

The Regional District 13 Board of Education met in special session on Wednesday, September 6, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. in the library John Lyman School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Currin, Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hennick, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski (arrived at 8:35pm), Ms. Parsons, Mr. Raczka, Dr. Shoemaker. Also present: Mrs. Viccaro, Mr. Gourley.

Mr. Raczka called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Public Comment: Liz Conroy spoke as a representative from POPS. They are concerned about the food and nutrition law from the State and the fundraisers done by POPS that include bake sales and candy sales. Mrs. Viccaro said she is going to address that issue later on the agenda.

Michael Doyle from Camp Farnham stated he is trying to promote the use of the camp by the school district. The camp is a non-profit organization that students from New Haven attend during the summer. He said the camp could be used more often for environmental studies and other activities. It is also available for scouts and other town groups.

A parent spoke about parents needing to buy school supplies for their children. She did not oppose buying supplies for her own child but was not happy to buy group supplies for the classroom. She had heard this upsets many parents. She also would like the building use policy to be revised. Many organizations are unable to pay the fees that were developed.

Mr. Raczka said many difficult decisions were made during the budget process. One of those was to have parents pay for school supplies like pencils, etc. that children use. This was done instead of cutting into school programs.

Next Board Meeting: The next Board meeting is September 27, 2006 at Korn School.

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

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mr. Hennick, the minutes to the August 23, 2006 Board of Education meeting were unanimously approved.

Communications: Mr. Currin received several phone calls regarding parents buying school supplies, freshmen basketball and the school use policy.

Mr. Hennick received calls from students about the Devil's Advocate. The students are trying to raise the money to do the paper on their own. He also received calls about the food and nutrition law and the fundraisers in the District.

Mrs. Adams received calls regarding the school use policy.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro reported Board members received a booklet regarding the condition of education in CT. It is the annual report done by the State Department of Education.

Mrs. Viccaro stated the District will be looking into using Camp Farnham for educational activities and also during the summer to help with racial isolation activities of the District.

The District has been increasing their recycling and has saved 13 trees as reported by the shredding company used this summer.

Juan Rodriguez, a former Board of Education member, has passed away.

Lisa Larsen and the choirs are looking for donations for the Martin Luther King School in New Orleans. They will take money donations, school supplies and small toys.

The teacher shortage areas in the state for this year are bi-lingual, special education 1-12, English 7-12, administration, math 7-12, music PreK-12, remedial reading 1-12, science, 7-12, world languages 7-12 and speech pathology.

Mrs. Viccaro shared the CMT and CAPT scores with the Board. She has not received all her data yet. When she does she will give a presentation to the Board.

These are the percentage of students at or above goal on the CMT.

Grade 3: Math, 65.2%, Reading, 62.4%, Writing, 72.1%

Grade 4: Math, 60.9%, Reading, 66.3%, Writing, 65.7%

Grade 5: Math, 74.1%, Reading, 72%, Writing, 77.2%

Grade 6: Math, 70.9%, Reading, 77.1%, Writing, 75.3%

Grade 7: Math, 81%, Reading, 81.6%, Writing, 75.3%

Grade 8: Math, 77.4%, Reading, 81.6%, Writing, 74.7%

These are the percentage of students at or above goal on the CAPT. Mrs. Viccaro stated the first scores printed in the Hartford Courant were incorrect.

Math: 63.9% - slight increase from last year

Science: 73.5% - slight decrease from last year

Reading: 63.3% - slight increase from last year

Writing: 73.6% - slight increase from last year

The percentage of students at basic or below basic ranges from 5-7%. These are the students with disabilities and English language learners. Many of the students with disabilities will never be able to pass at grade level.

Mrs. Viccaro reported all schools made Annual Yearly Progress with one exception. One category at Memorial School and this included students with disabilities.

The grant money the District receives from the Consolidated Grant has gone down by \$6,381 this year.

Mrs. Viccaro has heard from Jen Zettergrin who has pledged \$500 for the Devil's Advocate and she is trying to get areas business to also donate money.

Health and Wellness Policies: Mrs. Viccaro reported the State Department of Education is still working on the mandates for this policy. Several changes can be coming from them in the future.

Building Use Policy: Mr. Hicks reported the policy has been revised to include the church organizations with the school and town organizations that do not have to pay a fee other than the application fee for using the schools. This advice came from the District's attorney.

On a motion by Mr. Hennick, second Mrs. Adams, the Board of Education unanimously approved the Use of School Facilities Policy 1330.

Opening of School: Mrs. Viccaro reported it was a great opening. Transportation went very well with few complaints. Unofficially there are 2,214 students in the District. The official count will be taken October 1st. She said the energy level at the schools is very high even with the larger class sizes.

Ruth Beames is District 13's Teacher of the Year.

Food and Nutrition: The deadline from the State Dept. to develop a policy on food and nutrition has been changed to October 1st. Mrs. Viccaro has talked to Susan Fiore at the State Dept. who has received a number of phone calls regarding this law and school fundraisers. Ms. Fiore said their legal department is working on this issue and she will get information to the school districts when she receives it. Mrs. Viccaro believes the Board of Education will be able to develop a policy that will include bake sales and candy sales as fundraisers. The Board will also need to decide if they want to follow the food and nutrition law to receive ten cents on every dollar for lunches that are sold. The lunches would need to be low fat, low sugar and certain portion sizes. The Policy Committee will be meeting in the near future to develop this policy.

Transition Committee: The committee did not meet tonight but will meet before the next Board meeting on September 27.

Building Committee: Mr. Gourley wrote a letter to the School Facilities Unit of the State Department of Education regarding the issues they are having with the Haynes Construction Company. There was no response to his first letter so he has sent a second letter. The District attorney is also working on the issue with Haynes.

Additional Public Comment: George Adams thanked the Board for amending the school use policy. He also sent an email to Mrs. Viccaro regarding a solar energy program for the Board to review. He would be happy to head the committee to work on this program if the Board decides to do it.

Toby Bates also thanked the Board for the change to the school use policy and would also help on the solar energy committee if the Board approves it.

A parent said she was happy to pay the \$20.00 for school supplies, she approves the food and nutrition instruction for the students but hopes the fundraiser part can be worked out.

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