

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, September 17, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the music room at John Lyman School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Currlin, Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hennick, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons. Also present: Mr. Melnik, Mrs. Viccaro.

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

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Golschneider, the Board of Education unanimously approved the agenda as amended to include an Executive Session to discuss two legal matters and a student issue.

Mr. Hicks made a motion, second Mr. Currlin, to approve the minutes to the meeting of September 3, 2008. Mrs. Flanagan made corrections to the minutes. The motion was withdrawn. Ms. Parsons made a motion, second Mrs. Boyle, to approve the minutes as corrected. Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Currlin, Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Hennick, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons voted yes. Mrs. Golschneider abstained.

Communications: Mr. Hicks asked for a moment of silence to remember two past employees that passed away recently, Michael Maksymiuk and George Cocores.

Dr. Ochterski attended the Get Acquainted Night at Coginchaug last night. He said the parent attendance was great and he enjoyed the evening. Dr. Wysowski said it was the best attendance in the ten years that he has been at the school.

Mr. Hennick commented on the letter to the editor in last week's Town Times and a recent article in the Middletown Press. He said they were not factual. The personnel action was not based on union action, it was based on misconduct. He said people need to know the facts.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro shared an invitation to attend the awards ceremony for the distinguished administrators' award winners on October 30<sup>th</sup> at St. Clement's Castle in Portland. Mr. Andre' Hauser is the recipient of the Assistant Principal award. Mrs. Viccaro asked Board members to let her know by October 7th if they are interested in attending.

Mrs. Viccaro said that John Lyman School is one of two finalists for the CAS Elementary School of the Year.

Susan Wagemaker, Business Education teacher at Coginchaug has just been notified that she is the recipient of a \$25,000 grant to begin an investing and personal finance course at the high school. She is receiving the full amount of the grant.

Mrs. Viccaro distributed copies of the CRHS School Profile 2008-2009 and also a SAT Five-year profile. She said she has been meeting with the guidance department on a regular basis to discuss ways to meet the needs of all of our students whether they are planning on going on to higher education, into the service or into the work force. Mrs. Viccaro is concerned about the downward trend in the SAT scores. Both the state and national levels have also taken a downward trend, but Mrs. Viccaro is still not happy with the District results and is studying the trend.

Mr. Currlin suggested that students might not be feeling as much pressure to succeed on the SATs because some schools are not putting as much weight on them.

Mrs. Boyle asked when NCLB was implemented and if there is data back to that year to see what the trend has been since then. Mrs. Viccaro believes it was 2001; she will get that information.

Mrs. Adams feels that the changes in the test may have had a significant impact on the scores in the District and at the state level.

Mrs. Viccaro said the State has prepared a report on school wellness on each school in the State. Some of this information was taken from the Strategic School Profiles and some came from the schools. All of the schools have been rated. Mrs. Viccaro would like to reconvene the School Wellness Committee to review the data provided by the State. They will look at the general health and nutrition of the schools. The committee will meet for the first time in November and then report back to the Board of Education in March. Mrs. Golschneider volunteered to represent the Board on the Committee.

Mrs. Viccaro commended the following students that have been recognized by the Commissioner of Education for scoring at the advanced level on all four sections of the CAPT exams: Shaina Bradley, Sarah Bugai, Ross Burton, Daniel Charette, Ryan Ciarlo, Derek Cuneo, Jeffrey Ducki, Meagan Fairchild, Sarah Hopkins, Eric Kelly, Joseph Oblon, Laura Reimer, Victoria Rosborough, and Edward Ruddy.

Mrs. Viccaro mentioned that there was an inquiry at the Superintendent's Office as to the cost of the bracelets presented to staff on opening day. She wanted people to know that it was a personal donation and there was no cost to the District.

John Lyman School Presentation: Mrs. Brimecombe told the Board that the school had a video that was done many years ago, prior to her arrival at Lyman. It was decided two years ago that it needed to be updated to reflect the changes in the school since art integration has become much more of a focus.

Gail Freeman, Grade 3/4 teacher facilitated the project team to produce the DVD with a donation from the parent organization that enabled them to hire a videographer. The plan is to use the DVD to explain the program to prospective parents and to any other visitors to the school.

The DVD "Learners Through the Arts – The Integrated Day Program" was shared with the Board of Education. The Board thanked the teachers and Mrs. Brimecombe for the wonderful production.

CT Commission on Culture and Tourism Grant: Mrs. Brimecombe said the Hot School Grant for John Lyman School needs the Board's approval on an annual basis.

Mr. Hicks made a motion, second Mrs. Flanagan, that Karen Brimecombe, Principal at John Lyman School, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of Regional District 13 a certain contract with the State of Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism and to affix the corporate seal.

Exchange Program: Marilyn Horn, Spanish teacher at CRHS presented her plan for a two-week exchange program with a school in Oaxaca, Mexico where her daughter is a teacher. Five to ten high school students would travel to Mexico for two weeks, with one of the weeks being during the February vacation. Students will live with host families, attend school and take field trips while in Mexico. Then in April students from the school in Mexico will travel here for two weeks, live with host families in town, attend Coginchaug and take field trips. One of those weeks will be during the April vacation. Some fundraising will be done through the Spanish Honor Society but there will be no cost to the District. Mrs. Horn and Dr. Wysowski will accompany the students to Mexico.

Dr. Wysowski feels very strongly about this program. It will be a great opportunity for the students as ambassadors for our school and country.

Mrs. Viccaro is also very much in favor of this trip. She feels the students will gain a different perspective on this trip than they do on most of the other trips abroad.

Mrs. Golschneider asked what the screening process will be for the host families in Mexico. Mrs. Horn said that she trusts her daughter and the principal of the school in making the placements. She will be present so if there are any problems they can be handled immediately.

On a motion by Mrs. Adams, second Mrs. Boyle, the Board of Education unanimously approved the Exchange Program between Coginchaug High School and Blaise Pascale in Oaxaca, Mexico.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Adams, the Board of Education unanimously approved the field trip to Oaxaca, Mexico from February 14 to February 28, 2009.

Mr. Hennick reminded Mrs. Horn that in the event of an emergency the Board of Education has the right to cancel the trip and he recommends that the students purchase trip insurance. Mrs. Horn said the package she is purchasing from ACIS has the insurance as a part of it.

Field Trip Request to Brown University for the Model UN Club: On a motion by Mrs. Adams, second Mrs. Flanagan, the Board of Education unanimously approved a trip by the Model UN Club to Brown University on November 14 -16, 2008.

Personnel Policy Committee: Mrs. Flanagan said the committee has started negotiating with the cafeteria union. They have two more contracts to negotiate this year.

On a motion by Mr. Hick, second Mr. Currin, the board of Education unanimously approved to go into Executive Session to discuss two legal matters and a student issue.

The board moved back into regular session.

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