

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, October 13, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. in the library media center at Strong Middle School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Currlin, Mr. Hicks, Mrs. Flanagan, Ms. Gara, Mr. Hennick, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons. Member absent: Mrs. Golschneider. Also present: Mr. Melnik, Mrs. Viccaro.

Mr. Hennick called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Next Board Meeting: The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held on October 27, 2010 at Korn Elementary School.

On a motion by Mr. Currlin, second Mrs. Flanagan the agenda was unanimously approved.

Mr. Currlin make a motion, second Dr. Ochterski to approve the minutes to the meeting of September 29, 2010. Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Currlin, Mrs. Flanagan, Ms. Gara, Mr. Hennick, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons voted yes. Mrs. Adams, Mr. Hicks abstained.

Communications: Mr. Hennick commented that the presentation, Rachel's Challenge, that some board members attended prior to the Board meeting was very powerful and overwhelming.

Mrs. Viccaro said she has heard positive responses from the participating schools. The students had a great reaction. She expects to see some interesting responses coming from the each of the schools.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro reported that students were selected in different ways at each of the three schools to participate in the breakout groups from Rachel's Challenge. At Memorial the teachers selected the participants, at Strong it was by volunteering and random selection and at CRHS students volunteered in their homerooms and then back-up volunteers were also selected.

She also reported on questions regarding the study on bullying policies by Connecticut Appleseed. They will be contacting the principals directly and the interviews will take place during after school hours.

The towns' selectmen have requested to meet with the Board of Education members one hour prior to the next Board meeting. They would like to meet twice a year. At this meeting they would like to talk about shared projects and shared services.

As a follow-up to the questions regarding the SAT presentation, Mrs. Viccaro distributed a handout from the guidance department comparing all Connecticut High Schools SAT scores. She also shared a handout that shows the increase in the number of CRHS students taking the ACT test.

At the next BOE meeting Carol Luckenbach will be presenting. Mrs. Viccaro distributed information that Mrs. Luckenbach would like read by the Board before the meeting regarding the social studies curriculum.

Mrs. Viccaro said thirty seven students were inducted into the Spanish National Honor Society.

The latest copy of Board and Administrator for School Board Members was passed out. Mrs. Viccaro asked members if they would like to continue getting the subscription. Members were in agreement that the publication is informative.

Mrs. Viccaro gave praise to the Special Education Department. District 13 was one of only nineteen of 169 towns that were told by the State that we are in complete compliance with all transition activities.

Mrs. Viccaro reminded Board members that the dedication of the Strong School library in honor of Dr. Breck is taking place this Sunday, beginning at 1:30 p.m.

Virtual High School: Mrs. Viccaro attended a presentation on Virtual High School. It is an internet based learning program that many high schools in the state have begun to use. Virtual High School is the program used by LEARN. A handout was distributed showing a listing of the courses currently being offered. The intent is not to replace instruction that is currently taking place but to be able to offer courses on specific student interests or for when students have conflicts getting into a course. The classes are very intense and challenging. Becoming involved is a two year process because funding to train a teacher or a site coordinator would need to be budgeted in the first year and then students could enroll in the second year. Mrs. Viccaro will check into what other programs are used by schools in the state. Mr. Hauser was asked to put together a sub committee from the high school to begin to investigate internet learning options.

Show Choir Trip to Plymouth, NH: On a motion by Mr. Currin, second Ms. Gara, the Board of Education unanimously approved the Show Choir Field Trip to Plymouth, NH on November 3-4, 2010.

Model UN Trip to University of CT: On a motion by Mr. Currin, second Ms. Gara, the Board of Education unanimously approved the Model UN Field Trip to the University of CT from November 4 to November 6, 2010.

Music Trip to Virginia Beach: Mr. Coutsouridis said this trip is similar to the one they took two years ago except this time they are being given an extra musical opportunity. They will be performing with the Virginia Beach High School on their first day there in a share concert. Attendance is not required for students but they have surveyed the kids and interest is high.

On a motion by Mr. Currin, second Ms. Gara, the Board of Education unanimously approved the Music Trip Field Trip to Virginia Beach on April 13-18, 2011.

Health/PE Trip to Breckenridge, CO: Mr. Currin made a motion, second by Ms. Gara to approve the field trip to Breckenridge, CO from February 20-26, 2011.

Mr. Bajoros, the CRHS health teacher said they would cut off participation at forty students. There are many students who went on the trip last year that would like to return this year.

Mrs. Adams said she has heard some negative responses from Middlefield residents to the trip last year. She asked if the same objectives could be met by the group at a closer location.

Mr. Hicks also has concerns about the trip. He feels that it may put the District in a litigious situation and the trip does not meet the objectives. He does not want the Board to arrange for vacations.

Mr. Nemphos, CRHS PE teacher and one of last year's chaperones said this was the best trip he has ever gone on. He believes they fulfilled all of the goals of the trip. The range of students

who come together on this trip is amazing. He believes they will carry the experience throughout their entire lives.

Mrs. Flanagan said this trip affords kids who might not have the contacts to organize this type of trip the opportunity to participate. It is not taking away from the learning process because they are going entirely during the school vacation.

Mr. Bajoros said insurance is being included in the cost of the trip this year.

On the motion to approve the field trip to Breckenridge, CO Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Currlin, Mrs. Flanagan, Ms. Gara, Mr. Hennick, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons voted yes. Mr. Hicks voted no.

Trip to Yellowstone Wildlife Ecology Program, Gardiner, Montana: Mr. Currlin made a motion, second by Dr. Ochterski, to approve the trip to Yellowstone Wildlife Ecology Program, Gardiner, Montana, summer 2011.

Mrs. Michael, the trip advisor said approximately fifteen students have shown interest in going on the trip. Scholarships of up to ½ off are available, but the deadline for application is next week. Nine students are needed to secure this pricing. The students will be doing real science with the researchers. She would like to do additional fundraising with the students, if it is allowed. Several of the students interested in attending are seniors, so they would no longer be District 13 students when the trip takes place.

Mr. Hicks questioned whether the seniors would fall under the District coverage as they will no longer be students.

Mrs. Michael said they can sign up as individuals and not be a part of the group if it is a problem.

Mrs. Viccaro said she will contact the District attorney tomorrow to see how we will be able to make this work.

Mr. Hicks amended the motion, second Ms. Adams, to include pending clarification to the legality of post graduate seniors attending the trip.

The Board unanimously approved the Field Trip to Yellowstone Wildlife Ecology Program during the summer of 2011, pending clarification of the legality of post graduate seniors attending the trip.

Pension Committee: Ron said the Pension Plan is now in place. The one thing left to do is to name an oversight pension committee. Five people need to be appointed to the committee. There is no limitation on who can serve on the committee. They will report to the BOE. Members will serve two-year terms, staggered at first. The committee does not have the power to amend the pension plan. They must meet every six months or more frequently as needed. He would like the committee in place by the end of the year. Mr. Hennick asked for the Finance Sub-committee to decide on the make-up of the committee and then to come back to the BOE. Mr. Melnik has asked Tom Forma of Merrill Lynch to present at the Board meeting on January 12, 2011.

Policy Committee: Mr. Hicks said the committee met yesterday. They discussed the use of SMART pens. Two District students are currently using the pens as required by their IEPs. They have not decided if any regulations need to be applied to their use. Mrs. Viccaro is going to talk with other area superintendents to see if they are regulating usage or if they are having any issues with use. Mr. Melnik shared a document with the committee regarding buses going

onto private property. It is a draft that owners can sign off on. If applied it will not be for the convenience of the family, but for safety. The building usage policy is also being adjusted. Rate changes are being considered for out of District groups that use the schools and an energy fee and maintenance fee is also being considered for use of larger areas. Rosemary Allen will be asked to attend the next Policy Committee meeting to discuss the recent policy upgrades and how the policies can be easily accessed by Board members and the public.

Building Committee: Mr. Currin invited all Board members on a tour of the track and field on October 21, 2010 at 5:45pm, prior to the next Building Committee meeting. The turf is almost complete; they are finishing the edging and then the crumb rubber fill will be added. They will begin paving the track this week and then it will have to sit to cure before the rubber coat can be applied. The slab for the support building and the field event areas are complete. The concrete for the grandstands has been poured. The grandstands will be assembled during the next couple of weeks.

Magnet School: Mr. Hicks said an organizational meeting was held last week. The magnet school is ten years old. This year District 13 has eight students enrolled. The budget is on track because they have allowed non member districts to send students. Mr. Hicks will send the CMT results by email to the Board members.

Mr. Hennick reminded Board members to send him any agenda items for the retreat by the beginning of next week.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Adams, the Board of Education unanimously approved to adjourn at 9:25pm.