

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, September 14, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. in the music room at Lyman School. Board members present: Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Fulton, Ms. Gara, Mr. Hennick, Mr. Hicks (arrived at 8:05 pm), Ms. Parsons and Mr. Renninghoff. Absent: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Dr. Ochterski. Also present: Mrs. Viccaro.

Mr. Hennick called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

Public Comment: Aimee Brown, Linda Blackwood and Kim Terrill all of Ernest Drive in Durham had concerns regarding their childrens' bus stop at the corner of Parmelee Hill Road and Ernest Drive. They are concerned that the stop is unsafe. Phil Johnson of DATTCO stated that they are aware of the concern and would be sending a safety officer out tomorrow to review the stop. Mrs. Viccaro said she will personally contact Mrs. Terrill with the results of that review.

Donia Viola of Durham would like the Board to post the list of Board of Education Committees and which Board members are on them. She feels that rotating the members of the committees every couple of years would be an asset to everyone involved.

Jennifer Wells-DiPentima of Durham also has concerns with a bus stop on Parmelee Hill Road and the transportation changes on a whole. She asked what the District was really saving. Mrs. Viccaro said that the cost savings are unknown at this time but that changes to the routes continue to be made everyday and was happy to report that the kids are getting to school on time which has been a problem in the past.

Donia Viola of Durham also spoke regarding transportation saying child safety needs to come first.

Next Board Meeting: The next regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting will be Tuesday, September 27, 2011 at Brewster School.

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

On a motion by Ms. Gara second by Mrs. Flanagan, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the meeting of August 24, 2011.

Communications: Mr. Renninghoff said he received 2 emails regarding bus transportation concerns in Durham and in Rockfall. He said he told both that he will look into their concerns and forwarded the concerns to Eileen Bengtson, District Transportation Coordinator.

Mrs. Flanagan said she received communications regarding class enrollment and was working on a resolution with Mr. Hauser.

Superintendents Report: Mrs. Viccaro passed out an issue of Board and Administrators to the Board Members.

Mrs. Viccaro handed out the most recent SAT results. She quickly reviewed the information with the Board and noted that there was a small drop in students taking the SAT's. Mr. Hauser stated the decline in those numbers is due to some students taking the ACT's. Mrs. Flanagan asked if we got feedback on the ACT's and if we can do a comparison once those numbers are in. Mr. Hauser said we have not received those results but will share them once he does get them.

Mrs. Viccaro said the football team will have its first game at the new field on Saturday at 1:00 pm. She said she attended both girls' and boys' soccer games this week which took place on the new field.

Mrs. Viccaro said she has been in communication with Gary Paxton who is a member of the Cuginchaug Football Club and that the club will be running a concession stand on Saturday. She said that they were also willing to do the other 4 home games this season. She felt the proposal Mr. Paxton sent her was well planned out and would be acceptable until the Board has a chance to develop a policy for the use of concession stands. She said that there needs to be discussion with the other sporting groups so that they can all work together on concessions. Mr. Fulton suggested that a policy should get spelled out sooner than later.

Mrs. Viccaro reviewed correspondence from the state detailing teacher shortage areas.

Mrs. Viccaro said that the Districts preschool program received the Born Learning grant from the United Way. The grant provides a tool kit to build a Born Learning Trail which provides young children with an opportunity to get active, have fun and boost language and literacy skills. The "trail" features age-appropriate, simple-to-construct activities that can be set up outdoors. Carla Muskatello, Occupational Therapist at Brewster suggested the use of Allyn Brook Park to set up the trail but the Durham Parks and Recreation department was not interested in having the trail there. Mrs. Viccaro said she is exploring a couple of other places and will fill the Board in once it becomes finalized.

Mrs. Viccaro said the United Way will be sending out its Healthy Assets Survey to students in 7th to 12th grade. The survey was last done about 5 years ago. She said that parents can have their child opt out of taking the survey if they would like. There is no cost to the District for participating in this survey. Ms. Gara asked if the survey was available for review prior to it being given. Mrs. Viccaro said that it was and she would bring a copy of it to the next Board meeting.

Mrs. Viccaro said the presentations that have been requested for upcoming Board meetings this year are technology, guidance and all day kindergarten.

Mrs. Viccaro said she has been in contact with Kevin Roy, legal counsel, regarding setting up dates to start negotiations on the administrators' contract. Mr. Roy stated that October 20, 2011 is the first day negotiations can begin and that he would like to get some dates lined up as soon as possible.

Presentation

Update – Sports Participation Policy: Principal Andre Hauser passed out an update on the proposed CRHS Academic Eligibility Probation Program to the Board. He reviewed the program with the Board and reported the outcome of the students who participated. Overall he was very happy with the proposal but suggested some improvements.

Mr. Hicks invited Mr. Hauser to the next Policy committee meeting on October 5, 2011 so he can help with the suggested language improvements to the policy.

Update- Technology Policy: Principal Andre Hauser reviewed the results of the Board's decision last may to temporarily rescind the policy against the use of personal technology devices by students during the school day. He found that the use of these devices was helpful in keeping students organized and in many ways actually saved them time.

Mr. Hauser would like to make the temporary policy change a permanent change and asked that the Board allow the policy to remain as it is.

Several Board members spoke regarding the future of technology with regards to text books being converted to eBooks and iPads. Mr. Hauser said we are on the cusp of an exciting and huge change in education. Mrs. Flanagan said that as a District we need to be prepared for when this change does occur. Mrs. Viccaro said that the infrastructure is different in each building and she will have IT Director, Rich Fielding give us an update on where each school is.

Mr. Hicks once again invited Mr. Hauser to attend the next Policy Committee meeting so he can share his thoughts on the policy and help with the language improvements.

Committee Reports

Personnel Policies Committee: Ms. Parsons said they were successful in finalizing the contract for the Business Manager and that they will be starting negotiations with the Administrators in the up coming month.

Policy Committee: Mr. Hicks said that the Policy Committee met last week and that they have about 50% of the policy manual online. They will be continuing on the 6000 series and will work their way to the 9000 series. He said once that is completed they will be going back and checking on loose ends.

Finance Committee: Mrs. Flanagan said the Finance Committee met tonight and 2 weeks ago and continue to explore having a building utilization study done.

Mrs. Flanagan said that the Finance Committee met with BASREP to discuss the contract and hopes to finalize an agreement within the next couple of weeks.

Other Committee Reports: Mr. Hicks told the Board that he is the new ACES Coordination Representative. He asked if the Board would like to have Craig Edmonson come in and do an ACES presentation. Several members suggested that maybe an overview of ACES might be better. Mr. Hicks said he could put together an overview and then see if Amy Emory would do a presentation on how the District uses ACES.

Mr. Hicks said that the he will share the CMT results from the Thomas Edison Magnet School at the next Board meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mr. Fulton the Board of Education unanimously approved to adjourn at 9:01 pm.

Virginia P. Antonelli