

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENWICH BOARD OF EDUCATION

DATE: October 11, 2007, 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: New Lebanon School

PRESENT:

Board: Mrs. Colleen Giambo, Chairman
Mrs. Leslie Moriarty, Vice Chairman
Mrs. Nancy Weissler, Secretary
Mr. Steven B. Anderson
Mr. Michael C. Bodson
Dr. Susan S. Ellis
Ms. Virginia L. Gwynn
Mr. William G. Kelly

Administration:

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

Other:

Mrs. Tracy McKenna, Mr. & Mrs. Bill Robbins, Mrs. Jan Kach, Mrs. Philippa Orszulak, Mrs. Christine Marullo, Mrs. Kathy Sabanski, Mrs. Andrea Vaz, Mr. Michael Bocchino, Mrs. Alex Popp, Mrs. Sue Carriero, Mrs. Amanda Fernandez, Mrs. Karen Popp, Mr. Silvestre Tejada, Mr. Gene Nyitray, Principal, New Lebanon School; Mrs. Kristen Taylor, Old Greenwich; Mrs. Allison Burns, Mrs. Angelique Bell, Parkway School; Mr. Jonathan Cohen, Mrs. Marianna Ponns Cohen, Ms. Natalie Queen, Board of Education candidates; Mrs. Genevieve Krob, Mrs. Pam Speer, Mrs. Lilian Eng, Mrs. Janice Gardner, FHSPA; Mr. Andy Shaw, Greenwich Time, Mr. Ken Borsuk, Greenwich Post and other members of the public. An attendance list is on file in the Board of Education offices.

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Giambo, Chairman at 7:20 p.m.

1. Discussion of RISE Options

Mrs. Giambo asked Dr. Ellis to facilitate the RISE discussion. Prior to the start of the Work Session, the Board had organized a Community Forum from 6-7 PM to solicit feedback from the community about the RISE options, with each Board member facilitating a discussion with about 10 participants. A summary of the main themes that emerged from the Community Forum is attached to these minutes. To form a context for evaluating the RISE Options, the Board identified key guiding principles that would provide the foundation for any options that would be adopted (see attached Affirmations). The Board discussion centered on the following issues: building utilization, transportation, open choice, data requests, preschool students, the key factors for successful magnet programs, current magnet programs, and whether IB should be implemented at New Lebanon (see attached Summary). The Board identified additional data requests to be addressed by the Administration prior to the next Board meeting (see attached Data Requests).

Action will be taken on the recommendations at the October 25th Board Meeting.

2. Action on Fifteen Year Capital Plan

Dr. Wallerstein presented the Fifteen Year Capital Plan, including an explanation of 1) the GHS Auditorium and Music Instructional Space project with funding for A&E in 2008-2009 and construction in 2009-2010 and 2) the Central Office (Havemeyer) project with funding for in 2009-2010, and construction in 2010-2011.

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

In the discussions, it was noted that the Central Office estimates do not include construction escalation (which is included in the GHS project estimate). It was noted that any estimates for additional parking at GHS for the project are very preliminary, and Mr. Bodson expressed his concern that the estimated \$3.0 million for an extra 80 spaces is excessive.

AMENDMENT

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Mrs. Weissler to submit Option B (in which the existing auditorium is demolished), excluding additional parking expenses of \$3,011,000 and including a footnote indicating that parking is not included in the numbers. The submitted CIP project sheet and 15 Year Capital Plan were to be adjusted accordingly.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

ACTION ON ORIGINAL MOTION, AS AMENDED

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

3. Discussion of 2008-2009 Budget Strategies/Initiatives

Dr. Sternberg made a presentation to the Board on the 2008-2009 Areas of Focus and Budget Strategies/Initiatives. Questions centered around how we assess the results of our investment, how many initiatives are new, and what the plans are to expand the use of formative assessments.

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Gwynn and seconded by Dr. Ellis to extend the meeting by a half hour.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Giambo noted the importance of soliciting more public input in the Curriculum Review Process. Mr. Anderson requested that the Administration include plans for a more rigorous residency verification procedure in the 2008-2009 Budget.

4. Discussion on Monitoring Report E-003, Academic Mastery, Reading

Mr. Winters, Ms. Marie Jordan-Whitney, and Mr. Larry Sullivan reviewed the Monitoring Report for Reading with the Board. Ms. Leslie Pearson and Ms. Jane Cook, teachers at Julian Curtiss School, made a presentation to the Board about the strategies they use to improve students' effectiveness in making reader text connections. Recent Greenwich CMT results were weak in this area, but Julian Curtiss had outperformed the District.

As a whole, the Board expressed serious concern over the results and the lack of improvement in nearly all areas. The Board asked for more information on why there wasn't much movement beyond the proficiency level, and a further discussion of Tier 2 and Tier 3. This led to a staffing discussion and the amount of time spent at the schools on reading, particularly at Western, which has the least amount of time allocated to it among the middle schools. The Board also asked what was being done for middle school and high school students who are not proficient. An update and further review was scheduled for the November 1st Work Session, and the Administration was asked to

address the questions compiled by parents on the reading program as part of that review.

5. Agenda Planning

Agenda Planning was deferred to the next meeting.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to move into Executive Session to discuss the Superintendent's Evaluation and the Board Self-Evaluation at 9:45 p.m.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting returned to regular session at 10:35 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Nancy Weissler
Secretary