

Board of Education Regional School District 13 April 5, 2017

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, April 5, 2017 at 7:30 PM in the Library at Coginchaug Regional High School, 135 Pickett Lane, Durham, Connecticut. Board members present: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Renninghoff, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino.
Board members absent: Mr. Hicks.
Administration present: Dr. Veronesi, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Russell, Interim Business Manager.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

CRHS Reporters - Lauren Donnell, Emily Leibiger and Sam Marteka

Sam Marteka reported that the Show Choir performed Guys & Dolls last week, with more than 70 kids in the play. He felt that the students truly appreciated the work ethic of both Ms. Schilling and Mr. Fisher in the Music Department. Sam also reported that there will be a Chorus Night on April 27th at 7:00 PM in the Coginchaug auditorium, which will include choruses from all schools. There will also be a band and chorus concert on May 18th at 7:00 PM and the Jazz Band will perform on May 23rd at 7:00 PM.

Sam reported that two students placed third place in the DECA state competition, with 20 students from RSD 13 competing. The Eco Club held their Hunger Banquet a couple of weeks ago and raised \$1,100 for local food banks. The Junior Classical League and Latin Honor Society had their Ides of March party last week. The Spanish Honor Society will hold their Fajita Fiesta on May 5th from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM and the National Honor Society has been volunteering at Twin Maples, playing games with the residents of the nursing home. The induction for the National Honor Society is on May 11 from 7:00 PM until 9:00 PM. Best Buds had their Bingo Bash last week and included kids from all over the district. The Senior Class Council has met to discuss the Senior Class Trip to New York, the Senior Class Picnic and prom.

Sam commented that clubs really help students find their passion and he personally thanked the Board of Ed for their continued support of the activities, programs, clubs and athletics that go on in the District.

Lauren Donnelly tried to summarize her four years at the high school into two minutes and commented that if she had not participated in cheerleading and softball, she wouldn't be the person she is. She thanked everyone for their continuous support of the student athletes.

Lauren reported that the spring sports season has finally kicked off and the first track meet was held today. Baseball has had one victory and softball has yet to have a first game. Tennis has had a few matches.

Lauren also reported that band and chorus students left today for the competition in Virginia. There are over 100 kids in band and over 50 in chorus, approximately 25 percent of the total student population. Lauren echoed Sam Marteka's comments about Mr. Fisher and Ms. Schilling and their connections with the students.

Lauren also commented that she has committed to Elmira College in New York and will be majoring in nursing. Sam has narrowed his choices down to Syracuse University, majoring in sports analytics and the University of South Carolina, majoring in sports management. He also added that his involvement in DECA has pushed him toward management and business. It was also mentioned that Emily Leibiger, who is with the band and chorus in Virginia, recently committed to Northeastern.

Public Comment

None.

Next Board Meeting - April 19, 2017 in the CRHS Library

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Renninghoff made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Boyle, to approve the agenda as presented.

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

Approval of Minutes - March 22, 2017 and March 23, 2017

Mr. Renninghoff made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Flanagan, to approve the minutes of March 22, 2017 and March 23, 2017, as presented.

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

Communications

Mr. Moore reported that kids from Brewster School took a hike today at the Micah Ledges and some of the transportation costs were provided by the Middlesex Land Trust.

Business Manager's Report

Mr. Russell presented an end-of-the-projection that projects a surplus on the expenditure side of the budget of \$284,237. It is expected to be in the hole \$182,000 in certified salaries as a result of reducing that budget line item. The biggest change from last month has been a greater use of substitute teachers. Noncertified salaries remains about the same as last month's projections. Mr. Russell also reported that a claim has come through for unemployment benefits, but the District will be contesting that.

Mr. Russell explained that there should be a surplus in the Legal account as the District is negotiating the nurses' contract without legal services. Spring sports scrimmages were canceled due to the weather and that saved quite a bit of money on transportation.

He also reported that there is a projection of about \$60,000 on the positive side for revenue. One of the factors for that is parking fees and the District is also expecting some more Special Education Excess Costs. In summary, the budget looks to be pretty positive at this point.

The Board then moved to the Auditorium for the Public Hearing.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Veronesi reported that the flag pole at Strong School broke and is being replaced. She also reiterated that the CRHS band and chorus left today for the competition in Virginia.

Dr. Veronesi also encouraged the Board members to read the updates from the administrators.

New Business

Mr. Moore reminded the Board members that there are restrictions on what they can say, either in favor of or opposed to, the referendum. Of course, the Board members can answer any questions or give information.

2017-2018 Budget**A. Discussion on Public Hearing**

Mr. Moore commented that he had attended the Town's budget hearing in Durham and there had been about 200 people there, with 95 percent of them concerned about a \$30,000 cut in the library budget and a \$10,000 cut in the Fire Department, asking for them to be added back. He also commented that the fund balance is around \$11 million in Durham, on a municipal budget of \$5.6 million. Mr. Yamartino explained that Middlefield sets their fund balance at 10 percent of the budget, with anything above that getting refunded back to the taxpayers. Mr. Moore also stated that there has been no further information regarding the State budget.

Mr. Moore also commented that he felt that discussing the issues one by one prior to the public hearing probably reduced the total impact.

Dr. Taylor asked if the wording around the target class size can be changed at some point, possibly just adding the word "maximum" before target class size.

Mrs. Boyle hoped that more education for the taxpayers about the field house project will be provided before the referendum. Dr. Veronesi explained that the District needs to be careful not to use District funds for anything other than date, time and location after the referendum date has been set. Information can be put on the website and in the newspaper as long as the District doesn't pay. Dr. Veronesi asked Mr. Renninghoff to work with her on the fact sheet about the field house project.

Mrs. Boyle stated that she has heard that people are questioning whether the District can even put up lights and what time limits there might be. Dr. Taylor suggested minutes can be published and Mrs. Boyle thought possibly bullet-pointing what the lawsuit is would help. Dr. Veronesi asked the Board members for help developing the information.

B. Finalize Budget for District Meeting

Mr. Renninghoff made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Flanagan, to go to District meeting on May 1, 2017 with a budget of \$37,137,901 for Regional School District 13 2017-2018 budget, followed by a referendum on May 2, 2017.

In favor of going to District meeting on May 1, 2017 with a budget of \$37,137,901 for Regional School District 13 2017-2018 budget, followed by a referendum on May 2, 2017: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Opposed: Mr. Renninghoff. Motion carried, 8-1.

Set Graduation Date

Dr. Veronesi stated that, because of snow days, graduation will be held on Tuesday, June 20, 2017.

Mr. Renninghoff made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to set the graduation date for Tuesday, June 20, 2017.

In favor of setting the graduation date for Tuesday, June 20, 2017: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Renninghoff, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.

Teacher Non-Renewals

Mrs. Flanagan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Renninghoff, that the contract of employment for Amy McKay at Memorial, Kendra Havens-McColgan at Coginchaug, Kristen Allen at Brewster, Julie French at Coginchaug, Nilani Shankar at Lyman, Lindsey Jones at Coginchaug, Sarina Garofalo at Lyman, Craig Emmons at Coginchaug, JoAnna Silverstein at Memorial, Lisa Mishriky at Coginchaug, Kristy Dell at Memorial, Erin Schilling at Coginchaug, Kelley Lehman at Brewster, Benjamin Shoudy at Coginchaug, Emily Archer at Coginchaug, Carrie Kosienski at Brewster, Kristen Ciccone at Lyman, Nancy Kozlik at Lyman, Melissa Lonsdale at Brewster, Noreen Grenier at Lyman and Deborah Mariani at Memorial not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2016-2017 school year and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such persons in writing of this action.

In favor of teacher non-renewals as listed above: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Renninghoff, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.

Cancelled Professional Day Make-Up Options

Dr. Veronesi explained that one of the snow days fell on a Professional Development day and needs to be made up. She asked the Board to vote to allow her to enter into an MOU with the union to look to make up the six hours over the course of the next three months rather than add a day at the end of the year.

Dr. Friedrich made a motion, seconded by Mr. Renninghoff, to allow Dr. Veronesi to enter into an MOU with the teachers' union to add six hours of professional development to the current schedule, at the Superintendent's discretion.

In favor of entering into an MOU with the teachers' union to add six hours of professional development to the current schedule, at the Superintendent's discretion: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Renninghoff, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed.

Public Comment

Jim Irish from Middlefield thanked Dr. Veronesi for her work on the budget process and also thanked every member of the Board of Education for their efforts. Speaking on behalf of the Middlefield Board of Finance, they certainly felt welcomed to participate in the process.

Mr. Moore thanked Mr. Irish for his participation as well as many other people in the audience.

Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

In favor of adjourning the meeting: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Renninghoff, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

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