

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in special session on Monday, July 24, 2024 at 7:30 PM in the library at Coginchaug Regional High School.

Board members present: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. DeVecchio (remotely), Mrs. Hurlbert (remotely), Mr. Mennone (remotely), Mr. Moore (remotely), Mrs. Petrella, and Mr. Roraback

Board members absent: Mr. Stone

Administration present: Dr. Schuch, Superintendent of Schools, and Mrs. Neubig, Director of Finance

Mrs. Dahlheimer called the special meeting to order at 8:42 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Dr. Darcy made a motion, seconded by Mr. DeVecchio, to approve the agenda, as presented.

In favor of approving the agenda, as presented: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. DeVecchio, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella and Mr. Roraback. Motion carried.

Discussion on Public Hearing/District Meeting

Mr. Mennone thanked the board for their comments tonight. He felt that the board has gone above and beyond to do what is financially correct for the district. He noted that they have done everything they possibly can to take the numbers into consideration, including number of students, cost per pupil and how to maximize the buildings. He felt people need to understand the financial impact that will happen if the district remains with five schools. He does understand that everyone is bothered by the transition plan, but emphasized that it is only a two-year period to get to the final goal. If this does not happen, Mr. Mennone felt that they will be setting the community up for failure with financial burden and schools that are falling apart. This issue has been belabored for two-and-a-half years and the board has done everything they can to answer every question.

Mrs. Dahlheimer added that the board has been careful and cognizant in listening and are trying hard to communicate better. She encouraged people to continue to reach out.

Mrs. Caramanello thanked Mrs. Dahlheimer for the amount of effort she has given to this. She wondered how anyone could still be misinformed. Mrs. Caramanello also thanked Mrs. Neubig for her hard work with the numbers. She hoped that the voters can see how important this vote is. Her daughter will be going into second grade and is not happy about leaving the school she loves, but her family continues to be positive. Mrs. Caramanello added that they cannot do much about programming at Strong and Coginchaug if they do not lower costs.

Mrs. Dahlheimer commented on the pathway programs at the high school and how STEAM has been a cornerstone and they want to continue to increase that. She agreed that that won't be able to happen if they have to concentrate on facilities. Mrs. Caramanello added that parents have to think further ahead.

Mr. Moore thanked Mrs. Hurlbert for her remote work on getting the next steps flyers completed.

Resolution to approve the question for a referendum vote to amend the Plan of Regionalization for the district and to authorize the preparation of explanatory text

The resolution to approve the question for a referendum vote to amend the Plan of Regionalization for the district and to authorize the preparation of explanatory text is attached to these minutes.

Mrs. Petrella then read the Warning of Referendum Vote for both Durham and Middlefield into the record as attached to these minutes. The referendum date will be Tuesday, August 27, 2024, between 6:00 AM and 8:00 PM.

Mr. Mennone made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Petrella, to approve the question for a referendum vote to amend the Plan of Regionalization for the district and to authorize the preparation of explanatory text.

In favor of approving the question for a referendum vote to amend the Plan of Regionalization for the district and to authorize the preparation of explanatory text: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella and Mr. Roraback. Motion carried.

Mrs. Dahlheimer noted that Mr. DeVecchio was no longer on the call.

Mrs. Dahlheimer added that she has had conversations with the registrars from both towns and Heather Petit has done some amazing research about getting the bonding onto the November ballot. They did find out that it can be part of the November ballot and people who vote their property rights will vote in a separate section.

Adjournment

Dr. Darcy made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Caramanello, to adjourn the special meeting of the Board of Education.

In favor of adjourning the special meeting of the Board of Education: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella and Mr. Roraback. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

Debi Waz
Alwaz First

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 13
TOWNS OF DURHAM AND MIDDLEFIELD**

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE QUESTION FOR A REFERENDUM VOTE TO
AMEND THE PLAN OF REGIONALIZATION FOR THE DISTRICT AND TO
AUTHORIZE THE PREPARATION OF EXPLANATORY TEXT**

BE IT RESOLVED:

Section 1. That the Regional School District 13 Board of Education hereby approves the following referendum question which shall be submitted to electors of the Towns of Durham and Middlefield:

QUESTION:

“SHALL THE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 13 PLAN OF REGIONALIZATION BE AMENDED TO AUTHORIZE THE REGION 13 BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT A THREE-SCHOOL MODEL WITH PRE-K-GRADE 5 AT MEMORIAL SCHOOL IN MIDDLEFIELD, GRADES 6-8 AT STRONG MIDDLE SCHOOL IN DURHAM AND GRADES 9-12 AT COGINCHAUG REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN DURHAM AND TO CLOSE FREDERICK F. BREWSTER SCHOOL IN DURHAM AND JOHN LYMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN MIDDLEFIELD UPON THE TRANSITION TO THE THREE-SCHOOL MODEL?”

YES

NO

Voters approving the resolution shall vote “Yes” and those opposing the resolution shall vote “No”.

Section 2. That the Secretary of the Board of Education is authorized to prepare, print and disseminate a concise explanatory text concerning the referendum question above. Such explanatory text is subject to the approval of the Board of Education’s attorney. Subject to the approval of the Board of Education’s attorney, the Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to prepare and print explanatory materials regarding the proposed amendments to the Plan of Regionalization. The explanatory text and explanatory materials shall not advocate either the approval or disapproval of the referendum question above and shall be prepared in accordance with Section 9-369b of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Section 3. The following polling places shall be utilized for purposes of the referendum vote on the voting tabulators:

Durham Community Center
144 Pickett Lane
Durham, Connecticut 06422

Middlefield Community Center
405 Main Street
Middlefield, Connecticut 06455

Section 4. Warnings of the referendum vote shall be published in newspapers having a general circulation within the Towns of Durham and Middlefield, respectively, not more than fifteen (15) days before the date of said referendum, and not less than five (5) days before the date of said referendum, which warnings shall be in substantially the following forms:

**WARNING
REFERENDUM VOTE
Regional School District No. 13
Town of Durham
August 27, 2024**

A referendum vote of the electors of the Town of Durham, Connecticut will be held in the Town of Durham at the following place:

Durham Community Center
144 Pickett Lane
Durham, Connecticut 06422

and simultaneously in Middlefield, Connecticut on Tuesday, August 27, 2024, between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. pursuant to Section 10-47c of the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut, as amended, upon a resolution adopted by the Regional School District No. 13 Board of Education at a meeting held on July 24, 2024.

The resolution will be placed on the ballot labels as the following question:

“SHALL THE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 13 PLAN OF REGIONALIZATION BE AMENDED TO AUTHORIZE THE REGION 13 BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT A THREE-SCHOOL MODEL WITH PRE-K-GRADE 5 AT MEMORIAL SCHOOL IN MIDDLEFIELD, GRADES 6-8 AT STRONG MIDDLE SCHOOL IN DURHAM AND GRADES 9-12 AT COGINCHAUG REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN DURHAM AND TO CLOSE FREDERICK F. BREWSTER SCHOOL IN DURHAM AND JOHN LYMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN MIDDLEFIELD UPON THE TRANSITION TO THE THREE-SCHOOL MODEL?”

YES

NO

Voters approving the resolution shall vote “Yes” and those opposing the resolution shall vote “No”.

A copy of the full text of the amendment to the District’s Plan of Regionalization is on file and available for public inspection at the Town Clerk’s Office. Absentee ballots will be available from the Town Clerk’s office.

Dated in Durham, Connecticut this ___ day of _____, 2024.

Nicole Charest
Durham Town Clerk

**WARNING
REFERENDUM VOTE
Regional School District No. 13
Town of Middlefield
August 27, 2024**

A referendum vote of the electors of the Town of Middlefield, Connecticut will be held in the Town of Middlefield at the following place:

Middlefield Community Center
405 Main Street
Middlefield, Connecticut 06455

and simultaneously in Durham, Connecticut on Tuesday, August 27, 2024, between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. pursuant to Section 10-47c of the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut, as amended, upon a resolution adopted by the Regional School District No. 13 Board of Education at a meeting held on July 24, 2024.

The resolution will be placed on the ballot labels as the following question:

“SHALL THE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 13 PLAN OF REGIONALIZATION BE AMENDED TO AUTHORIZE THE REGION 13 BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT A THREE-SCHOOL MODEL WITH PRE-K-GRADE 5 AT MEMORIAL SCHOOL IN MIDDLEFIELD, GRADES 6-8 AT STRONG MIDDLE SCHOOL IN DURHAM AND GRADES 9-12 AT COGINCHAUG REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN DURHAM AND TO CLOSE FREDERICK F. BREWSTER SCHOOL IN DURHAM AND JOHN LYMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN MIDDLEFIELD UPON THE TRANSITION TO THE THREE-SCHOOL MODEL?”

YES NO

Voters approving the resolution shall vote “Yes” and those opposing the resolution shall vote “No”.

A copy of the full text of the amendment to the District’s Plan of Regionalization is on file and available for public inspection at the Town Clerk’s Office. Absentee ballots will be available from the Town Clerk’s office.

Dated in Middlefield, Connecticut this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Tonya Hogan
Middlefield Town Clerk