

Madison Public Schools Board of
Education Meeting
Tuesday, December 19, 2006 7:30 PM Eastern

Town Campus Hammonasset Room
10 Campus Drive
Madison, CT 06443

- I. Call to Order / Attendance
- II. Executive Session - 7:00 PM
- III. School Community Session - 7:30 PM
 - III.A. Public Participation
- IV. Board of Education Student Representatives' Report
- V. Superintendent's Report
 - V.A. Overview: Middle School Program of Studies
 - V.B. Overview: High School Program of Studies
- VI. Board Members' Comments
- VII. Board Committees / Liaison Updates
 - VII.A. Planning Committee
 - VII.B. Personnel Committee
 - VII.C. Policy Committee
 - VII.D. Finance Committee
 - VII.E. LEARN Liaison
- VIII. Audience Responses to Information Presented
- IX. Consent Agenda (Items 9.1. - 9.3.)
 - IX.A. Bills Payable: \$1,676,619.07
 - IX.B. Line Transfers: \$25,628.50
 - IX.C. Request for Removal of Used Books / Equipment
- X. Action Item: Minutes: 12.5.06 Meeting
- XI. Action Item: Planning Committee Recommendation: Elementary School Facilities Model
- XII. Old Business
- XIII. New Business
- XIV. Future Agenda Items
- XV. Adjournment

Madison Public Schools
Board of Education Meeting
December 5, 2006
Town Campus Hammonasset Room

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Chairman Robert Hale at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Becky Coffey; John Dean; Debbie Frey; Atty. Harriet Gowanlock; Robert Hale, Kathleen Rossini; Atty. Holly Sellers; David Youngerman.

Also present: Dr. H. Kaye Griffin, Superintendent.

1. Executive Session

MOTION: by Gowanlock, seconded by Youngerman to enter Executive Session at 6:35 p.m. to discuss personnel issues.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Personnel issues were discussed.

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

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock Hale, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

The public session of the Board of Education meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Hale at 7:30 p.m. Chairman Hale led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Becky Coffey; John Dean; Debbie Frey; Atty. Harriet Gowanlock; Robert Hale; Kathleen Rossini; Atty. Holly Sellers; David Youngerman.

Also present: Dr. H. Kaye Griffin, Superintendent; Anita Rutlin, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; district administrators; faculty; staff; students; community members.

3. School Community Session:

3.1. Public Participation

Ms. Jody Small of Horsepond Road stated that she addressed the Board of Education six weeks ago regarding school safety. She inquired if there was any activity in this area since then especially in light of an article she read in the newspaper on renovations to Ryerson.

Dr. Griffin responded that article on Ryerson related to planned and cycled maintenance on lighting, ceilings, and ventilation systems. She stated that there has been further investigation regarding safety concerns such video cameras, change in procedures, and adding security. The proposed 07-8 budget will reflect requests for additional security personnel.

4. Board of Education Student Representative's Report

Mr. Cavallo reported that trimester exams were completed last week. Schedules were delivered on Friday for the second trimester and the second trimester started on Monday. Student Leadership will hold a holiday spirit week from 12/18 - 12/22 with activities to include novelty days and a door decorating contest. Last year the students supported a needy family through Madison Youth and Family Services. They raised \$1,000 and were able to sponsor two families. This year they hope to raise \$1,200 by having a \$1/student donation.

5. Superintendent's Response to Board of Education's Requests for Information

5.1. Discussion of American Drug and Alcohol Survey (ADAS) Results

Dr. Griffin recognized representatives in the audience from various organizations that have been involved with the ADAS Survey. In attendance were Taffy Bowes, Assistant Director for Madison Youth and Family Services; Scott Cochran, Assistant Director for Madison Youth and Family Services; Marcie Beatty, Parent Representative for the Committee on Children and Youth; Mary Beth Golja, Selectmen's Council on Youth Substance Abuse; Laura Kaspro, Selectmen's Council on Youth Substance Abuse; Paul Sinicrope, Administrative Representative for the Committee on Children and Youth; Frank Henderson, Representative for the Middle School and High School; and Paul Jakubson, Madison Police Services. The Steering Committee is in place to review and implement data from the ADAS Survey

Dr. Griffin presented a PowerPoint presentation (on file) of the results of the ADAS (American Drug and Alcohol Survey) Survey (on file and copy available on the Madison Public Schools website). The presentation discussed results of a survey conducted with 7-8th grade and 9-12th grade students on use of drugs and alcohol in terms of percentage and number of students that use and do not use alcohol and drugs. An action plan is recommended to be completed to combat identified substance abuse issues and presented to Boards of Education, Selectmen and Finance. Community forums should be set-up for feedback/support. Training opportunities are recommended for Administrators, School Counselors, Teachers, Community Agencies and Staff and available resources should be explored.

Ms. Golja, Selectmen's Council on Youth Substance Abuse, commented that she is excited that the requested report was completed in a timely manner. She feels the report is important to build awareness in community both for those using and those not using alcohol and drugs. The survey results can be used as a deterrent as related to the number of students not using either drugs or alcohol. Ms. Golja has stated that it is important for parents to see the amount of alcohol and drug use that occurs at home.

Ms. Beatty, Madison Committee on Children and Youth, stated that it is important to be aware of the validity of the survey results in light of consistency checks utilized. In the detail report, it stated that if young people resort to using drugs to get through development they will never develop emotional maturity.

Chairman Hale inquired how the results of survey will be shared with students. Frank Henderson, Principal of Polson Middle School, responded that at upper middle school (7-8th grade) grade level meetings will be held this Friday. He intends to first thank the students for their efforts in completing the survey and share pieces of the data with the students. He will recognize the strong number of students choosing not to use alcohol and drugs. Follow-up will be done through health classes and counselors. On January 9th, a parent meeting is planned for 7-12th graders to review the data.

Ms. Britton, Principal of Daniel Hand High School, reported that students were involved for 45 minutes to take the survey and they exhibited seriousness when completing the survey. A written letter to the students will be sent out in next couple of days to explain the survey and what the results meant. The high school also plans to request a speaker to address the student body on the survey results.

Ms. Bowes, Madison Youth Services, stated she works with alcohol and drug prevention at the high school level and that it is a community issue, not just a school issue. She explained that Madison Youth and Family Services is committed to working with other agencies in town to make the community a safe place for children to live while growing up in a very challenging culture.

Mr. Cochran, Madison Youth and Family Services reported that a lot of counseling and assessment services and resources are available through his agency

Chief Jakubson, Madison Police Services, stated that the report has a lot of statistics to review but one of most significant is the level of participation in the survey in that 95% of the students participated. The message from this is that the students volunteered to take the survey and took it seriously. Madison Police Services wants to support this effort and get the right message across to the community. The town needs to take serious look at this issue.

Mr. Henderson thanked Anita Rutlin, Assistant Superintendent, for her work in getting the schools organized and completing all necessary research.

Chairman Hale stated that the town will need inter-agency and inter-board cooperation.

5.2. Discussion of Early Childhood Program Proposal

Dr. Griffin reminded the Board of a document distributed at the last meeting entitled Preliminary Position Statement on Early Childhood Education for Madison Public Schools. This document addresses the issue of a full-day kindergarten program in Madison.

Chairman Hale reported that the State is looking into mandating full-day kindergarten by the year 2015, so the future need for such a program in Madison would have to be addressed prior to the date. The State will not provide any funding to towns for a full day kindergarten program but will be providing construction funding for new buildings or renovations on existing buildings.

Ms. Rossini spoke about the philosophy of a full-day kindergarten program and the need to consider such a program in light of the current facilities structure that exists in Madison. Madison is currently utilizing the Town Campus facilities for its pre-school and ACES program. The kindergarten program is housed at the Jeffrey School along with grades 1-4 and Island Avenue and Ryerson schools also have grades 1-4. The Academy School is currently off-line. With the consideration of a full day kindergarten program, it is suggested that the Island Avenue School be used for an early childhood center to house the pre-school program and full day kindergarten. The Academy School could be renovated and brought up to code to house grades 1-4 along with the Jeffrey School and Ryerson School. The Town Campus facility would not be needed for school use and could possibly be turned over to the town.

The Elementary School Principals, Mona Goodman, Alexis Christina, and Paul Sinicrope, spoke to the benefits of a full-day kindergarten program and an early childhood center at Island Avenue School. Some of the issues presented were the need to increase the school day for kindergarten students to accommodate all the learning needed for the 21st century, a decrease in the stress and anxiety that currently occurs in a ½ day program, providing time for socialization skills for the students, a decrease in the number of transitions for the students, the ability to make a community facility to address early childhood needs both for the students and the parents, and the ability to identify and work with students over the full early childhood time period. It was also stated that Island Avenue School was the best available facility to create an early childhood center due to its one level set-up, large classrooms and the number of available classrooms.

Atty. Gowanlock questioned the principals about the impact of a full-day kindergarten program as it relates to the delayed start of students in kindergarten. Ms. Goodman responded that with an early childhood education center the school system would be better able to identify students and to provide information and education for parents on the transition to kindergarten.

Mr. Youngerman commented that he supports the idea of a full day kindergarten program but was concerned with the budgetary impact of such a program. A few years ago the Academy School was taken off-line and the savings were realized in the education budget. He is concerned with the budget impact of adding staff for a full day program, along with the associated cost of bringing a school facility back on line.

Dr. Griffin responded that the long-range plan already includes the staffing cost associated with the implementation of a full day kindergarten program. Costs would need to be computed for the facility operations.

The Board members continued their discussion on the philosophy of a full day kindergarten program, current and future facility requirements and budgetary impacts.

As the town has a committee working on the facilities throughout the town, the Board decided that a recommendation on this topic should be held at the next meeting on December 19th.

6. Board Members' Comments

Chairman Hale stated that Finance Committee meetings have been rescheduled and asked the Policy Committee to reschedule meetings to accommodate these changes.

Chairman Hale requested committee chairs to e-mail all agendas to all the Board members. He also asked if committee reports should be made at all the Board meetings. Ms. Coffey responded that brief written reports should be provided at each meeting. Ms. Rossini stated that the Steering Committee has quite a number of on-going items and a written report would be time-consuming.

Chairman Hale stated that the Facilities Manager has received a \$12,000 rebate to the school's electricity account as part of Northeast Utilities energy conservation program.

Chairman Hale distributed a copy of the State of Connecticut's Department of Education's 5-Year Long-Range Plan.

Dr. Griffin distributed a copy of notice going to parents and staff on December 11th regarding radon testing in the schools.

7. Distribution of Executive Summaries from Board Committees / Liaison

Ms. Coffey distributed a written report from the Finance Committee. She reported that to implement some of the district program improvements proposed for next year in the administration's long-term plan, more funding needs to be included in next year's budget than a 5.75 percent increase would provide. The Finance Committee has asked the Superintendent to develop a budget that incorporates some of these critical program improvements and this budget will ask for a larger percentage expenditure increase than the First Selectman has said he will support. A joint meeting of the Board of Education, Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance will be held on Tuesday, December 19th at 4:00 p.m. to present the Board of Education's strategic plan.

7.1. Policy Committee Report:

Review Policies #3542.1 Nutrition Program; #3542.2 Food Service Guidelines; #1330 Community Use of School Facilities

Atty. Sellers reported that Policy #1330 on Community Use of School Facilities is a first reading for discussion purposes only. The Policy Committee is discussing a new rate structure which reflects that normal cost of wear and tear plus an energy surcharge and cost of personnel/staffing to set-up and clean-up.

Atty. Sellers reported that Policy #3542.1 Nutrition Program is amended to be consistent with the Public Act.

Policy #3542.2 Food Services Guidelines requires further guidance from the legislature.

8. Audience Responses to Information Presented

No comments.

9. Action Item: Consent Agenda Items: 9.1 - 9.2

9.1. Bills Payable: \$77,722.23

9.2. Line Item Transfers: \$22,920.99

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

AYES: Coffey; Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

10. Action Item: Minutes – November 21, 2006

MOTION: by Rossini, seconded by Coffey to approve the minutes of the November 21, 2006 meeting.

AYES: Coffey; Dean, Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Youngerman

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Frey, Sellers

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

11. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

12. New Business

MOTION: by Sellers on behalf of the Policy Committee to approve Policy #3542.1 as amended.

AYES: Coffey; Dean, Frey Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

MOTION: by Sellers on behalf of the Policy Committee to table Policy #3542.2 pending further guidance from the legislature.

AYES: Coffey; Dean, Frey Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

13. Future Agenda Items

Ms. Rossini requested an examination on delayed openings at the high school for mid-terms.

14. Adjournment

MOTION: by Dean, seconded by Gowanlock to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 p.m.

AYES: Coffey; Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Submitted for approval at 12.19.06 BOE meeting.

H. Dobson