

DRAFT – Subject to Change

Board of Education

Regional District 13

May 23, 2007

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, May 23, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. in the library at Coginchaug High School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Currilin, Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons. Members absent: Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hennick, Mr. Raczka, Dr. Shoemaker. Also present: Mr. Melnik, Mrs. Viccaro.

Mr. Hicks called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

Public Comment: Joan Zito of Durham said she spoke with Superintendent Viccaro on the phone about many issues. She is most concerned about the 8.4% increase listed in the budget book for the regular education teachers when she knows that the raise they are due to receive next year is 3.9%. Mrs. Viccaro explained to her that this total increase is due primarily to additional positions that are being mandated. Mrs. Zito suggested having a section in the budget book that lists mandates separately. She wants the teacher line item to reflect their raise. Mrs. Zito also questioned the fund balance carry-over and the money received from excess cost. She feels that taxpayers are paying for over \$1,000,000 extra in the budget. Mr. Melnik explained that the fund balance is money that the district is forecasting will be left over from this year's budget and can be applied to next year's budget.

Maryann Boord, Selectwoman for Durham spoke on behalf of the Board of Selectman. She said they appreciate the Board of Education listening to their concerns and trying to delay the referendum as long as possible. The selectmen were requested to publicly support this budget and are doing so now and through a letter distributed to members. The letter will also be appearing this week in the Town Times.

Jim McLaughlin, 1st Selectman of Durham, is happy with the action that was taken at the last meeting. He has been informed by the Board of Finance from Durham that they can wait to set the mil rate as late as mid-June.

State Representative, Ray Kalinowski, said the legislative session wraps up at midnight on June 6th. He has no solid information yet as to the final budget or ECS information. There are three different proposals on the floor; the Governor's budget, the Democratic proposal and the Republican proposal. With the Governor's budget Durham would receive an additional \$463,000 and Middlefield would receive an additional \$315,000. The Democratic proposal will give Durham \$439,000 and Middlefield \$283,000 and the Republican proposal would give Durham \$251,000 and Middlefield \$148,000. Representative Kalinowski stressed that with the Republican proposal there are no new taxes proposed to cover the increased spending to the towns. He said there will be intense negotiations over the next two weeks and a compromise of these three proposals will create the budget.

Donia Viola of Durham said the taxpayers want to know where the funding is coming from. She is concerned that the reduced budget has not been published yet and the vote is next week. Mrs. Viola is also concerned about the mandate from the state to retrofit the school buses with new emissions filters. She said the State has mandated the change but the school district will have to pay the cost. She feels the control should be at the local level. Mr. Hicks told Mrs. Viola that the budget was reduced by \$186,000.

Mrs. Zito suggested that superintendents of all school districts march to Hartford to demand that the time frame for the State budget be changed to an earlier date to allow towns and school districts to make their budgeting decisions.

Mr. Kalinowski said constitutionally the State budget has to be wrapped up by the end of the 1st week in June.

Mr. Currilin thanked the Durham selectmen for their interest in and support of the budget this year. He appreciates that they have taken the time to understand the budget.

Next Board Meeting: The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held at Memorial School on June 13, 2007.

On a motion by Mrs. Flanagan, second Mrs. Adams the agenda was unanimously approved.

On a motion by Mr. Currilin, second Mrs. Adams, the Board of Education unanimously approved the minutes to the meeting of May 9, 2007.

On a motion by Mrs. Adams, second Dr. Ochterski, the Board of Education unanimously approved the minutes to the meeting of May 16, 2007.

Communications: None.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro said she attended the Art Show at Brewster School today. She also attended the Dave Brubeck Benefit Concert held at Cuginchaug on Saturday. The high school Jazz Band did a fabulous job performing. The Show Choir put on a production of "High School Musical" on Sunday evening and two assemblies for the students in grades 1-8 on this past Monday. The kids were so appreciate and a very adoring audience for the Show Choir.

Mrs. Viccaro told the Board that the Strong School Ice Cream Sports Social is this Thursday and the closing of the CRHS Art Show at the Levi Coe Library is being held on May 29th from 4:30 to 6:00pm.

Mrs. Viccaro attended a CAPSS meeting this week. The high school exit exam that will be implemented in 2012 was discussed. It is still unclear what it will look like because of the discrepancy of what school districts currently require for graduation. It is being designed by the State Department of Education. Another topic discussed was "21st century skills -high school reform: what we should be doing in our high school". Mrs. Viccaro said the new Commissioner of Education, Mark McQuillan is reorganizing the entire State Department of Education. The final decisions on the reorganization are supposed to be made public today.

State Budget Update: Representative Kalinowski talked about how the State budget process works from this point forward. He said that about eight people representing all areas will be meeting to hash out the final budget document. The legislature will not receive the final document for review until about two days before the final vote. He does not believe that there will be a need to go into a special session this year. He thinks they will reach a consensus on the budget in time.

Mr. Hicks thanked Mr. Kalinowski for taking the time to attend this meeting.

Healthy Food Certification Statement: Mrs. Viccaro said that earlier this year the Board made the decision to not participate in this State program. The State is asking the Board to make this decision on an annual basis.

On a motion by Mr. Currilin, second Mrs. Flanagan the Board of Education unanimously voted to not comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standard published pursuant to section 10-215e of the Connecticut General Statutes for the period of July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.

Summer Meeting Dates:

On a motion by Mr. Currin, second Dr. Ochterski, the Board of Education unanimously approved July 11, 2007 and August 22, 2007 as the summer meeting dates for the Board of Education.

Personnel Policies Committee: Mrs. Flanagan said the committee met this evening and was able to finalize their recommendations for the contracts of the Superintendent, Business Manager, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds and District Electrician. Mrs. Flanagan will get a report together to be sent with the next mailing so that a vote on the contracts can be taken at the next Board meeting.

On a motion by Mrs. Adams, second Dr. Ochterski, the Board of Education unanimously approved to adjourn.