmental Health Laboratory
100 Sebethe Drive, Suite A-5
Cromwell, CT 06416
(860) 635-6475 or (800) 243-4903



To: David Wiseman
Mystic Air Quality Consultants
1204 North Road & Rte. 117
Groton, CT 06340

Report #: C1034248

P.O. No.: Veterans Memorial School
1/25/10

Date Received: 01/25/2010

Date Reported: 01/26/2010

Page 1 of 1

Analysis: Volatile Organic Compounds

Analytical Method: Gas Chromatography; OSHA 7 - Small CT

Prep Date: 01/25/10

Analysis Date: 01/25/10

Sample Number	Air Volume (Liters)	Component	ug	mg/m ³	ppm
1	92.8	Fuel Oil #2	<25.0	<0.27	<0.040
2	92.6	Fuel Oil #2	69.9	0.75	0.11
3	90.2	Fuel Oil #2	<25.0	<0.28	<0.041
4-Blank	---	Fuel Oil #2	<25.0	Reporting Limit: 25.0 ug	

Analytical results do not require blank correction.

Samples analyzed by gas chromatography are quantitated by matching the retention times of sample peaks with those of known compounds. A matching retention time is not proof of chemical identity.

On all sorbent tubes and 3M 3520 organic vapor monitors the front and back section were analyzed separately.

Unless indicated by an asterisk, significant breakthrough was not detected.

Concentrations reported are based on air volumes provided. Results relate only to the items tested.

Unless noted otherwise above, the condition of samples on receipt was acceptable.

Approved By: James Kenny James Kenny CIH, CSP - Laboratory Manager

Date: 1/26/2010

(C1034248)

Environmental Health Laboratory
 ESIS Risk Control Services
 One of the ACE Group of Companies
 100 Sebethe Drive Suite A-5
 Cromwell, CT 06416
 (860) 635-6475; (800) 243-4903 FAX (860) 635-6750
REQUEST FOR ANALYTICAL SERVICES
 (Please fill all blanks to help us better serve you)

Standard TAT
 3 Day **RUSH** TAT
 Next Day **RUSH** TAT
 Same Day RUSH TAT
 Please call ahead for **RUSH** analysis.
 Additional charges apply.

Lab Report No.
C1034248
 Und SRF AR
 ESIS Z Claims
 Pol. Or Con. No.

Name: <i>Linda Castello</i>		Name: <i>David Wiseman</i>	
Company: <i>Mystic Air</i>		Company:	
Mailing Address: <i>1204 North Rd</i>		Mailing Address: <i>Same</i>	
City, State, Zip: <i>Groton, CT 06340</i>		City, State, Zip:	
PO#, Ref # (If Required):		Phone No:	
Accts. Payable Phone No: <i>800-243-7746</i>		Fax No:	
Accts. Payable Fax No: <i>860-449-8860</i>		Email: <i>damaged@stet.net</i>	
Sampling Location: <i>Veterans Memorial School</i>		Sampling Media: <i>CT</i>	
Product Manufactured/Service Rendered:		Sampling Method:	

Collected by (print): <i>David Wiseman</i>	Collector's Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>
Relinquished by: _____ Date/Time: _____	Received by: _____ Date/Time: _____
Relinquished by: _____ Date/Time: _____	Received by: _____ Date/Time: _____
Method of Shipment: <i>FedEx</i>	Received at Lab by: <i>C. Reigins</i> Date/Time: <i>1/25/10</i>
Authorized by: <i>[Signature]</i> Date: <i>1/22/10</i>	Sample Condition Upon Receipt: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable

Sample No.	Location	Media	Concentration	Class	Flow	Flow	Flow	Flow	Flow
✓ 1	CT	#2 Heating Oil	Class 37	0.2	0719	1503	464	92.8	
✓ 2	"	"	Class 29	0.2	0725	1508	463	92.6	
✓ 3	"	"	Main Office	0.2	0729	1500	451	90.2	
✓ 4	"	"	Blank	-	-	-	-	-	
		(diesel)							

FOR LAB NOTES ONLY:

RUSH

DISTRIBUTION: WHITE - LAB COPY CANARY - LAB FILE COPY PINK - CUSTOMER COPY



Mystic Air Quality Consultants, Inc.

1204 North Road (Rt. 117) Groton, Connecticut 06340

February 2, 2010

Preston Veteran's Memorial School
325 Shetucket Turnpike
Preston, Connecticut 06365
Attn: Mr. Michael House
Facilities Department

Re: Limited and Directed Ambient Air Measurement for #2 Fuel Oil

Date of Survey: January 28, 2010

Locations: Preston Veteran's Memorial School
Classrooms 37, 39 and Cafeteria (Dining Side)

Encl: (1) Ambient Air Sample Results

Dear Mr. House:

As requested, on January 28, 2010, Mystic Air Quality Consultants, Inc. conducted a limited and directed ambient air sampling for #2 Fuel Oil at the school referenced above. The sampling was conducted to ascertain the levels of fuel oil inside the school after a previous oil spill in the boiler room.

Results reflect conditions only at the time samples were taken and may change based on conditions that may occur outside or inside the building. Sampling for #2 fuel oil consisted of charcoal tubes (100/50 mg sections, 20/40 mesh) connected to a low flow sampling pump. The pump was calibrated at 0.2 liters per minute and was placed roughly 3-5 feet off the ground.

Environmental Health Laboratory (EHL) analyzed the samples. EHL is accredited by the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA).

Currently the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) do not have a Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL) for diesel fuel (#2 Fuel Oil), but the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) have a Threshold Limit Value (TLV) of 100 mg/m³ for vapor and aerosol.

Communications (24 hours): _____

Office: (860) 449-8903

FAX: (860) 449-8860

Toll Free: 1 (800) 247-7746

website: www.mysticair.com

e-mail: maq2@aol.com

The State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection has a few guidelines for the release of #2 Fuel Oil. For soil contamination if the total petroleum hydrocarbon level exceeds 500 parts per million then additional soil should be removed. For ambient air measurements although not documented in publications the recommended guideline that the DEP requires are for ambient air levels in buildings to be below 1 ppm.

Ambient Air Results

Sample Number	Location	Exposure Time	Flow Rate lpm	Air Sample Volume (Liters)	Lab Result mg/m ³	Lab Result ppm
1	Classroom 37	0657-1457 (480 Minutes)	0.2	96.0	0.99	0.14
2	Classroom 39	0700-1454 (474 Minutes)	0.2	94.8	1.8	0.26
3	Cafeteria (Dining Side)	0723-1501 (458 Minutes)	0.2	91.6	1.5	0.22
4	Blank	----		-----	<25.0 ug Detection Limit	----
Recommendation (Guidelines)	----	----	----	----	100 mg/m³ ACGIH	<1 ppm State of CT DEP

Based on the sample results all ambient air measurements were below all current guidelines. Please refer to **Enclosure (1)** for the laboratory results and chain of custody.

Please note that Classrooms 37 and 39 were conducted under "closed" conditions. All doors and windows were closed and no classroom activity occurred on the day of sampling.

Please note, however, that certain individuals may exhibit hypersensitive or allergic symptoms in environments where there are contaminants below set standards or detectable limits.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,



David Wiseman, MS, CIAQP, CIAQC, CIEC
Compliance and Inspection Services

LABORATORY ANALYSIS REPORT

ESIS Environmental Health Laboratory
100 Sebeth Drive, Suite A-5
Cromwell, CT 06416
(860) 635-6475 or (800) 243-4903



To: David Wiseman
Mystic Air Quality Consultants
1204 North Road & Rte. 117
Groton, CT 06340

Report #: C1034294

P.O. No.: Veterans Memorial
Fuel oil

Date Received: 01/29/2010

Date Reported: 02/02/2010

Page 1 of 1

Analysis: Volatile Organic Compounds

Analytical Method: Gas Chromatography; OSHA 7 - Small CT

Prep Date: 02/01/10

Analysis Date: 02/01/10

Sample Number	Air Volume (Liters)	Component	ug	mg/m ³	ppm
1	96.0	Fuel Oil #2	94.7	0.99	0.14
2	94.8	Fuel Oil #2	169	1.8	0.26
3	91.6	Fuel Oil #2	136	1.5	0.22
4-Blank	---	Fuel Oil #2	<25.0	Reporting Limit: 25.0 ug	

Analytical results do not require blank correction.

Samples analyzed by gas chromatography are quantitated by matching the retention times of sample peaks with those of known compounds. A matching retention time is not proof of chemical identity.

On all sorbent tubes and 3M 3520 organic vapor monitors the front and back section were analyzed separately.

Unless indicated by an asterisk, significant breakthrough was not detected.

Concentrations reported are based on air volumes provided. Results relate only to the items tested.

Unless noted otherwise above, the condition of samples on receipt was acceptable.

Approved By: James Kenny James Kenny CIH, CSP - Laboratory Manager

Date: 2/2/2010

RESULTS

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS of IMPROVEMENT

**Mike Schmoker
1842 E. Carver Rd.
Tempe, AZ 85284**

**Phone: 928-522-0006
schmoker@futureone.com**

The 333 Story

From Chicken Soup for The Soul

I was doing a weekend seminar at the Deerhurst Lodge, north of Toronto. On Friday night a tornado swept through a town north of us called Barrie, killing dozens of people and doing millions of dollars worth of damage. Sunday night, as I was coming home, I stopped the car when I got to Barrie. I got out on the side of the highway and looked around. It was a mess. Everywhere I looked there were smashed houses and cars turned upside down.

That same night Bob Templeton was driving down the same highway. He stopped to look at the disaster just as I had, only his thoughts were different than my own. Bob was the vice-president of Telemedia Communications, which owns a string of radio stations in Ontario and Quebec. He thought there must be something we could do for these people with the radio stations they had.

The following night I was doing another seminar in Toronto. Bob Templeton and Bob Johnson, another vice-president from Telemedia, came in and stood in the back of the room. They shared their conviction that there had to be something they could do for the people in Barrie. After the seminar we went back to Bob's office. He was now committed to the idea of helping the people who had been caught in the tornado.

The following Friday he called all the executives at Telemedia into his office. At the top of a flip chart he wrote three 3s. He said to his executives "How would you like to raise 3 million dollars 3 days from now in just 3 hours and give the money to the people in Barrie?" There was nothing but silence in the room.

Finally someone said, "Templeton, you're crazy. There is no way we could do that."

Bob said, "Wait a minute. I didn't ask you if we could or even if we should. I just asked you if you'd like to."

They all said, "Sure, we'd like to." He then drew a large T underneath the 333. On one side he wrote, "Why we can't." On the other side he wrote, "How we can."

"I'm going to put a big X on the 'Why we can't' side. We're not going to spend any time on the ideas of why we can't. That's of no value. On the other side we're going to write down every idea that we can come up with on how we can. We're not going to leave the room until we figure it out." There was silence again.

Finally, someone said, "We could do a radio show across Canada."

Bob said, "That's a great idea," and wrote it down. Before he had it written, someone said, "You can't do a radio show across Canada. We don't have radio stations across Canada." That was a pretty valid objection.

They only had stations in Ontario and Quebec. Templeton replied, "That's why we can. That stays." But this was a really strong objection because radio stations are very competitive. They usually don't work together and to get them to do so would be virtually impossible according to the standard way of thinking.

All of a sudden someone suggested, "You could get Harvey Kirk and Lloyd Robertson, the biggest names in Canadian broadcasting, to anchor the show." (That would be like getting Tom Brokaw and Sam Donaldson to anchor the show. They are anchors on national TV. They are not going to go on radio.) At that point it was absolutely amazing how fast and furious the creative ideas began to flow.

That was on a Friday. The following Tuesday they had a radiothon. They had 50 radio stations all across the country that agreed to broadcast it. It didn't matter who got the credit as long as the people in Barrie got the money. Harvey Kirk and Lloyd Robertson anchored the show and they succeeded in raising 3 million dollars in 3 hours within 3 business days!

Bob Proctor

Improvement Brainstorming Guidelines

The purpose of brainstorming is to produce as many good ideas or strategies as possible in a fast-paced, positive setting. It is often the first step in a focused, productive improvement meeting.

1. The purpose or desired result of the team meeting is clearly stated--preferably in writing.
2. A recorder writes down each idea on a flip chart, chalk board or whiteboard. If using a flipchart, post (rather than flip back) each page as it is completed.
3. Each person in the group, **in consecutive order**, has the opportunity to contribute **one** idea or strategy.
4. Each team member has the option to say "pass" when it is their turn to contribute.
5. Each person's remarks should be made as clearly and succinctly as possible--in 20 seconds or less.
6. There should be no criticism or discussion of ideas or strategies.
7. The recorder can seek clarification to ensure accurate recording of each idea or strategy.
8. *Expect to "piggyback" or build on each other's ideas: some of the best strategies are generated in this way.*

***Team Learning Log: From Problems to Solutions**

(reproduce as needed; team should submit copy to principal or project leader)

MEMBERS PRESENT:

DATE: _____

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

TARGETED STANDARD/AREA OF WEAKNESS (from a state or local assessment) [e.g. "Add/subtract decimals and fractions"; "identify author's bias"]

COMMON ASSESSMENT: TO EVALUATE INSTRUCTIONAL SOLUTION (BRIEFLY DESCRIBE WHAT STUDENTS MUST KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO)

INSTRUCTIONAL SOLUTION: BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF LESSON UNIT/STRATEGY (that addresses the above area of weakness)

SHORT-TERM RESULTS (1-4 WEEK CYCLE): MEASURABLE IMPACT OF SOLUTION (This can *only* be filled out *AFTER* an assessment has been given, e.g. "62% of our students" or "17 of 28 students" mastered the targeted standard)

ADJUSTMENTS TO INSTRUCTION (IF RESULTS AREN'T SATISFACTORY) _____

*one Team Learning Log per team, per meeting is sufficient

Annual Improvement Goals for 200__ -- 200__

GOAL 1: The percentage of our team's students who will be at or above standard in _____ will increase from:

_____ % at the end of 200__ (previous year's percentage/mean score) to

_____ % at the end of 200__

as assessed by the _____ (State/District or School Assessment)

SPECIFIC, low-scoring skills/standard areas to improve (e.g. "Measurement"; "Compare & order fractions and decimals"; "Organization")

*

*

GOAL 2: The percentage of our team's students who will be at or above standard in _____ will increase from:

_____ % at the end of 200__ (previous year's percentage/mean score)

to

_____ % at the end of 200__ (the following year's percentage/mean score)

as assessed by the _____ (State/District or School Assessment)

SPECIFIC skill areas to address/improve

“Next Steps” to ensure success with collaborative, data-driven improvement efforts:

I. Create end-of-course or end-of semester assessments for all courses

(some of this is based on recommendations by Rick DuFour and Rebecca DuFour)

Assessments must align with only the most *essential, enduring* standards on state assessments.

For courses *not* assessed in your state (e.g. electives, science etc.) teams should create end-of-course assessments based on a careful review of standards and the selection of—once again—*only the most essential standards* to be taught in each course. These assessments should:

--be completed during the summer/during team meetings

--include a clear and sufficient emphasis on **higher-order proficiencies: analysis, evaluation and synthesis**, which has to include writing and real-world problem-solving (English/Language arts should focus almost exclusively on *higher-order* proficiencies and assessments).

Finally, divide **essential standards into quarterly blocks & create quarterly assessments**; quarterly results should be reviewed by teams & leaders to gauge progress & identify need for support/improvement

II. At the beginning of the school year/after end-of course assessments are created, have ALL STAFF analyze state & end-of-course assessment data to complete a form like page 5: “Annual Improvement Goals” to

1. set a limited number of measurable, end-of-course/subject-area goals (not more than two, in my opinion)
2. list—for each course goal--specific, lowest-performing areas to improve on this year

Establish dates and times for team meetings; these are sacrosanct. Then be sure that every teacher brings the following **Teamwork Tool Kit** to every meeting

- Team norms/protocols/brainstorming guidelines—**essential** to time-efficient, productive meetings
- “Annual Improvement Goal” form (p. 8: with goals and areas of weakness based on data analysis)
- Interpretive guide(s)/sample assessments/scored writing samples provided by the state
- Rubrics, anchor papers, samples of student work wherever appropriate
- **Team Learning Logs** (e.g. p. 4)

Regularly collect and review **Team Learning Logs** at both building and district level

At every school and district meeting, regularly *share, celebrate and reward* measurable successes recorded on Team Learning Logs; be sure to disseminate successes to *all who teach the same skills or grade levels*

III. Administrators, Department Heads, Teacher Leaders :

Ask “key questions” regularly: What are your measurable goals? what specific standards are teams currently working on? What short-term wins has your team recently celebrated?

Meet with teams quarterly to: discuss results of quarterly assessments; ensure that essential standards were taught; plan for improving performance on standards where assessment data reveals weaknesses; explore ways to support improvement on next quarterly assessment

IV. Launch an all-out assault on reading deficiencies; improve literacy instruction at every grade level

Increase time spent on **purposeful (question or prompt-driven) reading and writing**, (shoot for 60 minutes of reading; 40 of writing in all classes combined--*daily*)

Have students regularly discuss open-ended, higher-order questions before and after they read—and before they write

Writing that is scored or graded should always be the result of “process writing”—of planning, drafting and revision—guided by teacher feedback at each stage

Conduct a “walk-around audit” of reading and English classes to identify patterns of strength or weakness (i.e. how much **actual purposeful reading and writing** are occurring? Report results and make plans for improvement—followed by another tour/audit—and another report

Provide direct instruction in **vocabulary** at every level. Use lists that are linked to state assessments, e.g. *EDL Core Vocabularies* (Steck-Vaughan: 800/531-5015) or SAT vocabulary

VI. Conduct a “Lesson Fair,” as soon as possible, where teachers attend staff development given by in-district teachers.

Any team should be eligible to conduct a session, if their team has had created a lesson or unit that achieved *successful, measurable results on a viable assessment* in any specific skill or area of proficiency

Annually examine data to **find schools/district teachers or teams whose high achievement on certain standards warrants an opportunity to present to others** in need of improvement on the same standard(s) (observe, interview & disseminate their methods)

For starters, **sponsor an event with even a few teachers; compensate these presenters and advertise their presentations** (“The 3rd grade team at Jefferson Elem. will present successful strategies and lessons for teaching ‘Measurement’ between 3:00 and 5:00 at _____ on _____”).

Mike Schmoker: schmoker@futureone.com 928-522-0006

THE OPPORTUNITY:

From “Brutal Facts” to the Best
Schools We’ve Ever Had

Dr. Mike Schmoker

schmoker@futureone.com

928/522-0006

INTRODUCTION: DO WE *TRULY* WANT BETTER SCHOOLS?

Because organizations only improve...

“where the **truth** is told and
the **brutal facts** confronted”

Jim Collins

BRUTAL FACTS:

Only 7% of low-income students will ever earn a college degree

BRUTAL FACTS:

Only **32%** of our *college-bound* students are adequately prepared for college

“Understanding University Success”
Center for Educational Policy Research

COLLEGE SUCCESS:

ANALYTICAL READING & DISCUSSION PERSUASIVE WRITING

- Drawing inferences/conclusions from texts
- Analyzing conflicting source documents
- Supporting **arguments** with evidence
- Solving complex problems with no obvious answer

David Conley

College Knowledge

COLLEGE and LIFE SUCCESS DEPEND ON...

- “The TEACHER EFFECT makes all other differences pale in comparison”

William Sanders

- Five years of **effective teaching** can completely close the gap between low-income students and others.

Marzano; Kain & Hanushek

IMPACT of TEACHING

- Pittsburgh Schools: 69% range of difference
- Mortimore & Sammons: teaching has 6 to 10 times as much impact as other factors
- Dylan William: 400% “speed of learning” differences

REALITY CHECK

- **“Effective practices never take root** in more than a small proportion of classrooms and schools”

Tyack and Cuban

- **“Effective teaching is quite different** from the teaching that is typically found in most classrooms”

Odden and Kelley

THE REAL OPPORTUNITY...

- “Most of us in education are mediocre at what we do”

Tony Wagner

Harvard Graduate School of Education

- **EVERY STUDY** of classroom practice reveals that most teaching is mediocre--or worse

Goodlad; Sizer; Resnick; Powell, Farrar & Cohen; Learning 24/7 Classroom Study

BRUTAL FACTS

- **After decades of reform, we still DO NOT INSPECT instruction, i.e.:**

1. WHAT we teach (essential standards)

or

2. HOW we teach
(effective lessons/units)

Gordon; Elmore; Marzano; Tyack &
Cuban; Hess; Berliner

The case of **SEAN CONNORS**

EFFECTIVE LESSON: WHAT & HOW

- **Clarity @ essential standard** being learned that day (“introductory paragraphs”; “infer character”)
- **“Scaffolded” (step-by-step) instruction**
 - Modeling → ”guided practice”
 - **“Check for understanding”/formative assessment** *between each step or “chunk”*
 - **Models/exemplars:** students studied these in pairs
- **Engagement & attentiveness**—students monitored/called on randomly
- Students write own intro. paragraph...
only when most/all students are ready

Hunter; Popham; Fisher and Fry; Marzano; Burns

WHY IS MOST TEACHING MEDIocre?

- “The administrative superstructure of schools
...exists to **‘buffer’ teaching from**

OUTSIDE INSPECTION”

Richard Elmore

**YOU CAN'T EXPECT WHAT YOU DON'T
INSPECT**

Peter Senge

PRIMARY TASK: Improve WHAT and HOW we teach

**I. REPLACE “IMPROVEMENT PLANNING” WITH
TEAM-BASED EFFORTS TO IMPROVE
WHAT IS TAUGHT and HOW WELL**

**II. “GUARANTEED & VIABLE CURRICULUM”
 (“WHAT”)**

III. SIMPLIFY “LEADERSHIP”

IV. RADICALLY REDEFINE

LITERACY INSTRUCTION

I. FIRST: TYPICAL “STRATEGIC” or “IMPROVEMENT PLANNING” MODELS...

- superficial; time-consuming
- counterproductive, distracting
actions that **PREVENT**

rapid, team-based cycles of instruction →
assessment → improvement of instruction

I. LEARNING COMMUNITIES: AN ASTONISHING CONCURRENCE

“The **most promising strategy** for sustained, substantive school improvement is building the capacity of school personnel to function as a **professional learning community**.”

Milbrey McLaughlin (cited in *Professional Learning Communities at Work* by Dufour and Eaker)

I. LEARNING COMMUNITIES: AN ASTONISHING CONCURRENCE

“Professionals do not work alone; they work in **teams**... to accomplish the **goal**—to heal the patient, win the lawsuit, plan the building.”

Arthur Wise: *Teaching Teams: a 21st – Century
Paradigm For Organizing America’s Schools*

I. FIRST: ADOPT “SIMPLE PLANS” to create PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

- 1. DATA - driven (academic!) priorities**
- 2. GOALS: that are measurable/tied to an assessment**
- 3. TEAMWORK that produces *short-term* assessment results**

...Anchored by a

GUARANTEED & VIABLE CURRICULUM

DATA: “S.M.A.R.T.” GOALS

1. SET measurable, annual goals for:
Math; Art; Writing; P.E.—tied to an **ASSESSMENT**

GOAL: Our team will improve in
(Physics; Math; Writing; French;)

from: **72% (2009)**
to: **76% (2010)**

- **Peter Senge:** “More than ___ goals is the same as none at all.”

DATA DRIVEN PRIORITIES

2. IDENTIFY lowest - scoring standards—from ASSESSMENTS

- ❑ MATH: “measurement; operations with negative and positive integers”
- ❑ WRITING: “voice”; “word choice”
- ❑ P.E. “volleyball unit; personal health plan”

3. USE formative assessment data (results from lessons, units, etc)

Stiggins; William & Black

AUTHENTIC TEAM-BASED PLCs:

**plan lesson/unit → teach it →
assess its impact → adjust
instruction**

- **Amphi High:** Thesis statement/introduction
- **Adlai Stevenson:** Physics: how a rainbow works
- **Lake Havasu High School:** Operations with negative & positive integers

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES: FACTS

- The “PLC” concept (by whatever name) is indisputably the

STATE OF THE ART for ensuring that **WHAT** and **HOW** are of a high quality, but alas...

authentic, team-based PLC’s are **EXCEEDINGLY RARE.**

II. “GUARANTEED & VIABLE CURRICULUM”

How important is this?

The NUMBER ONE FACTOR

for increasing levels of learning

Marzano; Porter; Lezotte

II. GUARANTEED...?

- Do America's schools now ensure that a "guaranteed & viable curriculum" ***actually gets taught?***
-

II. GUARANTEED & VIABLE CURRICULUM? BRUTAL FACTS:

- ROSENHOLTZ: teachers provide a “**self-selected jumble**” of standards
- BERLINER/WALBERG: **wild variation** from teacher to teacher; no alignment with agreed-upon, viable curriculum standards or assessments
- LITTLE; SIZER; ALLINGTON; CALKINS: “**curricular chaos**” in English & language arts

II. GUARANTEED CURRICULUM: MAP the STANDARDS*

1st quarter: NUMBER SENSE

DATA ANALYSIS & PROBABILITY

2ND quarter: PATTERNS, ALGEBRA & FUNCTIONS

GEOMETRY

3rd quarter: MEASUREMENT & DISCRETE MATH

MATHEMATICAL STRUCTURE/LOGIC

4th quarter: **REVIEW: for YEAR END ASSESSMENT**

**END OF EACH QUARTER: common assessment...with ample
intellectually rich, college-prep component**

III. LEADERSHIP in the Professional Learning Community

- “No institution can survive if it needs geniuses or supermen to manage it. It must be organized to get along under a leadership of average human beings.”

Peter Drucker

MONITORING 1. INSTRUCTION and 2. GUARANTEED & VIABLE CURRICULUM

- **LEADERS** (administrators, dept. heads) must
 1. Conduct at least one **unannounced classroom walk-through each month**, looking for schoolwide patterns of strength/weakness with regard to...
 - Clear focus on **essential** standards
 - College prep: critical reasoning/higher-order reading, writing, thinking
 - Essential elements of an effective lesson

September: “4 of 15 classes teaching essential standards”

October: “__ of 15 classes...” (SMART goal)

**MONITORING 1. INSTRUCTION and
2. GUARANTEED & VIABLE CURRICULUM**

**“If you can not
measure it, you
cannot improve it.”**

British scientist Lord Kelvin

LEADERSHIP: Team Management for “GUARANTEED & VIABLE CURRICULUM”

(D. Reeves; R. Marzano; R. DuFour)

QUARTERLY CURRICULUM REVIEW:

Leaders & Teams discuss...

- ❑ **quarterly assessments** (success rate; areas of strength/weakness)
- ❑ **grade books** (lowest-scoring assessments)
- ❑ **scored work samples** (weak/strong areas)

IS THIS A FAIR, REASONABLE REQUIREMENT?

PURPOSE OF MEETINGS: to strategize for/celebrate “SMALL WINS”

- _____ schools with a “steering committee”
- _____ presentations to faculty/depts: case for WHAT & HOW
- _____ teams that have/are using meeting norms/protocols
- _____ # of courses for which there are 1.) quarterly “standards maps” full of intellectually-rich, college prep content and 2.) common end-of-quarter assessments (which assess intellectually-rich college-prep content)
- _____ of our 25 course-alike teams have created a **SUCCESSFUL LESSON*** (e.g. 87% succeeded)
- _____ MARCH: 6 of 15 classrooms—essential standard being taught
- _____ APRIL: 13 of 15 classrooms—essential standard taught!

RECOGNIZE & CELEBRATE

measurable “SMALL WINS” to overcome resistance & promote MOMENTUM

The #1 LEVER FOR IMPROVING MORALE AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

Nelson; Blasé and Kirby

- **The single best, low cost, high-leverage way to improve performance, morale, and the climate for change is to dramatically increase the levels of meaningful recognition for educators**

Robert Evans

RESULTS of Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum; Effective Teamwork; Frequent Recognition & Celebration

ADLAI STEVENSON HIGH SCHOOL

- 10+ years of record-breaking gains on **every** national, state & end-of-course assessment
- 800% increase in AP success
- Average ACT score: 21 to 25*

IV. UNPARALLELLED OPPORTUNITY: LITERACY INSTRUCTION

“Under-developed literacy skills are the number one reason why students are retained, assigned to special education, given long-term remedial services and why they fail to graduate from high school.”

Ferrandino and Tirozzi: presidents of
NAESP and NASSP

BRUTAL FACTS; GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY*

- “Reading and Writing vs. ‘stuff’ ratio”
- Lucy Calkins: **1/15** reading to “stuff” ratio
- “Literature based Arts and Crafts”:
 - dioramas; game boards; **worksheets**;
 - posters**; **presentations**; coats-of-arms; mobiles; movies; cutting, pasting; designing book jackets; skits; collages

The CRAYOLA CURRICULUM

“I can only summarize the findings by saying that we’ve been stunned...

kids are given **more coloring assignments than mathematics and writing assignments...**

I want to repeat that, because I’m not joking, nor am I exaggerating.”

Katie Haycock

HIGH SCHOOL English

- **9th grade:** *To Kill A Mockingbird* (100 points total)
 - Draw “head or full body shot” of any character—use “crayons, colored pencils” (20 points)
 - Create a model of Maycomb (wood, plastic or styrefoam) (20 points)

HIGH SCHOOL English

“Honors” Sophomore English:

- Two schools—collage as 6-week assessment of literary unit
- *Frankenstein* assessment: make a mobile or collage
- *Siddhartha* Assessment
 - 8-pages of worksheets (96 questions; 5 days)
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch of space to answer each question

NO DISCUSSION OR WRITING

HIGH SCHOOL English

- **AP Literature: “Memories”
Scrapbook (200 points)**
 - **Second-semester project**
 - **For each page of text [no criteria for
quality of written work] draw
illustration (using various media)**

A BETTER WAY: READ, WRITE and TALK

- After **close reading** of innumerable books and articles, students
“**wrote and talked,**
wrote and talked”
their way toward understanding.

Mike Rose: *Lives on the Boundary*

K-12/COLLEGE SUCCESS:

ANALYTICAL READING & DISCUSSION PERSUASIVE WRITING

- Draw inferences and conclusions
- Analyze conflicting source documents
- Solve complex problems with no obvious answer
- (Prepare students to) Write multiple 3-5-page papers **supporting arguments** with evidence
- Read **far more** books, articles & essays than they now read in high school [in class!]

College Knowledge by David Conley

WRITING: IMPORTANT?

- Writing is the litmus paper of thought ...the very **CENTER OF SCHOOLING**

Ted Sizer

Writing aids in cognitive development to such an extent that the upper reaches of Bloom's taxonomy could not be reached without the use of some form of writing .

Kurt and Farris 1990

BRUTAL FACTS

- Writing is rarely assigned, even more rarely ***taught.***

William Zinsser; National Commission on Writing

- Even U.S. student's "**best** writing is **mediocre.**"

NAEP report on "best" US high school writing

- Students "with 3.8 GPAs," in highly selective colleges, **write poorly.**

NAEP writing Study

BRUTAL FACTS

“If we could institute only one change to make students more college ready, it should be to increase the **amount and quality of writing** students are expected to produce.”

David Conley

author of *College Knowledge*

K-12/COLLEGE SUCCESSES:

ANALYTICAL READING & PERSUASIVE WRITING

SIMPLE STEPS → MAJOR REVOLUTION

- “Who would make a better friend— Spider or Turtle?”
- “Old Dan or Little Anne: which admire most?”
- “What do you think are the most important lessons of WWI?”
- Evaluate for most/least effective, significant; interesting--presidents; explorers; scientists etc.

SIMPLE STEPS → MAJOR REVOLUTION: EACH QUARTER

DEVELOP ARGUMENTS/PROPOSALS:

■ **SCIENCE:**

- **PRO/CON: Drill in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**
- **Environmental sustainability**

■ **HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES:**

- **Illegal Immigration; Middle East issue(s)**
- **Evaluation of two presidents**
- **Case for liberal/conservative policy/politics**

THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD

- Coherent, common **curriculum**
- Reasonably good, (mostly) whole-class **lessons** every day
- Sufficient quantities of **purposeful**
 - **Reading** (adequate # of books, documents, editorials; poems, pages from textbooks)
 - **Discussion:** in pairs, groups and seminars
 - **Writing:** (adequate # of papers, pages per grade and course; mostly persuasive, interpretive)



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Superintendent of Schools
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(860) 889-6098
FAX (860) 889-8685

February 4, 2010

Miss Mackenzie Gauthier
74 Middle Road
Preston, CT 06365

Dear Mackenzie,

I am writing to congratulate you upon your selection by the Connecticut Association of Schools as one of two students from Preston Veterans' Memorial for recognition at its Elementary Celebration of the Arts Festival held earlier this week at the Aqua-Turf Club in Southington, Connecticut.

You are to be commended for excelling in the arts and for exhibiting a high level of citizenship and cooperative skills.

Your recognition, Mackenzie, at this event is a testimonial to your commitment as a student and reflects very positively on your pursuit of important goals. You should be very proud of this accomplishment as we are of you.

Please accept my best wishes for your continuing success.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John J. Welch".

John J. Welch, Ed. D.

cc: Dr. Walsh
Preston Board of Education



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February 4, 2010

Miss Jenna Lame
12 Wheeler Farm Road
Preston, CT 06365

Dear Jenna,

I am writing to congratulate you upon your selection by the Connecticut Association of Schools as one of two students from Preston Veterans' Memorial for recognition at its Elementary Celebration of the Arts Festival held earlier this week at the Aqua-Turf Club in Southington, Connecticut.

You are to be commended for excelling in the arts and for exhibiting a high level of citizenship and cooperative skills.

Your recognition, Jenna, at this event is a testimonial to your commitment as a student and reflects very positively on your pursuit of important goals. You should be very proud of this accomplishment as we are of you.

Please accept my best wishes for your continuing success.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John J. Welch".

John J. Welch, Ed. D.

cc: Dr. Walsh
Preston Board of Education



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February 1, 2010

Ms. Lisa Feltes
Mr. Paul Fitzgerald
Preston Plains Middle School
1 Route 164
Preston, CT 06365

Dear Lisa and Paul,

Congratulations on a very successful concert at Preston Plains Middle School on January 28th. I enjoyed it very much.

The students in both the choral and instrumental music groups performed very well. They were obviously well-prepared thanks to your hard work. In addition, they did not appear to be the least bit intimidated performing before such a large audience.

I realize, of course, that rehearsing for a combined program of this type requires a great deal of time and effort. However, the pay-off is well worth that time and effort. Ideally, we can strive to have more performances of this type throughout the year; ideally, we can encourage and motivate more students to join the chorus or learn to play a musical instrument.

Again, congratulations on a job well done and I look forward to the Spring Concert.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John J. Welch".

John J. Welch, Ed. D.

cc: Mr. Bernier
Preston Board of Education