

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, March 9, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the library at Strong School, 191 Main St., Durham, CT. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onofreo, Mr. Renninghoff, and Mr. Willett.

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

Mrs. Flanagan called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. after it was determined that a quorum was present.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Flanagan led the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

Public Comment

Mr. Lowry of Middlefield asked what the format was for the next Board meeting. The Board of Finance from Middlefield was invited to attend. Mrs. Flanagan asked Mr. Lowry to have members of the BOF email her ahead of the meeting with questions they have.

Mr. Lowry also asked for more detail in accounting for the Korn School closing, and asked a question if the MBR exemption exists for more than one year.

Next Board Meeting

The next Board meeting will be March 16, 2016 at Coginchaug Regional High School.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Hicks moved to approve the agenda. Mrs. Boyle seconded.

In favor of approving the agenda: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onofreo, Mr. Renninghoff, and Mr. Willett. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes of February 24, 2016

Mr. Hicks moved to approve the minutes of February 24, 2016. Dr. Onofreo seconded.

Discussion took place regarding comments made by Mr. Willett at the Board meeting that were not included in the minutes. Mrs. Flanagan asked what Mr. Willett wanted amended. It was decided that the minutes remain as presented and the topic would be addressed later in this meeting.

In favor of approving the minutes of February 24, 2016: Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onofreo, Mr. Renninghoff, and Mr. Willett. Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Fronc abstained. Motion passed.

Communications

Mr. Hicks stated that he was very excited about his opportunity to read to students at Lyman School last week.

Mrs. Fronc received a phone communication regarding the weighted grade scale starting with the incoming freshman class at Coginchaug and the concern that this was not communicated to the incoming freshman parents. Mrs. Fronc also had a parent communication questioning the activity fee at Coginchaug increasing from \$45.00 to \$75.00.

Mrs. Fronc requested a copy of the budget data entry binder.

Mrs. Boyle received a communication regarding changing block scheduling at the high school this year. Dr. Veronesi verified that the schedule was changing for next year and has not changed again during this current year. Mrs. Boyle asked for a copy of the proposed change.

Business Manager's Report

Mr. Melnik requested that the Brewster School project be closed.

Mr. Hicks moved to close the State of Connecticut project 213-0046 at Brewster Elementary School. The school is located at 126 Tuttle Road Durham, Connecticut. The project work included the removal and replacement of the roof at Brewster School. The project work is coded "RR" roof replacement. Mr. Renninghoff seconded.

In favor of approving the the State of Connecticut project 213-0046. Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onofreo, Mr. Renninghoff, and Mr. Willett. Motion passed

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Veronesi stated that the most recent NEASC report provided several commendations.

Dr. Veronesi advised the Board that there are changes in the Board of Education meeting schedule for 2017. Changes will be provided shortly.

As proposed by Jonathan Costa at the recent BOE retreat Dr. Veronesi would like to begin work on Strategic Coherence Planning and asked Board members who are interested in participating to let her know shortly.

Next Board meeting will include capital and a presentation by Mr. Fielding. Also, members of the finance boards of Durham and Middlefield will be attending.

Mrs. Boyle requested that Mr. Fielding provide the Board members all leases on a comprehensive sheet prior to the meeting.

New Business

None

2016-2017 Budget Discussion

Dr. Veronesi stated that this evening's presentation will include staffing, class size and a before and after school enrichment program.

Dr. Veronesi presented the enrollment by class for the 2016-2017 school year and stated that it falls within the Board of Education recommended class size. A 3-year projection was also provided. Dr. Veronesi stated that the number of teachers needed will decline at the elementary level over the next few years.

Mrs. Fronc asked if requirements and electives at the high school were being addressed. Dr. Veronesi addressed the enrollment at CRHS and class size stating that there will be fluctuation in classes.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the music program. Mrs. Fronc questioned why we were replacing a teacher that is retiring and Mr. Willett asked if there was a way to consolidate the open positions. Dr. Veronesi stated that she and her administrative team looked at various options. She stated she would not want to lessen or dismantle the music program.

Mr. Renninghoff asked why the musical was going to take place every year and Mrs. Boyle requested a detailed breakdown of the \$58,000 for salary for the play. She would also like to see the cost and the revenue of the play.

Dr. Veronesi discussed the development of mid-level leadership. The budget includes adding 1.5 FTE math specialist. Mrs. Flanagan asked if it was possible to cut a teacher and maintain class size. Dr. Veronesi stated she was comfortable with class sizes and staffing as it is good for the students.

Mrs. Fronc referred to page 17 of the budget booklet stating that there is a minus one elementary position and plus one elementary position. Dr. Veronesi said that there is a reduction by one from the 5th grade and one additional teacher at Lyman School for grade 1-2.

Discussion took place regarding the SPED program and children not in SPED. Mr. Willett questioned

the 25% increase in the certified staff line. Mr. Melnik referred to pages 6 and 10 in the budget booklet stating the increase for certified staff was 1.8% and was negative for non-certified staff. Mrs. Fronc questioned the significant increase in the SPED salary line at Lyman School and asked why there was not an increase at Brewster.

Dr. Veronesi advised the Board of Mrs. Lorrie Martin's intention to retire. Dr. Veronesi stated that we need to continue the outdoor program and the challenges we are faced due to Mrs. Martin's retirement. A request for the current salary was made. Dr. Veronesi to get this information to Board members.

Dr. Veronesi stated that the needs of the District have changed and has proposed a new position, Director of Organizational Development. There is a need for a person to handle personnel matters and also take over some of the responsibilities now covered by the Curriculum Director. Some of the duties would include the interview/hiring process, overview of certificate and licensing of certified staff, state reporting and regulatory requirements, working with the consortium, linking evaluations to professional development plan, and grant writing. Dr. Veronesi went on to say that HR jobs are presently split among many people at Central Office.

Board members questioned why it would be an administrative position and not a clerical position. Dr. Veronesi stated that support for curriculum and professional development is greatly needed. It is the best way to move the District forward.

A few Board members asked who was doing the job now, what's getting done and not getting done. Mrs. Boyle suggested a clerical HR person and additional non-administrative person to assist the Curriculum Director. Mr. Renninghoff asked where the administrator would be housed and how long before we would be hiring an assistant for this person. Mr. Willett stated that the changes Dr. Veronesi has already made in the District cannot be discounted. If this position is critical for what's best for the District there should be other areas cut to fund this administrator. Members of the Board of Education discussed at length the \$130,00 salary associated with the proposed position.

Mrs. Flanagan urged the Board to give some thought to this issue and asked Dr. Veronesi to move forward with her presentation.

Dr. Veronesi stated that she is proposing the District provide our parents a before and after school enrichment program similar to the program in Farmington. The program would begin in 2017. Discussion took place where Board members asked if the program was to be self funded/tuition based, and the possibility of a monkeysurvey to find out who is interested in the program. Mrs. Boyle also requested that the Board see the financials of the BASREP program.

Mr. Melnik stated that the District would need to hire someone to explore all options before a formal proposal is made.

Mrs. Flanagan asked for any further questions. Mr. Renninghoff about the food service staff at Korn and if they are presently enrolled in our health insurance plan. Mr. Melnik to provide this information to Mr. Renninghoff. Mr. Renninghoff also asked how the game officials are paid and who received the gate receipts. Mrs. Boyle would like an explanation of the gamekeepers fees as there is a significant increase. Mr. Melnik will contact Board members by email with the answers to these questions.

Mrs. Flanagan ended the budget discussion.

Committee Reports

Policy Committee

Mr. Hicks stated that there is no set date for the next meeting but assured that it will be very soon.

ACES

Mr. Hicks stated that ACES has closed on two buildings, Leeder Hill School in Hamden and 51 Trumbull St. in New Haven. There was also discussion on early retirement and self-insurance.

TEMS

Mr. Hicks referred Board members to the TEMS budget proposal included in their packet.

Mr. Hicks also stated that magnet school tuition may be on the chopping block for state funding.

Utilization Committee

Mrs. Flanagan stated that the committee talked about the FAQ's and RFP for design development. Their next meeting has not been scheduled as yet.

Mrs. Boyle requested that Board members receive a copy of the FAQ's prior to mailing them to the public.

Public Comment

Mr. Gueble of Durham stated that he sees fluff and waste in the budget. He questioned the \$220,000 increase in capital, proposed that grade 7 contemporary and ID programs be combined, and stated the budget is pricing people out of town.

Mr. Peterson of Durham agreed with Mr. Gueble's comments. He questioned the cost per pupil and wants to know why it keeps going up.

Mrs. Stephan of Durham referred to a comment made earlier in the meeting. She stated that Mr. Falcone was very clear to incoming freshman parents regarding the new grading system and the schedule change.

Adjournment

Mr. Hicks moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 p.m. Dr. Friedrich seconded.

In favor of adjourning the meeting: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onofreo, Mr. Renninghoff, and Mr. Willett. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted

Maureen Johnson