

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, April 6, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Music Room at Brewster School, 126 Tuttle Rd., 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**

Upon Mrs. Flanagan's request, members of the Coginchaug Regional High School Girls' Indoor Track Team led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **Public Comment**

Mr. Doyle of Durham acknowledged the members of Coginchaug's Girls' Indoor Track team for their accomplishments. He also expressed thanks to Mrs. Emory for the help she provided to his family during a difficult time last school year.

#### **Next Board Meeting**

The next Board meeting will be April 13, 2016 at Coginchaug Regional High School.  
7:30 p.m. Board of Education Meeting in the Library  
8:00 p.m. Public Hearing on the 2016-2017 Education Budget in the Auditorium

#### **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 March 9, 2016**

Mrs. Adams moved to approve the minutes of March 16, 2016. Dr. Friedrich seconded.

Mrs. Boyle asked for a discussion of the minutes. She requested a healthy discussion take place. She wants to see more substance in the minutes. She had asked a number of questions at the last meeting and these questions were not reflected in the minutes. Mrs. Fronc seconded Mrs. Boyle comments. Mrs. Adams suggested that the recorded minutes be available to those who are unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Hicks stated that he would bring the concerns to the Policy Committee to come up with a happy medium. Dr. Veronesi stated that she and Mrs. Johnson looked at minutes from other towns. Dr. Veronesi suggested that the meetings be video recorded and that Mr. Fielding was ready to do. If this decision was made all meetings would have to be at the high school. Dr. Veronesi would like to live stream the upcoming Public Hearing. Mr. Willett stated he liked rotating meetings from school to school. It gives the building principal an opportunity to showcase things being done at their building. Mr. Willett also brought up the topic of remote meetings stating that the Board has not solved technology and policy issues.

Mr. Hicks recommended to the Board that if the discussion is going to continue it should be added as an agenda item. Mrs. Flanagan suggested that the topic be put to rest.

Mr. Hicks moved that the approval of the minutes of March 16, 2016 be postponed until the April 13, 2016 Board of Education meeting. Mr. Renninghoff seconded.

In favor of postponing the approval of the March 16, 2016 minutes: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onofreo, and Mr. Renninghoff. Mr. Willett abstained. Motion passed.

#### **Communications**

Mrs. Fronc attended the ceremony recognizing Eagle Scout Brennan Bates. Brennan's Eagle Scout

project was making and placing school signs at Brewster and Korn schools.

Mrs. Fronc also received a letter from Mrs. Elders from Middlefield stating that the Board is accountable to propose a responsible budget. She is not in favor of the proposed administrator's position and would like to see the budget cut. Mrs. Elder's would also like to see more detail in the minutes. (This letter was sent to all Board members.)

Mrs. Adams stated she received a letter but it was not signed. Other Board members stated that they received the same letter.

Mr. Moore stated that he received a communication from a former selectman regarding the poor condition of the sign at Pickett Lane and Maiden Lane.

Mr. Hicks reported to the Board that he had the privilege of judging at the April 6, 2016 Invention Convention held at Memorial School. Students in the grade 6 ID program participated in the event. The following students will be moving on to the Connecticut Invention Convention the will take place at the University of Connecticut on Saturday, April 30, 2016.

- Tyler Fusco (Catastrophe Charger)
- Thomas Kannam (Chef Shield)
- Ava Marenna (Mail-a-Nator)
- Gage Rovelli (Hot Dog – Chilli Dog)
- Skye Aceto (Teach MElogy)
- Brady Koba (Chow and Chuckle)

Mrs. Boyle stated that she received various communications from parents of seniors regarding the date of graduation. This group of parents would like the graduation date moved from Tuesday, June 14, 2016 to Friday, June 10, 2016.

Mr. Willett commented on signs at all schools and noted that the signs need to be spruced up. Mr. Willett also stated that he was working closely with Dr. Veronesi regarding the high school students' trip to Italy next week.

#### **Presentation of CRHS Girls' Track Team All Americans with Coach Jack McShane**

Mrs. Flanagan introduced Mr. Barbieri, Athletic Director at Coginchaug Regional High School. Mr. Barbieri recognized Mrs. Germond for the years she has put into the girls' track team. Mr. Barbieri stated that Mrs. Germond would not be returning as the girls' indoor track team coach next season. He also commended the parents for their dedication. Mr. Barbieri introduced Mr. McShane who provided members of the Board of Education with a list of the records broken by the four individuals being recognized at the meeting. Mr. McShane stated that the example set by these girls to the entire team is outstanding. Mr. McShane said it was a joy and a privilege to work with these athletes. He then introduced Samantha Drop, Megan Decker, Alexandra Alsop and Jessica Drop stating the achievements of each individual.

Mr. Barbieri and Mr. Falcone, Principal of Coginchaug Regional High School presented banners recognizing these student athletes. The banners will be hung in the CRHS gymnasium.

Board members expressed their thanks to Mr. McShane and congratulations to the girls.

#### **Business Manager's Report**

Mr. Melnik reviewed the Healthy Food Program stating that the District has been part of the program since 2011. The District serves portion controlled meals with fruit and vegetables, limited carbohydrates, and protein. The state will give the District .10 for each meal served.

Mrs. Fronc moved to approve Regional School District 13's participation in the Healthy Food Certification Program for the period July 1, 2016 through June 30 2017. Mr. Willett seconded.

Mrs. Flanagan asked if there was any discussion.

Dr. Friedrich if the participation has increased. Mr. Hicks stated that 11 of the ACES schools participated.

In favor of approving the Regional School District 13's participation in the Healthy Food Certification Program: Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onfreo, and Mr. Willett. Opposed: Mrs. Adams and Mr. Renninghoff. Motion passed.

Mr. Melnik reported that the water project at the baseball field is completed. He also stated that the hot water heater at Korn School has failed and Mr. Croteau has hooked up a portable one.

Mr. Willett stated that the Board needs to keep in mind that there is a water line coming into the Pickett Lane complex.

Mrs. Boyle stated that a formal letter of thanks should be sent to the civic organization donating to the water project. Dr. Veronesi stated that a letter has been sent and she will forward a copy to each Board member.

### **Superintendent's Report Set Graduation Day**

Dr. Veronesi provided the Board with an explanation of why it is difficult to change the graduation date from June 14, 2016 to June 10, 2016 as requested by a group of parents.

District 13 students attend school for 182 days. If the date was changed there would be district wide implications. Calendars have been set and exam schedules are set. There is a lack of equity for teachers if the date is changed.

Mr. Hicks moved to set the graduation date for Tuesday, June 14, 2016. Mr. Renninghoff seconded.

Discussion took place. Mrs. Fronc asked for details if the high school graduation date was moved. She also requested an explanation on the lack of equity for teachers.

Dr. Veronesi stated that no professional development was budgeted for teachers that would not have student responsibilities for the last two days of school. Dr. Veronesi also stated that our students are getting out earlier than they ever have and families have greater childcare issues.

Mrs. Adams provided information regarding exams at the high school. Some classes are comprised of both Juniors and Seniors. The teachers would have to provide two separate exams.

Mr. Falcone explained that the last day of exams is scheduled for Monday with Tuesday being a makeup day. Also, rental of equipment for graduation has been set for June 14<sup>th</sup>.

Mrs. Fronc was satisfied with Mr. Falcone's explanation and stated that the exam schedule should not be upset.

Mrs. Boyle asked if next year we could move graduation to a specific Friday in June.

Mr. Falcone stated that if graduation takes place after the last day of school it often interferes with parents' vacation plans.

In favor of setting the graduation date for Tuesday, June 14, 2016: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onfreo, Mr. Renninghoff, and Mr. Willett. Motion passed.

Dr. Veronesi announced that Jenny Lussier received the National Library Award and will go to Colorado in June. She was nominated by Mrs. Petroski and Dr. Berry.

### **Presentation Update on Special Education Action Plan – Amy Emory**

Dr. Veronesi advised the Board that Mrs. Emory will provide an update of the Special Education Action Plan, and talk about staffing changes and the vision of SPED.

Mrs. Emory provided information regarding IEP best practices and also spoke about the Extended School Year stating that the program will focus on reading and functional skills. She spoke about implementing mandated transition requirements, close collaboration with transition agencies and focus

on transition outcomes. Mrs. Emory addressed dyslexia, mental health and staffing recommended cuts. Proposed cuts are 7 teaching assistants, 3 ABA positions, .7 speech position, and 1 nurse. Mrs. Emory described change like a train – you can run to the train, get run over by the train or be the conductor of the train. She commended her department for working hard and holding it together.

Mrs. Emory expressed challenges in assigning staff, tech support and life skills for students. The development of a mid-level leadership team will provide a plan with a focus on measurable outcome.

Mrs. Fronc asked if the mid-level leadership team would receive a stipend for this position. Mrs. Emory stated that it was still being discussed.

Mrs. Adams inquired about jobs for students who completed the Middlesex Transition Academy. Mrs. Emory stated the students at MTA work in the Middletown Community.

Dr. Friedrich asked how many students have IEP's. Mrs. Emory responded that there are 251 students.

A discussion took place regarding SRBI program. Mrs. Fronc provided information stating that every child is in the process at various tiers. Mrs. Boyle stated that she loved the analogy of the train. We have an obligation of prepare kids but is there a plan to educate parents who have children in the program. Mrs. Boyle also commended Mrs. Emory for providing the recent mental health/first aid program and wished the attendance was higher.

Dr. Veronesi stated that last year she requested \$35,000 be put aside for safety issues. There has been discussion with her team to provide professional development on mental health to more employees.

A discussion took place on summer school. Mrs. Emory stated that summer school for Tier 3 intervention for reading and math is back in the budget. Regular education student aligns with SPED student to work on skills and social skills. Mrs. Boyle asked if there is an option for parents to send their child to summer school. Dr. Veronesi stated that it was school recommendation. Mrs. Boyle also asked if there is a plan to help parents feel confident. Dr. Veronesi stated the IEP meeting is one on one with the parent. This meeting helps them feel more confident.

Mr. Willett asked about a line item for SRO. Dr. Veronesi stated there was no SRO. Earmarked money was directed towards safety and mental health issues. Mr. Willett stated it should have its own line item and not be lumped into the security line. Dr. Veronesi stated it is in PD with a detail including specific items.

Mrs. Flanagan thanked Amy for her presentation.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Educational Resources Committee**

No meeting

#### **Pension Committee**

Mr. Melnik reported that the Pension Committee met on March 24, 2016. They are required to hold 2 meetings per year. Members on the committee include: Mary Jane Parsons, Patricia Toth, Rebecca Adams, Jenna Lombardo and Tippi Popp. The next meeting will be held in October.

#### **Policy Committee**

Mr. Hicks stated that the committee met last week. He asked Board members to review the policies and they will talk about it at the next Board meeting. Discussion took place regarding the electronic participation. Mr. Willett would like to begin the process now.

Policies to be reviewed by Board members:

- Policy on Public Comment
- Football Field Advertising
- Use of School
- Flyers
- Purchasing Procedures
- Action by the Board
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention

- Concussions
- Dress and Grooming
- Meeting Conduct

### **Student Achievement**

Mrs. Adams reported that the meeting was good. The committee reviewed data from the winter assessments, how the data is being used and talked about the piloting of weighed grades at the high school. She also reported that Smarter Balance is taking place at Strong School after April vacation and other testing will take place in May. Dr. Friedrich stated that the data is pretty subtle . Mrs. Boyle wanted to know the growth results from last year to this year and Mrs. Fronc asked when the presentation on the Districts' results would take place.

Dr. Veronesi stated the presentation by Dr. Berry will take place in May. The next Student Achievement meeting will be on May 11.

Mr. Willett stated the Board should market and promote our school district to encourage people to move to Durham and Middlefield.

Dr. Friedrich moved to request Mr. Fielding to video record the public hearing. Mrs. Boyle seconded.

In favor of approving the recording of the Public Hearing: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onfreo, Mr. Renninghoff, and Mr. Willett. Motion passed.

Mr. Moore commended Mrs. Heckler and her staff in the difference in level of achievement at the elementary level as stated in the April 1 Superintendent's Report.

### **Human Resource Committee**

Mrs. Boyle would like to schedule a meeting of the committee prior to the Public Hearing.

### **Other**

Mr. Willett asked about the budget book pages. Mr. Melnik to send them to members who wanted them. Mr. Melnik offered to take the books to Central Office and have new pages inserted.

Mrs. Fronc followed up on the student activity fee. Mrs. Boyle asked if the increase in the fee from \$45.00 to \$75.00 was for sports only.

Mrs. Boyle moved to not raise the fee from \$45.00 to \$75.00. Mrs. Fronc seconded.

Mr. Hicks stated that the motion was out of order and needs to be made next week as the approved budget amount going to the Public Hearing cannot be changed. Mr. Hicks also said that it was out of order addressing an item not on the agenda.

Mrs. Flanagan explained the process of the Public Hearing to Board members.

Mr. Willett requested that the motion be removed.

Mrs. Boyle withdrew her motion.

### **Building Alternate Use Committee**

Mr. Willett said discussion has taken place regarding what belongs to the town and what belongs to the district.

Mrs. Boyle would like the Building Alternate Use Committee be a standing committee on the agenda.

### **Public Comment**

None

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Hicks moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 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*

*Recording Secretary*