

## REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREENWICH BOARD OF EDUCATION

**DATE:** October 25, 2007, 7:00 p.m.

**PLACE:** Parkway 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  
Mr. Richard Calcavecchio, Director of Budget

**Other:**

Mrs. Cathy Delehanty, GEA; Mrs. Julie Faryniarz, PTA Council; Mrs. Natalie Queen, Mr. Jonathan Cohen, Mrs. Marianna Ponns Cohen, Board of Education candidates; Mrs. Paula Bleakley, Mr. Medard Thomas, Mrs. Beth Cotter, Mrs. Rosa Sullivan, Mrs. Agustina Blanco, Mrs. Dawn Coleti, Mrs. Anna Saras, Ms. Katie Bennett, Mrs. Bebbie Castleman, Mrs. Alison Burns, Mrs. Leslie Breck, Mrs. Terri Collins, Parkway School; Mr. Ralph Mayo, Mrs. Laura Erickson, Mr. & Mrs. Ned Bancroft, Mrs. Libby Lane, Ms. Paige Birnbaum, Mrs. Mary Ann Murray, Mrs. Elizabeth Barth, Ms. Faith Sweeney, RISE Task Force; Mr. Andrew Shaw, Greenwich Time, and Mr. Ken Borsuk, Greenwich Post 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. Giambo, Chairman at 7:04 p.m.

This was the last regular Board Meeting for retiring Board members. Colleen Giambo, Virginia L. Gwynn, and William G. Kelly were recognized for their

contributions to the Board of Education during their tenure and presented with gifts of appreciation.

Mrs. Fran Kompar, was recognized for receiving the CEMA Administrator's Award, which was presented by Mr. John Curtin.

MOTION: Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned to a reception at 7:50 p.m.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

Mrs. Julie Faryniarz, PTA Council President, spoke on the need for respectful relations and communication within the school community. She noted that two important themes emerged from the work of the RISE Task Force: 1) student achievement is the top priority for everyone and 2) neighborhood schools are valued highly by the community. She noted that PTAC has identified the following priorities for the 2007-2008 Budget: increased investment in technology to develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills; equity in assured experiences; math specialists; and access to guidance counselors at GHS in the summer. She also advised of PTAC's support for the GHS Auditorium/Music Instructional Space Project and a contingency plan for Glenville if Hamilton Avenue is not ready by next September. She expressed her appreciation for the outgoing Board members.

Mrs. Cathy Delehanty, GEA President, spoke on the need to receive and incorporate feedback from the TEPD pilot program and expressed teacher support for small class sizes.

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

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Anna Saras Parkway parent, spoke against the proposed magnet program for New Lebanon. She also stated that she thought the cost estimates for RISE were understated because she did not believe that all consulting costs had been included.

Mrs. Diane Pignitaro Parkway parent, spoke against creating a magnet school at New Lebanon. She noted the focus of the schools should be on academic excellence.

- Mr. Bill Robbins New Lebanon parent, noted that there already is a two-tiered educational system in Greenwich and creating a magnet at New Lebanon might be a way to address that issue.
- Mr. Bob Brady RTM Education Committee Chairman and member of the RISE Task Force, urged the Board to vote for the RISE recommendations keeping in mind that racial imbalance is illegal under state law and the Board must abide by the law.
- Mrs. Allison Burns and Mrs. Leslie Breck Parkway PTA Co-Presidents, spoke on the RISE initiative and the importance on focusing on academic achievement and the whole child.
- Mr. George Crossman RISE Task Force member, expressed displeasure with the recommendations brought to the committee, since five of the seven recommendations included the implementation of another magnet school.
- Mr. Wheatley Dunham ISD Parent, spoke on expanding voluntary magnet programs while still maintaining a focus on neighborhood schools. He also spoke on the need to put academic excellence first.
- Mrs. Celia Fernandez and Mrs. Alicia Budkins Glenville PTA Co-Presidents and three former PTA Presidents, appealed to the Board to develop contingency plans for Glenville if Hamilton Avenue is not completed by next September
- Mrs. Patti Roer Glenville parent, spoke on the same issue.
- Mrs. Dawn Nethercott and Mrs. Rose Furano Hamilton Avenue School PTA Co-Presidents, spoke in support of the work of the Building Committee, the Board, and the Superintendent on behalf of Hamilton Avenue School.

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Gwynn and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to move Item 8.a. Action on RISE Options, ahead of the Board Development/Sharing Information items.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

**8.a Action on RISE Options**

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Ms. Gwynn to adopt Option 4 (New Lebanon as a partial IB magnet) of the RISE Options.

The Board had a lengthy discussion about some of the elements of the proposed option:

**Modified Open Choice:** The Board discussed the merits of making modified open choice available to those students not achieving proficiency over a two-year period. Board members discussed making transportation available to those students who qualified under this criteria and noted that modified open choice would also depend on the availability of space at nonmagnet schools. The Board also asked the Administration to identify and recommend the meaningful academic measures that could be used for the modified open choice criteria. Mr. Anderson expressed his objection to the proposal based on his concern that it would divert resources that could be otherwise allocated to education to transportation and that current policy offers parents the opportunity to appeal to the Superintendent to have their children attend a nonneighborhood school—though transportation is not provided in that case.

**Magnet Program for New Lebanon:** Board members agreed that the focus of a magnet program at New Lebanon should be on raising academic achievement for all students. The Board further indicated that a magnet program at New Lebanon should be designed to be attractive to parents both in the neighborhood and in the rest of Greenwich as well as to the staff. It was also noted that staff development and teacher acceptance of the magnet program would be important to its successful implementation. Planning and training are to be scheduled for the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years; however, the Administration is encouraged to identify interim steps to raise academic achievement at New Lebanon. It was also noted that the completion of the construction of both Hamilton Avenue and Glenville is likely to result in some additional movement of students.

**Current Magnet Programs:** The Board also requested that the Administration prepare a report on the status of the current magnet schools. The Board expressed the concern that the rollout of FLES may have diminished that attractiveness of Julian Curtiss' magnet program.

Original motion withdrawn by Mr. Bodson.

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



MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Dr. Ellis that the Administration will provide periodic updates to the Board of Education on the progress of planning and implementation.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed                      MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Mrs. Weissler that the Administration will provide a report to the Board on current magnet schools by June 2008.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed                      MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Dr. Ellis to have a five minute break.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed                      MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Gwynn and seconded by Mrs. Weissler to move the Summer School Report, Item 7c, ahead of Board Development/Sharing Information.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed                      MOTION CARRIED

**7.c                      Summer School Report**

Mrs. Greider and Mrs. Mary Mediate, Summer School Principal, reviewed the Summer School results and answered questions from the Board. In general, the Board commended Mrs. Mediate for the effective Summer School program. Discussion centered on whether the District should provide transportation and other support for those students on ISIPs to encourage them to attend Summer School.

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Weissler and seconded by Mr. Bodson to extend the time of the meeting until 11:00 p.m.

VOTE:                      8 in favor, none opposed                      MOTION CARRIED

## **BOARD DEVELOPMENT/SHARING INFORMATION**

Mr. Bodson reported the Hamilton Avenue project is delayed and the new target completion date is February 18<sup>th</sup>. He expressed disappointment with the change of date. Mr. Kelly suggested shifting workers from the Safety Complex project to the Hamilton Avenue project. Mr. Bodson also reported that the Glenville project has been accorded “new construction” status which should help maximize state reimbursement.

Mr. Kelly advised regarding the arbitration award for the GEA contract, in which the arbitrators found for the Board with a 2.8% GWI and against the Board’s proposed performance pay plan. He stated that the award would go to the RTM and that under state statute it will have the option of rejecting the arbitration decision.

Dr. Sternberg advised the Board on: 1) the crosswalk at New Lebanon School to encourage professional learning; 2) preventive measures against the MRSA virus; and 3) a recent meeting with parents.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **a. Discussion of Board Self-Evaluation**

Mrs. Giambo reviewed the results of the Board self-evaluation; the results addressed achievements and areas for development.

### **b. Discussion of Superintendent’s Evaluation**

Mrs. Giambo reviewed the results of the Superintendent’s evaluation; the results addressed achievement and areas for development.

## **BOARD ACTION ITEMS**

### **b. Approval of Transfers \$10,000 or More**

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Gwynn and seconded by Mr. Bodson to approve the Transfers \$10,000 or More, as submitted.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

**c. Action on Monthly Financial Statement**

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

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

**d. Action on Budget Resolution**

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mr. Anderson to Authorize the Superintendent to Request Two Amendments to the 2008-2009 Budget Resolution, as submitted.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

**BOARD CONSENT AGENDA**

**a. Approval of Minutes of September 20 and October 9, 2007**

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Gwynn and seconded by Mr. Bodson to approve the minutes of September 20 and October 9, 2007.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

Upon motion duly made Mrs. Weissler and seconded by Mr. Kelly, adjourned to Executive Session at 11:00 p.m to discuss the Superintendent Evaluation.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Executive Session returned to public session at 11:04 p.m.

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mr. Bodson to approve a performance payment of \$7,500 for Dr. Sternberg for the 2006-2007 school year.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Nancy Weissler  
Secretary