

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, April 11, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. in the library at Coginchaug High School. Board members present: Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Fulton, Ms. Gara, Mr. Hennick, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Renninghoff. Member absent: Mrs. Adams. Also present: Mrs. Mangini, Mrs. Viccaro.

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

Public Comment: Donia Viola is concerned about the growing increases for our continued participation in the magnet school. She talked to someone at the State and they said it is at the discretion of the District as to whether they continue to participate. Our enrollment is down to only seven students and she doesn't think it is worth the cost of transportation. Mr. Hicks said the District is obligated to participate if kids want to attend. Mrs. Viola is concerned about the cost of the busing and said the District is not obligated to provide transportation.

Next Board Meeting: The next meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for April 25, 2012.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mr. Renninghoff, the Board of Education unanimously approved to amend the agenda to include setting the Graduation Date for 2012.

On a motion by Mrs. Flanagan, second Ms. Gara, the Board of Education unanimously approved the minutes to the meeting of March 28, 2012.

Communications: Mr. Renninghoff said he received a call from a parent concerned that her child is being told by a teacher that penguins are dying due to global warming. The parent was concerned that global warming is being taught as fact. Mr. Hennick suggested that Mr. Renninghoff speak directly with Mrs. Viccaro about these concerns.

Ms. Parsons as well as other Board members attended the high school play. She said the play was very well done and very enjoyable. Mrs. Viccaro said over seventy students were involved. Coginchaug is one of the only schools that does not employ professional musicians for plays. It was a very difficult play and she is very proud of the kids.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro said the Connecticut Association of Schools Scholar Leaders have been named at Strong School. She is proud to announce that Matthew Sawicki and Shaun Whitaker will be representing the District at the CAS Scholar-Leader banquet this spring.

Mrs. Viccaro said four Coginchaug seniors have won top honors in a Top 15 essay contest conducted by the CT General Assembly. Honors went to Emily Carria, Heather MacIntyre, Justine Plourde and Rebecca Weir.

Mrs. Viccaro and Mrs. Boyle both attended the open house held at the Wesleyan Transition Academy. The program has grown; they currently have nineteen students enrolled. Students are very involved at the Wesleyan campus and in the community. They were both very impressed by the students and the program.

Mrs. Viccaro said the District is in the process of applying for a grant for the Student Success Plans. The money would be used to pay for subs at Memorial, Strong and Coginchaug while teachers are receiving professional development. Winners will be announced by the end of this month.

Mrs. Viccaro said she was invited back to a classroom at Korn School after participating in their Read Across America event. She returned to see students give book presentations. She was very impressed by what the students presented.

Mrs. Viccaro distributed a summary of a survey issued by the Commissioner of Education, Stefan Pryor, to principals throughout the state. He wanted to know which educational regulations have impeded their work as educational leaders. Topics discussed were bullying, education reform and unfunded

mandates. Mrs. Viccaro believes Commissioner Pryor will act on the things he can respond to. He has been very forthcoming and understands that education has been suffering from too many mandates.

Set Graduation Date: On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mr. Renninghoff, the Board of Education unanimously approved that Coginchaug High School's Graduation for the Class of 2012 will be held on Wednesday, June 20, 2012.

The Board adjourned to the Public Hearing.

The Board moved back into regular session.

2012-13 Budget Discussion: Mr. Hennick asked if any Board member heard anything at the Public Hearing that was worth discussing or warranted changing the budget.

Mr. Renninghoff questioned whether there is savings from the retirement of Mrs. Brimecombe. He said when Dr. Nicols retired last year the budget was reduced by \$10,000.

Mrs. Viccaro said it is a gamble to reduce the amount. She feels the position will attract experienced administrators. An arts integrated school may attract more seasoned administrators.

Mr. Hennick is hesitant to reduce the budget for the amount of money that is involved. He wants to be sure we are able to hire appropriately.

Mrs. Boyle would like to discuss the activity fees at the high school and whether they should be kept in the budget. She knows it is not a lot of money but it can impact families at the high school.

Other members would also like to discuss the fees in more detail. People do not have a problem with the parking fee but the activity fee concerned some. It was decided that the Finance Committee will do a cost analysis and report back to the Board about whether they might be able to be eliminated for next year.

Mr. Hicks made a motion, second Dr. Ochterski, to go to the District Meeting on May 7, 2012 with a gross \$35,981,819 Regional District 13 education budget for the school year 2012-13 followed by a referendum on May 8, 2012. Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Fulton, Ms. Gara, Mr. Hennick, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons voted yes. Mr. Renninghoff was opposed.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Ms. Parsons, the Board of Education unanimously approved to adjourn at 10:52 p.m.

Susan Gaudreau