

Board of Education

Regional District 13

August 26, 2009

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, August 26, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the music room at John Lyman School. Board members present: Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Currin, Mrs. Flanagan, Ms. Gara, Mr. Hennick, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons. Members absent: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Golschneider. Also present: Mr. Melnik, Mrs. Viccaro.

Mr. Hennick called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Public Comment: Scott Wheeler of Durham asked why there was no parent conferences held at the end of the school year. Mrs. Viccaro said they are not scheduled but a parent can request one with a teacher at any time. Mr. Wheeler asked why students are not allowed to take out books from the library at Brewster for the entire last month of the school year. Mrs. Viccaro said Brewster was short-staffed in the library at the end of the school year and that the librarian is shared between two schools so they needed to start collecting books from kids early enough to get all the returns prior to the end of the school year. Mr. Wheeler asked where the District stands with the money from the special education grant and if the money will have to be replaced. Mrs. Viccaro said the money will not have to be replaced. They are purchasing things that will not have to be put back into the budget. The grant totals approximately \$440,000.00. Mrs. Viccaro will be reporting at the next Board meeting on the details of how the stimulus money is being spent. Mr. Wheeler asked when the last time the Brewster School roof was inspected. Mr. Melnik said it hasn't been inspected but it has been repaired and is scheduled for replacement in two years. Mr. Wheeler is concerned about the amount of paper being used at Brewster School, his child received eight reminder letters on field day alone last year. He also asked why the Brewster School playground was not a part of the building project and bonded. He feels the fundraising has gone on long enough. Mrs. Viccaro said they will be using some of the AARA money, partnering with the BKPTA fundraising money to help replace the playground equipment this year. It will be a scaled back version of the original plan.

Next Board Meeting: The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held at Strong School on September 9, 2009.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mr. Currin, the Board of Education unanimously approved to amend the agenda, moving the Building Committee presentation to Item # V , adding an Oceanography Field Trip Request and an Executive Session to discuss a Possible Legal Action.

Dr. Ochterski made a motion, second Ms. Gara to approve the minutes to the meeting of July 1, 2009. Mr. Currin, Ms. Gara, Mr. Hennick, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons voted yes. Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan and Mr. Hicks abstained.

Building Committee: Approval of Plans for the three wells: Mr. Currin explained that in order to receive reimbursement for the project from the State Department of Education, Board approval is needed. He introduced Jeanine Armstrong Gouin, Vice President from Milone & MacBroom to speak about the well projects.

Ms. Gouin explained that approval from the Dept. of Public Health has been obtained for all three sites. Three potential well sites have been identified at all three schools but only two wells will be drilled at each site. They have received quotes from well drillers and are ready to begin work once the Dept. of Education approval is received. Mrs. Gouin reviewed each of the site plans, showing the location of the wells, atmospheric tank, hydro pneumatic tank and transfer pump. At each school a location within the building has been found that will be able to house the equipment, eliminating the need for a costly pump house. After the drilling takes place and

yield tests are complete, the engineering design for the system will be completed. The plan will then go back to the Dept. of Public Health for final approval and then it can go out to public bid for construction. If all goes as planned, she expects the project to be completed in early 2010.

Mr. Currilin said that Rob Francis has been able to provide Milone & MacBroom with very good data on the water usage at the schools. He also said that the budget for the projects is looking ok, but we won't know for sure until the well drilling is complete.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mr. Currilin, the Board of Education unanimously approved the plans and specifications as provided by Milone and MacBroom dated July 23, 2009 for water systems at Brewster Elementary School in Durham, CT, Memorial Middle School in Middlefield, CT and John Lyman Elementary School in Middlefield, CT.

Communications: Mr. Hicks said he and several other Board members attended the opening day staff meeting. He thanked Tom for his opening remarks and said the morning was very upbeat with all of the awards given out.

Mr. Currilin told members to look at the new sign outside of Lyman School that was approved by the Board last year.

Mr. Hennick said he could feel an excitement in the air at the opening meeting and people seemed ready to be back. He told members that he has made some adjustments to the Board committee assignments and asked people to contact him if they feel they have been given too much. The Communications Committee has been reinstated and Mrs. Boyle has been asked to chair it. Mr. Hennick said he and Mrs. Viccaro have looked at the meeting schedule and have decided to specify four BOE meetings where particular topics will be discussed. The first one will be the meeting on September 30<sup>th</sup> and the public will be invited to hear more about the building projects. They would like to run these meetings as more of a give and take with the public being allowed to ask and get answers for their questions. Other topics and dates will be decided soon.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro said eleven Good Apple awards and many service awards were given out at the opening meeting. Professional Development was held yesterday and today was the staff prep day at the schools.

Mrs. Viccaro said the Teacher of the Year was announced at the opening meeting, it is Terry Reilly, a Speech and Language Pathologist at Brewster School.

The security upgrades are almost complete. New key cards were distributed to staff for all of the buildings. Buildings will be programmed for hours and level of admittance. An article will be in this week's Town Times to let parents know of all of the changes taking place. Employees will also be expected to wear ID badges everyday and visitors will also be given a badge. Surveillance cameras are also being installed outside of all of the school buildings. All of the money for the security upgrades has come from the security grant. The schools will be inspected during the month of September by someone from the Office of Homeland Security. Rich Fielding has been the point person on the project and he has done a great job; it has gone very smoothly.

Mrs. Viccaro said her office has completed a desk audit from the Office of Civil Rights and passed so no further review is necessary.

Mrs. Viccaro said an issue regarding having a crossing guard at the intersection of RT 17 and Pickett Lane came up this summer while the town was trying to get the guard more training. It has been determined that because RT 17 is a State highway only a trooper or marshal can act as a crossing guard. We are looking to our local legislators for help in getting a legislative reprieve from this ruling but until then DATCO will be having all buses take a right hand turn onto

Main Street and if they need to go south they will turn onto RT 68 and then go left into Maple Avenue.

Mrs. Viccaro said that after inspections of the underground oil tanks at all of the schools it has been determined that the tank at Korn School must be replaced. It will cost approximately \$30,000.00 after State reimbursement. The tank is not leaking; the risk is when oil is being added to the tank. Mr. Melnik said it needs to be replaced before the winter heating season. Mr. Melnik was asked to find out the age of all of the underground tanks so future replacement can be planned for.

Mrs. Viccaro said two beautiful reading rooms have been installed at CRHS and Korn School. Both of them were paid for from donations to the District. Mrs. Viccaro suggested holding dedication ceremonies in the near future.

Mrs. Boyle asked for a list of the award winners from opening day and asked that the names be sent to the Town Times.

Business Manager's Report: Mr. Melnik said the new buses are ready for the opening of school. There are two cameras on each bus.

Ninety-eight percent of the roofs are completed at Lyman and Memorial Schools. The work that is left will be completed around the school day schedule.

Mr. Melnik said the auditors were here during August. The review went very smoothly; they will be returning in October.

The ED001 Report for the State has been completed and will be submitted tomorrow.

A pension meeting is scheduled for September 1<sup>st</sup>. Negotiations will resume with the support staff on September 14<sup>th</sup> and they will begin meeting on the Administrator's contract soon.

Bus Contract: Mr. Melnik explained that a motion is needed from the Board to allow Mrs. Viccaro to sign the agreement with DATTCO, the lease agreement, and the purchase and sale agreement. He explained that the contract was held up because of the lease agreement. Initially a municipal lease agreement was being written but the District did not meet the criteria because at the end of the lease DATTCO would have to buy the buses back at fair market value. It was finally decided that a seven-year taxable lease agreement is being written. Because the DATTCO contract is for only five years, they are actually taking some risk by agreeing to buy the buses at the end of the seven years. Their attorney has reviewed the contract and they are willing to take the risk.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mr. Currin, the Board of Education unanimously approved the resolution authorizing Susan Viccaro to sign the Lease Purchase Agreement, Transportation Agreement and Purchase Agreement on behalf of the District regarding school bus transportation. A copy of the resolution is attached to these minutes.

Mr. Hennick told the Board that route planning and the cooperation from DATTCO has been excellent this year.

Food Service Contract: Mrs. Flanagan said the contract is complete. It was a long negotiation but was settled at a 2½ % increase for each year of the four-year contract. Their insurance plan will be the same plan as the teachers.

On a motion by Mrs. Flanagan, second Mr. Currin, the Board of Education unanimously approved the contract with the Food Service Employees of Local 1303-438 of Council 4 AFSCME, AFL-CIO, effective upon execution through June 30, 2013.

Oceanography Field Trip: On a motion by Mr. Currlin, second Ms. Gara, the Board of Education unanimously approved the oceanography field trip to Block Island on September 18, 2009.

District Logo: Mrs. Viccaro said last year kids from CRHS and Strong submitted designs for a new logo but they were not exactly what the Board was looking for. She presented a new design to the Board that incorporates the old logo from the high school with RSD 13. Mrs. Viccaro would like approval for the logo so that it can be put onto the new security badges.

On a motion by Mr. Currlin, second Mrs. Flanagan, the Board of Education unanimously approved the new logo for Regional School District 13 as presented.

Personnel Policies: Mrs. Flanagan said negotiations with the Support Staff are continuing and will be starting soon with the administrators.

Finance: Ms. Parsons said the Finance Committee met this evening. The end of year transfer of funds was discussed. There were significant changes to the format of the budget this past year and expenses are better aligned. Because of this there were only three line items where possible transfers needed to occur: 2100 Student Support Services, 2300 Board Services, and 2600 Maintenance Operations. Once transfers are made in an appropriation the ability to see the overage for the line item is gone. After discussion with the auditors the Committee has made the decision to not make any transfers this year. Mr. Melnik said we are in compliance with legal requirements; we don't need to do anything unless we are over our total budget. Mrs. Viccaro said seeing the actual totals when developing the budget for the next year will be very helpful.

Lunch Prices: Ms. Parsons said the Finance Committee discussed the financial results of the Food Service Program. They have made great headway in the last year. The Committee recommends keeping the lunch prices the same as last year.

On a motion by Ms. Parsons, second Mr. Hicks, the Board of Education unanimously approved to keep the lunch prices at \$2.75 Districtwide.

Policy Committee: Mr. Hicks said the Policy Committee held three meetings this summer. There are five policies that will be voted on at the next meeting and he would also like the following policies considered for elimination: 1101.1 Parental Involvement, 1112 News Media Relations, 1220 Citizen's Advisory Committee, and possibly 1121 Video Taping Board Meetings.

Building Committee: Mr. Currlin said the Committee has been very active all summer. We are in the design phase and are still determining what we can afford. Inland Wetlands approval has been received, but the Zoning Board of Appeals has denied the request for the 80' light pole variance. A presentation was made to the Planning and Zoning Commission last week. The hearing has been continued to September 2<sup>nd</sup>. We are now looking for a change in the zoning to allow for the light height.

Mr. Currlin requested that an agenda item be added to a future Board meeting to discuss the current protocols for the H1N1 virus. Mrs. Viccaro said she will talk about it at the next meeting. The Department of Public Health has come out with very clear protocols that they want schools to follow. A letter will be going home to parents. They are considering using schools as a possible site for inoculation of students.

On a motion by Mr. Hicks, second Mr. Currlin, the Board of Education unanimously approved to move into Executive Session to discuss a Possible Legal Action.

The Board moved back into regular session.

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