

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, December 14, 2016 at 7:00 PM in the Library at Coginchaug Regional High School, 135 Pickett Lane, Durham, Connecticut. Board members present: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Renninghoff, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Mr. Hicks arrived later during the meeting.

Administration present: Mr. Melnik, Business Manager, and Dr. Veronesi, Superintendent of Schools.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Administrator Welcome

Tom Ford, principal at John Lyman School, started off reporting on student achievement and stated that they have been working hard to continue the implementation of Readers' Workshop and to implement teacher college units of study in reading. The goal is to help students become strong readers and to develop a love of reading. The PLC teams are working hard together, focusing on the units, implementation and instruction. The literacy coach has been instrumental in this process.

From a well-being standpoint, Mr. Ford reported that they are implementing the Second Step curriculum which is a social and emotional learning based program. Lesson topics include things like listening skills, empathy, concern, respect, managing peer conflicts and social curriculum.

Mr. Ford went on to describe that, from an engagement standpoint, they are continuing to be part of the Higher Order of Thinking schools network (HOT school) which is very complementary to the Integrated Day approach and is very student-driven and student-focused. They are working to align the HOT school approach to what the district is focusing on, including the 4Cs. Mr. Ford also acknowledged John Lyman's teachers and staff for their outstanding work.

Mr. Moore commented that the John Lyman concert last week was spectacular, as was the Strong School concert and fourth grade concert at Memorial.

CRHS Reporters

Sam Marteka reported on the senior class trip to Washington, DC. The trip began on Wednesday with a tour of Camden Yards in Baltimore. They then went to the National Air and Space Museum, followed by dinner and the hotel.

Lauren Donnelly explained that, on Thursday, the seniors went to the Lincoln Memorial, the Vietnam Memorial, Korean War Memorial, Martin Luther King Memorial and FDR Memorial. They then went to the Capitol Building, the Library of Congress and the Botanical

Gardens. The class then attended a play. Her favorite part of the trip was that the entire class came together.

Emily Leibiger reviewed that Friday started with a trip to Arlington National Cemetery which she found to be very emotional. They witnessed the “Changing of the Guard” and “Laying of the Wreath” at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The students then had some free time on the National Mall and went to the Smithsonian. About half the students went to the Holocaust Museum and she felt that was very emotional as well. Ms. Leibiger also went to the Museum of Natural History. The students then went to the Hard Rock Café and stopped at the 9/11 Memorial at the Pentagon.

Sam Marteka reported that the students attended the zoo on Saturday where the pandas were out. He summarized that the students will remember those four days for the rest of their lives.

Mr. Moore then welcomed Dr. Andrew Taylor, the newest board member, who was elected in November.

Public Comment

Nick Faiella of Middlefield, President of the Coginchaug Football Club, directed his comments toward the Field House which is on the agenda. Mr. Faiella thanked the ERC for agreeing to move the project to the full Board of Ed for review and discussion. He commented that the Club has been working with the ERC for about two years now. Mr. Faiella summarized that the project is almost 10 years old now, but the field was dedicated in 2001 and still remains about 90 percent complete. The proposed field house with bathrooms and field lights remain unfinished. Mr. Faiella feels that the athletic field complex is an extension of the high school and he highly recommended that the Board move forward with this long-term capital improvement.

Dr. Janice Mooney-Frank of Durham thanked the Board for accepting Dr. Veronesi’s proposal for benches in honor of her late husband and thanked Karen Kean and Sherry Hill for the tournament they organized. Dr. Frank’s vested interest was in tennis and wanted to see lights installed at the tennis courts as well as the football field.

Craig Bradanini of Durham explained that he is a resident, parent and a district employee. He was present tonight on behalf of the Education Association’s negotiations committee. Mr. Bradanini expressed gratitude for the positive experience this year. The committee felt the appreciation and support from both the Superintendent and the Board. The association ratified the contract yesterday.

Jenn Zettergren of Durham explained that she has been working on the field house committee and reported that the pipes have been sitting there for five years and she is not sure how long they are going to last. There is \$90,000 invested in them and the committee would like to see the

project finished this year. She reminded everyone that this will be for the kids today, in the future and for the entire community. Revenue could be generated by having events and graduation could also be held outside. She also felt that the lights would make the track safer.

Michelle DiMauro Murphy of Middlefield echoed what Nick Faiella and Jenn Zettergren have expressed and asked that the Board please consider completing the project. Ms. Murphy appreciates the great programs across the district and asked that those opportunities be continued by completing the field house project.

Next Board Meeting - January 11, 2017 in the CRHS Library

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made Jeremy Renninghoff and seconded by Dr. Friedrich to approve the agenda.

In favor of approving the agenda: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Renninghoff, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes November 16, 2016 and December 1, 2016

Mr. Renninghoff made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Boyle, to approve the minutes of November 16, 2016 as presented. Mr. Moore mentioned that there was no ending time in the minutes and he thought that the meeting was over around 9:02 pm.

In favor of approving the minutes of November 16, 2016: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Renninghoff, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.

Mr. Renninghoff made a motion, seconded by Dr. Taylor, to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2016 budget retreat as presented.

In favor of approving the minutes of the December 1, 2016 budget retreat: Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Renninghoff, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino, with Mr. Augur and Mrs. Boyle abstaining. Motion passed.

Superintendent Award Student Recipients - Kaylie LeMere and Garrett Puchalski

Dr. Veronesi recognized Kaylie LeMere and Garrett Puchalski who received the Superintendent's Award. This award is from the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents.

Kaylie LeMere has demonstrated success in Honors and AP classes throughout high school and participates in numerous activities, including athletics, National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society and art club. She also serves on Captain's Council, the Concussion Management Board

and National Society of High School Scholars. She has also been an amazing role model in the Best Buds and Unified Sports programs.

Garrett Puchalski has taken a rigorous Honors and AP curriculum through high school and has an impressive 4.08 GPA and is at the top of his class academically. He participates in a diverse group of activities which include athletics, music, community service and the environment. He holds leadership positions in five of these programs and has organized many activities. He is most passionate about the environment and music and has found many ways to impact our school.

Regional School District 13 Teacher of the Year - Valerie Swiantek

Dr. Veronesi also wanted to acknowledge Valerie Swiantek, the District's Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Swiantek teaches at John Lyman School and the District is proud to have her as a teacher. She is kind and compassionate, dedicated, bright and creative.

Tom Ford reported that he had presented Mrs. Swiantek as Teacher of the Year at the Opening Convocation in August. Mrs. Swiantek teaches first and second grade and Mr. Ford feels that she is the kind of teacher that all of the faculty aspires to be. Mrs. Swiantek always puts students first and teaches them as people. Her students are always engaged in the classroom. In closing, Mr. Ford stated that Mrs. Swiantek is respected by colleagues, parents and students and is a credit to the school, district and to the profession.

Mrs. Swiantek thanked Mr. Ford for the introduction and stated that she is incredibly overwhelmed and humbled. Her message at convocation day reviewed her incredible experience at John Lyman School and how lucky she is to be with students as they are just emerging as learners. Mrs. Swiantek thanked the Board and Mr. Ford from the bottom of her heart for the honor.

Presentation of Before and After School Program - Kevin Brough

Dr. Veronesi explained that Kevin Brough will be reviewing a proposal for a before and after school program to be provided by the District. The district has had BASREP, a program that rents space, for years. Dr. Veronesi did meet with BASREP and let them know the district would be exploring this. Mr. Brough's official retirement is at the end of this month and he has spent the time really looking into this program, including a survey and costs associated with it.

Mr. Brough reviewed that the packet of information that has been provided which is a summary of the work he has done over the last few months regarding the feasibility and viability of an extended care program in the district. Beginning with the executive summary, there are a significant number of families in the district who are in need of these programs due to work commitments. There are programs in place, including BASREP as well as an additional program in Durham and a number of smaller programs in Middlefield.

Mr. Brough explained that a survey was sent out to parents at Brewster, John Lyman and Memorial Schools in October. Mr. Brough thanked Maryellen Manning for her assistance in the development of the survey. He summarized that the survey showed that over half the parents indicated that their children were in some type of extended care program. Fifty-eight percent of the parents indicated they would be interested in enrolling their child in a proposed program and 32 percent expressed a possible interest.

Parents need extended care primarily due to work commitments, but socialization and enrichment opportunities were also cited. Close to 40 percent indicated that they would be interested in enrolling their child in both before and after school care. About half indicated they would be interested in all five days of the week, 32 percent were interested in three to four days and 22 percent in a day or two per week. Parents also indicated a preference for a drop-in option.

Something that would really separate the District's program from other programs would be an academic component and an enrichment component. Parents would like to see science and STEM enrichment programs, art and music programs and physical activities. Parents were also asked about a district summer program and about a quarter of the parents would be interested in the possibility of a potential summer program. Mr. Brough did not feel that the District would be ready for a program this coming summer, but it would be something that would be a service to parents and kids in the future.

Moving to page four, Mr. Brough reviewed staffing levels which would include a program coordinator. It was also felt that the program would be best if housed in both elementary school buildings. There would also be a need for a head teacher in each building as well as a number of assistants, four in the afternoon and two in the morning. This would be a great opportunity for high school students who could serve as interns. There would also be care provided on days when school is not in session, including vacations and early dismissal days.

Mr. Brough summarized proposed revenue which would, of course, be dependent on enrollment. He based his assumptions on 30 students enrolled in the morning and 60 students in the afternoon, with the numbers split between the two schools. The afternoon program would take place for three hours at a cost of approximately \$280 a month per student which is similar to other districts. Based on 17 school days per month, the average cost would be a little over \$16 per day per student which translates to \$5.49 per hour. The morning program would start at 6:30 AM and run for two hours. The cost would be approximately \$190 a month per student. Using the 17 days per month, the cost would be \$11.18 per day which translates to roughly \$5.59 per hour.

Yearly costs total a little over \$2,500 for the afternoon program and the morning program would be \$1,759 per year. Including registration fees, a total income of \$210,570 is projected.

The proposed salary for the program coordinator would be approximately \$60,000, including insurance and benefits. Head teachers would be at approximately \$18 per hour which translates to a yearly cost of \$22,644. For assistants, the hourly rate would be approximately \$13 per hour. For interns, the proposal would be to pay interns a little under \$10 per hour which would amount to a little over \$9,000 per year. For the morning program, two assistants would be necessary at a total cost of \$24,528. Total staffing costs for the program would be approximately \$168,961. Supplies would be necessary and are projected to be \$28,448.

Moving to page 9, costs would be associated with staffing, supplies, professional training and consulting from the Connecticut After School Network. Total income would be \$210,570 and total expenses would be \$205,409, with a surplus of a little over \$5,000. Mr. Brough felt that the program would be financially viable in its first year and of little to no cost to the District as the programs are in other districts.

Mr. Brough addressed payment options for low-income families in the District and felt that there would be a sliding scale for families below specific income guidelines. He reviewed several questions that had been asked. He reiterated the academic component, the homework assistance piece and enrichment programs that would make this program different from existing programs. The program could hopefully start on the first day of school for the 2017-2018 school year. With the really strong response to the surveys, Mr. Brough believes that declining enrollment would not affect the participation in the program.

Mr. Brough reviewed the steps for implementation, which include notifying parents and reviewing building utilization. Mr. Brough reported that he visited a number of programs in Windsor, East Hartford, Portland, Farmington and Litchfield County to help him in developing this proposal.

Mrs. Boyle asked if this meant that BASREP would no longer exist and Mr. Brough thought that they would contact BASREP and possibly incorporate their program into this. The survey was extended to all parents K-6 in the district, including those that already participate in BASREP. Mrs. Boyle also asked if the Board was expected to vote on this tonight and Dr. Veronesi explained that this was just informational.

Mr. Augur asked what the current enrollment is in BASREP and Mr. Brough thought that there were approximately 40 in the afternoon and approximately 15 in the morning. Mrs. Boyle asked if any local day care programs were contacted and Mr. Brough explained that they did not do that until approval had been given for the program. Mr. Moore asked what the cost of the program in Portland is and Mr. Brough reported that that is approximately \$281 a month and they have relatively the same enrollment. For afternoon programs, BASREP is approximately \$278 a month, Windsor is \$319, Farmington is \$275 and the program in Litchfield County is approximately \$272 per month. For the morning program, BASREP is \$189, Windsor is \$213, Farmington is \$190, Litchfield County is approximately \$204 and Portland does not have a morning program.

Mr. Brough also commented that there would be no transportation provided with this program and explained that the two locations would be helpful with this issue. Transportation may have to be provided to Memorial School.

Dr. Veronesi explained that this would be a good plan to support the needs of the District's kids and families. Dr. Veronesi also felt that in order to offer high-level professional development, the biggest problem is finding substitutes and that using early-release days is critical. She felt that this program would help parents with those early release days.

Mrs. Boyle asked if there would be a separate charge for the vacation weeks and Mr. Brough stated that it would be. Mrs. Boyle also asked if the head teachers would be members of the union and Mr. Brough felt that they would not be at this point.

Dr. Friedrich asked about the staffing numbers per student and Mr. Brough explained that the groups would be broken up by grade level, with the larger numbers being in the 1-2 and 3-4 groups. Mr. Yamartino thanked Mr. Brough for his work on this and asked if there are state laws regarding staffing to student ratios. Mr. Brough explained that the guideline is a ratio of 10:1 and also stated that there would not be a great deal of licensing to go through as it will be run by the District. Mr. Brough also explained that there would need to be some substitutes and also mentioned that the projected staffing is enrollment-specific. Mr. Yamartino also asked if there would be any impact to the District's liability or insurance coverages and Mr. Brough did not feel there would be any increase in insurance coverage, but increased custodial costs were considered. Both the principals of John Lyman and Brewster schools stated that the custodians are already there at 6:00 AM, so it should not involve a lot of additional cost.

Mr. Yamartino also asked about the specific of early-release days and Mr. Brough explained that they would be both scheduled and early releases/delayed openings due to weather as well as cancellation days. Mr. Augur felt that there would be a huge increase in the drop-in enrollment with weather days. Mr. Brough explained that the drop-in option would require prior notice.

Dr. Veronesi explained that she did not think all of the options would be available right from the start. Drop-ins and the summer program will probably have to be phased in. Dr. Veronesi summarized that the responses indicated that parents are looking for a high-level, predictable programming.

Dr. Friedrich asked about how the staffing ratio will be handled when enrollment is increased and he is a little uneasy that the budget posits a constant optimal number of students. Dr. Veronesi explained that the program would likely be budgeted similar to MTA. Mr. Yamartino asked if it was clear in the survey that there would be costs to the parents associated with the program and Mr. Augur commented that it was very clear. Dr. Veronesi offered to send a copy of the survey to the Board members.

Mr. Moore stated that this issue will be referred to the Utilization and ERC committees meetings which are in early January. Mrs. Petrella felt that Dr. Veronesi's comments about starting out with the basics makes the most sense. Dr. Veronesi also mentioned that there may even be a cap for enrollment in the beginning.

Dr. Veronesi also commented that she is currently involved with Durham-Middlefield Youth Services in grant writing for drug-free communities and this has reinforced the power of supporting each other in the community.

Communications

Mr. Moore reviewed that the Board members have received at least four or five emails supporting the field house, bathrooms and lighting. He also received one that felt that the money would be better spent for educational purposes.

Mr. Moore also stated that he, Dr. Veronesi and Mr. Hicks attended the Chamber of Commerce breakfast this morning and Abby Cannon, a Coginchaug student, sang the Star Spangled Banner in front of 650 members.

Mr. Yamartino reported that a parent reached out to him about information being sent home on outside activities and organizations. This parent felt there was no communication going out and they were not aware of different events and opportunities. Dr. Veronesi stated that the District made a change this year to put all flyers and newsletters on the schools' Facebook pages and the District's Facebook page. This was done because the District was inundated with paper. She has heard a few complaints, but not many. Mr. Yamartino asked if that change had been communicated to parents and felt that maybe the parents should be reminded. Dr. Veronesi explained that it is in her newsletter and in the updates from principals. Mr. Augur suggested that a link be included in emails that are sent. Mrs. Boyle thought that the calendar link on the website should be all-inclusive for all events, both inside the District and out. Mrs. Boyle asked if the Wednesday envelope is still being sent out and Dr. Veronesi felt that that was still happening, but Mr. Ford explained that they are increasingly more paperless.

Mr. Yamartino had a concern that all parents may not have access to email and the internet and Dr. Veronesi could not be sure that all parents do. Mr. Augur felt that access could be provided in the schools themselves. Mrs. Petrella also commented that some parents had said they had not been notified about late openings and Dr. Veronesi explained that the District had switched from Everbridge to School Messenger and information had been sent out to parents. The system was tested in October or November and a reminder had been sent about how the information needed to be entered. The instructions are included on the District website under Emergency Notifications.

Business Manager's Report

Mr. Moore announced that Mr. Melnik will be leaving the school district to become the Finance Director for the Town of Durham and thanked him for his service to the district.

A. Vote to Accept Audit Report

Mr. Melnik explained that every year, all municipalities are audited and the District uses BlumShapiro. The audit was presented to the ERC on December 7th and the ERC voted to move the audit to the full Board. He had copies to distribute to the Board members and explained that no federal audit had been done this year. Mr. Moore commented that it was a clean audit and there were no deficiencies mentioned.

Mr. Yamartino made a motion, seconded by Mr. Augur, to approve the audit as presented.

In favor of approving the annual audit: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Renninghoff, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Veronesi reflected on the anniversary of the Sandy Hook shootings and the good grace that exists in this district and community.

The budget process is well underway and administrators and department heads have handed in their budgets. Dr. Veronesi and Mr. Melnik will review every item, meet with each administrator and department head, and then, in early January, the team will assemble to determine any total increase.

Dr. Veronesi also mentioned that the Board members are invited to an acknowledgment of the Benchwarmers at a basketball game on December 29th. The event will have a 60s theme and will include a DJ. Wally Camp hopes to Skype in and say a few words at halftime. There will also be a reception in the library for organization members.

Current enrollment is 1,717 with a decrease of four students from last month, but still about 50 students higher than projected. Updated enrollment projects from Milone & MacBroom should be in next week. The breakout of enrollment is included in the packet that the Board members have.

Committee Reports**A. Policy Committee - November 29, 2016**

Mr. Hicks had arrived at the meeting and reviewed that the Policy Committee met on November 29th. They discussed public participation at Board meetings and how best to acknowledge the public. There was also discussion about scheduling a Board of Education retreat to give members an opportunity to work together as a group. At this point however, no changes were suggested to the current policy.

The Committee also talked about the class size policy and will have a draft for the Board that will include, "Kindergarten shall have a teaching assistant in the classroom during instructional time, unless the class size goes below 15 students." The hope would be to vote on that policy change in January.

There was also discussion about non-resident students attending school in the district and the Committee will reexamine that policy.

There was ongoing discussion about non-Board members participating on Board subcommittees. Mr. Hicks will talk to folks at ACES to see what works and doesn't work in other districts and he also believes there should be some discussion with attorneys as well.

The Committee discussed surveillance cameras and felt that this would open up a whole host of problems concerning student privacy. Mr. Hicks will reach out to Tom Mooney on this subject. There is a new law about information requirements for schools about student confidentiality with respect to software vendors. Dr. Veronesi announced that a decision has been made to delay implementation until January 1, 2018.

B. Utilization Committee - November 30, 2016

Mr. Moore reported that the Utilization Committee discussed the Silver Petrucelli report which included current needs and cost of meeting those needs for both short and long term. There are needs at Memorial, Brewster and Strong. The second part of the report looked at converting Brewster and Lyman into K through 5 or K through 6. The report included estimated costs and class sizes. The reports will be reviewed and commented on at the next meeting on January 4, 2017 at 4:00 PM. Mr. Moore invited all members to attend.

C. BOE Budget Retreat - December 1, 2016

Mr. Moore reviewed that the Boards of Finance from both towns met with the Board on December 1st. A great deal of information was discussed. Mr. Yamartino stated that the Middlefield Board of Finance felt it was a very warm and welcoming environment and they liked the fact that there was give and take. They also felt that the more information that the Board of

Finance has, the more they can support the budget. Mr. Moore was also very encouraged about the long discussion on student achievement needs and the importance of STEM programs.

Dr. Veronesi commented that the budget process is constantly reprioritizing priorities and the team has improved at multiple-year strategic planning. Mr. Yamartino confirmed that that message came through as well as the depth of the review that takes place in the Superintendent's office.

D. Education Resources Committee/Field House - December 7, 2016

Mr. Moore reported that the ERC talked about the audit and the field house. Jenn Zettergren and Nick Faiella made a great presentation about the need for the bathrooms and also gave a proposal from United Concrete on a package system. Mr. Moore reviewed the records and found that the issue stalled around 2014 and hasn't moved since. He would like to have a combined meeting of the ERC and the Utilization committees and decide if it should be included in this year's budget proposal. Estimated costs and financing options would need to be obtained.

Mrs. Boyle felt the ERC had a great meeting and that it was very beneficial. She is also in support of bringing this issue forward. Mr. Yamartino reviewed that the bathrooms have to come before the lights and Kevin Boyle had put together a comprehensive proposal for the field house and bathrooms, but no lights. Mr. Moore stated that the presentation included a prefab concrete unit by United Concrete and had all the bathrooms, but no field house. Jenn Zettergren had also presented an additional proposal that included both.

Dr. Veronesi mentioned that the whole budget is presented on February 8 and she encouraged the Board to think about how they would put this as part of the budget. Mrs. Boyle felt that the ERC should begin discussions on this as soon as possible and it was agreed to schedule a meeting for December 29, 2016 at 4:00 PM. Mrs. Boyle will invite her husband to the meeting as he did the original proposal.

New Business

A. Vote to Ratify Teachers' Contract

Mr. Moore reported that negotiations went very smoothly with the teachers and a summary of the contract had been sent to the Board members. Dr. Veronesi stated that the District is right in the ball park as far as state averages and the increase for three years was 9.52 percent, including step and cost-of-living. Mr. Melnik reviewed the steps and numbers of teachers and discussion continued on how the distribution was made. Mrs. Boyle commented that the district has always taken pride in being in the middle of the DRG and asked how this contract fares with that. Mr. Moore explained that the district is about average or a little higher at the entry level and, at the upper end of the salary, the district is moving toward the middle of the DRG. Mr. Yamartino noted the union's concessions in insurance and benefits and Mr. Melnik commented that the savings will be about \$60,000.

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Boyle, to ratify the teacher's contract.

In favor of ratifying the teachers' contract: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella and Dr. Taylor. Mr. Renninghoff and Mr. Yamartino voted against. Motion passed.

Public Comment

Dr. Janice Mooney-Frank thanked the Board, particularly Mrs. Boyle, for the consideration of the project to light the tennis courts and for the use of the tennis courts to hold the Dr. Kevin S. Frank tennis tournament.

Another member of the public asked if the microphones in the room could be made live so that everyone in the room can hear better.

Anticipated Executive Session

The Board moved into executive session at this time and returned to the regular meeting at 10:19 PM.

Adjournment

Mr. Renninghoff made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Augur.

In favor of adjourning the meeting: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Renninghoff, Mr. Yamartino and Dr. Taylor. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

Debi Waz
Alwaz First