

**Board of Education
Regional School District 13**

**Regular Meeting
Strong School, Library**

Revised Minutes

**February 26, 2014
Minutes & Motions**

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Flanagan at 7:30 p.m. with the recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call	Mrs. Flanagan	Dr. Onofreo	Mr. Renninghoff
	Mr. Hicks	Mr. Fulton	Mrs. Buckheit
	Dr. Friedrich	Mrs. Fronc	Mrs. Adams
Absent:	Mrs. Boyle		

Administrators	Dr. Veronesi	Mr. Melnik
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Public Present There were 11 members of the public present.

Public Comment

Donia Viola said she appreciates the public comment at the beginning and end of the agenda. She thanked Dr. Veronesi for going to the senior center. She said that she hopes that if there was revenue realized that it would go back to the taxpayers. She also indicated that the test scores do not seem to be improving but that the tests keep changing. She wondered if that had any influence.

Oanh Stephan said that next year she will have four children in four different schools and said that there has been an increase in class sizes. She is hoping that the Board is not moving toward increasing class sizes for the future. Teachers will have a difficult time with a larger group.

Jennifer Wells-DiPentima asked if it was proposed that if a school is to be closed is it the BOE decision or would it go to a vote of the townspeople? She also noted that the BOE has always been fiscally responsible but that the teachers are not being replaced this year and enrollment is very high. She is surprised at the study and that this is the leanest budget she remembers in the first round.

Mr. Fulton responded that it would be a BOE decision. He clarified that the Utilization Study relayed that we have spaces in the buildings that are not being utilized. We will have a difficult decision to make, and will ask for comments and concerns before we make the final decision. Because there is an impact that would affect the budget, the community would vote on the budget.

Mrs. Flanagan said that there is still a lot of work to review the buildings. We would also need information from the superintendent, administration, and community regarding uses of and alternative uses of the buildings, maintenance of the buildings, space in the buildings, technology needs, etc. We need to meet or exceed the program needs before these decisions are made. Building configuration is not going to drive the educational programs. This is a very complicated process. The BOE will decide what the future holds for those buildings. We will continue to have updates.

Mrs. Adams said that there would be a lot more discussion and that the community will have a role.

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Next Board Meeting

The next Board meeting will be March 5, 2014 at Strong School with the Boards of Finance from both Durham and Middlefield.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda made by Mr. Hicks, second by Dr. Friedrich. Vote: Unanimous.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the Minutes dated February 12, 2014 Regular Meeting made by Mr. Renninghoff, second by Mrs. Adams. Vote in favor: Mr. Renninghoff, Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Buckheit, Mr. Hicks, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Fulton. Abstention: Dr. Onofreo, Dr. Friedrich

Communications

Mr. Hicks said that the Durham Senior Board thanked Dr. Veronesi and Mrs. Flanagan for attending their meeting today. The conversation was great and they are thrilled that the BOE is taking time to communicate.

Mrs. Buckheit reported that the “Meet and Greet” with Dr. Veronesi is tentatively scheduled for April 3 instead of April 10.

Mrs. Fronc is still selling tickets for the Spaghetti Dinner.

Superintendent’s Report

Dr. Veronesi updated the Board on the principal search. She has met with all of the focus groups except for the non-certified staff at the high school. Next week the committee for interviewing will be put together. There are 23 applicants to date.

Dr. Veronesi was pleased to be at the Senior Center today and was very grateful for the conversations. She has made a commitment to get the seniors into the schools so they have a better understanding of what happens at the schools.

Dr. Veronesi stated there is a CAFE workshop on Nov. 14 & 15. The theme is Public Education in 2027 and what will it look like? The District has the opportunity to present regarding how we are engaging our community. Proposals are due at the end of March. She asked Board members to contact her if they are interested.

Business Manager’s Report

Mr. Melnik informed the Board that the information that will be discussed with the Boards of Finance was distributed to them. We have spent over \$70,000.00 on snow to date and are over budget.

Mrs. Adams asked if the roofs have had to be shoveled. Mr. Melnik said that only the wood roofs had to be shoveled and they have also cleared drains. He also said that the DATTCO contract is very favorable.

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Mr. Fulton asked about the flexibility of the DATTCO contract in regards to the enrollment changes. Mr. Melnik indicated that the contract is flexible in that regard.

Field trip to Quebec

Motion to approve the Field Trip Request to Quebec City, Quebec Canada on February 4-8, 2015 as presented made by Mr. Hicks, second by Dr. Onofreo. Vote: Unanimous.

2014-2015 Budget

Mrs. Adams asked about the flexibility of staffing with the enrollment in kindergarten.

Mrs. Flanagan is also concerned with the enrollment and said that they projected less. We will probably have to add another class to keep the class sizes as per the policy. We cannot commit right now, but we need more classes. She also said that we pushed Lyman class size this year, but we are not looking to continue to have large classes.

Mrs. Buckheit asked how many were projected and what we currently have. Mrs. Flanagan said that they accounted for 89 students in the budget and have 104 already enrolled.

Mrs. Fronc asked for the class sizes at the high school and special education.

Dr. Veronesi informed the Board that the high school course selection and kindergarten enrollment is still being looked at and will be completed by the end of the week. She will talk about staffing at the March 12th meeting.

Mrs. Buckheit asked if the tablets at the high school have saved any money on textbooks. Dr. Veronesi said it is hard to calculate if there is a cost savings or not because we are not certain if the textbooks used can be assessed on-line.

Dr. Veronesi stated Strong School will be sending out a letter to parents requesting if students are attending CRHS or not. Mrs. Buckheit said that the 8th grade parents need to be informed about more AP classes at the high school so that they can be looked at as well. Mrs. Fronc wondered if we can ask why they are choosing not to go to Coginchaug for high school also on that letter.

Mr. Fulton reminded the Board that the roll out of the chrome books will start 2013-14 in grade 9 subject to Board approval.

Mrs. Adams asked if the stipends were set. Mr. Melnik said that the stipends are difficult. We have them as place holders right now because we don't know if everyone will be returning to the positions and with the change from percent of salary for those grandfathered to a hard number, it is difficult to calculate.

Mrs. Flanagan said the information we have by March 12th is what will be used to determine the figure that goes into the budget.

Mr. Fulton asked if we have adequately provided professional development for teachers for Common Core and SBAC training. Dr. Veronesi said that the resources allocated for professional development next year are not adequate. She indicated that the needs must be determined first and then professional development plans developed.

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Mrs. Fronc suggested that we think about not pulling teachers during the school day and compensating them after school, during vacations and summers.

Old Business

Safety and Security Update

Dr. Veronesi said that fencing has been put around portables, there are door swipe stations, exterior cameras at track and parking areas, numbering exterior doors (still working on), and we have been looking into moving students at the high school out of the portables and into the building.

Mrs. Fronc likes that the police cars are still a presence at the schools.

Dr. Veronesi indicated that D13 responded immediately with safety and security improvements last year including buying more walkie-talkies. Grant monies will be available and D13 will apply. Grant funds can be applied retroactively for work and items previously purchased.

Mrs. Buckheit is concerned about the safety of the students – for example in another district a student went home with a wrong grandparent. She asked that we still look into the locks and other options like a magnet for the doors of the classrooms.

Mr. Hicks asked if the children have been talked to regarding safety in the schools.

Committee Reports

Utilization Committee

Mr. Fulton said that community workshop #3 narrowed down the conversation about the buildings. The next step is for the consultant to work on the report which will give options about utilization of the buildings. A concrete plan will be developed outlining the steps to account for all considerations. Communication with the community will continue from summer into fall.

Mr. Hicks spent the day at ACES. They are interviewing next week to get to four candidates for Executive Director and then the new person will be appointed.

Public Comment

Donia Viola asked about the cost over the years for TEMS and are we paying for more seats than bodies. Mr. Hicks confirmed that we only pay for enrolled students.

Donia Viola asked if we pay for transportation to Hartford Academy. Mr. Hicks said no.

Donia Viola said that she has noticed very few students on some of the busses. If the budget has not yet passed, why would you talk about CAFE as if it was approved? She thinks too much is spent on technology and kids need to be outside more.

Elmer Clark asked if population and the ECS money were up or down.

Mrs. Flanagan responded that the Board is calculating those numbers. ECS will be an estimate.

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Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:02 p.m. made by Mr. Hicks, second by Mr. Fulton. Vote: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tammy A. McPherson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Tammy A. McPherson
Regional District 13
BOE Recording Secretary