

PUBLIC INPUT FROM RAY BARNETT FOR 10/13/2020 FINANCE COMMITTEE MTG.

Finance Oct 13 2020

Evening. Ray Barnett Crimson lane

I would like to address questions that I believe has not been answered. There were questions raised about the purchasing practices of the superintendent in regard to the covid-19 supply purchase. I sent an email to my ward one city councilor(since he was the one mentioned in the fosters' article) to see if he had any new information about what happened. What did I get in reply NOTHING. SILENCE. So, as a concerned tax payer, I would like to know what actions have taken place to ensure this doesn't happen again. The superintendent admitted he didn't follow proper procedures. So the first question that needs to be answered is Is it illegal to spend taxpayer dollars that have not been approved and voted on by the body? Whether it be the city or the school. The superintendent had already purchased \$36,123.34 sometime prior to the August 4 meeting requesting a supplemental appropriation of \$490,000 dollars. During that meeting he failed to mention that the school board had not yet authorized this expenditure.

I was good that the superintendent took responsibility for not following the department and boards internal policies. What troubles me is that they are "all on the same page". And what page is that exactly. If that was an illegal expenditure Are they all in favor of breaking the law? In Foster it stated that the superintendent and the chairman of the school board were in constant communications about the supplemental appropriation and the execution of the expenditures. How much time passed between first discussions and spending money. Section 32 of the city charter, states that a special meeting of the school board can be called at any time by the superintendent, chairman of the school board or a majority of the school board. I believe there was time to call a special meeting.

I'm hoping that whatever the exact policy and procedures that were broken have been corrected and voted on properly.

City of Rochester School Department

Mr. Kyle Repucci
Superintendent of Schools
e-mail: repucci.k@rochesterschools.com

Dr. Sandie MacDonald
Assistant Superintendent of Schools
e-mail: macdonald.s@rochesterschools.com

Mrs. Linda Bartlett
Business Administrator
e-mail: bartlett.l@rochesterschools.com

Mrs. Christiane Allison
Director of Student Services
e-mail: allison.c@rochesterschools.com

Office of the Superintendent
150 Wakefield Street
Suite #8
Rochester, NH 03867-1348
(603) 332-3678
FAX: (603) 335-7367



October 8, 2020

School Board Resolution

On July 28th, Governor Sununu announced that he would direct \$1.5 million in federal money that came to New Hampshire as part of the CARES Act federal relief package to organizations that give vouchers to students encouraging them to attend private schools.

This announcement comes after Governor Sununu and Commissioner Edelblut have also re-directed other federal CARES Act money to private schools.

At a time when New Hampshire's public education funding is under strict scrutiny from the NH Legislature, NH courts and public sentiment, the Rochester School Board opposes using this federal aid for private schools.

The Rochester School Board estimates that it will need to spend thousands of dollars of local taxes to keep our students safe from Covid-19. Where the governor is sending our federal tax dollars to private schools, before helping our own public schools in New Hampshire is wrong and serving a political purpose. The money being redirected to private schools comes with no oversight from taxpayers, voters or even the NH Department of Education. Before funding private schools, Governor Sununu should ensure that CARES Act money from Washington should be reserved for New Hampshire's public schools.

While New Hampshire's public schools have received on average \$218 per student for covid-related expenses, Gov. Sununu has directed \$1,875 per student to a controversial, politically motivated voucher program. Before funding private schools, Governor Sununu needs to provide our public schools with the necessary tools to open our schools in either an in-person or remote format.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Rochester School Board:

1. Opposes the use of federal CARES Act aid being redirected to private schools;
2. Opposes the use of CARES Act aid being used for private school vouchers;
3. Calls upon Governor Sununu and Commissioner Edelblut to provide all CARES Act money to New Hampshire's public schools; and
4. Further calls upon Governor Sununu and Commissioner Edelblut to publicly support significant increases to state public education funding to assist school districts with expenses related to Covid-19.