

Suffield, Connecticut

Board of Education Meeting
April 26, 2011

Call to Order

Board Chair, Mary Roy, called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m. in the Suffield Middle School Media Center. Present: Board of Education members Mary Roy, Sue Porcello, Lauren Life, Jeanne Gee, Mary Lou Sanborn, Bob Eccles, Mary Ellen Tunsky and Lori D'Ostuni; and Interim Superintendent of Schools Mary Greenlaw-Dixon.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Special Recognitions/Awards

- K-8 Science Coach, Melissa Hickey, introduced new Eagle Scout, Dan D'Ostuni to the Board. Melissa gave an overview of Dan's Eagle Scout project which was to clean out and organize the elementary science closets at Spaulding School and also lead a group of scouts in making science packets for students at McAlister. The Board commended Dan on the receipt of the highest honor in Scouting.
- Donna Hayward, Suffield High School Principal, is the recipient of the CAS-CIAC Recognition for Service award. This award is for dedication to the Connecticut Association of Schools – Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference.

Director of Fiscal Administration, Ed Basile, arrived at 6:45 p.m.

Communications

None

Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

Life moved, Sanborn seconded to accept the minutes of the April 15, 2011 Board of Education meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Addition to Agenda

MOTION #11-029: D'Ostuni moved, Life seconded to add item VII.C Financial Report to the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

MOTION #11-030: Eccles moved, Gee seconded to approve the following items Consent Agenda as presented:

- Policy 0600.1 – Monitoring and Reporting: District
- Policy 6140/6142/6145/6160/6170 – Programs, Services and Curriculum
- Financial Report: March 2011

The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action Items

- Teamsters Grievance – Roger Fenalson, Agent for Teamsters Local 671, addressed the Board with a grievance filed as a result of filling a part time secretarial position with someone from outside of the union. Director of Special Education Dianna Kolodziej; Ed Basile, Director of Fiscal Administration; and Interim Superintendent Mary Greenlaw-Dixon answered questions from the Board of Education in regards to the hiring process and timeline and gave information on the screening process and the administrative position. Dr. Greenlaw-Dixon stated that it was her understanding that the situation had been resolved at the Superintendent's level. Mr. Fenalson disagreed. There was some discussion about the meaning of the words "qualified" and "grievance" as stated in the Teamster's contract. The Board of Education has five (5) days to respond to this grievance; however, Mr. Fenalson did state they could take longer if needed. The Board decided to meet after the Board of Education meeting to discuss this further.
- BlumShapiro – Jeff Ziplow and Linda Piazzaroli from BlumShapiro were in attendance to answer any Board questions about the recently complete re-engineering report. Board member Life asked where the Board needed to go from that point. An Implementation Team will be set up to cover the three major areas from the report: Technology, Finance and Leadership. Each member of this Team will set priorities and lead staff members to implement changes resulting in streamlining processes and utilizing available technology to meet the needs presented in the report. The Superintendent would be considered the project leader and a Board liaison should be appointed to keep the Board informed throughout all phases of this endeavor as policy and regulations will need to be revised or created. Board member Porcello asked that the Implementation Team be formed and in place by the May 17 Board of Education meeting. Board member Gee asked that a follow-up Community Forum be held with Jeff and Linda to answer questions about the report. A tentative date of May 11, 9 a.m. was chosen. This will be confirmed with the Superintendent's office and a location will be chosen.

MOTION #11-031: D'Ostuni moved, Eccles seconded to accept with gratitude the Blum Shapiro Operational and Management Efficiency Study. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board thanked Jeff and Linda for their efforts in producing the report.

- Special Education Ad Hoc Committee – Board members Sanborn and Tunsy reported on their efforts in finding an outside consultant to do a study to address the concerns raised by special education parents. Three agencies were approached: CREC, BlumShapiro and the Regional Resource Center. BlumShapiro declined due to lack of experience in the special education area. The cost for a CREC consultant is projected to be \$15,000. The Regional Resource Center cost was substantially higher. Board member Gee stressed the importance of keeping an objective view and, therefore, an outside consultant was advisable. The Director of Fiscal Administration stated that the cost of this study could be funded with monies remaining from the BlumShapiro re-engineering project. A member of the Board of Education will be selected as a liaison during this study.

MOTION #11-032: Life moved, Gee seconded to **dissolve the existing Special Education Ad Hoc Committee and to accept the recommendation to hire CREC as**

an advisor to evaluate the Special Education program and to authorize the Superintendent to execute any related documents/contracts. The motion passed unanimously.

Board member Life asked that any input from the Director of Special Education for direction of this study be considered. Board member Sanborn stated that it may impact the projected cost. She will contact CREC to find out.

- Alternative High School – Donna Hayward, Suffield High School Principal, reported that further investigation of the proposed alternate high school venture with Windsor Locks revealed that the cost would be significantly higher than anticipated. Ms. Hayward stated that Suffield will spend the next year in planning their own alternative high school program as cost analysis shows the program can be implemented here for less expense. Ms. Hayward will return to the Board in December 2011 with a proposal for their consideration.
- Policy Governance Model – Board member D’Ostuni gave a brief overview of how we will be managing policy to accomplish: student performance, district management, accountability, understanding about who decides what, connection between Board and public, communication between Board and Superintendent and the implementation of District policies.

Superintendent’s Report

- Two textbooks were brought forward for Board review: **Biology and Chemistry, 8th Edition**. Per Board policy, these books are available for review in the Central Office for the next 30 days.
- A Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Pilot Course for 30 Gr. 8 students was approved by the Curriculum Cabinet. This course would begin in fall 2011. There was much discussion at the Board level about the cost of this course which could cover equipment, texts, membership, training and materials. Dr. Greenlaw-Dixon pointed out that this was a line item in the proposed budget for next year. The Board asked that John Warrington, Suffield Middle School Principal, be present at the next Board of Education meeting to answer questions.
- AgriScience Grant Approval – Bid requests have been sent out and are due May 12. There will be a bidders meeting at 2:30 on April 28 for those interested in the project. Board member Porcello stated that Larry Plano, Facilities Director, be involved in this process.
- Jerry Franklin (CPTV) has agreed to monitor a panel discussion on Teen Safety. Date of this is TBD. Topics will include distracted driving, teen parties and teen decision making. Police Chief Manzi will also be involved at the high school in dealing with enforcement of the graduated license requirements.

Chair’s Report

- The Chair attended the facility tour at the Walker/MacDougal prison.
- The Chair reminded Board members that a referendum will be held on Thursday,

April 28. Dr. Greenlaw-Dixon added that on the same date there will be a parent portal drop-in session. To date 85 people have signed up to attend.

- There is a town Budget hearing on Wednesday, April 27.
- There is a human resources meeting at Suffield High School on Thursday, April 28, 5:30 p.m. for those Board members who would like information on conducting interviews. This might be helpful in light of the up-coming Superintendent candidate interviews.

Business Manager's Report

None

Subcommittee Reports

- Budget – There will be a budget hearing tomorrow night (April 27). The proposed Board of Education budget is to be cut \$200,000. Budget Subcommittee Chair, Bob Eccles, asked that consideration be given to where the cuts will be coming from.
- Policy – The following policies were presented for first read:
 - 1330/1330REG – Use of School Facilities - revised
 - 3280 – Gifts, Grants and Bequests – new
 - 3542.43 – Charging Policy – new
 - 6154/5154REG – Homework – annual review/revised
 - 4125 – Non-Certified Evaluation/Supervision - revised

Policy Subcommittee Chair Tunsky will look into obtaining sample policies on Pilot Courses through CABE. Also, Policy 4115 Certified Evaluation/Supervision is in the process of being updated.

- Facilities and Transportation – Subcommittee Chair Porcello stated that there will be a cost of \$14,600 associated with security cameras and card swipe access for the new concessions building at Suffield High School. It is hoped that some of this cost can be met with fund raising or cost will have to be taken out of next year's budget.
- Communications Task Force – A final report with recommendations will be presented to the full Board of Education at the May 17th meeting.
- Superintendent Search – Board member D'Ostuni stated that interviews with six candidates would be held beginning next week.

Future Business

- Safety Assessment of District Facilities
- Vulnerability of Technology Systems
- Disaster Action & Recovery of Technology Systems
- Integrity of Technology Systems
- CAPT/CMT Gender Data
- Communications Task Force Report

- Implementation Team - May 17
- STEM Pilot – May 17
- Communications Report – May 17
- Policies for Approval: 4118.51 – Social Networking
4118.51REG – Social Networking

Executive Session

Eccles moved, D'Ostuni seconded to enter executive session at 9:30 p.m.

A personnel issue was discussed.

D'Ostuni moved, Eccles seconded to return to regular session at 9:39 p.m.

Regular Session

Regular session reconvened at 9:50 p.m.

MOTION #11-033: Life moved, Eccles seconded **to deny the grievance #17984 from Teamsters Local 671**. The motion passed with one abstention (Sanborn).

Executive Session

Porcello moved, Tunsky seconded to return to executive session at 9:52 p.m.

A personnel matter was discussed.

Life moved, Tunsky seconded to return to regular session at 10:13 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ellen Tunsky
Secretary

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