

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENWICH BOARD OF EDUCATION

DATE: January 10, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Havemeyer Building Board Room

PRESENT:

Board: Mrs. Nancy Weissler, Chairman
Mrs. Leslie Moriarty, Vice Chairman
Mr. Steven B. Anderson, Secretary
Mr. Jonathan Cohen
Mrs. Marianna Ponns Cohen
Dr. Susan S. Ellis
Ms. Natalie Queen

Absent: Mr. Michael Bodson

Administration:

Dr. Betty J. Sternberg, Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Kathleen Greider, Deputy Superintendent
Mr. John Curtin, Asst. Superintendent
Mr. Chris Winters, Dir. Of Curriculum & Professional Learning
Ms. Mary P. Forde, Director, Pupil Personnel Services
Ms. Kim Eves, Director, Communications
Mr. Anthony Byrne, Director of Facilities

Other: Mrs. Julie Faryniarz, Mrs. Kristin Kratky, Mrs. Patricia Jomo, PTA Council; Mrs. Paige Davis, , Eastern Middle School; Mrs. Rose Fini Sullivan, Parkway School; Mr. Andrew Shaw, Greenwich Time, Mrs. Anne Semmes, Greenwich Citizen and other members of the public. An attendance list is on file in the Board of Education office.

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Weissler, Chairman at 7:00 p.m.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Dr. Ellis to approve the revised Agenda.

VOTE: 7 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

1. **Discussion of Monitoring Report E-002, Whole Student Development**

Ms. Forde provided the Board with an overview of the E-002 Monitoring Report. Discussion covered areas including the SEL goals, Resource Room availability for general education students, the quality and quantity of the services provided, the amount of time available for consultation, freshman and senior participation in extracurricular activities, CMS extracurricular participation rates, the increased rate of suspension at Western Middle School, minority suspension levels, the at risk student assistance program supported by the Greenwich Alliance, report cards, rubrics, and ethics elements in curriculum.

The Monitoring Report will be brought back to the Board for approval at the January 24th Board Meeting.

2. **Discussion of Fifteen Year Capital Plan**

Mrs. Weissler explained that she and Mrs. Moriarty had met with the First Selectman and Chairman of the BET regarding the Capital Plan. There may be a request to defer some projects to help ease the financial burden on the Town and Mrs. Weissler had requested Dr. Wallerstein and Mr. Byrne to review the Fifteen Year Capital Plan to come up with a reprioritization of items (Priority 1 – should remain “as is” in current plan; Priority 2 – could be deferred 5-8 years without significant negative impact; Priority 3 – could be deferred 8-11 years without significant negative impact) they felt would be able to be moved out to future years to help the town with this burden. Dr. Wallerstein and Mr. Byrne explained to the Board that most of the work in the Fifteen Year Capital Plan over the next five years dealt with issues of health and safety, and air quality, such as roofs, railings, asbestos removal and generally maintaining our physical plants to standards. The discussion and question and answer period was extensive and the Board thanked Dr. Wallerstein and Mr. Byrne for the terrific job they did in response to this request with such short notice and such quick turnaround. Their document will be used in discussion with the CIP committee. Any suggested changes will be brought back to the Board for consideration.

3. **Discussion of 2008 Administration of Harris Survey**

Mr. Curtin and Ms. Eves reviewed the Harris Survey results which indicated a good level of participation in general. They are in the process of communicating progress reports on students’ performance to parents. Key areas of concern were conditions of bathrooms, food improvement and improving the parent communication link. The 2008 version will be distributed after administration of the CMT and before the Spring break to students in Grades 3-12, parents, teachers and staff, and community leaders. Results are expected before the end of summer. Questions surrounded who was surveyed

within the community and what was the rate of return (30%). One Board Member questioned the administration of the survey to third through 5th grade students.

4. **2007-2008 Agenda Planning**

The Board discussed the upcoming priority and the status of plans for using school locations for the Presidential primary on February 5th. Dr. Sternberg gave the Board an overview of what other districts are doing regarding school closures and whether to make that day a Staff Development Day. Dr. Wallerstein and Mr. Byrne are working to resolve issues of police presence, traffic patterns, parking and other ways to secure the buildings without closing schools. There should be a decision reached on this issue by the end of next week.

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mr. Anderson to extend the time of the meeting by five minutes.

VOTE: 7 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Weissler discussed the board Workshop, which will be held on February 2nd from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. to discuss the Mission and Vision of the District. Dr. Ellis advised that Mr. Jim Richie has been hired as a consultant to the Policy Governance committee and the starting points for the work will be 1) the current mission statement dated 1999; 2) a draft from June, 2006 of the board discussion on revision; 3) feedback from administration and staff; 4) samples from other districts, and that the goal would be to 1) look at the current mission; 2) decide what should be kept; 3) decide what needs to be changed.

The plan will be to distribute the Mission and Vision draft to administrative staff and parents for feedback in March/April with the Board vote by June.

The plan is also to have a review of the PPS report prepared by the middle of March, followed by discussion at the April Work Session.

Mrs. Ponns Cohen suggested an addition to the Board Agenda for January 24th to discuss removing the PTA gift cap waiver policy. There was no decision made in this regard.

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mrs. Ponns Cohen to extend the meeting until 9:15 p.m.

VOTE: 6 in favor,

Mr. Anderson opposed

MOTION CARRIED

Dr. Sternberg requested that the Secondary Review Limitations be moved to the February Meeting.

A request was also made by Mr. Anderson to place the World Language review ahead of the Graduation Requirements discussion at the March 13th Board Meeting.

Mrs. Ponns Cohen requested that a discussion on residency verification of magnet school lottery participants be placed on the agenda.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to adjourn to Executive Session at 9:15 p.m. to discuss Superintendent's mid-year Evaluation.

VOTE: 7 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to move back into public session at 10:23 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 10:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Steven B. Anderson
Secretary