

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, January 25, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. in the media center at Memorial Middle School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski, Mrs. Parsons, Mr. Raczka, Dr. Shoemaker. Members absent: Mr. Currin, Mr. Hennick. Also present: Mr. Gourley, Mrs. Viccaro.

Mr. Raczka called the meeting to order at 7:32p.m.

Public Comment: Konrad Kotrady, a parent of children at Brewster and Memorial Schools is concerned about a new program starting next week at Strong School that will allow Strong School students to ride the bus home with Brewster and Korn students if they are staying after school for academic reasons. Mr. Kotrady believes it is the responsibility of the parents to transport their children after school. His children have had problems with older kids on the bus and he will have to transport them if this program is put into effect. He is critical of how the program was announced to parents without giving them any input before implementation.

Deborah Kotrady is concerned about the developmental differences between a Brewster or Korn aged child and a Strong School student. The topics of discussion on the bus are vastly different and she does not think it is appropriate to mix these age groups together.

Next Board Meeting: The next Board of Education meeting will be held on February 8, 2006 at Korn School.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Adams, the Board of Education unanimously approved to amend the agenda to include an Executive Session to discuss a Pupil Personnel Matter.

On a motion by Dr. Shoemaker, second Dr. Ochterski, the minutes of the Board of Education meeting of January 11, 2006 were unanimously approved.

Communications: Dr. Ochterski attended the Show Choir Concert with his mother who is a principal of a high school. She was impressed that the students had the courage to clown around in front of the audience. He also attended the Strong School concert this week. He was impressed with the concert there as well and with the fact that the new chorus teacher was able to pull a concert together in three weeks. He also attended the Korn School Band Informance today. It was held as a chance to see the students in band class and to see how far they have come since beginning playing their instruments this fall.

Dr. Shoemaker also attended the Strong School concert and said every song the eighth graders sang they learned during the last three weeks and they were very excited about the concert. He was very impressed with the new chorus teacher.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro announced that Kendra Alling is the new part-time chorus teacher at Strong School and Leslie Villalba, a Coginchaug graduate, has been hired to substitute until the end of the year for a teacher on maternity leave at Korn School.

Mrs. Viccaro has been meeting with Jim Misenti, the new director of adult education services from Middletown. They are reviewing the bills and services that the District receives. Mrs. Viccaro will report to the Board further about their discussions.

Mrs. Viccaro said that 110 Districts have now signed the NCLB lawsuit.

Mrs. Viccaro reported that the Coginchaug girl's softball coach, Ann Benjunas, is being inducted into the High School Sports Hall of Fame.

Mr. Hauser is at an awards presentation this evening for the high school Relay for Life team for the American Cancer Society. They are being honored for raising \$2,700.00; the largest amount in the youth group category.

Mrs. Viccaro received a letter from Governor Rell inviting her to a planning summit on Pandemic Response. Mrs. Viccaro and Mr. Gourley both plan on attending.

Governor Rell also sent a letter to superintendents in support of fundraising to aid Pakistan for earthquake relief.

Strategic Planning Update: Mrs. Viccaro reviewed the document that all Board members received. Each District school has submitted an update of how they are responding to the goals for the year.

Mr. Hicks thanked the people involved with putting this document together. He enjoys reading it every year.

Pupil Personnel: Mrs. Viccaro wanted to share some information on the changing cost of special education, as reported in a recent CAPSS newsletter, before Mrs. Emory began her presentation. In the 1990-91 SY \$535 million was spent on special education in the State of Connecticut. In the 2003-04 SY over \$1 billion was spent, an increase of 121%. In 1990-91 the State contribution was 40.58% and local districts paid 57.87% of the cost. By 2003-24 the State paid 30.39% and the local districts were paying 61.78%. In this district, special education accounts for 13% of the budget.

Amy Emory, Pupil Personnel Director, gave a presentation on what's new in special education within the District. Most of the changes to special education are a result of many new requirements and mandates issued from the State Department of Education. Each of the new mandates requires significant data collection and new staff training. The District has seen a significant increase in DCF referrals into the schools this year, as well as students into the ELL (English Language Learners) program that do not speak any English. There are also many more students entering school that have not had the support of the Birth to Three program because they couldn't afford their sliding scale costs. Many more students have been identified on the Autism spectrum than ever before. The change in the law that now requires the District to service students from private schools in the area has also impacted the District. There are currently three students from IDS that have been identified as needing services.

Mr. Raczka said that at some point the increased demands on the special education department would translate into added positions. It will look to the public as if the Board is responding to the needs of a specific year, but it will really be a build-up of the added demands over the years.

Hot Schools Grant: Every year the Board of Education must show their support for the continuation of John Lyman School as a H. O. T. School to enable them to receive grant money from the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Dr. Shoemaker, the Board of Education unanimously approved that Karen M. Brimecombe, Principal of John Lyman School is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this organization a certain contract with the State of Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism and to affix the corporate seal, if any.

Transportation Committee: Due to the questions raised by Mr. and Mrs. Kotrady regarding Strong students riding the elementary buses, it was decided that a Transportation Committee meeting would be scheduled for Friday, January 27, 2006 at 5:30pm at the Superintendent's Office.

Curriculum Committee: Mrs. Golschneider reported that the Curriculum Committee met this evening. Mrs. Luckenbach gave them a 2005-06 update. The math committee met this week and discussed concerns that have surfaced with the implementation of the first draft of the K-6 curriculum. The science committee has received new information from the state regarding performance-based tasks for each grade level. There are changes that will need to be made to the Language Arts curriculum for next year. The social studies curriculum update is being pushed off until next year. CMT and CAPT prep work is taking place at all schools. The book selected for One Book – One Community is not age appropriate for Memorial and Strong School students so another book that focuses on a similar issue is being selected for those age groups.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Adams, the Board of Education unanimously approved to move into Executive Session to discuss a Pupil Personnel Matter.

The Board of Education moved into regular session.

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