

The Regional District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, March 8, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. in the library at Coginchaug Regional High School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Currilin, Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Raczka, Dr. Shoemaker. Member absent: Mr. Hennick. Also present: Mrs. Viccaro, Mr. Gourley.

Mr. Raczka called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

There was no public comment.

Next Board Meeting: The next Board of Education meeting will be March 15, 2006 at Coginchaug Regional High School.

Dr. Shoemaker made a motion, second Mrs. Golschneider to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2006 Board of Education meeting. Dr. Shoemaker, Mrs. Golschneider, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Hicks, Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Adams, Dr. Ochterski, Mr. Currilin voted yes. Mr. Raczka abstained.

Communications: Mrs. Adams received several calls regarding the budget and class sizes. She said parents would not like to see class sizes increased.

Mrs. Flanagan received a call from Donia Viola who would like the District to go out to bid on the bus contract and to continue to go out to bid on other items to get the best prices available.

Mr. Gourley stated we are in the middle of a 5 year contract with Dattco and will not go out to bid for a couple more years. The contract increases 2.9% each year. Mr. Raczka stated when the contract was renewed with Dattco other area towns were getting a 5-7% increase on their transportation contracts.

Dr. Shoemaker stated he has also received calls regarding the budget and class sizes. He has also received calls requesting that when cuts are made that they are made evenly across the board.

Mrs. Adams attended the Drug Awareness program and stated there was good information presented to parents.

Mr. Raczka shared a letter he received about the Show Choir trip to Florida. Students had a great experience and were very well behaved.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro reported she also attended the NEOA presentation. She stated about 100 people were in attendance. The focus was on the use and abuse of over the counter drugs. The presentation was sponsored by the Local Prevention Council.

There will be an Internet Safety Night on March 16 at 7:00pm in the high school auditorium for parents only. FBI agent Tim Egan will be the speaker.

2006-07 Budget Discussion: Mrs. Viccaro discussed the class sizes and the class size policy. If sections are reduced at the elementary level and Memorial School, class sizes could exceed the class size policy. The information included only the students that are presently enrolled, it did not include the in and out migration of students.

Mr. Gourley discussed transportation. He had contacted Phil Johnson at Dattco and asked him about creating group bus stops for students. Mr. Johnson stated there are many narrow

roads in the District and some roads are too hazardous to have students walking to a group stop. He said it is a safety issue for students.

Mr. Johnson also stated in response to a question on the efficiency of the buses, we are getting the highest efficiency we can out of our school buses. We have 22 regular buses and 5 Type II buses. The District does three bus runs twice a day. The buses are pushed to the limit now, anything different would cause problems.

The Board discussed looking at the way students are picked up and looking at different waves to see if anything can be done. Mr. Gourley will get clarification from the State Department regarding the state mandates about having a seat for every student registered in District whether or not they use school bus transportation.

Mrs. Viccaro reported there are 15 outplaced special education students in the District. Costs can range from \$70,000 on up for tuition and transportation expenses. About 13.5% of the education budget is for special education. There are about 262 students that receive special education services.

The Board also discussed field trips and elementary supplies. Dr. Shoemaker thanked the administrators for their work on the budget and said he did notice their efforts to keep down costs.

On the receipt side of the budget, Dr. Ochterski suggested looking into expanding the BASREP program. This may be an option to help parents of Kindergarten students so students would have a place to go within the District during that period of time they are not in class. Several parents opt to go to a different program for Kindergarten because it is all day. It may also be possible to align the activities done at this program with the school curriculum. This would be a long-range plan. There is also the issue of space for an all day program.

The Board will discuss options for reducing the budget at their next meeting.

Policy Committee: Mr. Hicks reported the committee is reviewing the Use of School Facilities policy. The committee is looking at the fees that are charged for using the buildings and also at implementing an energy charge. The committee will continue to discuss this policy at their next meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Golschneider, the Board of Education unanimously approved to adjourn.