

**C4E – ELMIRA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PUBLIC HEARING  
ELMIRA FREE ACADEMY – COMMUNITY ROOM  
ELMIRA, NEW YORK  
July 23, 2009  
6:00 PM**

*Hearing Commenced: 6:02 PM*

**Overview of Elmira City School District C4E by:**

- **Joseph Hochreiter, Superintendent**

Superintendent, Joseph Hochreiter, begins with introduction and overview of Contract for Excellence (“C4E”). The Elmira City School District is in its third year of C4E. He explained that by law we have to have a public hearing. The State’s rules are very specific. This hearing has to be documented and sent to the State.

Tonight’s agenda:

- C4E Legislation & Background
- Timeline
- Allowable Spending & Programs
- 08-09 Funding
- Question and Answer period

In April 2007, the Legislature passed law requiring districts to complete a plan. Money was allotted for poor districts as a result of lawsuit. Instead of Districts receiving a payout from the lawsuit, the State created the C4E. C4E funds go to districts that receive an increase of more than 10% state aid. In 2007, the District received 10.4% more. District went to the State and asked if we could give back, so allocation remained 9.9% instead of 10.4%, which would have alleviated strings and requirements. However, we could not do so. In 2007, the District qualified for C4E because we had one or more schools in need of improvement—three (3) at the time.

Districts have to follow the C4E timeline. After completion of the public hearing, we have to submit our plan to the State.

What is the allowable spending?

- Class size reduction
- Teacher/Principal Quality
- Student time on task
- Middle & High School Restructuring
- Maintain Existing Programs/District Initiatives
- Universal Pre-K/Kindergarten

The District will allocate funds in the following areas for 2008-2009:

- Class Size Reduction
- Teacher/Principal Quality
- Middle & High School Restructuring
- Maintain Existing Programs/District Initiatives

Our district has reviewed data on class size and has worked to keep class size down. This was the original plan in 2007 and that plan has not changed. The district pays for 17.45 % more teachers in the elementary schools to keep an average class size under 20, which is targeted by the State. Research suggests that classes under 20 students make a significant impact. Therefore, paying for 17.45 teachers out of this funding has worked.

In the teacher/principal quality category, additional instructional support teachers have been funded for literacy support for elementary and secondary schools. They are mentors for staff. They take our reform plan and develop opportunities to help teachers in their buildings. The instructional support teachers don't have a case load of students; tests to grade; and can be visible throughout the day; sitting with teachers and administrators to move forward.

The district also has principals on assignment—under administrator's bargaining unit. They are the directors of instruction—one for the north side schools and south side schools. They are a strong support for staff development.

Under the High School Restructuring, the district has created night school. Allocated C4E funds are used to pay teachers to teach at night. Night school is for academically struggling students and those who have attendance issues. They take regular high school courses; can be more focused and concentrated and be away from the drama from a school day. This is very innovative and there is a need to look at alternative settings for kids in today's world.

Our credit recovery program provides immediate and targeted academic support to students. Students, who don't meet standards, can take a 3 week tutoring session with a certified teacher; take an online tutorial and have the opportunity to test out and get credit for the course. This is not free credit; students must meet seat time requirements. This program gives kids hope after a 20 week period; and have small window of time to make up work. 288 students have received credit from student recovery.

In the district initiatives category, the district has funded a counselor at each of the elementary schools (academic planning, goal setting with students, conflict resolution, transition planning with students and families, etc.). We also have a Behavioral Specialist at Diven Elementary, which is our most challenged school, due to low scores; demographics most challenging; poverty and environmental factors that make it tough for students to be successful. As a counselor and social worker, the Behavioral Specialist takes on the kids and the families to try to make an impact. She also supports the reading teachers at the elementary and middle school levels.

Mr. Hochreiter continues by going over the Grades 3-8 ELA & Math Results from 2006 to 2009. The State breaks results into sub-groups as they are weighted differently. These are not small groups in Elmira. Our performance has increased in the last three years; very encouraging and shows the district is using resources wisely.

A requirement for C4E is performance targets. Districts or schools who receive C4E funds and are in academic need have to achieve at least a 10% increase in area struggled.

At the end of October 2009, the State conducted an annual visit. At that audit, the State spent time with Mr. Hochreiter and he showed where money was spent and on what. They visited Diven Elementary & Broadway Middle. The Auditor met with Principals; walked buildings. They also met with the Behavior Specialist at Diven and sat down with her. Our district received a perfect score. It is important to note that we are doing what we said we were going to do. Our plan has been the same for the last 3 years and our district has not deviated or gone off the course of the plan because results speak volumes.

Next steps:

Our district will continue to work on schools in greatest need; responding to parent concerns and giving opportunity for the public to chime in on the plan. The C4E website is set up on the district's website. The State requires all of the feedback we have received from community and parents be posted on the website and sent to the State. Mr. Hochreiter shows the website and live links. The website shows the plan, where dollars are spent by school; and shows where the community can give input; type in question, comment or concerns.

Mr. Hochreiter agrees with the accountability piece. School funding is not free. We have to perform and show what we are doing for it. Overall, we are seeing benefit throughout our schools.

Question period from the audience.

Public Comments:

<b>QUESTION &amp; COMMENTS BY PUBLIC</b>	<b>DISTRICTS ANSWER AND COMMENTS</b>
What kind of response have we gotten to the website?	Will be checking and monitoring it—link has to stay live for 30 days. Last year, did forum, no one showed up. 2 years ago, Doug Martin, ETA President showed up.
Board member comments that Mr. Hochreiter did a great job in explaining C4E	

Mr. Hochreiter closes by letting the audience know that the district has to spend money on kids and programs. We cannot spend these funds on buses, furniture, etc. C4E is a good thing—it is not a blank check—keeps everyone honest in terms of spending money and on what works.

Once the thirty days expire the district will send the required documentation to the State.

*Meeting ends at 6:35 PM.*