

REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREENWICH BOARD OF EDUCATION

DATE: January 24, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Western Middle School

PRESENT:

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

Administration:

Dr. Betty J. Sternberg, Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Kathleen Greider, Deputy Superintendent
Dr. Susan Wallerstein, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. John Curtin, Assistant Superintendent
Ms. Mary P. Forde, Director, Pupil Personnel Services
Dr. Ellen Flanagan, Director, Human Resources
Ms. Kim Eves, Director, Communications
Mr. Richard Calcavecchio, Director of Budget
Mr. Anthony Byrne, Director of Facilities

Other: Mrs. Cathy Delehanty, GEA; Mrs. Julie Faryniarz, Mrs. Margaret Santhanam, Mrs. Sue Rogers, Mrs. Kristen Kratky, PTA Council; Ms. Stacy Gross, Principal, Mrs. Kim Sitarz, Mrs. Nancy Chapin, Mrs. Luanne LaRose, Mr. George Von Tobel, Mrs. Sharon Wilson, Western Middle School; Mrs. Nancy Barton, BET; Mr. Mark D'Amico, Principal, Mrs. Alicia Budkins, Glenville School; Mrs. Rosa Fini Sullivan, Parkway School; Mrs. Genevieve Krob, Mrs. Pamela Speer, FHSPA; Mr. Tom Conelias, Mrs. Alexis Voulgaris, RTM; Mrs. Dawn Nethercott, Mrs. Rose Furano, Hamilton Avenue School; Mr. Bill Robbins, New Lebanon School; Mr. Andrew Shaw, Greenwich Time, Mr. Ken Borsuk, Greenwich Post, Ms. Anne Semmes, Greenwich Courier and various members of the community. An attendance list is on file in the Board Office.

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Weissler at 7:05 p.m.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Bodson to approve the revised agenda.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

Ms. Stacy Gross, Principal of Western, and several members of her staff presented their SIT goal and action plan to address Reading and Writing at Western, a comprehensive, cross discipline approach to increasing student achievement at all levels.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to adjourn to a short reception.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC HEARING

Mrs. Julie Faryniarz, PTA Council President, discussed the Whole Student Development Monitoring Report, the Student Improvement Team summary report, the CIP Committee and possible reductions in capital expenses, the Hamilton Avenue building and keeping URS to oversee the project, and thanked administration for the communication in many areas, especially to Ms. Eves for the Board Meeting briefs and Dr. Sternberg for lunch forums. She passed on thanks from the parents for closing school on February 5th, the day of the primary voting.

Mrs. Cathy Delehanty, GEA President, requested that the February 5th school closings not be handled as a snow day for staff, but should instead be used as a staff development day.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Dr. Ellis to limit the time for speakers to three minutes each.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Celia Fernandez
Glenville PTA Co-President, thanked the Board for their support of URS to oversee the Ham. Ave. building project, and requested that they consider an alternate plan for Glenville students if the modulars are not ready for occupancy by Glenville students in September.

Mrs. Dawn Nethercott &
Mrs. Rose Furano

Ham. Ave. PTA Co-Presidents, urged the Board to keep URS on their project to oversee the work and insure the project will stay on track.

Mrs. Leslie Cooper

GHS PTA Co-President, thanked the Board for their support of the renovation of the Performing Arts space.

Mrs. Rose Fini Sullivan

Parkway School parent, addressed her concerns about the reading initiative and balanced literacy.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT/SHARING INFORMATION

Mr. Bodson reported that the Hamilton Avenue building contractor is projecting completion by April, URS is projecting end of May. He agrees that URS should be kept on as construction manager. He also advised that 18 of the 20 contracts have been awarded for the Glenville building project. That project is on schedule to start construction July 1.

Mrs. Weissler reported that architects Perkins & Will will develop a paper on key land use issues in reference to the GHS Auditorium/Music Instructional space project, which she will send to the Selectman, the BET, and the RTM Education, Finance and Budget Overview Committees.

Dr. Sternberg reported on the Administrative Crosswalk which was successfully completed at Old Greenwich School. She also reported on her meetings with the Principals and Assistant Principals and the K-12 Science meeting. In response to a previous query by a Board member, Dr. Sternberg presented copies of the financial audit reports, which confirmed that we are operating in full compliance with applicable accounting regulations.

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. School Improvement Team Summary Report

Mrs. Greider presented a report summarizing the individual School Improvement Team reports submitted annually. She also updated the Board on the work of the SIT Review Committee, a committee designed to review and improve the SIT process. She outlined the goals for next year. Her presentation was followed by a question and answer period with the Board related to S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely) goals, the alignment of school vs. district goals, different goal levels at different schools, teacher and parent “buy-in”, the level of parent inclusion and involvement, and terms of accountability.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

a. Discussion of Hamilton Avenue School Schedule of Completion and Possible Action on Glenville School Relocation Options

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Bodson to accept the Glenville School relocation options.

The Board again discussed taking action on a contingency plan for Glenville School should Hamilton Avenue School not be completed by the end of this school year. As the substantial completion date for Hamilton Avenue is scheduled for the end of May, it was decided that no action on a contingency plan was necessary at this time. However, there was consensus that the Board continue to include the Hamilton Avenue/Glenville School Buildings on the agenda until they are confident that Hamilton Avenue will be completed in time for Glenville students and staff to move into the modulars. Given needed time schedules, Options 2 and 4 remain open. This item will appear again on the February agenda. Motion was withdrawn.

b. Discussion and Possible Action on Revised Fifteen Year Capital Plan

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to approve the Revised Fifteen Year Capital Plan as submitted.

Mrs. Weissler provided the Board with the background surrounding the revised Fifteen Year Capital Plan and provided an overview of the process that resulted in a reduction of approximately \$9.6 million over the next three years. This process also entailed keeping the Performing Arts project at the high school on the same timeline (A&E in '08-'09, construction in '09-'10). Mr. Byrne had reviewed all projects and rated them as:

1. Not moved from original time sequencing
2. Moved out 3-8 years
3. Moved out 8-11 years

AMENDMENT

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mr. Anderson to add to the motion, "The Board delegates authority to the Board Chairman to make further modification to the CIP Plan."

AMENDMENT

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Mrs. Ponns Cohen, to add the following language to the end of the previous amendment: "up to a reduction of \$10 million as well as to shift projects amongst the next three years."

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

VOTE ON AMENDMENT, AS AMENDED:

8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

VOTE ON MOTION, AS AMENDED

8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

c. **Discussion and Possible Action on InterDistrict Magnet Schools and Regional Vocational Technical Schools**

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mrs. Ponns Cohen to bring this item to the floor for discussion and possible action.

Mr. Curtin presented a report on InterDistrict Magnet and Vocational Technical Schools and the participation of Greenwich students in these programs. There was much discussion about this item centering on the areas of no tuition and no transportation costs to parents, forced tuition mandates from the State, whether limits can be placed on the number of Greenwich students attending outside of the district, plans for monitoring this concern, privacy concerns, the right to recruit on campus, and the desire to have the Board vote on the Stamford Environmental Elementary Interdistrict magnet agreement. The Board requested that this item come back to the February 28th Board Meeting for consideration and in the meantime, they referred it to the Policy Governance Committee for legal and statutory issues. Motion withdrawn.

d. **Action on Monitoring Report E-002, Whole Student Development**

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Ms. Queen to approve Monitoring Report E-002, Whole Student development.

Questions from the Board on this Monitoring Report, presented by Ms. Forde, were on the code of conduct, programs for at risk kids, and how our rates of expulsion and suspensions compare nationally. Ms. Forde advised we did not have national information, but that in comparison to other Connecticut communities, our numbers are high. The Administration is working on different strategies (such as the high school's STARS program) to address these issues.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

e. **Action on Transfers of \$10,000 or More**

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Ms. Queen to approve the Transfers of \$10,000 or More.

A Board member requested information regarding the criteria for centralized versus decentralized expenses.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

f. Approval of Monthly Financial Report

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to approve the Monthly Financial Statement, as submitted.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Calcavecchio advised the Board that expected Excess Costs reimbursement from the State is currently tracking much lower than forecast. He is currently researching and reviewing data input for all areas of this potential issue. He expects to have the specific details by the February meeting, but advised that, with current data, the amount could be in the range of \$1,000,000.

BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Consent Items

1. E-002 - Whole Student Development
2. E-004 – Graduation Requirements
3. E-010 – Strategic Roadmap and Annual Goals
4. E-020 – Financial Management
5. E-040 – Effective Learning Environment
6. E-050 – Management of Human Resources
7. E-051 – Other District Administrative Operations
8. E-080 – Public Involvement in Schools
9. Minutes of December 20, 2007 and January 10, 2008

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to approve the Consent Agenda.

AMENDMENT

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Ponns Cohen and seconded by Mrs. Weissler to remove E-020 and E-051 from the Consent Agenda.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

VOTE ON MOTION, AS AMENDED:

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION

CARRIED

1. **E-020, Whole Student Development**

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Ponns Cohen and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to approve E-020, Whole Student Development.

There was discussion regarding this policy which centered around a Board member's belief that it does not conform to legal issues. It was suggested that the item be postponed until the February Board Meeting.

AMENDMENT

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mrs. Ponns Cohen to add legal reference to 10-220, Duties of the Board of Education, to E-020 policy.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

VOTE ON MOTION, AS AMENDED:

VOTE: 7 in favor, Mrs. Ponns Cohen
opposed

MOTION CARRIED

2. E-051, Other District Administrative Operations

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Queen and seconded by Mrs. Ponn Cohen to approve E-051, Other District Administrative Operations

AMENDMENT

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Mrs. Ponn Cohen to change the word "Equitability" to "Accessibility" for the heading under No. 2.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

VOTE ON MOTION, AS AMENDED:

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

BOARD OPERATIONS PLANNING

a. Agenda Planning – Discussion of the 2007-2008 Agenda Plan

Mrs. Weissler outlined this evening's discussion and the fact that the Board referred the InterDistrict Magnet discussion, the Riverside PTA request for a Waiver of the gift cap, and the Hamilton Avenue/Glenville option items to the February agenda.

A Board member requested a review of the Harris Survey criteria.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Ms. Queen, the meeting was adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Anderson
Secretary