

REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREENWICH BOARD OF EDUCATION

TIME: August 31, 2006

PLACE: Western Middle School

PRESENT:

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

Administration:

Dr. Betty J. Sternberg, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Mary Capwell, Deputy Superintendent
Mr. John P. Curtin, Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Susan O. Wallerstein, Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Ellen Flanagan, Director of Human Resources
Mr. Anthony Byrne, Director of Facilities
Mr. Richard Calcavecchio, Director of Budget
Ms. Mary P. Forde, Director, Pupil Personnel Services
Ms. Kim Eves, Director of Communications

Other:

Mrs. Cathy Delehanty, President, GEA; Mrs. Janice Richards, Mrs. Gerri Fleming, Mrs. Sue Rogers, Mrs. Julie Faryniarz, PTA Council; Mrs. Genny Krob, Mrs. Marjorie Stone Rodriguez, Mrs. Debbie Appelbaum, Mrs. Paige Davis, Greenwich High School; Mrs. Allison Tepper, Mrs. Erica Purnell, Mrs. Sharon Wilson, Mr. Clay Mera, Mrs. Jane Kahn, Mrs. Melinda Pecora, Mrs. Debbi Biagi, Mrs. Wendy Bufford, Mrs. Deborah DeBrisco, Mrs. Lora Parisi, Mrs. Virginia DiSapio, Ms. Jennifer Vitiello, Mr. Michael Morrotto, Ms. Stacey Gross, Principal, Western Middle School; Mrs. Lisa Harkness, Mrs. Patricia DeWitt, Mr. Carl Marinaccio, Mr. Marc D'Amico, Principal, Mrs. Marlene Gilbert, Mrs. Donna Curtis, Mrs. Cecilia Fernandez, Glenville School; Ms. Keach Heagey, Greenwich Time; Mr. Ken Borsuk, Greenwich News, and various community members. An attendance list is on file in the Superintendent's Office.

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Giambo, Chairman, at 7:02 p.m.

Mrs. Giambo spoke on the retirement of Mr. Steven H. LoParco from the Board of Education, effective September 1, 2006 and his contributions to the Board of Education during his tenure.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Gwynn to adjourn to a reception at 7:15 p.m.

The meeting was called back to order by Mrs. Giambo, Chairman, at 7:35 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mrs. Janice Richards, PTA Council President, expressed a welcome to Dr. Sternberg and appreciation to Mr. LoParco for his contributions to the Board. She stated that the PTAC's focus for this year are in the areas of academic achievement, equity of school gifts, strengthening communication links between home and schools, implementation progress of math curriculum, whole student development and closing the achievement gaps, facilities utilization, and the school budget.

Ms. Cathy Delehanty, GEA President, welcomed Dr. Sternberg and expressed thanks to Mr. LoParco for his contributions to the Board. She expressed a concern about the pressure on teachers to achieve this year's initiatives and a desire to have the Board, Central Office and administrators and teachers working together as a team.

Mrs. Lisa Harkness, Co-President of the Glenville School PTA, thanked Mr. LoParco for his efforts on the Board, particularly in his role with the Glenville construction project and expressed the PTA's support of the action item on the Agenda to include Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment for the Glenville building project.

Mrs. Melinda Pecora and Mr. Sylvester Pecora spoke about the construction at the Byram Shubert Library resulting in the loss of sidewalks and lack of safe entry and exit for school children going to New Lebanon School. They also spoke about the loss of parking for school employees and parents visiting the school.

Mrs. Alicia Comesana-Vila, Co-President of the New Lebanon PTA, also spoke of the dangerous situation for children walking to New Lebanon School with the loss of safe passageway due to construction. She asked for Board support to improve the situation for the students.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT/SHARING INFORMATION

a. Reports of Officers, Committees, Liaisons, and Superintendent

Mrs. Giambo reported on the Executive Committee Meeting and thanked Mrs. Capwell for acting as Interim Superintendent during the summer.

Ms. Gwynn reported that the Policy Governance Committee will be meeting on September 15th at 9:00 a.m. and will be planning the agenda for this school year.

Mr. LoParco reported that Hamilton Avenue School construction project is moving forward and the excavation has been completed. Glenville School Building Committee has approved the final schematics plan and is moving forward with the architect.

Dr. Sternberg thanked everyone, both staff and parents, for her warm welcome. She acknowledged the accomplishments of Dr. Wallerstein and Mr. Byrne for the many facilities projects completed during the summer. She acknowledged the problems at New Lebanon School caused by the neighboring construction project and talked about possible solutions being developed by all the involved parties and the need to address this immediately. She updated the Board on the current enrollment, stating that the district is over projections by 113 students, primarily at the elementary level (82). She indicated that all but 2 teaching positions have been filled, with the exception of a high school special ed position and a speech teacher. She indicated that elementary class sizes will be monitored over the next few weeks, since some sections are nearing the established limits. She discussed the SAT test results, indicating that the test was new this year (harder math, more reading comprehension, fewer analogies, new writing component). Greenwich's reading scores were the highest in 15 years.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. LoParco to instruct Mrs. Giambo to contact the First Selectman, the Director of Public Works, the Director of the Library, the Police Chief, and the Director of Planning & Zoning so that action can be taken to immediately resolve the unsafe conditions at New Lebanon School.

During discussion, one Board member indicated the need for daily police presence during drop-off and pick-up even if it is at the district's expense.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed

MOTION CARRIED

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Discussion on Standardized Test Results

Dr. Sternberg presented a detailed analysis of standardized test results for the district. She made the following key points:

- Spring 2006 CMT test was the first time for the Generation 4 test, making comparisons with prior years difficult.
- Although proficiency is not the target of our district, Greenwich still needs to look at these numbers. The percent of students achieving proficiency is high, but there is not much overall growth from 2000 – 2004.
- Greenwich’s goal for all students should be to meet or exceed the average of DRG A schools.
- A school will fail the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act if any sub-group does not meet the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets. However, scores are only measured if there are at least 40 students in a particular sub-group. Given that the size and composition of the populations vary among our buildings, not all schools have the same challenge.
- Regarding the CAPT results, comparisons to DRG averages are difficult since the composition of the DRGs was changed this year.

Dr. Sternberg concluded her presentation indicating that Greenwich’s focus needs to be on additional interventions at GHS to mitigate flat/declining results, targeted programs for specific sub-groups at the middle school and successful implementation of new curriculum in math and literacy at the elementary level.

Board members had questions about the impact of Individual Student Intervention Plans (ISIPs), how to balance the district’s focus of reaction to AYP measurement versus delivering our whole program to all students, concern about the efforts to address the GHS students who did not perform well enough on the CAPT to meet the new graduation requirements, how to use these standardized test results along with other data to determine if our students are making appropriate growth. Mrs. Giambo indicated that some of these issues will be addressed in future Board work sessions.

b. Discussion of Harris Survey

Ms. Eves gave the Board an overview of the results of the Harris Survey and the impact on future planning. She indicated that one of the purposes of the survey is to measure non-academic aspects of Greenwich’s education system, which are represented in 4 of the 6 arenas in the Success System. While Greenwich scored better than other schools who completed the survey, the District needs to look at areas of weakness. The next steps are to work with building leadership, provide the data to each School Improvement Team and insure all weaknesses are addressed by a stated initiative. The survey will be administered again in Spring 2008.

Board members requested a listing of issues regarding the Board of Education to be presented at a work session.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

a. **Approval of 2006-2007 Rental Rates for Facilities**

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mrs. Weissler to approve the 2006-2007 Rental Rates for Facilities.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

b. **Authorize Request to State Legislature for Special Act Related to Hamilton Avenue School**

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. LoParco and seconded by Mr. Kelly to approve the request to State Legislature for Special Act Related to Hamilton Avenue School.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

c. **Action to Amend the Glenville School Educational Specifications to Include Provision for Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment**

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. LoParco and seconded by Mr. Kelly to approve the Amendment to the Glenville School Educational Specifications.

AMENDMENT

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Ms. Gwynn amend the Educational Specifications to include appropriate furnishings, as needed.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION, AS AMENDED

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **Approval of Month end Financial Report, 6/30/06**
- b. **Approval of Month End financial Report, 7/31/06**
- c. **Action on Secretary's Request to Approve Minutes of May 25 (2), June 1, June 2, June 13 (2), June 15, June 20 and June 26, 2006**

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mrs. Weissler to remove Item a. from the Board Consent Agenda.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Dr. Ellis to approve Items b and c on the Board Consent Agenda.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Gwynn and seconded by Mr. Anderson to approve Item a on the Board Consent Agenda.

At the Board's request, Mr. Calcavecchio discussed the final 2005-2006 results. He indicated that the district will return \$1,327,000 to the Town as a result of lower than budgeted enrollment and maintaining tight fiscal controls throughout the year despite high energy costs.

VOTE: 8 in favor, none opposed MOTION CARRIED

BOARD OPERATIONS PLANNING

a. **Agenda Planning**

MOTION: It was moved by Mrs. Moriarty and seconded by Mrs. Weissler to approve the Revised Agenda Plan.

Several items were discussed for inclusion in the next iteration of the Agenda Plan: GOSA contract approval; Board issues relating to Harris Survey; District progress relating to Harris Survey; Alliance's progress on grant ideas; enrollment discussion; update on BET/BOE discussions regarding approval of budget transfers

VOTE: 7 in favor, none opposed, 1 abstention
(Mr. LoParco abstained) MOTION CARRIED

b. **Meeting Debrief**

Mrs. Giambo thanked Dr. Sternberg and Ms. Eves for their thorough presentations. Ms. Gwynn mentioned an area forum on September 7 discussing the achievement gap, in which both Dr. Sternberg and Dr. Leverett are participating.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. Anderson, the meeting moved into Executive Session at 9:42 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting moved back into Public Session at 10:25 p.m. to discuss personnel matters.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 10:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie B. Moriarty
Secretary