

Draft
Subject to Change

Board of Education

Regional District 13

March 21, 2007

The Regional District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, March 21, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. in the library at Strong School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Currin (arrived at 8:00pm), Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Raczka, Dr. Shoemaker. Members absent: Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Hennick. Also present: Mrs. Viccaro, Mr. Melnik.

Mr. Raczka called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

Public Comment: A parent expressed his concern about security in the schools and if anything is being done to enhance the security in the buildings. Mrs. Viccaro stated this is an ongoing process. The District is currently getting badges for all their employees. Visitors to the schools are asked to sign in at the office and some buildings give out badges for people to wear. Putting in cameras and getting people to monitor those cameras is a funding issue. There may be homeland security money in the future that would help with the funding.

Several parents thanked the Board for their time and work on the budget. They supported the increases in the high school staffing, technology, and music staffing.

Jeremy Renninghoff felt the budget percentage was too high and said many people will not support the budget especially with the re-evaluation in Middlefield. He also asked what percentage of the budget goes to salaries, transportation, etc. Mrs. Viccaro stated that will be reported during the budget discussion later on the agenda.

Mr. Judson stated the statement made by the selectmen in both towns about not supporting the percentage increase in the budget was not the opinion of all.

Next Board Meeting: The next Board of Education meeting is March 28, 2007 at Strong School.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Dr. Shoemaker, the agenda was unanimously approved.

On a motion by Dr. Shoemaker, second Mrs. Golschneider, the minutes of the March 14, 2007 Board of Education meeting were unanimously approved.

Communications: Board members received an email from Ernie Judson regarding the budget.

Mr. Hicks received a call regarding three school buses being on Arbutus Street at the same location at the same time. There were two regular buses and one Type II bus. Mr. Melnik will check into it.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro stated the following shortage areas have been reported by the State Department of Education: Bilingual Education, Special Education, English 7-12, Intermediate Administration, Math 7-12, Music, Library Media, Science 7-12, Speech and Language, World Languages 7-12.

Consortium students in grades 7-12 attended the Diversity Conference at Wesleyan on March 20th.

Mrs. Viccaro attended the Ensemble Night at Memorial School on March 20th. It was a great night.

John Forline was named the CIAC Assistant Coach of the Year.

Eight students from the high school participated in the New England Music Festival.

All second grade students at Brewster have pen pals in China that are in the fifth grade. The students in China are learning to read and write English. Kathy Newell's son, (she is a teacher assistant at Brewster) teaches in China.

Mrs. Viccaro reported all District employees will have badges by the beginning of the next school year. Mr. Gaechter and Mr. Fairburn, teachers at the high school are working with the Emergency Services in Durham to make the badges. They are using Durham's badge making machine and ordering the supplies needed.

Mrs. Viccaro has talked to Joe Heller, representative from Yankee Gas and CL&P and the District has saved \$152,127.14 in incentive savings since 1997.

Eighteen students from Memorial School have had their poetry published in the book "Pine Tree Poetry Collection".

Korn Professional Development Day: Bridgett Schlicker, Leslie Kilroy, and Noelle Durkin, fourth grade teachers at Korn School, thanked Mrs. Viccaro for approving their Professional Development Day to work on incorporating what they learned from reading consultant Nancy Boyles into their reading curriculum. The strategies they teach their students on reading comprehension will help them in taking the CMT tests.

Field Trip Request to Spain: Marisa Thurston, Spanish teacher at the high school is requesting to take 11th and 12th grade world language students to Spain during April vacation, 2008.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Adams, the field trip to Spain during the April vacation, 2008 was unanimously approved.

2007-08 Budget: Mrs. Viccaro responded to the questions that were asked about the new courses and staffing at the high school. She said the textbooks for the forensic class are included in the budget. There is already a forensic class being offered, this is an expansion of that class. Earth Science textbooks will be used for astronomy.

After the first run of the course selection schedule the courses that showed the most interest were: forensics, oceanography, animal behavior, technology – TV Production, sports management, web design, Journalism, and astronomy. The money for the curriculum work that needs to be done for some of these classes is not in the budget. It will cost about \$1800.00.

Other staffing needs at the high school are to reduce class sizes. An expected additional 30 students will be at the high school next year. The .8 technology position proposed can be reduced to .4 in response to the course selection decisions.

Mr. Melnik shared a pie chart of the budget that showed 58% of the budget goes to salaries. The 13% left goes to transportation, purchased services, benefits, utilities, leases, debt service, tuition and supplies.

Mr. Melnik responded to questions regarding the portables and special education costs. The two duplex portables will cost \$77,000 a year for three years. Special education costs make up 12.5% of the budget.

Mrs. Viccaro proposed the following cuts to the budget: 1 current portable lease ends in September and the money was in the budget for the whole year, the budget can be reduced by \$24,562 due to this lease ending; .2 social worker \$13,015; .5 library media assistant at Strong \$9,250; 1.0 remedial teacher position \$76,500; 2 part-time teacher assistants \$18,500 and .4 tech education position \$30,600 this is reduced from the .8 position proposed at the high school.

The Board discussed some other budget items. Mrs. Viccaro will get the following information for them to discuss at next week's meeting: where the curriculum work money for the additional courses at the high school will come from; the purchasing, use and reuse of sheet music; enrollment and class sizes; what can be done with scheduling if less than a .8 position for music was in the budget; what can be cut in technology if \$20,000 was cut from that budget; and what other cuts will be made to reduce the budget by 1% and possibly another .5%. Mrs. Viccaro was also asked to get information on the need for the two portables proposed in the budget and which one to cut if only one portable was left in the budget.

Finance Committee: Ms. Parsons reported the committee met and the 2006-07 budget is on target.

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