

**CLIFTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
September 12, 2018
MINUTES**

Board Members Present: James Daley, Judith Bassford, Fahim Abedrabbo and Gary Passenti

Administration Present: Richard Tardalo and Michael Ucci

Other Attendees: Senator Nia Gill, Assemblywoman Britnee Timberlake and
Assemblyman Thomas Giblin

Meeting Time: 5:30 p.m. - 6:35 p.m.

Items of Discussion:

- Department of Education – Debrief of Charter School Lawsuit
 - Board members debriefed the Legislators regarding the lawsuit the Board has taken up with the Department of Education due to extremely large enrollment increases for Charter schools. Mr. Daley indicated that the Clifton Board of Education had almost no consultation with the DOE during the State’s approval process of the Charter School enrollment increase. State aid transferred to Charter schools has dramatically increased over the past few years. Also, he stated that the revised State aid from the SFRA formula should not count as compensation due to the increase in the Charter School budget. Ms. Bassford identified the Committee’s concern regarding the entire approval process for Charter Schools and how enrollment is projected. Mr. Tardalo commented relative to the inequity of the selection of students enrolled in the Charter Schools.

- Board of Education Election – November to April
 - The Committee informed the Legislators about the Board of Education’s decision to move the school board election back to April from November. This will give voters the chance to focus on the local election without voter fatigue. Also, it gives citizens the opportunity to vote on the school budget. There is current litigation regarding this matter and it was noted that the result of the litigation could set State precedent.

- Election Day – Security Concerns
 - The Clifton Board of Education has a policy to close all schools on Election Day due to the high security risk in today’s environment. The Committee concurred that the State should take measures to have all elections on a weekday that school is not in session with the exception of presidential elections.
- Overall School Security
 - The Committee expressed the need for security grants from the State to address large scale projects such as a district-wide vestibule project. Also, to heighten security that there would need to be funds to provide for the manpower of security personnel.
- State Aid - Special Education
 - The Committee discussed the cost of educating special education students and that the State should provide aid to districts for tuition that exceeds a certain rate.
- Board of Education Member Training
 - There was a discussion regarding earlier training for newly elected Board members and increased ethics trainings every year.
- Chapter 78 Concerns
 - The Committee expressed concern to the Legislators that any decrease to the Chapter 78 medical contribution law could be disastrous for all local Boards of Education throughout the State. The State should not take any actions to hinder districts ability to negotiate provisions with regard to the standards set in Chapter 78.
- NJ School Funding Formula - Fair Funding
 - The Clifton school district has been drastically underfunded since the adoption of the SFRA formula. While the State has been producing revised State aid figures to lessen the burden the district is still approximately \$40 million underfunded according to the States funding formula. Until the funding formula is fairly funded, Mr. Daley through the

Committee requested all district payments to out of district tuition for non-special education students be capped.