

Approved by the Board of Ed:

Suffield, Connecticut

Board of Education Meeting
March 15, 2011

Call to Order

Board Chair, Mary Roy, called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. in the Suffield Middle School Media Center. Present: Board of Education members Mary Roy, Sue Porcello, Lauren Life, Jeanne Gee, and Mary Lou Sanborn; Interim Superintendent of Schools Mary Greenlaw-Dixon; Director of Fiscal Administration, Ed Basile and observers.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Special Recognitions/Awards

- Suffield Middle School student, Mason Bieter, was recognized for being the national winner of “Lights, Camera, Save” video contest. Mason’s 90-second video clip won over 170 other entries. The Board viewed the winning video.
- Grade 5 student, James Casella, presented his “Million Page Read” program to the Board. Jimmy came up with the idea for the students at McAlister to reach a goal of reading one million pages during this school year. Jimmy outlined the steps followed each week to acquire the data from each classroom and chart progress. He anticipates reaching this goal before the end of the school year.
- Joseph Rusnock, a student from Spaulding School, was recognized as CT Association of Schools Award winner for music. Joseph’s music teacher, Wyn Jespersen, presented Joseph to the Board and spoke about his accomplishments.

Board member Smith arrived at 6:50 p.m.

- Spaulding student, Julianna Service, was this year’s Suffield CT Association of Schools Award winner in Art. Spaulding Art teacher, Patty Piellucci, presented Julianna to the Board in recognition of this special award.
- A proposal submitted by Suffield High School teacher, Carl Casinghino, to the National Association for Media Literacy Education, was accepted for presentation at the NAMLE2011 Conference.
- The Suffield/Windsor Locks ACES High Robotics Team along with advisors Bob Lowell and Bill Pease gave a short presentation to the Board about their experience at the competition in New Hampshire in which they placed first. This qualified them for the National competition in April in St Louis MO. They will also be competing in Hartford in March. Bob Lowell praised the cooperation of all the teams. He encouraged students to join the team and “get sucked into” this great activity.

Board Member D’Ostuni arrived at 7:11 p.m.

Communications

- The Chair reported that a letter was received from the contractor who was hired by Maintenance to help them clear the school roofs. Russo appreciated the recognition of their efforts.
- A letter has been received from the Boucher family recognizing the efforts of preschool teacher Amy Lynch.

Public Comment

Mr. Jonathan Metcalf, parent, addressed the Board on behalf of a group of special education parents voicing concerns about communication and the chain of command in the special education program. Materials for review were distributed to the Board. Mr. Metcalf asked that the Board form a Special Education Task Force to follow up on these concerns. The Board asked for time to review the information and will place this topic on the agenda for the first meeting in April.

Approval of Minutes

Life moved, D'Ostuni seconded to accept the minutes of the March 1, 2011 as amended to change the motion under Approval of Minutes as follows:

The 2.36 % increase is based on the additional cost of the **PLAN (pretest for ACT)** at the high school level, purchase of STEM supplies, contracted teacher salary increases , outplacement, magnet schools and a proposal for a Data Specialist/Communications Liaison. There are also approximately .5% additional increases still under consideration. Funds previously allocated to the one-time re-engineering fee will be reallocated back to the Directors of Curriculum position.

The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

By request, items A (Suffield Administrators' Group Contract), B (Approval of Graduation Date), and H (Position Description – High School Assistant Principal) were removed from the consent agenda.

MOTION #11-017: Life moved, D'Ostuni seconded to approve the following items Consent Agenda as presented:

- Non-Certified Teacher/Non-Renewal
- Food Service Report – January 31, 2011
- Financial Statement – February 28, 2011

The motion passed unanimously.

Suffield Administrators' Group Contract

Director of Fiscal Administration, Ed Basile, provided an overview of the changes and answered questions raised about the presented SAG contract. **MOTION #11-018:** Life moved, Smith seconded to approve the Suffield Administrators' Group contract as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Graduation Date

MOTION #11-019: D'Ostuni moved, Porcello seconded that the Board set the graduation date as June 18, 2011. Discussion followed regarding state mandates. The motion was withdrawn a firm graduation date can be set after April 1.

Assistant Principal Position Description

The Board reviewed the updated position description for Assistant Principal of Suffield High School. The Interim Superintendent and the High School Principal met together to revise this document. Board member Smith questioned the need for two assistant principals at the high school and suggested a more creative use of the funds to form a Dean of Student position. This individual would "float" between schools as needed. He asked if an examination of the current Assistant Principal workload would determine that some of the tasks could be done by staff members who do not have administrative certification. Donna Hayward, Suffield High School Principal, stated that the National Association of Schools and Colleges had recommended the addition of a second Assistant Principal in the last accreditation report and that it could possibly affect accreditation if it was removed. Board member D'Ostuni questioned the fact that the oversight of the Agriscience Department was not listed on the Assistant Principal position description and would like it added to the Summary portion of the document.

MOTION #11-020: Life moved, Porcello seconded to approve the Suffield High School Assistant Principal position description to include addition of the additional duties (add leadership of the Agriscience Department to one of the two assistant principal position descriptions). The motion passed 6-1 (Smith voting against).

Board member Smith stated that we needed to have a discussion about the process for hiring a new Assistant Principal for Suffield High School. How does the Board want to be involved in this process? Board member D'Ostuni asked for a process recommendation from the Interim Superintendent at the next Board of Education meeting.

Board member Smith left at 8:26 p.m.

Discussion/Action Items

- 11/12 Budget – **MOTION #11-021:** D'Ostuni moved, Sanborn seconded the following: **Resolved, that the Suffield Board of Education approve the recommended budget to the Suffield Board of Finance in the amount of \$30,961,551 which represents a 1.83% increase or \$556,414 more than the current budget.** The motion passed unanimously.
- Board Goals – The Board received a report prepared by Dr. Michael Wasta resulting from a series of forums held during the previous school year. The Chair stated that the Board needs to start discussions on revising the existing Board of Education goals based on the report. Board member Life suggested that the March 29 retreat would be a good time to start on this project. As the retreat will focus on the Board's self-evaluation, Board Goals will be an agenda item for the April 5 Board meeting.

Superintendent's Report

- The PowerSchool Parent Portal will be opened to a test group of parents beginning on March 21. A timeline was presented with all parents K-12 being able to access the Portal from June 6 through the last day of school. There was a brief discussion about

how to accommodate those families that do not have internet access. The Interim Superintendent indicated that there has been some discussion about having some facilities available after hours if needed. Board member Life suggested that the Kent Memorial Library has free internet for patrons.

- A Teen Safety discussion facilitated by Dr. Kaminer from UConn will be held at Suffield High School on March 22, 6:30 p.m. The towns of Granby and E. Granby have been invited to attend. Board member Life suggested that any towns involved in our Agriscience program be included in these types of events.
- Dr. Greenlaw-Dixon met with the Spaulding principal, Facilities Director, Director of Finance, and IT Director to review Crisis Resource Team protocol for that school. We are in the process of updating the district CRT manual. More information will be presented to the Board at a later date.
- The Board was asked to preview the NEAS&C report that was distributed and to contact Dr. Greenlaw-Dixon with any questions.

Chair's Report

- The Chair will be attending the facility tour at the Walker/MacDougal prison.
- Negotiations on the Teamsters contract will be starting. One of the non-certified groups has applied to "decertify" from the Teamsters. The State Department of Labor will be meeting in Suffield on this matter.

Business Manager's Report

- Mr. Basile checked Tom Mooney's book and confirmed that a firm graduation date may be set by the Board after April 1st.
- There is currently a situation with teachers living in MA where the CT gross wages are not matching the gross wages cited on the MA W-2 due to Teachers' Retirement Board deductions. Shipman and Goodwin are working with the MA Department of Labor to resolve this situation and will issue an opinion on the issue, hopefully, before April 15. If there is no legal resolution by then, Board member Smith suggested that the affected employees file for the changes for the previous three years on their own without written documentation from the district's legal advisor.

Subcommittee Reports

- Policy – The Policy Subcommittee met on March 11. Building use regulations are being revised as to priority use of the facilities. Also discussed were policies for Social networking, Superintendent's Designee, and Governance. The Bullying policy revision is on hold pending legislative update.
- Facilities and Transportation – The next meeting is scheduled for March 22 and will include a discussion of the cross country course for fall 2011 and the high school concession stand being donated by the Rotary Club.
- Communications Task Force – Gee stated that recommendations have been formed which fall in line with recommendations that BlumShapiro will be making in their final report to

the full board in April. The Task Force will defer their recommendations until that report is delivered. Board member Porcello stated that the Communications Committee has not filled the vacant chair position. She nominated Jeanne Gee for this position. This item was tabled for further discussion at the retreat on March 29.

- CREC Report – Board member Sanborn will attend the meeting on March 16. A list of bills was sent to Board members and Administrators.

Future Business

- Safety Assessment of District Facilities
- Sound Field Systems
- Vulnerability of Technology Systems
- Disaster Action & Recovery of Technology Systems
- Integrity of Technology Systems
- CAPT/CMT Gender Data
- Communications Task Force Report
- School Climate Survey Results (SMS)
- Special Education Task Force Request (April 5)
- Board Goals (April 5)
- BlumShapiro Report
- 0600.1 – Monitoring Report
- Facility Report – Spaulding School
- Policy Governance Manual
- Program/Services and Curriculum Policy
- Graduation Date

Executive Session

D'Ostuni moved, Sanborn seconded to enter executive session at 9:20 p.m.

Contract matters were discussed.

D'Ostuni moved, Sanborn seconded to adjourn from Executive Session at 9:50 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Allyson Kehoe
Secretary pro tem

DRAFT