

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, August 23, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. in the media center at Coginchaug High School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Currin, Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Hennick, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Raczka, Dr. Shoemaker. Also present: Mr. Gourley, Mrs. Viccaro.

Mr. Raczka called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Next Board Meeting: To be discussed later in the meeting.

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

Mr. Hennick made a motion, second Mrs. Adams, to accept the minutes to the meeting of July 5, 2006. Mrs. Adams, Mr. Currin, Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hennick, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons, Mr. Raczka voted yes. Mr. Hicks, Dr. Shoemaker abstained.

Communications: Mr. Raczka mentioned a copy of an email that Board members were given in their packets regarding a donation to support the Devils Advocate.

Mr. Currin distributed a copy of an email received from Alex Kuehnle, a CRHS senior, regarding the cancellation of the Devils Advocate.

Mr. Hennick said he has received several calls regarding the Devils Advocate.

Mr. Hicks commented on the New Staff Luncheon, that he and four other Board members attended today. Both he and Mr. Raczka were impressed with the diverse backgrounds of the new hires.

Dr. Ochterski attended the Selectmen's Meeting in Middlefield last night to discuss the election of Board of Education members being moved to the November election. Dr. Ochterski made several points, but the one that carried the most weight with the Selectmen was the fact that unaffiliated voters (such as him) would never be able to get on the ballot. The largest percentages of voters in Middlefield are unaffiliated.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro also talked about the New Staff Luncheon. She said that it was a very fun day. Only twelve new staff have been hired this year. They are very enthusiastic and have a lot of practical experience.

Mrs. Viccaro and Mr. Raczka met with the 1st Selectmen of both towns this week. They talked about many issues and hope to continue to meet with them many times throughout the year. Mr. Raczka said he has asked them to each send a representative to sit in on the administrator negotiations.

Mrs. Viccaro attended the Superintendents' Welcome Back Breakfast sponsored by the State Department last week. Interim Commissioner of Education George Coleman talked about many new state mandates and initiatives.

The CAPT results are in and should be made public next week. Mrs. Viccaro said she will report on the results of both the CAPT and the Mastery testing to the Board next month.

Mrs. Viccaro discussed her frustration with the State regarding the lack of movement on the Infrastructure Grant that was awarded to the District in December 2005. The grant award is for \$128,375 and is to be used for fiber optic connectivity to Brewster and Lyman Schools. Thirty school districts or towns were awarded money as a part of a \$5 million grant program. In order for the District to receive the grant money it must get approved by the Bond Commission and it has not been put on their agenda. Mrs. Viccaro has spoken with Governor Rell, State Rep. Kalinowski, and Senator Meyer regarding this issue. The Technology Committee put many hours of work into the writing of this grant and it is tied in with federal e-rate funding. Mrs. Viccaro asked Board members for their support in contacting State representatives. She will try to obtain a listing of the other districts and towns that were also awarded the grant to see if a more concerted effort would be more effective.

Mrs. Viccaro said that Jenny Lussier and Kelly Falvey, both teachers in the District were awarded grants from ACES for video conferencing equipment.

Mrs. Viccaro reported that as of July 10th, Shipman and Goodwin will be representing us in all legal matters. Attorney Anne Littlefield will be our main representative from the firm. Mrs. Viccaro has worked with her before and has been very pleased with her work.

Mrs. Viccaro said that Dr. Wysowski and Mr. Hauser have met with the students from the Devils Advocate and have discussed alternatives. Two Wise advisors have been assigned to work with the students. Mrs. Viccaro explained that it was a Central Office decision to cut the Devils Advocate. The cost to produce the newspaper totals over \$4,000 between the stipend and printing costs. An alternative being considered for next year is the possibility of offering a journalism course. If additional donations are received to support printing the paper in the Town Times it will be considered.

Mrs. Viccaro said the new District website is ready to be unveiled within the next couple of weeks. It has been entirely redesigned and access to the community will be significant.

Mr. Gourley said the Town Times was able to secure a benefactor to pay for the printing costs of the bus routes in the Town Times.

Mrs. Viccaro told Board members to be sure to look at the gardens around Cuginchaug. They were all weeded and mulched by Sue Michael and the ECO Club.

Mrs. Viccaro said a lot of new information is coming from the State regarding health and wellness initiatives and policies. The Wellness Policy that will be voted on tonight may have to be adjusted because of changes being implemented by the State. Mrs. Viccaro will be reviewing the documents more thoroughly and then the Board will need to make a decision by September 15th as to whether the District wants to participate in a program offered by the State. If the District chooses to participate in this program it will have a major impact on outside food sales in the schools.

September 13 Board Meeting: Mrs. Viccaro asked the Board if the next meeting date could be changed to accommodate a meeting that all of the administrators would like to attend.

On a motion by Mrs. Adams, second Mr. Currin, the Board of Education unanimously approved to move the next regularly scheduled Board of Education Meeting from September 13th to September 6th at John Lyman School.

Policy Committee: Mr. Hicks said the Board needed to act on the wellness policies tonight.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Golschneider, the Board of Education unanimously approved policy 4162/4262 Wellness.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mrs. Adams, the Board of Education unanimously approved policy 5135 Wellness.

Mr. Hicks said the Policy Committee met last evening and invited community members to the meeting to discuss the Use of School Facilities Policy. The community has been unhappy with the rate schedule that was established in the spring and it was tabled for further review. After much discussion with the community members and among the Committee, changes were made to the rate schedule. The Board was presented with the changes for their review and will be asked to vote on it at the next meeting.

Transportation Committee: Dr. Ochterski said the Transportation Committee has met twice this summer. Bus route combinations and optimization was discussed. Every bus stop adds approximately one minute to a route. During the month of October, Dattco has offered to provide example routing trying to eliminate 2, 3, or 4 buses. The possibility of combining Lyman and Memorial runs was also explored but it is not possible. Going out to bid for the bus contract was discussed. Dr. Ochterski is collecting contract information from other Districts to see how much the District is paying comparative to others. Dattco is providing some of the information and Mrs. Viccaro is obtaining others through the superintendents' association. Some of the elementary routes have hit the time limit for students on buses. The Committee feels that the District needs to begin changing how pick-ups are done, but they want to be sure that change is unilateral across the towns and that one area of town is not focused on. The search for a new bus depot was also discussed. The 1st Selectmen are aware that the District is looking for a new location. The location must be west of Main Street, Durham.

Mr. Currin asked Mrs. Viccaro if she could obtain the schedule of meetings for the Parents for Good Schools Group so Board members may plan to attend meetings.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Dr. Shoemaker, the Board of Education unanimously approved to go into Executive Session to discuss Administrator Evaluations.

The Board moved into regular session.

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