

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 18, 2007 7:30 PM Eastern

Town Campus Hammonasset Room
10 Campus Drive
Madison, CT 06443

- I. Call to Order / Attendance
- II. Executive Session - 6:30 p.m.
- III. School Community Session - 7:30 p.m.
 - III.A. Public Participation
- IV. Board of Education Student Representatives' Report
- V. Superintendent's Report
 - V.A. Presentation: Class of 2007 Summary Report
 - V.B. Presentation: Electronic Course Management (Blackboard (Bb)) Project
 - V.C. Presentation: Mathematics Report of Findings
 - V.D. Update: Student Enrollment / Class Sizes
 - V.E. Review: Special Education Operational Budget Projected Receivables Report
 - V.F. Update: Board of Education Community Outreach Committee October Brunch / Jeffrey School
- VI. Board Members' Comments
- VII. Board Committees / Liaison Updates
 - VII.A. Planning Committee
 - VII.B. Personnel Committee
 - VII.C. Policy Committee
 - VII.C.1. Second Reading: Policy #5170 Activities / Fees /Charges
 - VII.D. Finance Committee
 - VII.E. LEARN Liaison
- VIII. Audience Response to Information Presented
- IX. Consent Agenda (Items 9.1 - 9.6)
 - IX.A. Bills Payable: \$12,879.97 (2006/2007) and \$441,981.30 (2007/2008)
 - IX.B. Line Transfers: \$3,568.46
 - IX.C. Line Transfers: \$40,125.53
 - IX.D. Line Transfers: \$40,000.00
 - IX.E. Acknowledgement: Out-of State Travel for Grade 7 and 8 Students at Walter C. Polson School (Reference Policy #6100.16.1)
 - IX.F. Notice of Intent of Instruction of Student at Home for 7 Students
- X. Action Item: Security Assessment of Madison Public Schools
- XI. Action Item: Purchase of IEP Direct
- XII. Action Item: Minutes 9.4.07 Meeting
- XIII. Old Business
- XIV. New Business
- XV. Future Agenda Items
- XVI. 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.

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Consent Agenda:

The following agenda items are designated as routine and appropriate for approval as a single action by the Board of Education, if so desired. A Board member may request removal of any item from the consent agenda for review and discussion.

Board of Education Meeting
September 4, 2007
Town Campus

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order / Attendance

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Chairman Robert Hale at 6:45 p.m.

Present: John Dean; Harriet Gowanlock; Robert Hale; Kathleen Rossini; David Youngerman.

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

MOTION: by Gowanlock, seconded by Rossini to enter Executive Session at 6:45 p.m. to discuss personnel issues.

AYES: Dean, Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Youngerman

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0

2. Executive Session

Personnel issues discussed

Legal issues discussed.

Ms. Coffey entered executive session at 6:55 p.m.

MOTION: by Youngerman, seconded by Dean to adjourn Executive Session at 7:25 ~~8~~ p.m.

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

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

The public session of the Board of Education meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Hale at 7:35 p.m. Chairman Hale led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: John Dean; Becky Coffey; Harriet Gowanlock; Robert Hale; Kathleen Rossini; 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 Recognition: Madison Public Schools' Teacher of the Year

Dr. Griffin recognized Madison's Teacher of the Year, Karen Kaufman, Mathematics Teacher at the Dr. Robert H. Brown School. She mentioned that Ms. Kaufman was presented with her official award at the Opening Day event on August 29th.

Dr. Griffin reported that the district participates in the National Teacher of the Year program. The program starts with recognitions at the local level. The local Teachers of the Year are then nominated at the state level and the state recipient is nominated to the national level. The program celebrates excellence in teaching and teaches who inspire the love of learning.

Dr. Griffin discussed the accomplishments of Ms. Kaufman in the Madison district including her years of service; connecting math concepts to the real world; engaging her students in their work; serving as a team leader and on numerous committees; teaching summer programs; and her implementation of new teaching strategies.

Ms. Kaufman stated how honored she is by the award and that it has been a joy to work with the teachers, administrators and students.

3.2 Public Participation

Chairman Hale commented that he made a decision last week to review the copy of the videotape of the August 21st meeting. When he discovered that this was a problem for some people, he promptly made arrangements to have the tape returned and in the future he will request a duplicate copy of the meeting video. He apologized for any inconvenience that this may have caused.

Kim Kehoe, 66 Beaver Pond Road, stated that since she has moved to town she has questioned a lot of the board's and administrators' decisions. She feels that the board applies its policies inequitably. She quoted various board policies including #4112.6 on personnel; #4111 on certification; and #9540.10 on public participation at board meetings. In policy #9540.10, Ms. Kehoe reported that it states that questions asked by the public, if possible, will be answered at board meetings or investigated by the Superintendent and a prompt response provided. She questioned the Superintendent's statement at the last board meeting that the state granted a special exemption for Ms. Hale to serve as the Interim Director of Student Services. She feels this position should have been filled by someone in the district with the full certifications. Ms. Kehoe also questioned whether the exemption was granted before or after Ms. Hale assumed the interim position. Finally, she questioned whether the state was notified of the temporary appointment of Ms. Hale. Ms. Kehoe read a letter she received from the state on March 22 regarding the certification of the Interim Director and added that this letter did not mention a special exemption being granted. She requested that the board stop the inequity of policy application by the Superintendent. She stated that Dr. Griffin is a short-term employee and should not make long-term decisions. She asked that the Assistant Superintendent serve as the Acting Superintendent and that an interim Assistant Superintendent be hired.

Dr. Griffin responded to questions posed by Ms. Kehoe. She stated that due diligence was exhibited in determining whether Ms. Hale would qualify as an Interim Director of Student Services. She commented that the State Department of Education was contacted and the district was informed that Ms. Hale could serve in the position on a temporary basis. She added that the position for Director of Student Services was posted within the district and any interested employees could apply for the position, including those with the required certifications. Dr. Griffin added that certification information was filed with the state in January which is the typical process. She further stated that she was contacted by the state in May indicating that if Ms. Hale was to continue in the position she would need to complete the special education certification. She followed up with Ms. Hale who indicated that she did not want to pursue the special education certification. Dr. Griffin added that the position was posted for the 4th time in 3 years and during all these times all union requirements / regulations were adhered to.

Steve Lutz, 66 High Hill Circle, questioned whether it is protocol for the administration to assign employees with the appropriate certifications to a position such as the Interim Director of Student Services. Dr. Griffin responded that the district can not assign employees to positions due to union requirements including fair and open posting and that these rules are followed at all times. She added that Ms. Hale applied for the interim position and was interviewed just like any other candidate.

Barbara Ciotti, 12 Amber Trail, stated that she realized the whole process has been difficult and that people are on edge but she does not feel that it is fair that people that get up to speak should be "jumped on" by the Superintendent or the board.

4. Superintendent's Report

4.1 Overview: 2007 -2008 "Back to School" Activities / Information

4.1.1 Opening of School Update

Dr. Griffin presented a PowerPoint presentation consisting of pictures from the Opening Day activities for staff including a breakfast, employee recognition and guest speaker David Warlick. The presentation also included pictures from the first day of school at the Jeffrey School.

4.1.2 Student Enrollment / Class Size

Dr. Griffin distributed reports on elementary enrollment and district enrollment. She reported that the kindergarten enrollment is at 211 and the revised projection was 210 students. She stated that the elementary class sizes look very good with a few classes at the 23 student level but most between 21-22 students. The K-4 student enrollment projection was 1290 and there are currently 1289 students enrolled. The grades 7 and 8 enrollment numbers are being reviewed based upon a variance of -14 in grade 7 and -13 students in grade 8. Dr. Griffin added that the enrollment is within 48 students from the projection and the official enrollment report is as of October 1st.

4.1.3 Student Transportation

Art Sickle, Manager of Administration Services and Madga Grayson, Manager of Durham School Services provided the board with a report on student transportation for the 2007-2008 school year. Mr. Sickle reported that everything has been going smoothly, but he is cautious because there have been only three days so far in the school year. The last drop-off times were at 4:23; 4:26 and 4:15 p.m. based upon a last bell time of 3:25 p.m. The complaints have been low with less than 30 and most of the inquiries have to do with bus stops. He added that a couple of runs have been adjusted.

Ms. Grayson commented that this has been the best year yet. This success is based upon the hard work over the summer by the new dispatcher and safety supervisor, along with Ms. Caraszi from Central Office. She added that a majority of the drivers have returned this year and are driving the same runs. Enough drivers have been recruited with a few spares. The bus drivers all did "dry runs" and made corrections prior to the start of school.

Mr. Sickle reported that tomorrow will be the first full transportation day with the private schools all starting.

4.2 Overview: 2007 Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Results and AYP Report

Anita Rutlin, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, made a PowerPoint presentation (on file) on the 2007 Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) results and AYP.

4.3 Overview: On-Line District Calendar

Mr. Sickle presented the board with a demonstration of the district's new web based calendar program that is available on the district's web site. He encouraged the board and all residents to sign up to be part of the calendar to in order to view district events, filter district events, tracks events, move district events to their personal calendar and receive notifications of meeting changes.

Dr. Griffin added that the calendar is part of the board's strategic plan goal of increasing communication with the public. It will also help the district with possible scheduling conflicts.

Mr. Sickle added that the district and each school now have a list serve to send e-mail notifications/information to those who subscribe and he encouraged the board and parents to sign up for this communication tool.

5. Board Member Comments

Chairman Hale reminded the board about providing their choice for appointment of school liaisons and liaison to the Superintendent. Mr. Hale also reported that in the American School Board Journal of September 2007 Madison is mentioned in an article regarding use of technology. Finally, Mr. Hale noted that he received a copy of the newsletter from T.A.P.S. and commented that their activities are impressive.

Ms. Gowanlock commented that the presentation by Mr. Warlick at the Opening Day event was fascinating.

6. Distribution of Executive Summaries from Board Committees / Liaisons

Ms. Rossini reported that the Planning Committee met this morning and reviewed a number of items. One item of discussion was the Academy School. The Committee reviewed the results of the August 23rd Public Hearing and prepared a draft handout for the September 6th Public Hearing. She noted that most of the comments at the Public Hearing were in support of using Academy as a school and most of the questions dealt with when the project should go forward and how it should look. The Planning Committee also discussed transportation and enrollment. Ms. Rossini distributed facilities notes from the meeting. The Planning Committee will make a recommendation at tonight's meeting to authorize the Superintendent to make application to the town for modifications to the sidewalk plan at Daniel Hand High School. She added that this is an important safety enhancement and funding for the project will be discussed at the next meeting. The committee also reviewed the three proposal from consultants on security assessments and they have requested that the Superintendent bring one of the consultants back for an additional meeting. Ms. Rossini noted that due to the volume of projects, the Planning Committee will be meeting weekly.

Ms. Coffey reported that the Finance Committee met last week. She noted that the 2006-07 budget is still closing out. The 2007-08 budget is 70.88% expended at this time due to salary obligations and noted that no accounts are a concern. The personnel reconciliation will take place at the first meeting in October. Ms. Coffey noted that a new report will be prepared which will outline special education revenue as receivables since this revenue is received many months after the expenditures occur. The committee is also looking at the student activity account management.

6.1 Policy Committee: First Draft Reading Policy #5170 Activities / Fees / Charges

Mr. Youngerman presented the first reading of policy #5170 Activities / Fees / Charges that reflects the addition of clubs to the athletic and intramural registration fees. He requested comments on the policy from the board.

7. Audience Response to Information Presented

Barbara August, 128 Five Fields, questioned the CAPT test results and wanted to know what the district is doing for those students that need extra help and how they can encourage students to achieve above the minimum requirement of these tests. She also expressed concerned that the math program at the high school is only over 2 trimesters rather than 3. She stated that the education of the students is more important than some of the issues that have been occurring lately. Dr. Griffin responded that there has been a lot of discussion at board meetings over the last couple of years regarding the accelerate curriculum and that it often takes 2-3 years to start to see the results of the curriculum changes. A general discussion ensued on various educational issues.

8. Consent Agenda (Items 8.1 – 8.4)

8.1 Bills Payable: \$68,209.11 (06/07) and \$542,364.23 (07/08)

8.2 Line Transfers: \$118,584.02

8.3 Budget Expenditure Report as of 8.30.07

8.4 Textbook Adoption:

Thinking About Psychology
Bedford, Freeman & Worth Publishing
Daniel Hand High School Human Behavior

MOTION: by Coffey, seconded by Rossini to approve the consent agenda.

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

NAYS: None
MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

9. Action Item: Special Appropriation Requests

Ms. Coffey reported that Madison ended up receiving an additional \$400,000 in ECS funding from the State of Connecticut for 2007-08. The State, at the same time, reduced other grant funding to be received by the town resulting in a net increase of \$326,000 in additional state aid. Since the current budget has already been adopted, the only way to access these funds is through a special appropriation request. Ms. Coffey noted that a public meeting was held between representatives of the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and Board of Education to discuss the possible distribution of these funds. The special appropriation requests submitted for the board's consideration reflect 50% of the additional revenue (\$163,228) and Ms. Coffey believes that there will be support from the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance for this special appropriation amount. She noted that the special appropriation requests reflect funding in the areas of computer hardware, security assessment, instructional supplies and media supplies. All these requests are non-recurring expenses that are in keeping with the board's strategic plan.

MOTION: by Finance Committee to approve the special appropriation requests totaling \$163,228 to allocate additional ECS funding.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Youngerman
NAYS: None
MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

10. Action Item: Line Item Transfers \$261,838.48

MOTION: by Coffey, seconded by Youngerman to approve the line item transfers totaling \$261,838.48 for annual 2007-2008 salary reconciliation.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Youngerman
NAYS: None
MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

11. Action Item: Minutes 8.21.07

Ms. Rossini noted that the minutes need to be correct to reflect the absence of Ms. Frey at the 8.21.07 board meeting.

MOTION: by Coffey, seconded by Rossini to approve the minutes of the 8.21.07 meeting, as amended.

AYES: Coffey, Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Youngerman
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: Dean
MOTION CARRIED: 5-0

12. Action Item: Minutes 8.28.07

MOTION: by Youngerman, seconded by Rossini to approve the minutes of the 8.28.07 meeting.

AYES: Coffey, Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Youngerman
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: Dean
MOTION CARRIED: 5-0

MOTION: by Planning Committee to add to the agenda Action Item: Modification to Site Plan at Daniel Hand High School and to authorize the administration to make appropriate application to the town for any modifications to the site plan for Daniel Hand High School.

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

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

13. Old Business

13.1 Discussion: Appointment of 2007-2008 School Liaisons

Chairman Hale reminded the board members to submit their selection for school liaison.

14. New Business

No new business was discussed.

15. Future Agenda Items

Mr. Youngerman requested a presentation on the Blackboard project at a meeting in November or early December. He also requested an update from the Director of Guidance on the class report. Dr. Griffin responded that the report from the Director of Guidance is slated for the next agenda.

Ms. Gowanlock requested a report on the status of the student advisor program.

Ms. Coffey requested a mid-term report on changes to the program of studies.

16. Adjournment

MOTION: by Dean, seconded by Coffey to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 ~~8~~-p.m.

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

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

Submitted for approval at the 9.19.07 BOE meeting.