

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, December 14, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. in the music room at John Lyman Elementary School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Fulton, Ms. Gara (7:45pm), Mr. Hennick, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Renninghoff. Member absent: Mr. Hicks. Also present: Mrs. Mangini, Mrs. Viccaro.

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

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

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

On a motion by Mrs. Flanagan, second Mrs. Boyle, the minutes to the meeting of November 9, 2011 were unanimously approved.

Communications: Mr. Fulton shared copies of maps of the newly approved redistricting plans for both the State House of Representatives and the State Senate. In the State House of Representatives, Durham will now be split into two Districts, the 86<sup>th</sup> (with North Branford, Wallingford and Guilford) and the 101<sup>st</sup> (with Madison), and Middlefield will now be a part of the 82<sup>nd</sup>, with Meriden. In the State Senate Durham will be a part of the 12<sup>th</sup> District with North Branford, Branford, Guilford, Madison and Killingworth, and the 34<sup>th</sup> District with Wallingford, North Haven, East Haven and possibly Hamden. Middlefield will be a part of the 13<sup>th</sup> District with Middletown, Meriden and Cheshire. We will have many more representatives and senators and the issues facing the towns in the district will be very different. It will be difficult for a small community to get support for issues important to our district.

Mr. Hennick said he attended the Superintendent's Award luncheon this year. He was very proud to be with our students and to see the students from across the state that were representing their districts.

Superintendent's Award Students: Mrs. Viccaro presented the 2011-2012 Superintendent's Award winners, Marissa Puchalski and Tyler Davis with gifts from the school district. Both students were honored last month at a luncheon. Mrs. Viccaro shared each of the student's accomplishments that led them to being selected as the award winners.

Friends of Education: Mrs. Viccaro presented the Friends of Education awards to Jane Moen, the Director of Durham Middlefield Youth and Family Services for all of the new programs she has started in the community since she began as director last year; to Rhonda Riggott-Stevens and Heather Kannam for their organization and direction of the Willy Wonka play that students in grade k-8 participated in last year; and to Hope Lintz and in memory of Bill Lintz for their continuous support of the children of District 13.

Teacher of the Year: On behalf of the District, Mrs. Viccaro presented Jan Wenzel, the 2012 District 13 Teacher of the Year with a gift of appreciation from the District. Mrs. Wenzel is an art teacher at Coginchaug High School. Mrs. Viccaro said Mrs. Wenzel supports every student that walks through her classroom door and has helped to transform the high school through her work with the art club.

Update on Professional Development Days: Mrs. Viccaro reported that a letter of agreement with the teachers' union is being signed this evening. Each school will be receiving two three-hour sessions of professional development after school to make up for the lost PD day. The schedule varies from building to building, but they will all be making up the time. They have also agreed to add the day back into the calendar in February.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro said the schools continue to work on the Common Core math standards. They are working in grade level teams. The Language Arts Committee is meeting but waiting to introduce their material at the school level until after the math work is complete.

Mrs. Viccaro had a call from a parent that is concerned about the number of athletes receiving concussions this year. She said many schools are beginning to do baseline assessments on athletes prior to sports seasons. Mrs. Viccaro is going to look into the cost of these assessments and investigate the idea further and will report back to the Board in January.

Mr. Fulton asked Mrs. Mangini to check with our insurance company to see if there are any implications for the District if we establish the baselines.

Mrs. Viccaro said the Community round-up was extremely successful this year. Over 450 kids were involved. \$1200 went to each town and over 14,000 items were collected. Shopping carts were borrowed from Home Depot to transport food items from the cars and it worked very well.

Mrs. Viccaro said that the joint meeting of the Boards of Finance, Education and Selectman will be rescheduled. Members are asked to try to think of areas in common to the District and to the Towns to try to improve cost effectiveness.

Mrs. Viccaro attended a meeting in Middlefield last week regarding rebuilding the bridge on RT 147 near the Middlefield/Durham town line. It is going to take two years to complete. The road will be reduced to one-lane with a stop sign allowing three cars at a time to pass. Work is scheduled to begin this spring.

Mrs. Viccaro discussed the report that the CT Association of Public School Superintendents presented to the State Board of Education recently. If enacted it will bring about substantive changes in education. Universal preschool and all day kindergarten are key to the plan and would be made available to all children. Superintendents felt that the report was well received by the State BOE and by the new Commissioner of Education. Mrs. Viccaro will send members a link to the CAPSS site so they can review the document.

Business Manager's Report: Mrs. Mangini said during her first weeks in the District she has focused on the audit and the ED001 report. She has met with our bankers, Dattco and Cigna reps. She has visited all of the schools. Contract negotiations with the administrators have just been completed and they have a tentative agreement. She has just begun the site reviews of all of the school cafeterias as required by the State by February 1<sup>st</sup>. Mrs. Mangini has been reviewing the processes and financials and is starting to work on next year's budget. The office staff has been very supportive and she feels she is off to a great start.

Oil Tanks at Memorial and Brewster Schools: An explanation and a motion regarding the replacement of the oil tanks at Brewster and Memorial Schools was emailed to members prior to the meeting.

Ms. Parsons made a motion, second Dr. Ochterski to accept the specifications as described and to move forward with the Brewster Elementary School oil tank replacement project.

Mrs. Boyle questioned why the material for the two tanks was different.

Mr. Renninghoff said he had several questions regarding the project that he emailed to the Business Manager earlier in the week. He did not receive a response from Central Office until today and he did not feel that his questions were answered.

Mrs. Flanagan questioned why this project was being handled by the Building Committee and not the Building & Grounds Committee of the Board of Education.

Some members felt that if a Building Committee is necessary, then a new one should be started. They want more BOE representation on the Building Committee as there is currently only one BOE member serving on the committee.

Sue Gaudreau explained that the project has to be handled by the Building Committee because of the state reimbursement process. The Committee must be made up of members of the community as well as BOE members.

Mrs. Viccaro said that when Mr. Melnik left she asked Rob Gourley to come in to help keep this process going. He met with the engineers for the first time today. The plan was to reconvene the existing Building Committee after this meeting.

It was suggested that Jeremy Renninghoff join the Building Committee as an additional Board representative and as a representative from Middlefield.

Mrs. Viccaro said that before this is finalized she would like to check the rules governing appointments to Building Committees.

Mr. Renninghoff will attend the meeting of the Building Committee when it is scheduled.

Ms. Parson withdrew her motion regarding the Brewster Oil Tank Replacement.

Mr. Hennick said he did not know how pressing the time line is for this project but he asked for permission to call a special meeting if necessary.

Model United Nations Trip – January 19-22, 2012 to Yale University and February 24-26, 2012 to Boston University: Mr. Hauser explained that although there are two trips and they are both costly, most students will attend only one. The Model UN is a very popular activity at the high school and the weekend trips are the big events for the group.

Mrs. Adams made a motion, second Dr. Ochterski to approve both of the Model United Nations trips to Yale University on January 19-22, 2012 and to Boston University on February 24-26, 2012. Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Fulton, Ms. Gara, Mr. Hennick, Dr. Ochterski and Ms. Parsons voted yes. Mr. Renninghoff was opposed.

Policy Committee: Mrs. Adams said the Policy Committee met this past Monday. They spent time looking at how the concession stand is going to be managed. A meeting has been scheduled for January 9<sup>th</sup> at 6pm for any Board members to attend to give more input to the process. The Committee is currently reviewing how other towns run their concession stands. The Policy Committee also continued to look at other policies on the agenda.

Finance Committee: Mrs. Flanagan said the Committee met this evening with the auditors. The audit was reviewed. She commended the central office staff for receiving an unqualified opinion from the auditors. The auditors also discussed the pension plan and the unfunded actuarial liabilities. Members are going to meet with the pension plan actuaries to discuss this in more detail. The Finance Committee has begun preliminary budget work and are looking at the budget format and determining what is possible to be more transparent. There will be four finance meetings preceding the budget meetings where the administrators will be able to present their own budgets. The capital expenditures on the roofs, wells and athletic fields were also discussed. They would like the summary broken out by project to be able to see the State reimbursements clearly.

Personnel Policies: Ms. Parsons said a tentative agreement has been reached with the administrators' union. She really appreciates the administrators understanding of the fiscal constraints facing the Board.

Follow-up:

Mrs. Viccaro will gather more information regarding concussions and report back at the January meeting on the cost of baseline assessments. Mrs. Mangini will check to see if there are any insurance implications.

Mrs. Viccaro will forward the CAPSS website to BOE members.

Further discussion will be held regarding the Building Committee/oil tank approvals.

On a motion by Mrs. Lintz, second Mrs. Flanagan, the Board of Education unanimously approved to adjourn at 9:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Susan Gaudreau*