

REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREENWICH BOARD OF EDUCATION

DATE: February 28, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: International School at Dundee

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, Asst. Superintendent
Ms. Mary P. Forde, Director, Pupil Personnel Services
Ms. Kim Eves, Director, Communications
Mr. Richard Calcavecchio, Director of Budget
Mr. Anthony Byrne, Director of Facilities
Dr. Ellen Flanagan, Director of Human Resources

Other:

Mrs. Cathy Delehanty, GEA; Mrs. Julie Faryniarz, Mrs. Kristen Kratky, Mrs. Jackie Johnson, Mrs. Margaret Santhanam, PTA Council; Mrs. Terri Ricci, Mr. Gene Schmidt, Mrs. Angela Schmidt, Mrs. Colleen Alfano, Mrs. Michele Regan, Mrs. Bianka Kortlan-Cox, International School at Dundee; Mr. Tom Conelias, Ms. Alexis Voulgaris, RTM; Mrs. Alicia Budkins, Mrs. Celia Fernandez, Glenville School; Mrs. Sophie Douling, Riverside School; Mrs. Laurie Heiss Grealey, Mrs. Mrs. Jackie Welsh, Greenwich High 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 Superintendent's Office.

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Weissler, Chairman, at 7:04 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mrs. Julia Faryniarz, PTA Council President, spoke about improving achievement and the comprehensive reviews of program progress. She embraced the Secondary Review and expressed her confidence that the review would help us provide additional 21st century skills that students will need upon graduation. She advised that PTAC was encouraging parents to participate in the Harris Survey and the importance of these surveys for proper results. She also commented that PTAC is concerned about District staff being overburdened with excessive emails and requests for information from Board members. PTAC supports all efforts made by the Board to reduce the disturbance to district operations.

Mrs. Cathy Delehanty, GEA President, spoke regarding teachers' disappointment with the BET rejection of the funds for the Childcare program, especially after all the work done by staff and Administration to get the program going. She also spoke about the teachers who had commitments for child care for this coming year and the fact that at this point, they have no recourse.

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

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Aaron Hull GHS teacher, spoke on the disappointment and abandonment he felt after having the Childcare Program rejected by the BET.

Mrs. Laura Erickson & Mrs. Christina Downey Riverside PTA Co-Presidents, asked the Board to support the request for a waiver of the gift cap so they can replace the stage curtains and sound system.

Mrs. Nancy Chapin & Mrs. Bianca Courtlan-Cox ALP Committee, thanked the Board for the forum to discuss ALP with Chris Winters and Barbara O'Neill. Continued dialogue will focus on the scope of the review, benchmarking standards and the means of reporting the results.

Mrs. Rosa Fina Sullivan Parkway parent. Opposed the interdistrict magnet school, stating that it takes away from our district initiatives

- Mrs. Laurie Heis Grealy GHS PTA Co-President, expressed thanks for the upcoming Secondary School review.
- Mrs. Sarita Borden Parkway speech pathologist, spoke of her extreme disappointment with the lack of funding for the Childcare program and her frustration with having counted on the program for her child, and, at this late stage, the difficulty of finding childcare elsewhere.
- Mr. Fred Baker RTM District 5 representative, asked that the Board defer the vote on the interdistrict magnet.
- Mr. George Crossman Community member, spoke on Policy E-040 and specifically E-040.27. He stated concern about the policy limiting teachers' ability to write letters of recommendation for students applying to private schools in Greenwich

BOARD DEVELOPMENT/SHARING INFORMATION

Mr. Bodson reported that they have received a report from URS stating that Hamilton Avenue School will be completed by June 22nd. There has been an increase in staff and work levels. They are monitoring the work schedule very closely. Regarding Glenville, they are on timeline with the awarding of contracts.

Mr. Anderson reported that the Negotiations Committee met on January 28th with the little LIUNA (paraprofessionals and security aides) union. This was the second round of mediation and it is now headed towards an April arbitration date.

Mrs. Weissler discussed Attorney General Blumenthal's opinion dated February 21, 2008, which upheld the State's racial balance statute. She also advised that the operating and capital budgets were approved by the BET Budget Committee, with the exception of the \$15,000 for child care. She advised that Mrs. Queen has been appointed liaison to the Greenwich Leadership Council on Early Childhood Education and also the Greenwich Scholarship Association and that Mrs. Moriarty will serve as the Board representative on the GHS Auditorium / Music Room Building Committee project

Dr. Sternberg advised the Board that she recently attended a focus walkthrough at Central Middle School. She explained the process to the Board and the meeting that follows the walkthrough with the Principal. Dr. Sternberg reported very strong, positive feedback from this walkthrough. She also advised the Board that 39 administrators

and their assistants attending two days of Breakthrough Coach training and invited the Board to attend when she and her assistant go in May.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

a. **Discussion/Update on Hamilton Avenue School Schedule of Completion and Glenville School Relocation Options**

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Cohen to open this item up for discussion.

Mr. Bodson began the discussion, stating that all indications are that the Hamilton Avenue project currently appears to be on time for completion in June. As long as this schedule holds true, there is no need to act at this time. The Board will continue to monitor the timeline and make adjustments as needed. A board member stated we should consider how to improve our monitoring of other construction projects in the future. Mr. Bodson stated that the Glenville project will have a Project Manager, thereby avoiding some of the problems we have had with the Hamilton Avenue project.

There was no vote taken on this motion since the Board decided no action was necessary at this time.

b. **Discussion and Possible Action on Request of Riverside School for Waiver of Gift Cap**

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Ms. Queen to approve the Waiver of Gift Cap for Riverside School.

In discussion, a Board member brought up the issue of future waiver requests having “liberal” time limits but that the waiver requests should contain a final maturity date.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

c. Discussion and Possible Action on Secondary Review Limitations

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. Cohen to approve the Secondary Review Limitations.

Dr. Sternberg reviewed the purpose, membership and scope of the work of the Secondary Review Committee recommendation. There was broad discussion regarding these recommendations from the Board, including composition of the committee, the need to have people from different kinds of work environments on the committee, the scope and purpose as it relates to our policies and procedures, review of the structure regarding instruction, delivery of instruction, success, alignment with mission, and how well we are doing it, what we want students to know coming out of high school in terms of knowledge and skills, clarification of what we want to accomplish, including people on the committee with knowledge of global and overseas economy, membership should be more broad with the inclusion of cutting edge industries and futurists, more clarity on structure, what business and industry are looking for from high school graduates, an analysis of GHS compared to other Connecticut towns, other states and international, that there be no predisposed or preset conclusions, budget impact and consideration, school start times and its impact on teacher retention, what is working and what is not working regarding professional learning, peer mentoring, academic achievement goals, safety considerations, busing, federal and state mandates, and our ARCH and CLP programs.

Dr. Ellis agreed to work with Dr. Sternberg on the next iteration of the limitations, which will be presented to the Board at the March meeting. There was no vote taken on this motion at this time.

d. Discussion and Possible Action on InterDistrict Magnet Schools: Stamford Six to Six/Environmental PreK-8 Magnet

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Dr. Ellis to approve participation in the Stamford Six to Six/Environmental PreK-8 Magnet.

Mr. Curtin reviewed the history of our involvement in magnet schools. The Board questions and concerns related to Administration time and focus spent working

on interdistrict magnets, the fact that whether we participate or not, there would be no difference in tuition if any of our students decided to attend; the costs involved for transportation, impact on student enrollment and racial imbalance issues, special education students and any other incremental costs.

VOTE: 4 in favor, Mr. Cohen, Dr. Ellis,
Mrs. Moriarty, Ms. Queen;
4 opposed, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Bodson,
Mrs. Ponns Cohen, Mrs. Weissler
MOTION FAILED

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. Anderson to withdraw Greenwich from the Cooperative Educational Services Magnet program.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

e. **Action on Tuition/Rental Rates**

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mr. Anderson to approve the Tuition/Rental Rates, as submitted.

Dr. Wallerstein and Mary Forde reviewed the tuition rate proposal. The Board comments related to consideration of a raise in tuition in light of escalating costs.

AMENDMENTS

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Ms. Queen to increase preschool tuition rates (half day) by approximately 10% to \$5,000 and to increase preschool (full day) to \$6,750.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to approve summer school tuition as presented.

VOTE: 7 in favor, none opposed,
Mrs. Ponns Cohen abstained
MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Bodson to increase the K-12 Out of District Tuition K-12 by 4.8%.

VOTE: 7 in favor, none opposed
Mrs. Ponns Cohen abstained

MOTION CARRIED

VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION, AS AMENDED

VOTE: 7 in favor, none opposed,
Mrs. Ponns Cohen abstained

MOTION CARRIED

f. Action on Monitoring Report E-050, Management of Human Resources

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mr. Bodson to approve Monitoring Report E-050.

Dr. Flanagan gave the Board an overview of the Monitoring Report. Board comments centered on customizing staff development for new teachers, volunteer background checks and the disappointment of the Board with the BET decision regarding childcare for staff.

VOTE: 7 in favor, Mrs. Ponns Cohen opposed

MOTION CARRIED

g. Action on Monitoring Report L-020, Professional Personnel Practices

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Dr. Ellis to approve Monitoring Report L-020.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

h. Action on Monitoring Report L-002, Legal Requirements

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Queen and seconded by Mr. Anderson to approve Monitoring Report L-002, Legal Requirements.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

i. Action on Monitoring Report E-080 – Public Involvement in Schools

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to approve Monitoring Report E-080.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

j. Action on Monitoring Report E-051 – District Administrative Operations

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Ms. Queen to approve Monitoring Report E-051.

Board discussion centered on guidance on transfer issues and discussion of shared services. Mr. Anderson agreed to take the lead in the shared services topic.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Mr. Anderson to extend the time of the meeting by ten minutes.

VOTE 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

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

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Mr. Bodson to approve the transfers of \$10,000 or more.

Board discussion focused on the new method of paying bus monitors.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

I. Approval of Monthly Financial Report

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Dr. Ellis to approve the Monthly Financial Report.

A Board member requested that the BET be kept informed on anticipated Major Object transfers as we head into fiscal year end.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes of January 24, January 25, February 2, February 6, and February 7, 2008

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Ms. Queen to approve the minutes of January 24, January 25, February 2, February 6 and February 7, 2008.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

BOARD OPERATIONS PLANNING

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

Dr. Ellis advised that a first reading of revised governance policies would take place at the March 27th Board Meeting and they would be on the April 27th Agenda for Board action. The Board requested Dr. Flanagan to lead a discussion on E-080 Volunteers procedures in April. The resolution regarding the Greenwich Alliance will be presented at the March Work Session. There would also be a post mortem discussion on the '08-'09 budget so Board members were requested to finish submission of their comments.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. Cohen, the meeting was adjourned at 10:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Anderson
Secretary