

Board of Education Regular Meeting

Tuesday, January 6, 2009 7:30 PM

Town Campus Hammonasset Room, 10 Campus Drive , Madison, CT 06443

I. Call to Order / Attendance

II. Executive Session - 7:00 p.m.

II.A. Personnel Items

II.B. Legal Items

III. School Community Session- 7:30 p.m.

III.A. Recognition: Isabella Jibilian, Walter C. Polson Middle School Grade 7 Student, who has been selected to participate in the Nutmeg Book Selection Committee

III.B. Recognition: Walter C. Polson Middle School Operation Kids Care

III.C. Public Participation

IV. Board of Education Student Representatives' Report

Speaker (s): Thomas Presti and Anna Balakrishnan

V. Superintendent's Report

Speaker (s): David J. Klein

V.A. Update: 2008-2009 Enrollment

Speaker (s): David J. Klein

V.B. Kindergarten Action Team Presentation

Speaker (s): Anita Rutlin; Margaret Borden; Jeff Burt; Alexis Christina; Mona Goodman; Paul Sinicrope; Ruth Smerek

VI. Board Members' Comments

VII. Board Committees / Liaison Updates

VII.A. Planning Committee

Speaker (s): Members: Debra Frey, Chair; Bill Clorite, Becky Coffey

VII.B. Personnel Committee

Speaker (s): Members: John Dean, Chair; Becky Coffey; Robert Ruggiero

VII.C. Policy Committee

Speaker (s): Members: Harriet Gowanlock, Chair; Seth Klaskin

VII.C.1. Second Revision Reading: Policy #5090.3.6.1.1., Bullying

Speaker (s): Harriet Gowanlock

VII.D. Finance Committee

Speaker (s): Members: Becky Coffey, Chair; Harriet Gowanlock;

VII.D.1.	Preliminary Budget Discussion	Holly Sellers Speaker (s): Becky Coffey
VII.E.	Community Outreach Committee	Speaker (s): Members: Seth Klaskin, Chair; Becky Coffey
VII.F.	LEARN Liaison	Speaker (s): Liaison: John Dean
VIII.	Audience Response to Information Presented	
IX.	Consent Agenda (9.1 - 9.4)	
IX.A.	Bills Payable: \$3,125.40 (07-08); \$314,941.21 (08-09)	
IX.B.	Line Transfers: \$25,235.12	
IX.C.	Budget Expenditure Report as of December 22, 2008	
IX.D.	Textbook Adoption: Forensic Science for High School Students; Daniel Hand High School, Science: Biotechnology and Forensic Science	
X.	Action Item: Minutes December 16, 2008 Meeting	
XI.	Old Business	
XII.	New Business	
XIII.	Future Agenda Items	
XIV.	Meetings of Importance	Speaker (s): Chairman Hale
XIV.A.	January 14, 2009: Planning Committee/Island Avenue School Building Committee; 7:30 a.m. Central Office Room B	
XIV.B.	January 20, 2009: Policy Committee; 5:30 p.m., Central Office Room B	
XIV.C.	January 20, 2009: Board of Education Meeting, Formal Budget Presentation to the Board of Education; 7:30 p.m., Town Campus Hammonasset Room	
XV.	Adjournment	

Public Participation Guidelines:

Members of the community are invited to speak on topics of interest and / or topics to be addressed in the agenda. The Board of Education may choose to interact with participants, but will not act upon topics that require further study before action is taken. The participation time will be limited to three (3) minutes per person and fifteen (15) minutes overall to guarantee efficient operation of the entire meeting.

Board of Education Meeting
December 16, 2008
Town Campus

Meeting Minutes

1. The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Chairman Robert Hale at 7:03 p.m.

Present: Becky Coffey; John Dean; Debra Frey; Robert Hale; Seth Klaskin; Robert Ruggiero; Holly Sellers

Also present: David J. Klein, Superintendent; Anita Rutlin, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment.

2. Executive Session

MOTION: by Frey seconded by Klaskin to enter Executive Session at 7:03 p.m. to discuss personnel and legal issues.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Mr. Clorite entered at 7:05 p.m.

Confidential personnel matters were discussed.

MOTION: by Ruggiero, seconded by Coffey to adjourn Executive Session at 7:18 p.m.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Frey, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

The public session of the Board of Education meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Hale at 7:33 p.m. Chairman Hale led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Bill Clorite; Becky Coffey; John Dean; Debra Frey; Robert Hale; Seth Klaskin; Robert Ruggiero; Holly Sellers

Also present: David J. Klein, Superintendent; Anita Rutlin, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; district administrators; community members.

3. School / Community Session

3.1.1. Daniel Hand High School Boys Cross Country Team, Class MM State Champions

Superintendent Klein stated that the Daniel Hand High School Boys Cross Country Team, several of whom were present, recently won the Class MM State Championship for the second consecutive year under the direction of Coach Tim Geary. Mr. Klein shared with the Board the following highlights of the season for the team and Coach Geary:

- First time in school history that Cross Country has qualified as a team for the New England Championships.
- The team finished in the top 10 in the state opens.
- Coach Geary, in his 25th year of coaching, was named 2008 New Haven Register All Area Coach of the Year.

Mr. Klein commented that although track is often thought of as more of an individual sport, this group of young men epitomized the concept of a team and represented Daniel Hand High School, as well as the whole Madison community, in a very positive light. Mr. Klein presented Coach Geary and the team co-captains with a Certificate of Recognition from the Board of Education.

3.1.2. Daniel Hand High School, Recipient of a Silver Medal in U.S. News and World Report's second annual list of America's Best High Schools

Mr. Klein next reported that, for the second consecutive year, Daniel Hand High School was awarded a Silver Medal in U.S. News and World Report's Second Annual List of America's Best High Schools. Mr. Klein stated that the Silver Medal is a much deserved honor and speaks to not only the talented students of Daniel Hand, but also the teachers, administrators and other staff. Analysis for inclusion in the list of America's Best High Schools by U.S. News & World Report is based on the following areas:

- Standardized test performance
- Proficiency rates of all students, including the least advantaged
- Challenging, college-ready curriculum

Mr. Klein expressed that this is something for the community as a whole to be proud of and thanked the community for their support of the Madison Public Schools.

3.1.3. Presentation of NEASC Accreditation Plaques

Mr. Klein reminded those present that last year all of the district schools received NEASC Accreditation and each school was given a banner in recognition of this distinction. Tonight he distributed the Accreditation Plaques to each of the building principals to proudly be displayed in their schools.

J. Milton Jeffrey Elementary School

Mona Goodman, Principal; Rachel Weiss, Assistant Principal

Island Avenue Elementary School

Kathy Nutley, Principal

Kathleen H. Ryerson Elementary School

Dr. Paul Sinicrope, Principal

Dr. Robert H. Brown Middle School

Julie Phelps, Principal; Kathryn Hart, Assistant Principal

Walter C. Polson Middle School

Frank Henderson, Principal; Jill Hale, Assistant Principal

Chairman Hale noted that Madison is one of only five districts in Connecticut in which all schools in the district are accredited.

Public Participation

None at this time.

4. Board of Education Student Representatives' Report
(Thomas Presti and Anna Balakrishnan)

Ms. Balakrishnan reported that the recent production of "Father Knows Best" was a great success; Students are now getting ready for the spring musical "The Wiz", with auditions being held over the last two days. She also reported that the chorus concert was held recently with all the different singing ensembles performing. She stated that the concert was a wonderful success.

Mr. Presti reported that it is Spirit Week at Daniel Hand High School and students are gearing up for hat days on Wednesday and Thursday where there will be a tie in for students to raise money for charities. Next Monday is

'holiday colors' day and the judging will also take place on Monday for the door decorating contest. Spirit week will conclude with a pep rally on Tuesday prior to the winter break.

Mr. Presti also reported that many students have received early acceptance letters. He brought a poster on which students have written the names of colleges to which they have been accepted.

5. **General Discussion: Special Topics**

- **Senator Edward Meyer**
- **State Representative Deborah Heinrich**

Senator Meyer and Representative Heinrich were invited to the meeting to discuss the upcoming Legislative Session and the direction that the Legislature may take with regard to the budget.

Senator Meyer began by thanking the Board and Superintendent for their dedication to education. He stated that there are two main issues he wanted to discuss for 2009, the first being the Education Cost Share (ECS). The Governor has proposed a 10% cut to these funds - Senator Meyer stated that his position is that our schools are the last area that should be cut. Senator Meyer suggested that one way to control these potential cuts is to adopt a state budget for one year at a time rather than two years as is the normal practice. Though Senator Meyer stated that if the budget is developed for two years, it can be revisited for 2010-2011 when the economy has hopefully begun to recover from the current cycle.

The second issue Senator Meyer raised was regarding state mandates. He explained that Mark McQuillan, Commissioner of the State Department of Education, was looking to close the academic achievement gaps which exist between suburban and urban school districts. Senator Meyer stated that this would be very costly and very difficult to achieve without State aid.

Senator Meyer also discussed two new initiatives under consideration. One is a new mentoring system to replace the BEST Program and the other is a new dual certification requirement for teachers. Discussion ensued, and the pros and cons of these initiatives were considered.

Representative Heinrich next addressed the Board and thanked them for inviting her and Senator Meyer to the meeting. She also expressed how important the interaction and open dialog between state legislators and the Board of Education are. She emphasized that we are looking at a significant deficit for the current year, as well as the next budget year, and stated that the Governor plans to put forward another mitigation plan to 'plug the hole' in the budget for the current year. Representative Heinrich expressed concern for the possibility of cuts to this year's budget affecting funds that have already been promised, and have formed the basis for town budget and expenditure decisions. She mentioned the state's rather sizeable 'rainy day fund' might provide the means of mitigating the current deficit but no decision has yet been made about using this fund.

All were in agreement that a cut to ECS funding would be devastating not only to the Madison Public School district, but across the state. It was also the consensus of the Board that Madison uses its education dollars very wisely and our students get 'a lot of bang for the buck'. Discussion continued, and Senator Meyer suggested that members of Boards of Education communicate with the Legislature and suggest alternate forms of revenue. He also commented that Boards, in addition to asking the State not to cut education dollars, should let their Legislators know what they would support. All Board members agreed that cuts to ECS funding would be disproportionately detrimental to the students of Madison.

Chairman Hale stated, and all members of the Board concurred, that Madison is not looking for additional funding at this time, but wishes to maintain the programs and quality of education currently offered to the students of the district. Chairman Hale further stated his hope that if programs (such as the BEST program) are changed, that the state does not pass the costs of these programs on to districts. He also expressed his opinion that there are too many mandates that are either under funded or not funded at all, which places a huge burden on districts.

Chairman Hale concluded by stating that he knows that Senator Meyer and Representative Heinrich both have education in their hearts and minds, but they are only two voices of many. He stressed that Madison does a great job for its students with the dollars it has, and that he is very proud of this school district.

Chairman Hale, Superintendent Klein and members of the Board thanked Senator Meyer and Representative Heinrich for their time and stated that they look forward to having them back at a future meeting.

6. Superintendent's Report

6.1. Daniel Hand High School Schedule Review

Mr. Klein introduced Barbara Britton, Principal, and Dan Zittoun, Assistant Principal of Daniel Hand High School, who at the last Board of Education meeting gave a presentation of the Program of Studies for 2009-2010. Mrs. Britton began by stating how thrilled she and the administration of Daniel Hand are about being named a Silver Medalist by U.S. News & World Report for the second year.

Mrs. Britton and Mr. Zittoun next discussed the daily schedule and gave an overview via a Power Point presentation (on file) for all grade levels and an example of a typical daily schedule for a Special Education. They stressed the strong academic course loads many students carry, as well as the arts program, particularly music. Mrs. Britton stated that 59% of the student body at Daniel Hand is somehow involved in the music program. Mrs. Britton and Mr. Zittoun also pointed out offerings after period 9. There is a period 10 during which time classes are held for Show Choir, Waes Haeil, Stage Band, Encore and Chamber Orchestra. There are also many club offerings, drama classes and athletics that are held after the end of the regular school day.

Mr. Klein and the Board thanked Mrs. Britton and Mr. Zittoun and commented on the impressive, full schedules some of the students maintain.

6.2. Pre-School Action Team Presentation

Mr. Klein next introduced Dr. Barbara Macauley, Director of Student and Special Education Services and the Pre-School Action Team that she has been working with on the transition from ACES to a Madison Public Schools run pre-school program. Dr. Macauley introduced the members of the team that has been working hard for months on the transition: Rachel Weiss, Assistant Principal at J. Milton Jeffrey Elementary School; Mary Megargee, Speech and Language Pathologist at Jeffrey School; Jori Smith, School Psychologist for Kindergarten/Pre-School; and Deborah Pagano, parent. Two members of the Committee were not able to be present at the meeting: Pam Whalen, Grade 3 Teacher at Jeffrey School and Sharon Kokoruda, parent.

Dr. Macauley distributed a copy of the Committees' report which was submitted to Mr. Klein, and introduced a Power Point presentation (on file). Ms. Weiss first explained that effective July 1, 2009, Madison Public Schools will take over the ESY (Extended School Year) and Pre-School program which has been run by ACES for the past five years. An overview the program, associated costs and explanation of the methodology used by the committee to complete the program review was presented with input from each of the committee members. A dialog with the Board, including a question and answer exchange regarding the general model of the program, ensued.

The Board expressed thanks for the work of the committee on the assessment and development of the Pre-School Program. Dr. Macauley thanked the Committee for their hard work and presented each of them with a token gift of appreciation.

6.3. 403(B) Written Plan Document

Mr. Klein commented on the Written Plan Document for the Madison Public Schools 403(B) Program which is on the agenda for approval this evening. He complimented Ms. Heather Dobson, Director of Human Resources, for working closely with staff to ensure the smooth implementation of the changes. Ms. Dobson explained that the final document is the result of a five month process to have the Written Document compliant with recent IRS regulations. She stated that she worked closely with the Finance Department as well as a consulting firm, Hooker & Holcomb and legal counsel, Shipman and Goodwin. Atty. Sellers asked if adjustments could be made if necessary. Ms. Dobson responded that she was just notified that the original January 1, 2009 compliance date was extended to January 1, 2010 so there will be time to make sure that everything is in order and make any adjustments if necessary.

7. Board Member Comments

Mr. Ruggiero mentioned that he is working on coordinating a Legislative Breakfast to be held on January 12th. More information will be forthcoming.

8. Reports from Board Committees / Liaisons

8.1. Planning Committee

Ms. Frey reported that the Committee met last week. Work continues with Mike Ott, Assistant Director of Public Works and Town Engineer, on site improvements through the Safe Routes to Schools grant. A comprehensive improvement plan must be developed. Mr. Klein has recommended that the current Town / Madison Public Schools Safety Committee be involved in the Safe Routes to Schools plan, and that the Board will receive updates as the work progresses.

Ms. Frey next reported that the 2009-2010 LOCAP Planned and Cycled Maintenance schedules have been approved with revisions. The schedule will be submitted for Board approval at the January 6, 2009 meeting.

She next reported that discussions continue with individuals involved with the Theatre Arts program regarding the most appropriate venue for performances.

Lastly, Ms. Frey gave a general update on discussions which have been taking place with the Ice Hockey Booster Group. She distributed a letter written by Mr. Klein to Booster Group members highlighting talking points of their discussions and stating the position of the Board of Education. She also stated that there will be a more detailed report and presentation at the January 6th Board of Education meeting. Ms. Frey offered thanks to Mr. Dave Labanara and Mr. Michael Eisele for their passion and interest in advocating for student athletes. She indicated that they engaged the Board and Administration in meaningful conversations and the discussions were always very cordial.

8.2. Personnel Committee

No Report.

8.3. Policy Committee

8.3.1. First Revision Reading: Policy #5090.3.6.1.1., Bullying.

Ms. Gowanlock was not present. Ms. Coffey reported in her absence that the Committee met last week and continued their review of the preamble to the Code of Conduct in an effort to streamline the document and reduce the possibility of conflicts between the Code itself and the consequences charts.

Ms. Coffey directed the Board to the first revision reading of Policy #5090.3.6.1.1. Mr. Klein explained that the revisions to this policy must be approved by February 1, 2009, and the Administrative Regulations have been embedded into the policy to make it clear to both parents and students what the consequences would be for an infraction. Discussion ensued and Atty. Sellers suggested the Policy Committee discuss whether or not to have the Regulations written into our policies, which would necessitate policy revisions as statutes change.

8.4. Finance Committee

Ms. Coffey reported that the Committee met last week, and a draft copy of the 2009-2010 Budget will be distributed to the Board prior to the January 6, 2009 meeting. Ms. Coffey reminded the Board that the draft document they will receive will be very different from past years, and she read the following statement:

“The proposed Board of Education Budget is a prudent budget that recognizes the current difficult fiscal climate in both the town and the state. Nonetheless it will maintain the quality of educational programming that the district is offering this year. The proposed budget does not

include increases for new staff or for new programs. The budget increase is strictly tied to contractual obligations for current employees, special education, facilities, and transportation.

The Board and the public will have an opportunity to learn about the budget at the Board meeting presentation by the Superintendent scheduled in January.”

8.5. Community Outreach Committee

Atty. Klaskin reported that the Committee had met earlier in the evening and discussed modifications to the Community Outreach Breakfast program, as well as developing expanded opportunities to keep the public informed about the Madison Public Schools.

8.6. LEARN Liaison

Mr. Dean reported that LEARN had met last week and the speaker was Dr. Judy Golden, Superintendent of East Hampton Public Schools, who has spent time on Capital Hill along with representatives from all of the other 49 states in a national effort to influence legislators and seek funding for education. Two other items of discussion were amendments to No Child Left Behind and increases in Special Education requirements, as well as an informal round table discussion on next year's budget.

Chairman Hale stated that in February, Boards of Education travel to Washington en masse to lobby, and there will be six or seven representatives from Connecticut participating in the lobbying effort.

9. Audience Response to Information Presented

None at this time.

10. Consent Agenda

10.1. Bills Payable: \$334,359.86 (08/09)

10.2. Line Transfers: \$10,968.62

10.3. Donation: \$1,000 for tents for Daniel Hand High School runners from the Cross Country Boosters

10.4. Request for removal of used books/equipment

MOTION: by Coffey, seconded by Dean to approve the Consent Agenda.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Frey, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Ms. Coffey commented on the generous donation from the Daniel Hand High School Cross Country Boosters

11. Action Item: Minutes of December 2, 2008 Board of Education Meeting

MOTION: by Ruggiero, seconded by Sellers to approve the minutes of the December 2, 2008 Board of Education meeting.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Frey

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

12. Action Item: Daniel Hand High School Program of Studies

MOTION: by Coffey, seconded by Clorite to approve the Daniel Hand High School Program of Studies for 2009-2010.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Frey, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

13. Action Item: 403(B) Written Plan Document

MOTION: by Klaskin, seconded by Ruggiero to approve the Written Plan Document for the Madison Public Schools 403(B) Program.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Frey, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

14. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

15. New Business

15.1. Textbook Adoption Preview (December 16, 2008 – January 6, 2009)

- Forensic Science for High School Students
Daniel Hand High School
Science: Biotechnology and Forensic Science

16. Future Agenda Items – January 6, 2009

16.1. Kindergarten Action Team Report

17. Meetings of importance.

Chairman Hale referred to the list of upcoming meetings on the agenda. He commented that dates for the Budget Development meetings will be added as soon as they are confirmed.

18. Adjournment

MOTION: by Dean, seconded by Sellers to adjourn the meeting at 10:17 p.m.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Frey, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Submitted for Approval at the 01/06/09 Board of Education Meeting
dmd