

Board of Education Ellington, Connecticut

September 25, 2013

A regular meeting of the Ellington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, September 25, 2013 in the School Administration Building.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Mr. Keune, Chairperson.

Present were: Messrs. Blanchette, Keune, McNamar, Roberson, Stoughton, and Young; Mesdames Hayes, Kiff-Judson, Picard-Wambolt and Student Representative DeIPiano; Mr. Stephen Cullinan, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Erin McGurk, Director of Educational Services; Dr. Kristy LaPorte, Director of Special Services; and Mrs. Margaret Devlin, Director of Business Services. Also present were Mr. Neil Rinaldi, Principal Ellington High School, Mrs. Suzanne Markowski, Director of Guidance and Mr. Peter Welti, Chair of the Permanent Building Committee, Town of Ellington. Mr. Friedman was absent.

CITIZENS AND STAFF FORUM

No one addressed the Board.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Keune asked if anyone wished to remove any item from the consent agenda. Mr. Roberson asked to remove items number 4 and 9. Mr. Keune then stated that if there are no other objections, Consent Agenda items 1 through 3, 5 through 8 and 10 through 17 will be adopted. As there were no other objections Consent Agenda items 1 through 3, 5 through 8 and 10 through 17 were adopted.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the August 15, 2013 Special Board Meeting
2. Approval of the Minutes of the August 21, 2013 Regular Board Meeting
3. Approval of the Minutes of the September 11, 2013 Regular Board Meeting
5. Approval of the 2014-2015 Board of Education Budget Calendar as Recommended by the Finance Committee
6. Approval of 2014-2015 Budget Guidelines as Recommended by the Finance Committee
7. Approval of Lori Purcaro and Jennifer Plis as Candidates for TEAM Initial Support Teacher Training.

8. Approval of Submission of the 2013-2014 Title III English Language Acquisition Grant in the Amount of \$5,288.
10. Approval for the 2013-14 school year to allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: (1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; (2) the sale is at the location of the event; and (3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store.
11. Approval for the 2013-14 school year to allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in state statute provided that the following conditions are met: (1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; (2) the sale is at the location of the event; and (3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store.
12. Approval of the Employment of Amanda Willis as a long-term substitute grade 1 teacher at Center School, effective, on or about, October 21, 2013.
13. Approval of the Employment of Theresa Thomas as a long-term substitute grade 4 teacher at Center School, effective, on or about, October 14, 2013.
14. Approval of the Employment of Jean Mudgett as a long-term substitute remedial reading teacher at Windermere School, effective, on or about, October 28, 2013.
15. Acceptance of the Personnel Resignation of Shannon Platt, special education aide at Windermere School, effective August 23, 2013.
16. Acceptance of the Personnel Resignation of Jeana Holmes, food service worker at Center School, effective September 13, 2013.
17. Acceptance of the Personnel Retirement request of Carol Batsie, food service worker at Windermere School, effective August 28, 2013.

REPORT AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Special Reports

Update on Building Projects

Mr. Keune welcomed Mr. Peter Welti, Chair of the Permanent Building Committee and thanked him for his excellent work and his attendance at tonight's meeting. Mr. Cullinan stated that at the Board's July meeting he and Mr. Keune expressed concern regarding the ability to meet the initial timeline for the project. Events of the past two months have confirmed these concerns. A meeting to review the timeline was held on September 10, 2013 prior to the regular meeting of the Permanent Building Committee. Dan Keune, Tracey Kiff-Judson, Gary Blanchette, Michael Larkin, Gina Olearczyk and Mr. Cullinan represented the district. Peter Welti, Gary Magnuson and other PBC members were present along with Peter Williams, and David Stein of Silver Petrucelli. A follow-up meeting was held on September 17, 2013 at which Steve Moccio, Michael Larkin and Mr. Cullinan represented the district. Peter Welti and Peter Williams were in attendance as were representatives from Silver Petrucelli. Another meeting is scheduled for October 2, 2013.

Mr. Cullinan informed the Board that at this time neither project has been approved to go to bid. It was hoped that the Crystal Lake Project would be approved on September 23, 2013. However, that meeting was cancelled as there was still a fire code modification that has not yet been approved. That modification was approved on September 24. David Stein of Silver Petrucelli attempted to schedule the PCT for Crystal Lake School on Friday, September 27 but was informed of several other issues that must be addressed before that meeting can be scheduled. On September 25 the district was informed that an ED053 must be submitted to the state in order to schedule a site inspection of the 59 South Road property. There had been no mention of this requirement prior to today.

The state was to have completed its review of the Windermere Project on August 30, 2013. As of today this process has not yet been completed. Once that step is done, the architects will need to provide responses to any areas of concern noted in the state review and then make a final presentation to the state. The FF&E PCT for September 27, 2013 was cancelled and will be re-scheduled for mid-November. We have requested November 27 and are waiting to hear from the state if they accept this date.

Pending the information received at the upcoming October 2, 2013 meeting, the addition at Crystal Lake will hopefully begin February/March 2014 with completion approximately in December 2014. The addition contains ten classrooms; offices of the principal, nurse, school psychologist, social worker, speech, reading, conference room and the new portion of the media center. This could lead to the transition of the K-4 students at Crystal Lake from their current classrooms mid-year so as to allow the renovation of the current classroom wing to begin in January 2015. If this phase were successful, the renovation of the current grade 1-4 classrooms could be completed by

August 2015. The current kindergarten and library/media center will be converted to the new cafeteria. This section along with the current administrative office will be renovated in that same January 2015 to August 2015 time period. The gymnasium work may begin in May 2015 and run through August 2015.

The final phase which includes the remainder of the library/media center, the conversion of the current cafeteria to accommodate Art as well as OT/PT and the conversion of the staff lounge and a math intervention room will begin in May 2015 and may be completed in December 2015 in an accelerated alternate plan. The base plan has this phase completed by August 2016.

Mr. Cullinan cautioned that all timeframes may be extended and make transitions complicated. A phasing plan is being developed along with a corresponding plan for exiting students and staff. Mr. Cullinan stated that the Board's Ad Hoc Facilities Committee should review this plan. The committee will also be asked to decide upon a Hazmat Plan.

At this time Mr. Cullinan sees no scenario where there would be any transition of students for the 2014-2015 school year. The current grade configuration will remain the same as it is now for at least that school year. The initial anticipated completion of the entire project had been September of 2015. That will not occur until at least December 2015 through September 2016. Once a firmer timeframe has been established the information will be formally disseminated to the public. The next meeting for the Permanent Building Committee will be October 8, 2013.

Mr. Keune commended Mr. Welti and the Permanent Building Committee for its excellent work and commitment to the projects.

Annual CT Mastery and CT Academic Performance Test Results

Director of Guidance, Suzanne Markowski, provided a profile of the Class of 2013. Eighty-one percent of the class is involved in post secondary education, including four-year colleges, two-year colleges and technical schools. Mrs. Markowski stated that the Class of 2013 submitted 592 college applications to 191 institutions. A list of the institutions to which students applied, were accepted to and are attending was presented. Fifty-eight members of the Class of 2013 took the ACT and in all five areas (English, math, reading, science and composite) scored at or above state and national results. Eighty-four percent of the Class of 2013 took the SAT and scored well above state and national results in all three areas (Critical Reading – 522, Math – 529, Writing – 517). One-hundred and eleven students took one hundred forty-three AP exams, with eighty-six percent of the students scoring three or better. Eighty-one students earned five hundred and forty credits through the College Career Pathways program at

Asnuntuck Community College. Forty-three seniors earned one hundred and thirty-eight credits through the UCONN Early College Experience program. The ACT and SAT scores were well above state and national results. Mr. Keune asked if the Board could see comparisons with local districts, not just state and national comparisons.

Mr. McNamar requested information regarding the demographics of students taking AP courses. Dr. Young inquired about the administration's thoughts regarding the decrease in the percentage of students scoring three or better on these exams. Mr. Cullinan stated that he was pleased with the significant increase in the number of students taking AP courses.

Regular Board Committee Reports

Operations Committee

The Operations Committee met on August 28, 2013. Mrs. Hayes informed the Board that the committee reviewed a request to remove a tree in the Windermere courtyard that has become a safety issue as it attracts bees, wasps and hornets. The committee reviewed other options and has recommended removal to the full board. The Operations Committee also reviewed and approved a request for shrub removal at Center School due to both egress and aesthetic issues. Both items are listed as action items on the agenda.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee met on September 16, 2013. Mrs. Kiff-Judson reported that the committee reviewed the Food Service financials for 2012-13 which indicated a significant operating loss due to a decrease in lunches purchased. As a result hours of work have been reduced and the financials will again be reviewed in January. The committee also reviewed the final expenditures and transfers for the 2012-2013 fiscal year that showed a balance of \$1,086.46. Approval is listed as an action item.

Special Board Committee Reports

Communications Committee

Mrs. Kiff-Judson reported that the Communications Committee met on September 10, 2013. The committee discussed preparations for the Board's Annual Brainstorming Session with Ann Baldwin. The committee postponed continued revisions to the Board's Communications Framework pending feedback at the Brainstorming Session. The Committee is scheduled to meet again on October 1, 2013.

Administrative Reports

Superintendent's Report

Opening of School Report

Mr. Cullinan reported on the variety of activities at each school at the start of the school year. The report included: Administrative in-service; the New Teacher Orientation; the first professional development day; open house at each school; PTO meetings; evacuation drills; the high school freshman orientation; pre-school orientation; and various school assemblies.

ESEA Waiver Amendment

Mr. Cullinan reminded the Board that Connecticut filed a successful waiver with the federal government about 14 months ago that, among other things, introduced the New Accountability System. The waiver also contained many of the revisions to the teacher evaluation process across the state. The Connecticut State Department of Education is now submitting an amendment to that waiver. The Board packet contained a communication from Commissioner Pryor outlining the contents of the requested amendment.

The amendment requests flexibility on the use of state test data in the evaluation process. Connecticut is requesting to provide districts the flexibility to administer either the state legacy tests (CMT/CAPT) or to administer the Common Core aligned Smarter Balanced Assessments in 2013-2014. The Smarter Balanced Assessments is required to be administered the following year 2014-2015. As districts move to align curriculum to the Common Core State Standards as measured by Smarter Balanced Assessments why should they also prepare for CMT and CAPT? If districts move to Smarter Balanced Assessments in 2013-2014 there can be no comparative data for teacher/administrator evaluation for the 22.5% that relates to standardized tests. Thus, there is a request for a waiver to use other measures for this 22.5%. If this amendment is approved, the Connecticut State Department of Education will then submit another amendment for waiver of standardized tests for the 22.5% for 2014-2015. Dr. McGurk provided some examples of what measures districts might use to assess this 22.5% in the evaluation process.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Dr. McGurk reported that the Open Choice Academic and Social Support Grant of \$119,600 is in its fifth year. This is not a competitive grant but must be submitted to and approved by the Board of Education. In Ellington, funds are used for: professional development; to support the PBIS initiative; Responsive Classroom training; and transportation. At Ellington Middle School, Mr. Pearson is forming a Diversity Committee

in hopes of such activities as reverse field trips, where students go to Hartford and the Choice students act as hosts.

Board Liaison Reports

Mrs. Picard-Wambolt reported that she attended the CREC Council meeting on September 18, 2013. Emily Wright from the Metropolitan Learning Center was honored as the CREC Teacher of the Year. Terry Schmidt, council chair, has developed new orientation and other resource material for new and returning council members that can be accessed through the CREC website. He also discussed his vision for the Council, especially renewed engagement and instilling a sense of responsibility and authorization. He has asked that all Board of Director members solicit opinions from their board members regarding CREC. Board members were requested to provide feedback to Mrs. Picard-Wambolt.

Peter Smith from Rome, Smith and Lutz updated the Council on legislative activity that lead to a council discussion regarding Common Calendar. CREC is sponsoring the second half of its school safety symposium, this one to focus on mental health. It is scheduled for October 24, 2013 at CCSU.

Mrs. Picard-Wambolt reported that CABA is sponsoring a webinar titled, *A Unique Perspective on Crisis Communications & Planning* on Wednesday, October 2, 2013; workshops on *The Freedom of Information Law: What You Need to Know* and *School and Social Media: Students, Staff and Safety* on Wednesday, October 16, 2013. The CABA New Board Member and Leadership Conferences are scheduled for December 10, 2013.

ACTION ITEMS

A motion was made to add as action item #5 the Approval of the 2014 Board of Education Meeting Schedule.

1st. A. Hayes

2nd. A. McNamar

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

A motion was made to add as action item #6 the Approval of Submission of the 2013-2014 Open Choice Academic and Social Support Grant in the Amount of \$119,600.

1st. A. Hayes

2nd. K. Picard-Wambolt

Mr. Roberson stated that he believed this would be beneficial for board members who do not have children in the schools. Mrs. Hayes stated that she made arrangements and toured all of the schools. Mr. Keune stated that members of the Board are often in the schools as part of their liaison responsibilities. Mrs. Picard-Wambolt stated that she attends all of the Crystal Lake PTO meetings. Mr. Keune stated that most meetings have presentations that require technology not always readily available at each school. He also referenced the additional work for the custodial staff. Mr. Cullinan also referenced the impact upon the custodial staff and indicated that the Board can change the meeting location if they wish to see something specific at any school.

Mr. Roberson withdrew his motion and Mr. Stoughton withdrew his second on this amendment.

Mr. Keune called for a vote on the motion as amended.

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

6. A motion was made to approve the submission of the 2013-2014 Open Choice Academic and Social Support Grant in the amount of \$119,600.

1st. A. Hayes 2nd. K. Picard-Wambolt

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Kiff-Judson inquired as to any follow-up the Board would have regarding the summer reading of *Creating Innovators*, by Tony Wagner. The Board will meet at 6:30 p.m. on October 23, 2013 for this discussion.

A motion was made at 8:58 p.m. to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing and reviewing exempt documents related to personnel negotiations and to invite the Superintendent of Schools into the executive session.

1st. A. Hayes 2nd. T. Kiff-Judson

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

The Board came out of executive session at 9:18 p.m.

A motion was made to add as action item #4: the Ratification of the Ellington Administrators' Association Contract.

1st. A. Hayes 2nd. A. McNamar

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

4. A motion was made to ratify the Contract between the Ellington Board of Education and the Ellington Administrators' Association for the period of July 1, 2014 – June 20, 2017 as recommended by the Board's negotiating committee.

1st. A. Hayes

2nd. A. McNamar

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

A motion was made at 9:20 p.m. to adjourn the meeting.

1st. M. Young

2nd. G. Blanchette

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Marie Hayes
Secretary

AMH/ad