

Board of Education

Regional District 13

June 10, 2009

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, June 10, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the library of Coginchaug Regional High School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Curren, Mrs. Flanagan, Ms. Gara (arrived 7:35), Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hennick, Mr. Hicks (arrived at 8:35), Dr. Ochterski, and Ms. Parsons. Also present: Mr. Melnik, Mrs. Viccaro.

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

Public Comment: Mrs. Viccaro began by informing the public that she received a call from the teachers' union president Candy Brickley. Ms. Brickley wanted to let the Board know that the teachers met earlier in the day and voted against the furlough day – 23 votes for and 136 votes against. Ms. Brickley did state that 19 teachers did express interest in signing up for the Health Savings Account. Mr. Hennick said although the increased interest in the H.S.A. is great news, unfortunately the Board needs to have tangible numbers to work with when working on a bottom line figure. He stated that the Board can not go to referendum with possible numbers, they need actual numbers.

Betty Wakeman-Long of Durham said that she doesn't feel that the teachers should carry the burden should the budget go down again.

Mr. Hennick thinks the reason the teachers voted against the furlough day was because they are afraid. They think if they give a furlough day and the budget goes down again the Board may want more from them and the teachers' contract would be at risk.

Betsy Bascom teacher at Lyman and Durham resident said that she voted for the furlough day and felt it was the right thing to do as a resident.

Katie Forline of Durham felt the Middletown press article was not well balanced and focused too much on the furlough day and not enough on the H.S.A. savings. She thinks the public needs to be educated on what they are voting against. She thinks some people voted against the budget because of the athletic center and they don't realize that this budget has no impact on the athletic center.

Next Board Meeting: The next meetings of the Board of Education will be a July 1, 2009 at Coginchaug Regional High School and August 26, 2009 at John Lyman School

On a motion by Mrs. Adams, second by Ms. Gara the agenda was unanimously approved.

Mr. Curren, made a motion, second by Dr. Ochterski, to accept the minutes of the meeting of May 27, 2009. Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Hennick, Dr. Ochterski, and Ms. Parsons voted yes. Mrs. Adams, Ms. Gara, Mrs. Golschneider and Mrs. Flanagan abstained.

Communications: Mrs. Flanagan said that she heard from people who thought that concessions from the teachers were important to getting the budget passed. She also said that some people in the community felt that higher level employees should take more of a concession than lower level employees.

Mrs. Golschneider received several calls and was approached by people in the community. They told her that they didn't vote no because they were unhappy about the budget but voted no because there was no furlough day and they still feel that the teachers need to give back.

Mrs. Boyle said she has been hearing the same as Mrs. Golschneider. She also said people feel that no raises should be given this year.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro was happy to announce that the District was in receipt of a \$24,985.00 grant from the State of Connecticut under the School Attendance Program. Mrs. Viccaro thanked Andre Hauser for his efforts collecting the data to put the grant together. 8 schools districts applied for the grant and Regional

School District 13 was 1 of 4 schools that received it. This money will be used to continue to train teachers in the Capturing Kids Hearts program. Mrs. Viccaro said she needs the Board to authorize her to sign for this grant. Ms. Gara asked if there were any hidden expenses for accepting this grant and Mrs. Viccaro said that there are none.

On a motion by Mrs. Golschneider, second by Mrs. Boyle the Board of Education unanimously approved that Superintendent Susan Viccaro has the authority to sign for the Positive Student Climate and Student Connectedness Grant.

Mrs. Viccaro wanted to thank Curtis Peterson of Durham for the donation of 40 easels to the District. The easels will be distributed throughout the District.

Mrs. Viccaro received correspondence from the State of Connecticut stating that the U.S. Department of Education is changing the Student Race Ethnicity Reporting Requirements for the 2010-2011 school year.

New Business

Athletic Uniforms/Football – Ted Lombardo: Ted Lombardo reviewed the Athletic Department / Uniform Purchase Information sheets that were handed out to the Board at the May 27, 2009 Board Meeting. Mr. Lombardo explained how recent cuts will affect the purchase of uniforms in some sports for the next school year. Mr. Lombardo said he had hoped to outfit the sports that were in need of new uniforms with funds from the 09-10 budget. He thought with the football program beginning in 2010-2011 school year there may not be enough funds to do it then. Mr. Lombardo was sad to see that the last round of cuts took away funds for uniforms. He stated that most of the funds in his 610 account are spent on supplies and replacement of equipment. Mr. Lombardo said if there is anything left over in the 610 account at the end of the year it is applied towards the purchase of uniforms and that rarely happens. He said it would have been nice if there was \$30,000.00 in the 610 account for next year.

Mrs. Flanagan and Mrs. Boyle both felt that the Board needed a long range plan for athletic needs. Mrs. Flanagan said the Board needs to see a purchasing plan for uniforms and both Mrs. Flanagan and Mrs. Boyle asked Mr. Lombardo to prepare a 3, 5 or 10 year plan showing the annual cost needed to outfit a particular sport. Mrs. Boyle felt that with this long range purchasing plan the Board could make better informed decisions when it came to athletics.

Bus Contract: Mr. Melnik said that the bus contract is going back to DATTCO on Friday with changes made by Mark Walsh on some of the language. Mr. Melnik said that there were no changes made in the final cost of the contract.

2009-10 Budget: The Board discussed several options to reducing the budget and made the following revisions:

- \$ 4,950.00 Capturing Kids Hearts – no longer needed now that the District received the grant
- \$ 8,700.00 Summer work curriculum
- \$ 1,300.00 Reading consultant supplies- no longer needed since the reading consultant was cut
- \$ 500.00 Supplies – District wide
- \$ 1,500.00 Sheet music for Coginchaug and Strong schools.
- \$44,500.00 Health position at Memorial
- \$ 7,824.00 Teacher overages at Coginchaug
- \$26,000.00 Capital Reserve – brings the balance to zero
- \$29,883.00 Part time Spanish teacher at High School
- (\$ 7,117.00) Salary off-set differential – Coginchaug Science
- **\$118,090.00 Total**

In addition to the above, the following revenues were added to decrease the current budget:

- \$63,506.00 Transportation Grant – received more than what was budgeted

- **\$181,596.00 Total additional cuts**

The Board also looked into the various ways of using \$135,000.00 in stimulus money to replace funds from the current budget. It was explained that in order to use these funds they need to guarantee that the level of funding for the following year's budget would be consistent with the level of funding in place for the 2008-2009 budget to meet the requirements of the grant. Given the current economic state, the Board felt this to be too risky and chose not to use these funds. They felt that if these funds were used it would be a short term fix and would only increase the following year's budget. The requirement of the stimulus funds is that they be used for Special Education expenditures and not for regular education.

Susan Michael teacher at Coginchaug asked to speak and Mr. Hennick allowed her to address the Board. Mrs. Michael did not understand why positions were being cut when several teachers agreed to switch over to the H.S.A. plan. She said that the amount of money the District would save by these teachers switching over to an H.S.A. was much more than what the furlough day would be. Mr. Hennick again stated that unfortunately the Board needs to have tangible numbers to work with when working on a bottom line figure and that the Board could not go to referendum with possible numbers. Mrs. Michael said she had missed the first part of the Board meeting and was unaware that this was already addressed. She said she truly thought this would have made a difference.

On a motion by Ms. Parsons, second Mrs. Adams the Board of Education unanimously approved \$181,596.00 in additional cuts to the 2009-2010 budget.

Dr. Ochterski said that the Board needs to communicate to the public why we did not use stimulus money to reduce the budget. He also said that the Board needs to let the public know that a "NO" vote to the budget will not change the teachers' contract.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second by Mrs. Adams the Board of Education unanimously agreed to hold a referendum on June 23, 2009 on the proposed \$33,758,601.00 gross 2009-2010 Regional District 13 education budget preceded by a District Meeting to be held on June 22, 2009.

Personnel Policy Committee: Mr. Hicks reported the Personnel Policy Committee met on June 4, 2009. These are the items they discussed:

Food Allergy Plan: The nurses' version needs to be revised. Gwen Zittoun will forward a policy that includes statutory requirements.

Transportation: There are inconsistencies in walking distances, etc. Gwen Zittoun will review the current policy along with the recommendations from the transportation consultant.

Grants: The committee discussed who approves grants and if the administration knows what grants are being written. An approval process will be put in place. A draft plan will be created for preliminary discussion.

Policy Book Review: The policy book will eventually be put on the District website as a PDF file. The committee will start reviewing the 1000, 2000 and 3000 series for the next meeting. Gwen Zittoun will also review the policies and make any changes to reflect State Statutes and CT State Dept. of Education guidelines.

On a motion by Mrs. Golschneider, second Mrs. Adams the Board of Education moved into Executive Session to discuss the Superintendent's Evaluation.

The Board moved out of Executive Session.

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