EDU 5741: Finance in Education
Dr. Anthony Annunziato
Spring 2014

Course Synthesis

Dr. Annunziato describes this course as an examination of, “the establishment and management of district budget and finances to support achievement of educational goals and facility development. In order to support these educational goals, this course examines how public education is financed in New York State. Major topics include principals of school finances, revenue and taxes, fiscal problems, school purchasing, insurance operations and maintenance of school facilities, transportation, and food services. In addition, this course examines the sustainability of public education in New York State under a property tax cap and changing economic conditions.” The culminating project for this course was a budget presentation representing a local school district.

I was encouraged to develop a budget presentation for the local school district of Smithtown. Dr. Annunziato’s experience as superintendent in Smithtown enabled him to encourage me to analyze budget information that was accessible and detailed from a district he knew well. The budget presentation contained a comprehensive breakdown of revenues, expenditures, reductions, events that impacted budget reductions, instructional program reductions, and budget/tax levy increases.

Other assignments included a book review of Unsustainable: Strategy for Making Public Schooling More Productive, Effective, and Affordable by Tim McDonald. The book focuses on certain absolutes that need to exist to produce sustainable education reform. Legislators need to
define progressive but measurable examples of student learning. Additionally compensation must be made available, constructive competition should occur, research development and collaboration should be emphasized. Two research article critiques were also required in a format where purpose, question, information, concepts, assumptions, inferences, point of view, and implications were analyzed.

Dr. Annunziato’s insight as a former superintendent and chief financial officer was incredibly valuable to my growth as a school district leader. His support and constructive feedback, in a positive manner, during this course made me realize how fortunate I am to have him as my dissertation mentor.