

The Regional District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, October 11, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. in the music room at Brewster School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Currin, Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hennick, Mr. Hicks (arrived at 8:00pm), Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Raczka, Dr. Shoemaker. Also present: Mrs. Viccaro, Mr. Gourley.

Mr. Raczka called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Public Comment: A couple of parents spoke about their concern over safety after the recent incidents that have happened in the nation regarding shootings in schools. They said many area towns have a buzzer system where people are buzzed in to the buildings. They asked what the Board thought about a buzzer system and if they had discussed this safety concern. Mr. Raczka said the Board is having their retreat on Sunday and this is one of the issues they will be discussing. He said some of the schools have portables and they would be harder to secure. Mrs. Viccaro said the administrators have also discussed this issue and are looking at ways to increase safety. They are also in the process of updating their crisis manual to help deal with these kinds of issues.

Steve Buckett mentioned safety should be a part of the curriculum. Mrs. Viccaro said safety is addressed in the health curriculum starting in first grade. There are also Student Assistant Teams in the buildings that do get involved when a child needs help or there is a concern about a student and they also work with the families. They try very hard to be aware of any warning signs.

Next Board Meeting: The next Board of Education meeting will be October 25, 2006 at Memorial School.

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

On a motion by Dr. Shoemaker, second Dr. Ochterski, the minutes to the September 27, 2006 Board of Education meeting were unanimously approved.

Communications: Mrs. Flanagan received a call from someone concerned about the speed and traffic on Pickett Lane especially after school when students are on the playing fields and having track meets. Mr. Gourley stated several options are being looked at to control the speed and to help with the traffic.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro attended the Spanish and French Honor Societies induction. Twenty students were inducted into the Spanish Honor Society and eight into the French.

Marilyn Horn received an award for her description of the Fajita Festival. She received a certificate and \$75.00 for the chapter. This is the sixth year for the festival that served over 250 people and raised \$1100.00.

The CT River Coastal Conservation District nominated Susan Michael as their 2006 Teacher of the Year for her work with the ECCO Club, in the Environthon and other environmental work with students in the District.

The District has received \$2775 from the parking fees and \$6280 from the activity fees.

The District is offering a flu clinic for employees in November. The employees pay out of pocket for the shots.

Mastery/CAPT/AYP/SAT: Mrs. Viccaro reported that these scores are the baseline for the 4th generation of the CMT. The District's goal is to move students on the proficient level up to the goal and advanced levels. March will be the new generation of the CAPT. Teachers are also working to have more students move up from the proficient level to the goal and advanced levels on the CAPT. Mrs. Viccaro said all schools made Annual Yearly Progress except for one subgroup of students with disabilities at Memorial School. There were over forty students this year in that group and they needed to be reported. There is an improvement plan in place.

Students have also done very well on the SATs for college. District students do very well in comparison to the state and national levels.

Brewster School – Nancy Heckler: Mrs. Heckler reported they have started a new Core Ethical Value program this year. The Core Ethical Values are integrated into the curriculum and are aligned with the school rules. Each class will spend two weeks teaching each value to the students. Students will discuss the core ethical values every day and how they relate to the things they do in school and at home. Students will get a different color bead for each value they learn to hang in their classroom all year. They will also include the values in their student goals for the year.

Board of Ed Elections/Charter Revisions: The Board discussed the new election procedures being mentioned by the charter revision committees of both towns. Durham is proposing that Board of Education members be elected in the November elections instead of a town meeting in May. It is also recommended the terms of office be increased from three to four years. Middlefield has discussed this same proposal but has not taken a position yet. Both towns would need to agree before any changes are made. Members felt the Board would become too political if they needed to campaign and be voted for in November. It can create dissension in the group and be more difficult to operate. Now decisions are made as to what is best for the students and the community, and that may become more difficult if people are voting along party lines. It will also be harder for an independent voter to be on the Board of Education.

On a motion by Mr. Hennick, second Mr. Currilin, the Board of Education made the following resolution that they are opposed to having the Board of Education elections changed to November and would like the town meeting form of elections in May to continue. Mr. Hennick, Mr. Currilin, Mrs. Golschneider, Dr. Shoemaker, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Raczka, Mrs. Adams, Dr. Ochterski voted yes. Mrs. Flanagan voted no. Ms. Parsons abstained.

A letter will be sent to the towns' charter revision committees noting this resolution and the reasoning behind it.

Finance Committee: Ms. Parson reported the committee reviewed the 2006-07 budget and it is progressing on track. It is slightly below last year's percentage level. The committee also reviewed the 2005-06 end of year transfers. It was noted that the salary account had a surplus but when the budget is developed there is no guarantee that the District would receive reimbursements from state and federal grants. Also regarding the money in the fund balance carryover, \$600,000 of that money is being used for the 2006-07 budget.

On a motion by Ms. Parson, second Mr. Currilin, the 2005-06 End of Year Transfers were unanimously approved as presented. A copy is included with these minutes.

Policy Committee: Mrs. Viccaro explained that even though the District opted out of the food and nutrition policy, beverages were not a part of that. Only water, 100% juice, or milk can be served unless the Board approves a motion to include other beverages.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Ms. Parsons, the Board of Education unanimously approved to offer alternative beverages.

Curriculum Policy: Mrs. Golschneider reported the committee began discussions on the proposed changes to the grading scale at the high school, and if a student can receive academic credit for certain classes taken at the Greater Hartford Academy. They received a curriculum update: the science and math curriculum will need to be reviewed and then approved by the Board of Education for implementation and language arts is being revised to be in line with the CMT, CAPT and State benchmarks. Some budget items to be discussed at the Board Retreat are remedial services, adding a reading consultant and a .5 music teacher.

Magnet School: Mr. Hicks reported there are 771 students at the Thomas Edison Magnet School. The school can hold 800 students. Meriden is capped at 75% and cannot send any more students. Six new staff have been hired and there was a smooth opening to the beginning of school. The magnet school has not made AYP and strategies are being put in place for improvement. The partnership agreement states a representative from the partner Boards of Education needs to be chosen by their Board of Education annually to serve on the Steering Committee.

On a motion by Mrs. Golschneider, second Dr. Shoemaker, the Board of Education unanimously approved Norm Hicks as their representative on the Thomas Edison Magnet School Steering Committee.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Golschneider, the Board of Education unanimously approved to adjourn.