

Board of Education Ellington, Connecticut

April 22, 2015

A regular meeting of the Ellington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, April 22, 2015, in the School Administration Building.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mr. Keune, Chairperson.

Present were: Messrs. Blanchette, Friedman, Keune, McNamar, Roberson, Purcaro, and Young; Mesdames Kiff-Judson, Picard-Wambolt; Mr. Stephen Cullinan, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Kristy LaPorte, Director of Special Services; Mrs. Margaret Devlin, Director of Business Services; Student Representative Jennifer Roy; Ms. Laura Norbut, Administrative Intern; and Dr. Scott Nicol, Superintendent-elect. Mrs. Hayes was absent.

Also attending were: Mr. David Pearson, Principal, Ellington Middle School; Mr. Neil Rinaldi, Principal, Ellington High School; Mr. Mark Wursthorn, Assistant Principal, Ellington High School; Mrs. Suzanne Markowski, Guidance Counselor, Ellington High School; Mrs. Judi Moeller, Guidance Counselor, Ellington High School; and Mr. Paul Grzyb, Special Education Teacher, Ellington High School.

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. As there were no objections, Consent Agenda items one through nine were adopted.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the March 25, 2015 Regular Board Meeting.
2. Approval of the Minutes of the April 1, 2015 Special Board Meeting.
3. Approval of the Minutes of the April 10, 2015 Special Board Meeting.
4. Approval of the employment of Gina Beato as a long-term substitute fifth grade teacher at Windermere School, effective April 6, 2015.
5. Approval of the employment of Christie Malanga as a long-term substitute grade 1 teacher at Center School, effective April 27, 2015.

6. Acceptance of the resignation of Gregory Chessey, custodian at Ellington High School, effective April 8, 2015.
7. Acceptance of the resignation of Tressa Giordano, special education aide at Center School, effective April 24, 2015.
8. Approval of a request for a leave of absence for childrearing purposes, Emily Bellone, grade 6 teacher at Windermere School effective August 24, 2015 through the end of the 2015-2016 school year.
9. Approval of Submission of IDEA Consolidated Grant Application for FY 2016 in the amount of \$404,188 (Special Education 611) and \$11,042 (Preschool Education 619).

REPORT AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Special Reports

Presentation of Ellington Friend of Education Award

Mr. David Pearson presented the Ellington Friend of Education Award to Mrs. Jane Roets. Reading from his nomination letter for Mrs. Roets, Mr. Pearson stated that Mrs. Roets was a founding member of the Ellington Friends of Music, a parent booster organization that supports music education in the Ellington Public Schools. Mrs. Roets has been the driving force behind the formation of this positive, supportive parent group with an upbeat, enthusiastic leadership style. Ellington is fortunate to have such a dynamic community member who advocates for the children of our community.

U-Knighted Week Presentation

Mr. Neil Rinaldi introduced the Ellington High School U-Knighted team members that organized a successful week-long awareness campaign throughout the school that kicked-off with an assembly and culminated with a pep rally to show support and acceptance of all students. Mr. Rinaldi praised the members for their leadership and determination. He presented a video, produced by U-Knighted team member Christopher Brawley that showcased student and staff interviews and the assembly from U-Knighted Week. This was followed by a presentation by the U-Knighted team members: Nick Topor, Erin Wardrop, Danielle Markowski, and Erin Meany. Leadership team member Brandon Bogrette was unable to attend.

Regular Board Committee Reports

Communications Committee

Mrs. Kiff-Judson stated that the Communications Committee met on April 7, 2015. They discussed budget-related communications for 2015-2016 Budget, including a budget fact sheet, school newsletters, and letters to editors. There was also a discussion/review of the communications framework of plans/activities for 2015. Items discussed were alerts from school website/email distribution list, media pitch, backdrops, and Teacher of the Year Award.

Special Board Committee Reports

Administrative Reports

Superintendent's Report(s)

Monthly Instructional Report – March 2015

Mr. Cullinan stated that the report was distributed this evening. The report contains the results of Kindergarten Inventory as well as the Dolch Sight Word Assessment for grades one and two.

Crystal Lake School reported on Smarter Balanced Assessment proctor training; a meeting of the Safe School Climate Committee; a visit from Teachers College Primary Grades staff developer; Read Across America Day; a concert by music groups from Ellington High School; several PTO cultural events; and Dress Like a Story Book Character Day.

Center School reported on parent conferences; Bingo night; the Reading for Fun Store; several field trips, including one to the Connecticut Historical Society, the Lincoln Theater at the University of Hartford, and the Bushnell Theater; PBIS program; National Volunteer Week; SBAC testing; Early Childhood classes; and the Academic Fair.

Windermere School reported on the work of the Behavioral Intervention Team; the Health Education Program; PTO Spring Book Fair; parent conferences; Donuts for Dads; fifth and sixth grade video conference with scientists from NASA; Student Success Plans; Friends of Rachel Club; Career Day; SBAC testing; planning for two math nights; an Academic Fair and a Science Fair; incoming fifth grade orientation; and changes to their Master Schedule.

Ellington Middle School reported on SBAC preparations; student literary essays; historical fiction book clubs; science CMT for grade eight; ongoing work with the Teacher College; student-led conferences; Music All Night; and the Patriot's Pen essay contest.

Ellington High School reported on the work to revise the school-wide rubrics to align to the Common Core state standards; the use of Chromebooks; Little Kids/Big Kids Open

House; work with the League of Innovative Schools; Opening Knight Players; the Unified basketball team; and work on their Master Schedule.

Special services reported on attending a Connecticut State Department of Education Legal Forum; attending a conference on Early Childhood Outcomes; meeting with Community Health Resources staff to review the emergency mobile psychiatric services that are available for students; and meeting with representatives from IEP Direct.

Mr. Cullinan stated that the Instructional Report also included a significant number of staff and student recognitions.

Monthly Building Projects Update

Mr. Cullinan stated that since the last meeting of the Board of Education, there have been two Crystal Lake School construction meetings on April 2 and 16. The Permanent Building Committee (PBC) met on April 15. Despite the tough winter, the contractors, Enfield Builders, stated they are on schedule for an inspection for Certificate of Occupancy for the new addition for early June. Preparations are being made for the summer move. There will be two storage trailers. Plans for recycling obsolete furniture have been approved by the PBC. Also, John Collins, Director of Technology, coordinated a meeting with vendors to plan for the power and technology needs for the new addition when it opens.

2015-2016 Proposed Budget Update

Mr. Cullinan stated that the Annual Town Budget Hearing was held on April 14. Board of Finance (BOF) Chair Robert Clements presented the drivers of the budget. The budget as presented to the BOF without reductions would require an increase in the mill rate of 28.7 mils to 31.6, which is a 2.9 mil increase, or a tax increase of 10.1 percent. The major drivers are Debt Service, Municipal Solid Bulky Waste Curb Collection, the State Police Department (discussion of School Resource Officer (SRO) Program), the Unexpended Fund balance, Board of Education, the municipal budget and the Capital Expenditure budget.

The BOF met again on April 16 and April 21. As a result of deliberations, \$285,900 was reduced from the BOE budget, which is the savings from the health insurance change. They also reduced the BOE budget by an additional \$40,000 which is the equivalent of a reduction of one School Resource Officer. They also eliminated the air conditioning at Windermere School from the Capital Budget at an amount \$52,000.

The Annual Town Budget meeting is scheduled for May 12 at 8:00 p.m. at Ellington High School with the Referendum scheduled for May 19.

Insurance Update – Dental, Life & Disability

Mr. Cullinan stated that based upon experience, cost factors, and access in our network, he recommends selecting Anthem for Dental, Life and Disability.

K-6 Transition

Mr. Cullinan stated that the Board packet included a K-6 Transition Update sheet of Option A and Option B.

Option A: Current (2014-2015) Grade 4 class will attend Grade 5 at Windermere School in 2015-2016 and will also attend Grade 6 at Windermere School in 2016-2017, creating an intermediate school of one grade (6) for one year.

Option B: Current (2014-2015) Grade 4 class will attend Grade 5 at Windermere School in 2015-2016 and will return to home school for Grade 6 in 2016-2017.

After consideration of parent feedback, transportation costs and Board discussions, it was decided that Option A be selected as the grade configuration going forward. A motion will be added to this meeting as Action Item #6.

Board Liaison Reports

CREC

Mrs. Picard-Wambolt reported that she attended a CREC meeting on April 15. She discussed the search process for the next Executive Director of CREC. She also discussed bills that were sent to the Appropriations Committee, including the requirement for full day kindergarten as of September 2017.

Student Representative Report

Student Representative Roy reported on sophomores taking the CAPT Science testing, juniors began Smarter Balanced testing, the Winter Sports Awards, the start of spring sports, a music festival in Florida, the Opening Knight Players production in Maine, Teacher Cart Races, and Relay for Life to benefit the Cancer Society.

ACTION ITEMS

A motion was made to add as Action Item #3, the personnel employment of Danielle Zavatsky as a long-term substitute teacher.

1st. A. McNamar

2nd. T. Kiff-Judson

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

A motion was made to add as Action Item #4, the personnel employment of Brendan Case as a long-term substitute teacher.

1st. A. McNamar

2nd. G. Blanchette

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

A motion was made to add as Action Item #5, the resignation of a grade 1 teacher.

1st. M. Young 2nd. A. McNamar

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

A motion was made to add as Action Item #6, the approval of Grade Configuration 2016-2018.

1st. M. Young 2nd. M. Purcaro

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

1. Move that upon the recommendation of the Policy Committee, the Board hold a second and final vote to rescind all policies contained in the current Board of Education Policy, Section 3000 – Business/Non-Instructional Operation and adopt in its place, the revised Ellington Public Schools: Business/Non-Instructional Operation: Series 3000 as presented.

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

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

2. Move that upon the recommendation of the Policy Committee, the Board hold a second and final vote to rescind all policies contained in the current Board of Education Policy, Section 4000 – Personnel and adopt in its place, the revised Ellington Public Schools: Personnel: Series 4000 as presented.

1st. K. Picard Wambolt 2nd. M. Purcaro

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

3. Move to approve the appointment of Danielle Zavatsky as a long-term substitute third grade teacher at Windermere School, effective April 21, 2015.

1st. M. Purcaro 2nd. A. McNamar

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

4. Move to approve the appointment of Brendan Case as a long-term substitute PE/Health teacher at Ellington Middle School, effective April 22, 2015.

1st. A. McNamar

2nd. T. Kiff-Judson

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

5. Move to accept the resignation of Colleen Martin, grade 1 teacher at Windermere School, effective June 19, 2015.

1st. A. McNamar

2nd. H. Friedman

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

6. Move to approve the grade configuration for the 2016-2017 school year as follows:

Center School:	Pre-Kindergarten through Grade Five
Crystal Lake School:	Kindergarten through Grade Five
Windermere Elementary School	Kindergarten through Grade Five
Windermere Intermediate School	Grade Six

Further move to approve a grade configuration for the 2017-2018 school year as follows:

Center School:	Kindergarten through Grade Six
Crystal Lake School:	Kindergarten through Grade Six
Windermere School	Pre-Kindergarten through Grade Six

Move to direct the administration to develop and implement appropriate transition plans, with corresponding budget requests, if necessary, to successfully implement the approved grade configurations.

1st. M. Young

2nd. K. Picard-Wambolt

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Cullinan stated there was a copy of a letter in the Board packets from David A. Sweet, NEASC Team Chair thanking and praising Dr. Erin McGurk's participation in a recent NEASC visitation committee to Shepaug Valley High School.

A motion was made at 8:15 p.m. to enter into executive session for the purpose of Review of Exempt Documents Pertaining to Strategies Related to Negotiations and to invite the Superintendent of Schools, Stephen Cullinan, and Superintendent-elect, Dr. Scott Nicol, into the executive session.

1st. M. Purcaro

2nd. A. McNamar

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

The Board came out of executive session at 8:37 p.m.

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:37 p.m.

1st. A. McNamar

2nd. M. Purcaro

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

TKJ/amd

Tracey Kiff-Judson
Vice-Chair