

REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREENWICH BOARD OF EDUCATION

DATE: November 29, 2007, 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: North Mianus School

PRESENT:

Board: Mrs. Leslie Moriarty, Vice-Chairman
Mrs. Nancy Weissler, Secretary
Mr. Steven B. Anderson
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

Other:

Mrs. Cathy Delehanty, GEA; Mrs. Julie Faryniarz, Mrs. Jackie Johnson, Mrs. Patti Jomo, Mrs. Sue Rogers, Mrs. Anne Miller, Mrs. Carol Coughlin, PTA Council; Mrs. Bonnie Butera, Ms. Jenn Bensivengo, Mr. Tom Pastore, Mrs. Anne Pfetsch, Mrs. Kelley Moore, Mrs. Karen Hasterok, Mrs. Alexandra Buss, North Mianus School; Mr. Bill Robbins, New Lebanon School; Mrs. Genevieve Krob, Mrs. Lillian Eng, FHSPA; Mrs. Paige Davis, Mrs. Leslie Cooper, Mrs. Laurie Heiss Grealey, Mrs. Cynthia Zizzi, Mrs. Debbie Finkelstein, 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. Moriarty, Vice-Chairman at 6:20 p.m. The Board moved into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation. A motion was duly made and seconded to move out of Executive Session at 7:00pm.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MOTION:: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Cohen to nominate Mrs. Nancy Weissler as Chairman of the Board of Education.

VOTE 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mrs. Weissler to nominate Mrs. Leslie Moriarty as Vice-Chairman of the Board of Education.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Mrs. Ponns Cohen to nominate Mr. Steven Anderson as Secretary of the Board of Education.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned to a reception at 7:20 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mrs. Julie Faryniarz, PTA Council President, congratulated and welcomed Ms. Queen, Mr. Cohen and Mrs. Ponns Cohen to the Board of Education and thanked the rest of the members of the Board for the amount of time they spend volunteering to support the efforts of the staff for the benefit of the students. She spoke in support of the Educational Specifications for the GHS Music/Auditorium project and expressed concern about the lack of progress with the construction at Hamilton Avenue School. She stressed the need to move this project along and get the Glenville project underway and students moved out of that building.

Mrs. Cathy Delehanty, GEA President, welcomed new Board members and congratulated new Board officers.

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

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Anna Saras Parkway parent, spoke on the budget, stating that she believes there are critical pieces missing, such as per school/per student expenditures and the need to have individual school overhead costs. She stated that she believes that per student spending varies by school from a low of \$7,600 to a high of over \$21,000. These cost variances need to be explained.

Mrs. Celia Fernandez Glenville parent, provided a history of the Glenville open space problems and stated she is looking forward hearing these problems be addressed at the December meeting.

Mrs. Nancy Chapin & Mrs. Bianca Cortlan-Cox ALP parents, support a rigorous academic program for high achievers, and made the following requests:
1) backup data for disparity in per student expenditures.
2) clarify the level of parent involvement in the upcoming ALP review
3) assure that educational needs for ALL children are funded.

Mrs. Rose Furano
Mrs. Dawn Nethercott Hamilton Avenue School parents, were extremely unhappy with what they view as continual delays and broken promises regarding their school. They stated that they are extremely cramped in the modulars, have no single room where more than 50 students can convene, the new building is still not watertight, construction is over budget, and the delivery on the building is already eight months behind schedule. Encouraged the Board to help resolve ongoing construction and communication issues.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT/SHARING INFORMATION

Mr. Bodson reported that Worth Construction has refused to temporarily heat the new Hamilton Avenue School. Heat is required in order to continue work to the inside of the building. The Hamilton Avenue Building Committee is frustrated and he knows the parents and staff are frustrated as well. They are working on a solution.

He also reported that the Glenville Building Committee has received the timeline for the Glenville project.

Mr. Anderson reported the Negotiations Committee is scheduled for mediation for little LIUNA on December 18th.

Dr. Sternberg advised the Board that she attended the Reading Summit in Waterbury today with Mrs. Greider and Ms. Marie Jordan-Whitney. She received a letter from the State Board of Education on November 26th advising that the State Board of Education will meet to review our racial balance plan because we did not pick one of the seven options originally suggested. Mrs. Weissler and Dr. Sternberg will attend the hearing. She also advised the Board about the large amount of staff time that has been spent on answering the second round of questions related to the budget.

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Discussion of Educational Specifications for Greenwich High School Music Rooms/Auditorium Project

Mr. Rusty Malik, architect with Perkins & Will, provided the Board with a presentation and detailed explanation of the Educational Specifications for the Greenwich High School Music Rooms/Auditorium Project.

Questions from the Board members addressed the following: comparable data for surrounding communities for high school music rooms/auditorium space; the opportunity to share space with other academic areas; the rationale for including

the thrust and pit; and the impact of the project on the ventilation of and possible future air conditioning of the gym.

b. Presentation on Strategic School Profiles

In the absence of Mr. Curtin, Dr. Sternberg reviewed the summary sheet which was prepared by Mr. Curtin. Comments from the Board centered on time on task variances among schools (especially in the area of middle school reading), percentage of budget for special education, a request for the breakdown of special education costs percentage trends compared to other districts, a request to attempt to correct the classification of Hamilton Avenue and Julian Curtiss as intradistrict schools, not interdistrict schools, a desire to reword parts of the narrative section, results regarding free and reduced lunch students, tracking the performance of the 5.1% who did not participate in preschool, separating certified staff per building vs. variable cost, instructional time and remedial time per building, low physical fitness scores in grade four at certain schools. Dr. Sternberg noted that the Administration is working to clarify the base data reporting and that the Profiles have already been submitted to the state.

c. First Reading, Board Meeting Calendar for 2008-2009

The Board reviewed the Board Meeting Calendar for 2008-2009 and commented that there is no meeting from June to August and it was suggested that the Board consider a meeting in July. There was no concurrence from the majority of Board members.

d. First Reading, School Calendar for 2009-2010

The Board reviewed the 2009-2010 School Calendar and commented about the value of staff development days at the end of the year and their feeling that staff development days should not be at the beginning or the end of the school year. They also commented that the February and April break are too close together. Other comments: a suggestion to move the February break back a week and making a shorter April vacation. Dr. Flanagan will bring multiple versions to the next Board Meeting.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

a. **Action on New Courses at Greenwich High School**

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to approve the New Courses at Greenwich High School as presented.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

b. **Action on Monitoring Report E-003 Academic Mastery, Reading**

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mr. Bodson to approve Monitoring Report E-003, Academic Mastery, Reading.

There was a question regarding whether the Board approves textbooks or electronic media and this issue was referred to the Policy Governance Committee to determine scheduling of reviews and the inclusion of pilots and definition of textbooks.

There was also a question about the length of time a student usually spends in ESL and whether or not there is a maximum amount of time to be in the program.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

c. **Action on Monitoring Report E-003, Academic Mastery, Math**

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Ponns Cohen and seconded by Mr. Anderson to approve Monitoring Report E-003, Academic Mastery, Math.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

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

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

AMENDMENT

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Bodson and seconded by Mrs. Moriarty to change the code and description on the final entry for 10/17/07 to read A620 16 68 52150, Office Services, and to change the last entry on 11/1/97 to A600 17 93 54150, and to change the description on the last entry for 11/9/07 to Printing and Binding.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION, AS AMENDED

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

d. Approval of Monthly Financial Report

MOTION: It was moved by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. Bodson to approve the monthly financial report.

Discussion on this item centered around the Continuing Education Operating Deficit, the inclusion of indirect costs, whether overhead costs are included, where we stand regarding residency issues and costs associated with it, and the fact that we may be required to seek an interim appropriation in the spring to cover increased enrollment.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes of September 27, October 11, 2007, October 25, November 1 and November 8, 2007

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Queen and seconded by Mrs. Ponns Cohen to approve the minutes of September 27, October 11, October 25, November 1 and November 8, 2007.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

BOARD OPERATIONS PLANNING

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

Mrs. Weissler advised she wanted to consider adding items to the agenda plan related to:

1. Discussion of the plans for the Harris Survey;
2. Ends and Limitations for the Secondary Review;
3. Ends and Limitations for the ALP Review;
4. Report on New Lebanon Magnet Program Committee
5. The PPS Report;
6. The Curriculum Review Process
7. The Strategic Road Map.

Upon motion duly made by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mr. Cohen, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Anderson
Secretary