

Board of Education

Regional District 13

December 9, 2009

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, December 9, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the media Center at Memorial Middle School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Hennick, Dr. Ochterski. Members absent: Mr. Currin, Ms. Gara, Mr. Hicks, Mrs. Golschneider, Ms. Parsons. Also present: Mr. Melnik, Mrs. Viccaro.

Mr. Hennick explained that as there was no quorum of the Board present no votes could be taken but the Board would proceed with business that could be discussed. He apologized to the public for the lack of a quorum.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Next Board Meeting: The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held at Brewster School on January 13, 2010.

Communications: Mr. Hennick said he received a letter from the BK PTA thanking the Board for attending their meeting.

Mrs. Boyle said she attended the Powder Puff Football game against Cromwell as well as the evening football game. She said both events were well attended, the team spirit and camaraderie of the fans was great. She also attended the Community Round-up this weekend and thanked Beth Galligan for the coordination of the event.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro reported that the District has been named in an estate. A new scholarship will be established in honor of Annette Francis. The amount of the scholarship is unknown at this time.

Mrs. Viccaro said a group of students approached her about starting a teen safe driving program. The group will be student led.

Tiger Robison, the music teacher at Brewster and Korn is starting a children's chorus through the Durham Park & Recreation program.

Lorrie Martin would like to take students on a discovery dive at a public pool in Cheshire. Mrs. Viccaro would like to have her present the details of her idea at the next Board meeting.

Mrs. Viccaro distributed an editorial from the Hartford Courant entitled "Schools Tough it Out", regarding the Swine Flu and keeping schools open. Mrs. Viccaro was mentioned in the editorial and they supported her decision to keep District schools open.

Superintendent's Award Students: Mrs. Viccaro recognized this year's Superintendent's Award winners, Hannah Kowalski and Danielle Charette and she presented each of them with a gift from the District.

Regional District 13 Teacher of the Year: On behalf of the Board of Education, Mrs. Viccaro presented Teresa Reilly, 2010 Teacher of the Year, with a gift of appreciation from the District. Mrs. Reilly is a Speech Pathologist at Brewster School and works with the District's youngest students.

Mrs. Reilly thanked Mrs. Viccaro and the Board for the honor.

Mrs. Viccaro distributed copies of a new School Law Alert from Shipman & Goodwin.

Mrs. Viccaro said the State is applying for Federal "Race to the Top" funds. The State as a whole has to be eligible for the District to receive any of the money. If the State is eligible the District could possibly receive an additional \$39,000 in Title I funding.

Mrs. Viccaro mentioned an article in the Hartford Courant regarding "Pay to Play". She said there are major differences in the fees from town to town.

Mrs. Viccaro distributed a copy of a letter from the State Board of Education regarding health-related legislative changes. Students who have asthma or severe allergies will now be allowed to carry inhalers or injectors and self administer if they meet certain criteria.

Safety Concerns Regarding Stop Lines: Mrs. Viccaro said she received a call from Marilyn Keurajian regarding the stop lines on the road being faded on Pickett Lane. Mrs. Viccaro spoke with Mr. Francis and he has found someone to repaint the lines. She doesn't know if he has a date scheduled yet, but it should be done soon.

Mrs. Keurajian said she has spent many days watching cars roll through the stop signs. They are young drivers and we need to set a good example for them. We need to make it a priority to get this done.

Mrs. Keurajian is also concerned about the lack of enforcement of the dress code at the recent Homecoming Dance. She feels it sets a bad example if the students are not reprimanded. Mrs. Viccaro told Mrs. Keurajian she has shared her concerns with Dr. Wysowski.

Business Manager's Report: Mr. Melnik said the bus company will be at Admin. Council tomorrow to show the administrators samples of video recordings from the buses.

Mr. Melnik said the District has joined with a new electric consortium, beginning January 1, 2010. The contract is for the years 2010 to 2012. He estimates savings of approximately \$55,000-\$60,000 per year with the new agreement.

Mr. Melnik distributed information and instructions on the AARA reporting data that the District is required to file on a quarterly basis with the State Department of Education. He went over the instructions to show the Board what is involved with the reporting.

TEAM: Carol Luckenbach updated the Board on the new model for teacher training and mentoring that is being finalized by the State. It was supposed to start this year but the implementation has been delayed until July 1, 2010. This year there is nothing in place because the BEST program ended last year. The District has to form a TEAM Coordinating Committee and train the members. The successful completion of the TEAM program will be the full responsibility of the District, not the State. Mrs. Luckenbach thinks the program will be better and less stressful than the BEST program once the implementation is complete.

2010-2011 Calendar: Mrs. Viccaro distributed copies of the 2009-2010 calendar and a working copy of the 2010-2011 calendar. The State has a new requirement that schools meet in data teams. Meeting this obligation has been very difficult. Mrs. Viccaro is proposing adding six to eight additional early release days to the calendar for next year, eliminating one professional day and adding one more instructional day to the calendar. She said there has also been some discussion among superintendents about having the students attend school on Veterans' Day and using the day for instruction and history of Veterans' Day. This was not well received by our local veterans when discussed in the past but she would like to know this Board's feelings about the idea. She will be meeting with the administrators tomorrow to develop a plan and will bring a calendar back to the Board for approval at the January meeting.

Mrs. Boyle said she has heard from some parents that they don't like that a professional day is scheduled so close after having a day off for the Durham Fair.

Dr. Ochterski said we also need to be concerned about the total number of instructional hours that our students are receiving as we are already lower than many towns.

2008-09 Annual Report: The Annual Report was distributed to members. It will be voted on at the next meeting.

Mr. Hennick closed the meeting at 8:55 p.m.