

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, October 25, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. in the media center at Memorial Middle School. Board members present: Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Hennick, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Raczka, Dr. Shoemaker. Members Absent: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Currin. Also present: Mr. Gourley, Mrs. Viccaro.

Mr. Raczka called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Public Comment: Sue Bianchi, a parent of children at Brewster and Korn Schools came to speak about the math curriculum in the elementary schools. She is aware that a “purchase program” for math is being considered for inclusion in next year’s budget. She has done some research on how the teachers are currently getting their materials for teaching math and finds it to be very inconsistent between classrooms and levels. A purchased program with teacher guides and workbooks for students will offer consistency. Mrs. Viccaro said this program was talked about at the Board Retreat. The costs involved will be discussed further. The Contemporary teachers are very interested in this type of program.

Steve Buckheit, a John Lyman parent, is concerned about security at the front doors of our schools. He has talked with state troopers and they said others schools in the area have been more proactive than our district has been. He would like to see some type of buzzer system or monitoring at the front of the buildings. Mr. Raczka said this issue was discussed during the Board Retreat.

Maria Richardson, a Durham resident, said that while visiting the high school recently she noticed they use walkie talkies to communicate regarding issues around the building. She suggested that this might be used more in other buildings as a simple solution.

Next Board Meeting: The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held at Cuginchaug Regional High School on November 8, 2006.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Dr. Shoemaker, the agenda was unanimously approved.

On a motion by Dr. Shoemaker, second Mrs. Flanagan, the minutes of the meeting of October 11, 2006 were unanimously approved.

Communications: Mr. Hicks said that many magnet school students attending a field trip to Nature’s Classroom became ill with an intestinal infection part way through the day. Mrs. Viccaro received a call from the director of ACES. There were 66 students on the trip. About 2/3 of the students became ill. All of the adults on the trip became ill and some of them ended up in the hospital. The building was shut down. Seven of the students who became ill were from District 13. Mrs. Viccaro did not receive any calls from parents of students at the magnet school.

Mr. Hicks said he received a call from a parent regarding remedial services at the elementary level. He will discuss this further during budget sessions.

Mr. Hicks attended the wedding of Leslie Villalba, a new teacher at Korn School. He was excited to see so many of the Korn School staff members at the wedding.

Dr. Ochterski attended the first ever 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Information Night held at Cuginchaug last week. Parents toured the school and were given a preview of what classes are offered. The evening gave him a better sense of what to expect at Cuginchaug.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro said the Jazz Band performed at the Middlesex Chamber before 900 people. It is the biggest event the Chamber holds and the kids did a terrific job.

Mrs. Viccaro received a call from a parent asking if the District would consider school uniforms. The parent also asked why we have a winter and a spring recess. Mrs. Viccaro asked the administrators if they felt there was support for uniforms and they did not think there was but they will also discuss it with their parent groups.

Mrs. Viccaro said the Crisis Manual is currently being updated. The District is working with local officials to complete the changes and the new document should be ready within a couple of months.

Mrs. Viccaro spoke at a recent BKPTA meeting as well as at the Kindergarten Progress Report Night at Brewster School. At both meetings she discussed the budget process.

Mrs. Viccaro said there are twenty-four applicants for the position of School Business Administrator. The Committee will be meeting again soon.

Mrs. Viccaro attended the Italian Cabaret this past Saturday evening. She said it was a delightful evening.

Mrs. Viccaro received a call from Donia Viola questioning the use of permanent substitutes in every building. She was also concerned about whether District funds were used for the Board Retreat. Mrs. Viccaro made it clear that no taxpayer money is used for the Board Retreat. Mr. Raczka also wanted to make it clear that Board members are not paid and that there is no reimbursement for any expenses.

Mrs. Viccaro said that the District is having a very difficult time getting substitute nurses. District 13 does not pay as much as the surrounding towns.

Mr. Raczka asked Mrs. Viccaro to gather information regarding the effectiveness of educating boys and girls separately. There have been recent articles in the news discussing this issue.

Pupil Personnel: Amy Emory presented the new IEP Manual and Forms, and the new IEP to the Board. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is written for each of the current 268 special education students in the District. The IEP is created by a team of people working with the student. It takes on average 3 to 6 hours to complete the document, but some take considerable longer for more difficult cases. Minimally, all special education students must have an annual review, but most IEPs are revised 2 to 4 times per year, after a PPT has been held on the student. Mrs. Emory reviews all of the IEPs. The IEP is a very important, complex document. She said that she has seen a significant increase in the complexity of the needs of preschool children coming into the District and she anticipates the number of children in special education continuing to rise.

Alternative Energy: Jennifer Janelle, of Shipman and Goodwin, came to speak about alternative energy sources. She said that the District has already done well in taking advantage of energy saving measures through our latest building projects and by purchasing through an energy consortium. The next step for the District would be to look at alternative energy sources.

Ms. Janelle is working with the Town of Middletown on their building of a new high school. They have opted to install fuel cells at a total project cost of \$1,119,000. She has been able to secure grants for them totaling \$940,000. The cost to the town is \$179,000. They will save approximately \$250,000 in energy costs during the first year of operation. In the second year the savings will be about \$200,000.

Ms. Janelle said renewable energy sources are very clean power. Fuel cells cost \$4,700/kw and solar panels cost \$5,000/kw. There is guaranteed grant money of \$450/kw and many other additional savings. The demand and backup charges are waived by installing alternative energy. Capacity credits are given for taking you off of the grid. It is also possible to have net metering, where CL & P would buy power back from the District. Ms. Janelle would look at information on the buildings, past bills, etc. and engineers would evaluate to see what type of alternative energy source is the best fit for the building. The engineers are representatives of the companies trying to sell the products so they would do these assessments free of charge. It is a building-by-building process. Ms. Janelle recommends doing only one building at a time. The initial cost to the District would be \$5,000 for Ms. Janelle's services. She would walk the District through the entire process. She knows all the energy programs available and will help the District get funding from as many sources as possible.

The Pickett Lane campus was discussed. This area can be considered one site because Pickett Lane is a private road, owned by the District. The two largest schools are at this site and would probably be best suited for fuel cells. Ms. Janelle suggested looking at this area first.

Mr. Raczka asked the Finance Committee to meet to discuss this proposal. Ms. Janelle will send Mrs. Viccaro a spreadsheet on the Middletown savings as well as information on places that Board members could visit to see fuel cells in operation. Mrs. Viccaro will also ask representatives of CL & P to present their alternative energy programs to the Board.

Model UN Field Trip Request: On a motion by Mr. Hennick, second Dr. Shoemaker, the Board of Education unanimously approved a field trip request by the Model UN Club to Yale University from January 25, 2007 to January 28, 2007.

Finance Committee: Ms. Parsons said the Finance Committee meeting that was scheduled for this evening was cancelled. Rob Gourley said he just met with the auditors yesterday for the first time. He is working to make some of the changes that they have requested. The Finance Committee will meet on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

Transition Committee: Mr. Hennick said an Executive Level Search Committee needed to be named to carry on the interviews for the School Business Administrator.

On a motion by Mr. Hennick, second Mrs. Golschneider, the Board of Education unanimously approved the following people to serve on the Executive Level Search Committee for the School Business Administrator: Merrill Adams, Anne Cocchiola, Robert Francis, Theresa Fredericks, Debbie Golschneider, Tom Hennick, Norm Hicks, Mary Jane Malavasi, Daniel Shoemaker, Susan Viccaro, and Steve Wysowski.

Personnel Policies: Mrs. Flanagan reported that the Committee is meeting tomorrow evening; negotiations are ongoing.

Mr. Raczka and Mrs. Viccaro are meeting with the selectmen tomorrow morning.

Mr. Hicks mentioned the loss of Lindsay Haile, a 1999 graduate of Coginchaug High School who passed away this week. He asked that the sympathies of the Board of Education be sent to the family.

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