

Board of Education Regular Meeting

Tuesday, January 19, 2010 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. Public Participation

IV. Board of Education Student Representatives' Report

Speaker (s): Anna Balakrishnan and Andrew Chapman

V. Superintendent's Report

Speaker (s): David J. Klein

V.A. Report on Out of State Travel

Speaker (s): David J. Klein

V.B. Strategic Renewal Meeting of January 12, 2010 - Update

Speaker (s): David J. Klein

V.C. Dr. Robert H. Brown Middle School - Grade 5 Schedule Adjustment for 2010-2011

Speaker (s): Julie Phelps and Kathryn Hart

VI. Board Members' Comments

VII. Board Committees / Liaison Updates

VII.A. Planning Committee

Speaker (s): Members: Debra Frey, Chair; Bill Clorite; Jean Fitzgerald

VII.B. Personnel Committee

Speaker (s): Members: John Dean, Chair; Pam Meier; Robert Ruggiero

VII.C. Policy Committee

Speaker (s): Members: Seth Klaskin, Chair; Jean Fitzgerald; Pam Meier

VII.C.1. Discussion: Approved 2010-2011 Calendar and Draft 2011-2012 Calendar

Speaker (s): Seth Klaskin

VII.D. Finance Committee

Speaker (s): Members: Bill Clorite, Chair; Jean Fitzgerald; Cindy Wood

VII.E. LEARN Liaison

Speaker (s): Liaison: Robert Ruggiero

VIII. Audience Response to Information Presented

IX. Consent Agenda (9.1- 9.3) (Ref. Bylaws 9540.2 and #9540.8)

IX.A. Bills Payable: \$476,016.74 (09-10)

IX.B. Line Transfers: \$55,199.26

IX.C. Donation: \$4,680 to the Kathleen H. Ryerson Elementary School students for field trips from the Ryerson PTO.

X. **Action Item: Minutes of the January 5, 2010 Board of Education Meeting (Ref. Bylaw #9540.8)**

XI. **Action Item: Adoption of the 2010-2011 Board of Education Budget (Ref. Bylaw #3020.7)**

XII. **Old Business**

XIII. **New Business**

XIV. **Future Agenda Items**

XIV.A. Guidance Department Update - February 2, 2010

XV. **Meetings of Importance**

XV.A. January 28, 2010: Board of Education Retreat; 6:00 p.m., Town Campus Hammonasset Room

XV.B. February 2, 2010: Finance Committee Meeting; 6:00 p.m., Central Office Room B

XV.C. February 2, 2010: Board of Education Meeting; 7:30 p.m., Town Campus Hammonasset Room

XV.D. February 4, 2010: Board of Education Presentation of 2010-2011 Budget to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance; 7:30 p.m., Town Campus Hammonasset Room

XV.E. February 25, 2010: 2010-2011 Budget - Board of Finance Public Hearing, Board of Education and Board of Selectmen Presentations; 7:30 p.m., Walter C. Polson Middle School Auditorium

XV.F. March 3, 2010: CABE - A Day on the Hill; 8:30 a.m., Capital Avenue, Hartford

XVI. **Adjournment**

**Madison Public Schools
Board of Education Meeting
Central Office Room B
January 19, 2010
7:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.**

Executive Session Agenda

1. Executive Session (7:00 p.m.)

1.A. Personnel Issues

- **Status of Open Positions**

1.B. Legal Issues

- **Student Discipline Updates**

Adjournment (7:30 p.m.)

Board of Education Meeting
January 5, 2010
Town Campus

Meeting Minutes

1. The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Chairperson Coffey at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Bill Clorite; Becky Coffey; John Dean; Jean Fitzgerald; Debra Frey; Pamela Meier; Cindy Wood

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

2. Executive Session

MOTION: by Frey, seconded by Fitzgerald to enter Executive Session at 7:00 p.m. to discuss personnel and legal issues.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Fitzgerald, Frey, Meier, Wood

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Personnel matters involving confidential issues were discussed.

Legal issues were discussed.

MOTION: by Meier, seconded by Dean to adjourn Executive Session at 7:10 p.m.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Fitzgerald, Frey, Meier, Wood

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

The public session of the Board of Education meeting was called to order by Chairperson Coffey at 7:30 p.m. Ms. Coffey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Bill Clorite; Becky Coffey; John Dean; Jean Fitzgerald; Debra Frey; Seth Klaskin; Pamela Meier; Robert Ruggiero; Cindy Wood

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

3. School / Community Session

3.1. Recognition: Island Avenue Elementary School – "The Pajama Program"

Island Avenue Student Council Members:

Lily Barber

Daniel Long

Amy Corcoran

Nathaniel Palumbo

Brinley Engel

Jaret Ostop

Claire Giles

William Sobran

Ms. Coffey welcomed members of the Island Avenue Elementary School Student Council and turned the floor over to Superintendent Klein for the recognition. He greeted the students and their parents and explained that the Student Council led a school wide program to collect pajamas and books for disadvantaged children. He then introduced Mrs. Kathy Nutley, Principal of Island Avenue School and asked her to talk more about this program.

Mrs. Nutley stated that as the Principal of Island Avenue, one of her goals is for the students to develop a strong sense of community. Mrs. Nutley explained that she researched this program over the summer and thought it was a perfect way for students at Island Avenue to give to kids their own age. She spoke with her Student Council members and they were very eager for their school to participate in this program. Mrs. Nutley introduced each of the Student Council members in attendance as well as Mrs. Connie Piccione, a retired Island Avenue Teacher and her husband Mr. Mike Piccione, who worked with the students and actually made the deliveries to schools in New Haven and Hartford. Each of the students read a bit about the program and some shared thank you notes from children who received the pajamas and books. Mr. Klein presented a Certificate of Recognition signed by him and Ms. Coffey to the Student Council on behalf of Island Avenue School for their participation in this program.

3.2. Public Participation

None at this time.

4. Board of Education Student Representatives Report (Anna Balakrishnan and Andrew Chapman)

Mr. Chapman was not present at the meeting; Ms. Balakrishnan reported on the following:

- The Homecoming Dance will take place this Saturday, January 9th, after being postponed twice because of Swine Flu and snow.
- Spirit Week took place prior to the December break and concluded with a pep rally. The dance and gymnastics teams performed, there was recognition of the fall sports teams and winter captains, and there was a faculty/student backwards free throw competition, with the students coming out victorious.
- All students will be taking the NEASC survey either Thursday or Friday of this week.
- The orchestra concert took place the Thursday before vacation and was a huge success.

5. Superintendent's Report

5.1. Report on Out of State Travel

Mr. Klein reported on some upcoming out of state field trips, all involving Daniel Hand High School students, for the Board's information.

5.2. Update: January 4, 2010 Professional Development Activities (Anita Rutlin)

Ms. Anita Rutlin, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, gave an overview of Professional Development activities that had taken place the previous day at Daniel Hand High School, Dr. Robert H. Brown Middle School, the J. Milton Jeffrey Elementary School and Central Office. She reported that workshop topics included curriculum work, information on Asperger's Syndrome, and the NEASC Self Study. Ms. Rutlin reported that this was the final District Wide Professional Development day for the 2009-2010 school year, and completes the state mandated 18 hours of learning for staff which supports student learning.

5.3. Discussion: Connecticut's Race to the Top State Reform Plan

Mr. Klein discussed the new Federal Race to the Top (RTTT) initiative and the possibility of Connecticut districts, specifically Madison, applying for these newly available federal funds which are intended to drive change in the schools. He explained that this is a very new program and the information available on it is extremely limited. He pointed out to the Board that information was included in their packets (on file), as well as a copy of the Connecticut RTTT Participating Local Education Agency (LEA) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at each Board member's place (also on file). Mr. Klein pointed out that the required initiatives and responsibilities of participating LEA's were highlighted on this document.

Mr. Klein stated that he had attended an informational meeting on December 21st along with Ms. Rutlin, Ms. Coffey and Mr. Ed Valla, President of the Madison Education Association Union, all individuals whose attendance was

recommended. He explained that Connecticut would get \$180 million if awarded this grant, and Madison's share would be \$44,000 over four years (\$11,000 per year). Districts are not required to participate in the grant application, and have 90 days to change their minds if they do sign the MOU. Mr. Klein explained, however, that the deadline to sign the MOU was next Monday, January 11th which was cause for concern, due to the lack of information and very tight and finite deadline.

Ms. Coffey stated that she attended another recent meeting at LEARN, at which State of Connecticut Department of Education Commissioner Mark McQuillan urged districts to support this initiative and sign the MOU's. Ms. Coffey stated, however, that she is also very concerned about the lack of information presented and noted that the details as presented are 'sketchy' at best. She stated that there are 'strings attached' to this money and one of her biggest concerns is the enormous amount of data collection and reporting that will be required. She stated that the Board had to think long and hard as to whether or not the amount of money Madison would receive was worth the amount of work required to track and report it. She stated that as the deadline was quickly approaching, barring a decision tonight, she would like to request that the Board empower her to work with Mr. Klein, Ms. Rutlin and the MEA leaders to reach a decision as to whether or not to pursue this grant.

A thoughtful discussion ensued. Mr. Klein stated that while this money would help the District pay for things it already does (some of which are or will be mandated), the Board needed to consider very carefully whether the 'strings' attached to this money are worth it. Mr. Klein also explained that if Madison does not participate at this time, and Connecticut does not receive the funds, the state can reapply in April and Madison can participate then if the Board chooses to do so. Mr. Klein reiterated that while the information he was presenting with Ms. Rutlin and Ms. Coffey was inadequate, they were sharing with the Board everything they knew about the program.

Discussion continued and members of the Board expressed their concerns about not having all the facts. After much consideration, it was the consensus of the Board to not enter into the Connecticut Race to the Top Memorandum of Agreement at this time. The Board agreed they would reconsider if more information was available and there was an opportunity to participate again in the future. Ms. Coffey asked for a Motion to add an Action Item to the Agenda so the Board could officially vote to not participate in Race to the Top at this time.

MOTION: by Klaskin, seconded by Meier, to add Action Item #11 to the Agenda not to participate in Race to the Top.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Fitzgerald, Frey, Klaskin, Meier, Ruggiero, Wood

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

5.4. Formal Presentation of the Administration's 2010-2011 Recommended Budget

Mr. Klein next introduced a Power Point presentation (on file) of the Superintendent's and Administration's recommended 2010-2011 Budget. He stated that he and the Administrative team had developed the proposed budget with a great deal of thoughtfulness, care and fiscal responsibility. He further stated that while it is not a 'glamorous' budget, it will allow the Madison Public Schools to continue to fund all existing programs and maintain its level of excellence.

Mr. Klein's presentation highlighted accomplishments of the Board of Education, students and staff, as well as the District as a whole. He commented that the achievements of the students in Madison go well beyond the CMT and CAPT results. As Madison's students achieve much academic success, they also excel in many other areas, such as athletics, music, theater, and community/civic endeavors – all of which have great value in the education of our students.

Mr. Klein stated that the budget as presented represents a 3.49% increase, with no new programs and no new staff. He pointed out, however, that were it not for the anticipated shortfall in Excess Cost Grant Reimbursement from the State for unanticipated Special Education outplacements, the requested increase amount would be only 2.83%. He explained that it is very difficult to predict costs associated with Special Education Outplacements, and the 2009-2010 budget was developed based on the state reimbursing ECS funds at 100% for the past two years. Madison is looking at an anticipated shortfall of \$261,925 (23%) for the current year. The 2010-2011 budget was prepared

anticipating a 30% reduction in ECS funds. Mr. Klein made very clear that this issue should not become a Special Education / Regular Education debate. The District is responsible for educating all of its students, and does an excellent job with only 27 of 3,668 students currently outplaced. He stated that these are all "our kids" and they deserve the best education possible.

Mr. Klein explained that again, salaries represent the largest portion of the budget, as this is a "people generated endeavor" and these increases are tied to contractual obligations. He did note a reduction in staff of 2.5 FTE's in Certified Teachers and 3.8 FTE's in Support Staff. He explained that these reductions have nothing to do with the difficult economic times, and are entirely due to declining enrollment. He provided detailed projected enrollment numbers and class sizes for each grade level to substantiate these reductions. Mr. Klein also stated that he has already communicated about the anticipated reductions to all staff and it is far too early for anyone to be concerned as the positions to be eliminated are either one year only or temporary employees. There is also an early retirement option (VNRIO) available which 27 employees are eligible for.

Mr. Klein also provided detailed information with regard to Madison's Net Expenditures per Pupil, which is the second lowest among comparable districts. Even with this low per pupil expenditure, Madison ranks in the top 10 based upon assessment results and ranks third in the State for CMT and CAPT results. Mr. Klein commented that this is glowing proof of how much Madison does with very little. He also provided examples of additional funding Madison would require if our per pupil expenditure matched that of comparable districts.

Mr. Klein concluded his presentation by stating again, that the budget as presented represents a 3.49% increase. If not for the reduction in state reimbursed ECS funds, the requested increase would be only 2.83%. He also thanked and commended the Administrators, many of whom were present, for their conscientious and diligent work on this budget.

6. Board Member Comments

Ms. Coffey thanked Mr. Klein and applauded him and the Administration for presenting what she thought to be an excellent, very responsible budget. She asked that any questions be forwarded directly to Mr. Klein as well as Mr. Clorite, as Chairman of the Finance Committee. Responses to any questions will be provided to the Full Board.

7. Reports from Board Committees / Liaisons

7.1. Planning Committee

No report.

7.1. Personnel Committee

No report.

7.3. Policy Committee

No report; their meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2010.

7.4. Finance Committee

No report.

7.5. LEARN Liaison

Mr. Ruggiero reported that the December meeting at LEARN included a presentation by Executive Director Dr. Virginia Secomb on how the organization has grown over the last 20 years. He commented that it was a very interesting and informative discussion.

8. Audience Response to Information Presented

None at this time.

9. Consent Agenda

9.1. Bills Payable: \$677.94 (08-09); \$830,245.35 (09-10)

9.2. Line Transfers: \$36,658.00

9.3. Budget Expenditure Report as of December 22, 2009

9.4. Donation: \$6,000 to J. Milton Jeffrey Elementary School as partial payment for anticipated class trips for Grades K-4, from the Jeffrey School PTO.

9.5. District Consolidated Application (Part II); Title II, Part D – Educational Technology Entitlement Grant (Grant period July 1, 2009 – August 31, 2011)

MOTION: by Frey, seconded by Clorite to approve the Consent Agenda.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Fitzgerald, Frey, Klaskin, Meier, Ruggiero, Wood

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

Atty. Klaskin commented on the donation from the Jeffrey School PTO. He stated that this was an extremely generous donation; other Board members concurred that this was an exceptional amount.

10. Action Item: Minutes of the December 15, 2009 Board of Education Meeting

MOTION: by Dean, seconded by Meier to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2009 Board of Education meeting.

Ms. Frey stated that she had noticed an error in the minutes as printed in the Board packets, listing her name as present at the meeting when she was not. The Board Clerk stated that she had already caught and corrected the error.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Klaskin, Meier, Wood

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Fitzgerald, Frey, Ruggiero

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

Ms. Coffey then called for the MOTION that was added to the Agenda.

11. Action Item: Connecticut's Race to the Top Memorandum of Understanding

MOTION: by Klaskin, seconded by Dean, to refrain from signing the Memorandum of Understanding for the Race to the Top grant application at this time, subject to reconsideration if the state files another application and provides more detail.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Fitzgerald, Frey, Klaskin, Meier, Ruggiero, Wood

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

Atty. Klaskin requested that Mr. Klein and Ms. Coffey share any additional information they receive regarding Race to the Top with the Full Board. Ms. Coffey clarified that if Connecticut receives this grant money in the first round, there will not be another opportunity for Madison to apply.

Ms. Coffey expressed her appreciation to Mr. Klein and Ms. Rutlin for the work they had done to get to this point in such a short time frame. Mr. Klein commented that it has never been the practice of this Board to make decisions without all the facts, and their decision tonight held true to prior practice.

12. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

13. New Business

No new business was discussed.

14. Future Agenda Items

No future agenda items at this time.

15. Meetings of importance.

Ms. Coffey referred to the list of upcoming meetings on the agenda, and in particular the Board of Education / Administration's Strategic Plan Renewal Meeting on January 12th and the Board of Education Retreat scheduled for January 28th.

16. Adjournment

MOTION: by Clorite, seconded by Wood to adjourn the meeting at 9:27 p.m.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Fitzgerald, Frey, Klaskin, Meier, Ruggiero, Wood

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

Submitted for approval at the 01/19/10 Board of Education Meeting
dmd