

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, March 13, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. in the library at Strong School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Renninghoff. Absent: Mrs. Fronc. Also present: Mr. Melnik, Mrs. Viccaro.

Mrs. Flanagan called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. with the recital Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Hicks.

Public Comment: No public comment.

On a motion by Mr. Renninghoff, second Mrs. Adams, the Board of Education unanimously approved the agenda.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Adams, the Board of Education unanimously approved the minutes of March 6, 2013.

Communications: Mrs. Flanagan stated that she received a number of phone calls from parents concerned about the reading selected by a Board member at Read Across America Day earlier this month. Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Viccaro and the Board member met this week and it was agreed that the selection was not appropriate for younger children. In order to prevent an incident like this happening again it was agreed that prior to the event the building administrator should preapprove the selection to be read. It was also agreed that the selection should be age appropriate and curriculum approved.

Mrs. Buckheit attended the Exchange Club Spaghetti Supper this past Sunday and stated on how great it was. Mrs. Buckheit was impressed with the jazz band performances by Memorial, Strong, and Coginchaug.

Mrs. Boyle announced that the Scholarship Ball is scheduled for March 23, 2013 and Mrs. Adams announced that the CVEF Trivia Bee has been rescheduled for Friday, March 22nd at Strong School.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro reported that the Visiting Committee from NEASC will be visiting Coginchaug next week. Janet Allison will be attending and bringing along 2 visitors from South Africa. Mr. Hauser invited the Board to attend the panel presentation at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 17th at 2.45 p.m. Board members will be interviewed followed by a reception at 3:30 p.m.

2013-2014 Budget: Mrs. Flanagan commended Mrs. Emory for a very informative presentation given at the Finance Committee meeting prior to the Board meeting.

Mrs. Viccaro encouraged Board members and members of the community to email their representative regarding the loss of grant money designed for regional transportation in the amount of \$282,257 and make them aware of how it has impacted our community. Mrs. Flanagan asked Mrs. Viccaro to email Board members with the representatives email addresses. Mrs. Viccaro will also put these addresses on the website.

Mrs. Flanagan invited the Board to engage in conversation. Mr. Fulton expressed concern about declining enrollment and how are we going to adjust staff. The Finance Committee would like to revisit class size next week.

Discussion took place and it was recommended that a kindergarten and 1 / 2 class at Lyman School be eliminated for the 2013 -2014 year. Board members stated that with the reduction of these classes, class size was well within policy.

Mr. Melnik discussed headcount for the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years. In 2012-13 many changes took place with people being moved, transferred or leaving the District. Mr. Melnik stated that changes in headcount did not have an impact on the dollar amount budgeted for 2012-13. Mrs. Flanagan expressed her appreciation for Mr. Melnik's diligent work.

Mrs. Flanagan asked Mrs. Viccaro to meet with her administrators and have them prioritize their budget.

Mrs. Buckheit suggested the District consider holding off on hiring additional tutors for next year while Mrs. Boyle recommended that increasing two 10-month positions to 12 month positions not be done this year.

Discussion ensued during which many board members expressed an interest maintaining our class size policy when considering staffing reductions. Mrs. Adams pointed that much of the increase is in the areas of Special Ed and asked the Administration to look into what other districts have done to manage these rapidly escalating costs. She also stated that we need to consider looking at administrative and support areas for savings. After much discussion Mrs. Viccaro asked the Board for guidance on the dollar amount they are looking for. Mrs. Flanagan asked Mrs. Viccaro to look at cutting \$300,000 and \$500,000. Mrs. Flanagan further emphasized the importance of looking beyond class size and teachers to administrative and support areas for possible reductions.

After some discussion, Dr. Ochterski stated that a cut this significant would impact programs.

Discussion took place regarding the portables and security. The goal of the Board is to move students out of portables so capital funds do not have to be spent.

Mrs. Adams suggested that the Board take a look at the trend analysis sent out by Mr. Melnik. Mrs. Viccaro will follow up regarding trends across the state.

New Business: Mrs. Viccaro provided the Board with a worksheet showing the amount of money spent on purchasing tablets for American Studies and the funds that were allocated for the purchase. The total cost of Tablets including shipping and covers was \$17,255.12. Funds allocated from History Texts, Software Licensing and (e-rate) totaled \$17,255.12.

Finance Committee: Mr. Fulton stated he would entertain any questions from the public.

Building/Grounds/Transportation: Mrs. Boyle stated that the committee was looking for a creative solution to secure the portables.

Mrs. Boyle also reported on CIAC committee. She stated that they have addressed all five standards and are waiting to hear back from CIAC to confirm date of visit.

Other Committees: No other reports.

Follow-Up:

1. Mrs. Viccaro to send Board members email addresses of representatives.
2. The Board will revisit class size next week.
3. Mrs. Viccaro to speak with all administrators regarding reduction in staff.
4. Mrs. Viccaro and administrators to prioritize budget items.
5. Mr. Melnik to provide trend analysis to administrators.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mr. Renninghoff, the Board of Education unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Johnson