

REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREENWICH BOARD OF EDUCATION

DATE: March 27, 2008, 7:30 p.m.

PLACE: Central 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. Kristen Kratky, Mrs. M. J. Foti, Mrs. Sue Rogers, PTA Council; Ms. Carol Walsh, Principal, Ms. Karen Vitti, Mr. Charles Smith, Mrs. Kathy Bryers, Mrs. Emily Michaud, Central Middle School; Mr. Marc D'Amico, Principal, Mrs. Michele Albanese, Mrs. Laura Kelly, Mrs. Donna Curtis, Mrs. Alicia Budkins, Mrs. Ellen Lewis, Mrs. Alicia Fernandez, Mrs. Marilyn Voges, Glenville School; Mrs. Nancy Barton, Mr. Steven Walko, BET; Mr. Peter Tesei, First Selectman; Mrs. Genevieve Krob, FHSPA; Mr. Tom Conelias, Mrs. Alexis Voulgaris, RTM; Mrs. Dawn Nethercott, Mrs. Rose Furano, Mrs. Laura DiBella, Mrs. Donna Ortoli, Mrs. Mina Bibeault, Mr. Robert MacIntyre, Mrs. Lisa Horch, Hamilton Avenue School; Mr. Bill Robbins, New Lebanon School; Ms. Hoa Nguyen, 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 7:34 p.m.

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

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC HEARING

Mrs. Julie Faryniarz, PTA Council President, thanked the staff, parents, teachers, Board, PTA, town leaders and parents and receiving school communities for assisting the Hamilton Avenue students that are being displaced due to mold in the modulars. She acknowledged the frustration of the Ham. Ave. community and suggested a town paid employee be hired to monitor all school facilities building projects. She also suggested that we come up with swing space in case another situation like this arises. She also stressed the importance of keeping the Glenville students/community together during their displacement for construction on their school.

Mrs. Cathy Delehanty, GEA President, acknowledged the challenge to teachers trying to deliver a quality education to students that have been displaced throughout the district. She also suggested the importance of looking to reduce class size in light of the many initiatives to improve achievement. She asked for time during the school day for teachers to involve themselves in professional learning and collaboration, by offering several early release days.

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

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Robert Jeffress, Coordinator of the STARS Program at Greenwich High School, presented his students. The students talked about their experience in the program and how it has helped them improve their grades and attitudes toward school in general.

The following people spoke at the public hearing regarding the Hamilton Avenue School modulars, the new Hamilton Avenue school construction project and the Glenville Relocation Plan:

Mr. Robert MacIntyre
Mrs. Laura DiBella
Mr. Vincent Demartis
Mrs. Mina Bibeault
Mrs. Gina DeMartis
Mrs. Donna Curtis
Mr. Henry Baker
Mrs. Dawn Nethercott & Mrs. Rose Furano
Mrs. Donna Ortoli
Mrs. Celia Fernandez
Mrs. Siegrun Pottgen
Mr. Brian Finkel
Mr. Paul Curtis

Mrs. Anna Saras spoke at the Public Hearing regarding the Mission/Core Values initiative.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT/SHARING INFORMATION

Dr. Ellis stated that the Policy Governance committee would review the community feedback on the Mission and Core Values statement and bring it back to the Board at the May Work Session.

Mrs. Moriarty stated that the Advisory Committee on Facilities would be meeting on Monday, March 31, at 7:00 p.m. at the Havemeyer Building to review more specific options relating to the modulars.

Mr. Anderson advised that he and Ellen Flanagan have initiated discussions with the town child care centers related to obtaining child care for teachers.

Mr. Bodson reported that the Hamilton Avenue contractor has stated that the building will be completed by May 22nd. We are projecting a June / July timeline to receive the temporary Certificate of Occupancy. The four main outstanding construction issues have been given to Worth and they are meeting again next Tuesday to address them.

Dr. Sternberg gave an extensive report on the work on the Hamilton Avenue modulars, relocation issues and how they are being addressed, and the anticipated relocation of Glenville for their upcoming construction. She told the Board about staff development day and the effects that took place, including our strong efforts to continue business as usual across the entire school system.

Discussion of Hamilton Avenue School Schedule of Completion/Update on Current Relocation Plan

Building on Dr. Sternberg's abovementioned report, the discussion on this item centered on the analysis of the Charles Street bus stop and issues that have been resolved from Monday's meeting with the Ham Ave community. It was agreed that there would be an update on open issues at the April 3 Work Session and that the lines of communication to the community continue to be kept open.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

a. Action on Revision to Charge to Advisory Committee on Facilities

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Ponns Cohen and seconded by Ms. Queen to approve the Revision to the Charge to the Advisory Committee on Facilities.

Mrs. Weissler explained the change in the wording in Item 1 of the charge to be changed to: "work with the Administration to develop options for 1) the location of the Hamilton Avenue School students if their new building is not available for use by the start of the 2008-2009 school year, and 2) the location of the Glenville School students during the planned building renovation project"

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

b. Discussion and Possible Action on Relocation Options

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Dr. Ellis to authorize the Board Chair to request that the First Selectman (or other appropriate authority) submit a Municipal Improvement request to the Board of Selectman to repurpose the Western Greenwich Civic Center as a school.

Mrs. Moriarty provided an overview of the school relocation plans. She advised that First Selectman Tesei is helping to clear the issues with the Western Greenwich Civic Center and we are also looking into using either the existing modulars or new modulars. It was suggested that we should look into

securing swing space for the long term. There was discussion pertaining to the removal of Options #6 and #19 from the list of possible relocation options; consensus was to consider removing these items as they were not considered to be viable long-term solutions.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mr. Anderson to have the Board ask our Board representative to communicate to the Glenville Building Committee not to move ahead with the demolition of the building until we are certain that the Hamilton Avenue School is completed.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

REVISED MOTION:

It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Mr. Cohen to have the Board vote to communicate to the Glenville Building Committee the Board's expected timing of substantial completion on the Hamilton Avenue School project.

VOTE: 6 in favor, Ms. Queen &
Mrs. Ponns Cohen abstained MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Ponns Cohen and seconded by Ms. Queen to delay consideration of the Mission/Core Values and ALP review until the later of Hamilton Avenue being completed and Glenville construction starting.

VOTE: Ms. Queen & Mrs. Ponns
Cohen in favor, 6 against MOTION FAILED

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Mr. Cohen to extend the meeting by thirty minutes.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Dr. Ellis to move Item 7c, Discussion of District Priorities, to be discussed now.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

7c. Discussion of District Priorities

In light of the time and effort that the Board and Administration have been spending on the Hamilton Avenue school construction, the Hamilton Avenue modulars mold issues and student relocation, and the Glenville School construction project, Dr. Sternberg provided an overview of proposed changes to our District Priorities.

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Ponns Cohen and seconded by Mr. Cohen to postpone the 2007-2008 initiatives of Secondary Review, Development of Benchmark Assessments for Science and plan for educator childcare program.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mrs. Weissler to postpone the Advanced Learning Program Review.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. Cohen to continue in pilot form the K-5 Revised Report Card and to delay its full roll-out.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. Bodson to postpone refining implementation of modes of communication with stakeholder groups.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. Bodson to change “implement” to “explore options” for childcare program.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Dr. Ellis to extend the meeting until 11:00 p.m.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Ponns Cohen and seconded by Ms. Queen to delay consideration of the Mission/Core Values statement.

Board discussion on this motion focused on the need to get the Mission statement in place for the start of the '08 – '09 school year and the belief that the majority of the required work had already been done.

VOTE: Mrs. Ponns Cohen, in favor, 6 against, Ms. Queen abstained
MOTION FAILED

5.c Discussion and Possible Action on Secondary Review Limitations

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Queen and seconded by Mrs. Ponns Cohen to open discussion on Secondary Review Limitations.

Dr. Sternberg gave the Board an overview of the revisions to the Secondary School Review Limitations. The Board made the following changes to the document:

1. Under Process, change the January 30, 2008 and February 2008 dates to 2009.
2. Under Phase III, Item 7, change the wording to “transition between elementary and middle and middle and high school”.
3. Page 3, number 9, add the word “possible” before “the” and “use” in item 9.
4. Correction of spelling in Cost of Recommendations/Schedule of Implementation.
5. Under that category, omit “To the extent possible”, and replace the word “determine” with the word “quantify”.
6. Assure that a parent representative from elementary schools is on the committee.

The Board requested that these changes be made and the limitations be brought back to the April 24th meeting.

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mr. Bodson to move Item 7a, First Reading, Monitoring Report E-003 – World Language next.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

7.a First Reading, Monitoring Report E-003 – World Language

Mr. Winters, Program Coordinator for Curriculum and Instruction, and Mrs. Marsha Schenker, Greenwich High School Program Coordinator for World Language, provided the Board with an overview of the Monitoring Report. Board member discussion centered on the possibility of requiring a World Language graduation requirement, the possibility of making World Language a core class in the middle schools, the possibility of adding Mandarin to the Julian Curtiss language menu, and how the high school reallocates staff as student demand for various languages shifts over time.

5.d. Non-Renewal of Not-Tenured Staff

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Cohen to approve the Non-Renewal of Non-Tenured Staff, as presented.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

5.e Action on 2007-2008 School Calendar Changes

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Cohen to approve the 2007-2008 Calendar Changes.

The Board reviewed the proposed changes to the 2007-2008 School Calendar to establish the last day of school for students and staff based on the number of snow days taken this year. The Board postponed the decision until its April 3rd Work Session, waiting for the final decision from the State Commissioner of Education on the Superintendent's requested waiver of three school days for the Hamilton Avenue students.

Motion withdrawn by Mr. Anderson.

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

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Dr. Ellis to approve the Transfers of \$10,000 or more, as submitted.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

5.g Approval of Monthly Financial Report

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

Discussion focused on the Hamilton Avenue modulars relocation costs, Special Education reimbursements, and the expected variances as the budget year heads toward conclusion.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

a. **Approval of Minutes of February 28 and February 29, 2008**

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. Bodson to approve the Minutes of February 28 and February 29, 2008.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. Cohen, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Anderson
Secretary