

The Regional District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, May 9, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. in the music room at Brewster School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Currlin, Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hennick, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Raczka, Dr. Shoemaker. Also present: Mrs. Viccaro, Mr. Melnik.

Mr. Raczka called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Mr. Raczka thanked the Board, the administration, staff and Mrs. Viccaro for all their hard work on the budget.

Public Comment: Ernie Judson stated he was sorry the budget had not passed. He felt the letter from the selectmen had a lot to do with it. Many people would like the Board not to reduce the music position or the positions at the high and not to cut any of technology. Maybe they can look at the salary account and the reading consultant position. Mr. Judson said he would like to encourage more communication from the Board with the selectmen and the public, possibly attending the selectmen meetings.

Other parents agreed with Mr. Judson. They felt people saw the letter by Renee Primus Edwards and figured she knew the issues and was giving good advice. They would like the Board to be conservative in their cuts to the budget.

Next Board Meeting: The next Board meeting on the agenda is set for May 23, 2007 but with the budget not passing the Board will discuss having a Board meeting next week later on the agenda.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Dr. Shoemaker, the Board of Education unanimously approved the agenda as amended to include Meeting Next Week under New Business and an Anticipated Executive Session for a medical personnel matter and a personnel leave request.

Mr. Hennick made a motion, second Dr. Shoemaker, to approve the minutes to the April 25, 2007 Board of Education meeting. Mr. Hennick, Dr. Shoemaker, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Raczka, Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Adams, Dr. Ochterski, Mr. Currlin voted yes. Mrs. Golschneider abstained.

Communications: Mr. Currlin stated the Board is very grateful for the work of the D13 Parents Group for Good Schools.

Mr. Currlin and Mr. Raczka attend Memorial's Evening of Excellence. They said the students did a great job.

Dr. Ochterski attended the concert, the Pride and Spirit at Strong and got a sneak peek at the Memorial play and said all were very good.

Some of the Middlefield Board of Education members met with a group of parents to discuss the schools and the budget. Mrs. Adams stated she has heard from 2 people requesting the Board not cut technology and from one person requesting the Board make large cuts.

Mr. Hennick attended the Writers Jubilee at Korn where students learn different writing techniques.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro reported she received correspondence from Maryann Boord asking that the Board put off the referendum for as long as possible to hopefully see

what the ECS money will be. Mrs. Viccaro said according to State statutes the referendum needs to be held within four weeks.

Mrs. Viccaro attended the evening of excellence at Memorial, the drama production at Strong School and the Senior picnic. Mrs. Viccaro and Mr. Melnik attended an emergency management workshop and a workshop on helping employees with substance abuse problems and life issues.

Mrs. Viccaro met with Leigh Jones Bamman on the Governor's Prevention Partnership who was impressed with the District's work combating substance abuse and underage drinking. She will continue to work with the District to see how the partnership can help.

Mr. Raczka stated there has been a lot of talk about the ECS money. Several legislators have said the state budget is not near a settlement. The District needs to have a budget and cannot wait for the State to have an approved budget. Mr. Melnik stated the ECS money does not go to the District it goes to the towns. It should be the town budget that is delayed.

Costa Rica Field Trip Request: This is a biological science field trip requested by Mr. Pasioka at the high school. It will be over April vacation next year and would involve about 25 students.

On a motion by Mr. Currlin, second Mr. Hennick, the Board of Education unanimously approved the Costa Rica field trip request to be during the April vacation in 2008.

The Board requested when the number of students going is known they would like to receive that information as well as student/chaperone ratio.

Mrs. Berndt's Grade 2 Field Trip Request: Mrs. Viccaro read a letter from Mrs. Berndt's second grade class requesting they have a camp out at John Lyman School on June 8-9, 2007.

On a motion by Mr. Currlin, second Mrs. Adams, the Board of Education unanimously approved Mrs. Berndt's Grade 2 Field Trip Request for June 8-9, 2007.

District Goals 2007-08: Mrs. Viccaro presented the District Goals. She said they will be implementing the revised Language Arts and Math curriculum and revising Social Studies. It was noted some of the goals may be impacted by the decisions made on the budget.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mr. Currlin, the Board of Education unanimously approved the 2007-08 District Goals.

Meeting Next Week: The Board discussed meeting next Wednesday to discuss finalizing the education budget for another referendum.

On a motion by Mrs. Flanagan, second Mrs. Adams, the Board of Education unanimously approved to meet on May 16, 2007 in the library at the high school.

2007-08 Budget: Mr. Raczka stated the Board needs to look at cutting the budget. He suggests they cut big ticket items instead of making several smaller reductions. He also does not feel we will get enough information from the State budget to make a meaningful difference. If the District does receive additional ECS money it can be put into the fund balance to be included in the following year's budget.

Mrs. Flanagan suggested inviting Senator Meyer and Ray Kalinowski to the May 23, 2007 Board meeting to discuss the state budget and to clarify things. Mrs. Viccaro will invite them to the meeting.

Mr. Melnik stated the ECS money is given to the towns; over the years the amount given changes very little. The towns are required to give the District at least the amount of the increase per state statute. The towns can change the mil rate when they receive the ECS money.

The Board discussed the items they would like to review to make changes to the budget. These items included: the salary account, the operations budget, benefits reductions, savings from courses at the high school that will be covered by existing teachers teaching an additional class, a portable, one staffing position and possibly eliminating a bus. Mrs. Viccaro will also be meeting with the administrators to see what options they suggest.

Curriculum Committee: Mrs. Golschneider reported the math curricula revision is 90% done but is being reviewed to include guidelines that were sent from the State. Science is being revised and needs to include units that will be on the CAPT test.

Building Committee: Mr. Currilin stated the District has settled with the last contractor from the building projects. The State has to audit the projects within a six month time frame after they are closed and submitted. All the members of the Building Committee were thanked for all their work with a special thank you to Kathy Koritko and Roger Newton.

On a motion by Mr. Currilin, second Mrs. Flanagan, the Board of Education unanimously approved to close out the five building projects: Brewster Project Number 213-0033EA; Korn Project Number 213-0034EA; Strong Project Number 213-0036RNV/E; Central Office Project Number 213-0035VE/RNV; CRHS Project Number 213-0037 RNV/E.

Finance Committee: Ms. Parson reported the 2006-07 budget is on track. The committee will not only be comparing the budget to last year but also historically by going back 5 years. This year's budget is 1% under historical expenditures for April.

The committee will be reviewing the way the budget is presented and if some changes should be made.

Magnet School: Mr. Hicks stated the magnet school steering committee is reviewing the seat commitment. They are looking at phasing out Middletown's 20 free seats. Waterbury, Wolcott and Berlin are still interested in joining the magnet school. The committee also discussed open enrollment.

ACES put the computer laptops out to bid and the low bid came in under the budgeted amount making it possible for all students grades 6-8 to receive laptops.

Mrs. Flanagan said the Personnel Policies committee will be meeting May 23 and Long-Range Planning on June 13. Both meetings will be before the Board meetings.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Golschneider, the Board of Education unanimously approved to move into executive session to discuss a medical personnel matter and a personnel leave request.

The Board moved into open session.

Mr. Hicks made a motion, second Mrs. Adams to grant a teacher paid sick time donated by certified staff up to three days per person. Mr. Hicks, Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Currilin, Dr. Ochterski, Mr. Hennick, Mrs. Golschneider, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Raczka voted yes. Dr. Shoemaker abstained.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Flanagan, the Board of Education unanimously approved to grant a teacher a one year leave.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Flanagan the Board of Education unanimously approved to adjourn.