

SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT

REGULAR MEETING

March 27, 2014

The regular meeting of the Southington Board of Education with Executive Session was held on Thursday, March 27, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. in the Municipal Center Public Assembly Room, 200 North Main Street, Southington, Connecticut.

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS TWO-WAY RADIO PROJECT, CONTRACT RENEWALS, A STUDENT MATTER AND REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT ~ 6:30 p.m.

An Executive Session meeting was held from 6:34 p.m. and recessed at 7:05 p.m. to begin Board of Education recognitions.

Board members present were Mr. Brian Goralski, Chairperson; Mrs. Terri Carmody, Vice Chairperson; Mrs. Jill Notar-Francesco, Secretary; Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mrs. Terry Lombardi, Mr. Zaya Oshana and Mrs. Patricia Queen. Absent was Mrs. Patricia Johnson.

Present from the administration were Dr. Joseph Erardi, Jr., Superintendent of Schools; Mrs. Karen Smith, Assistant Superintendent; Mr. Fred Cox, Operations Manager (left at 6:45 p.m.).

3. BOARD OF EDUCATION RECOGNITIONS

At 7:12 p.m., the Board recognized the following middle school students for their participation and success in the local science fair and at the state level at the 2014 Connecticut Science & Engineering Fair. Congratulations to:

Hannah Platt ~ Kennedy, Grade 7 ~ "Decreasing Sugar in Horse Treats"

Award: Pfizer Life Sciences Award 4th Place, Life Sciences 7th grade trophy, Invited to compete in Broadcom MASTERS, Alumni Botany Award, Alumni Equine Award

Mary Bilodeau ~ Kennedy, Grade 7 ~ "Gluten – A Sticky Situation"

Award: Pfizer Life Science Award, 2nd Place, Life Sciences 7th Grade, \$100 and trophy, Invited to compete in Broadcom MASTERS

Ananya Karanam & Jagvi Patel ~ Kennedy, Grade 8 ~ "Ready, Set, Grow"

Participants only

Evan Bender & Michael Dorsey ~ DePaolo, Grade 8 ~ "The Effects of Deicers on Grass Growth" Award: Pfizer Life Sciences Award 3rd Place, Life Sciences Middle School Team Trophy, Invited to compete in Broadcom MASTERS

Lidia Yu ~ DePaolo, Grade 8 ~ "Pitch Not Perfect"
Award: People's United Bank Mathematics Award with ATOMIC, Middle School Finalist, Medallion & Acrylic Award

Lydia Prusak ~ DePaolo, Grade 7 ~ "Oxidation in Apples"
Participant Only

Ashley Shafran & Erin Palinkos ~ DePaolo, Grade 8 ~ "The Effects of a Robot's Speed in Mazes with Different Amounts of Turns"
Participants Only

At 7:22 p.m., Mr. Goralski called for a recess.

4. RECONVENE MEETING ~ REGULAR SESSION

The regular session was reconvened at 7:41 p.m. by Chairperson, Mr. Brian Goralski. Board members present were Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mrs. Terry Lombardi, Mrs. Jill Notar-Francesco, Mr. Zaya Oshana and Mrs. Patricia Queen. Absent was Mrs. Patricia Johnson.

Present from the administration were Dr. Joseph Erardi, Jr., Superintendent of Schools; Mrs. Karen Smith, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Sherri DiNello, Director of Business and Finance; Mr. Frederick Cox, Director of Operations and Dr. Perri Murdica, Director of Pupil Services.

Student representatives present were Miss Abigail Harris and Miss Stephanie Krar.

There were approximately 56 people in the audience.

5. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by four students from Thalberg School.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES ~ March 13, 2014

MOTION: by Mrs. Notar-Francesco, seconded by Mr. Derynoski:

"Move to approve the Board of Education Regular Meeting minutes of March 13, 2014, as submitted."

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

a. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes ~ March 18, 2014

MOTION: by Mrs. Notar Francesco, seconded by Mrs. Carmody:

“Move to approve the Board of Education Special Meeting minutes of March 18, 2014, as submitted.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications from Audience

Ms. Antoinette Delfino, Spanish teacher and Diversity Club advisor at Southington High School, asked the following parents to come to the podium:

Don Corriveau, 162 River St., stated that both his son and daughter were part of the Diversity Club where they learned about the many different cultures and traditions around the world. His son is currently in Germany working on Apple computers and will be in China in May. Due to the excellent AP and engineering courses available to students at the high school, his son is excelling in college and will be graduating early. He is very proud that his children attended Southington High School and thanked the Board for all they do.

Alex DeVore, 120 Wonx Spring Road, stated that he moved to Southington with his daughter three years ago; she is now a sophomore at the high school. She is a member of the Diversity Club, and has embraced it. She is of Haitian, German and Irish **descent**. He thanked Dr. Erardi for his years of service and to Ms. Delfino for fostering diversity throughout our community.

Sameena Tanveer, Belrose Ave., stated that her daughter is involved in the Diversity Club and thanked Ms. Delfino for the opportunity to present their culture to the people of Southington.

b. Communications from Board Members and Administration

MOTION: by Mrs. Notar-Francesco, seconded by Mr. Oshana:

“Move to add Agenda Item 10g. Student Expulsion 2013-2014-06.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Communication from Board Members:

Mrs. Notar-Francesco stated that she attended the Townwide Spelling Bee on Thursday, March 20th at Thalberg School. She congratulated the winners. The first place winner was Christian Mohr, a sixth grader, from Kennedy Middle School. Christian is the third in a series of consecutive winners from JFK. This is the third consecutive year that JFK has taken home the prize. The runner up was Dylan Johnson-Alers, a Grade 5 student, from Flanders Elementary School. Both students were extraordinary representatives of their schools, and the evening was

one that was unforgettable in many remarkable ways. Mrs. Notar-Francesco extended thanks to the Record Journal and Southington Education Foundation for their sponsorship and to Alan DeBisschop for his participation, again, as Bee Master.

Mrs. Lombardi stated that she was invited to sit in on an AP Spanish class at the high school. From the minute the class started to the end, not one word of English was spoken. To see the level of curriculum that is being taught and students teaching other students is a great example of what we have in our town in the area of World Language. She thanked Mrs. Riccio and Ms. Star. The Board made a great decision extending this to Kindergarten and Grade 1.

Mr. Goralski stated that he attended the eighth annual Michael Casale basketball game at Derynoski Elementary School. It is a great event with a great spirit of remembering a teacher who served our school system well, and who left far before his time. Mr. Goralski said that he was honored to represent the Board. A scholarship in Mr. Casale's name has been set up for a graduating senior who attended Derynoski.

Communication from Administration:

Dr. Erardi reported on the following:

In addition to his report, he asked Mrs. Smith to give an update on the Spanish Magnet proposal at South End Elementary School. Mrs. Smith stated that the Board had in front of them a copy of the initial outline of what the Kindergarten and Grade 1 program will look like, aligned with the Common Core State Standards. It is a very thorough document and the Curriculum and Instruction Committee will review it in detail, but she wanted the Board to see what the conceptual ideas are.

1. CAPSS Position – AHCA

This is important information on CAPSS' position on the Affordable Health Care Act and the result of additional costs to future education budgets. There is a slight impact on the 2014-2015 budget.

2. Out of District Staff Survey

This survey was given to staff members to gain real information of potential interest for staff who live out of the district for the opportunity to have their child attend a Southington school tuition-based. The response will be brought back to the sub committee.

3. Kindergarten 2014-2015

Mrs. Karen Smith and staff held two evening presentations for parents to ask questions on full-day versus half-day opportunities. Eight parents attended last night, and final numbers and final draft of the 2014-2015 Kindergarten will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

4. SEF / Community Y / BOE Partnership

Dr. Erardi is very proud to share that the Southington Education Foundation has offered a \$20,000 donation to complete the Camp Sloper Nature Center.

Dr. Erardi congratulated Mr. Cox on his well-deserved retirement and stated the following for the record, “Fred, your loyalty to the district and to my office has been simply incredible. During my tenure you brought to close three major school projects and the Municipal Center. You have successfully launched two additional projects with our middle schools and in between you have been a strong and consistent decision maker within all aspects of operations and maintenance. I value your opinion and friendship. I value your integrity and your ability to be truthful and honest at all times. I wish you only the best with your retirement at the close of this school year. On behalf of my office and the Board of Education, we send your way an enormous thank you for the stewardship and leadership you have offered this district for well over three decades.”

5. Thalberg Elementary School – Technology Club – Kate Wakefield

Mrs. Wakefield, library media specialist at Thalberg School, thanked Dr. Erardi and the Board members for the opportunity to present tonight. She stated that this project has grown from a seed idea into life form and she is so impressed with the students know-how to use the technology and the connections they are making with staff. The club now currently has thirty-five “tech-sperts” and plan to add more. She thanked Mrs. Reilly, Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Bennett for their support. She introduced the four student “tech-sperts” who came to give their presentation: Sylar Gravel, Gillian Smith, Jaden Vuong and Erin Young. A robot presentation was given.

Mrs. Lombardi thanked Mrs. Wakefield and the students for their presentation. Mrs. Queen stated that she thought this program was phenomenal. She stated that she saw exhibited in this presentation communication, patience, problem solving, leadership and the teachers demonstrating what it is to be a life-long learner.

c. Communications from Student Representatives

Miss Harris reported the following:

- She commended the Thalberg students and thought that they did a fantastic job; the future Robotics team is in good hands.
- The Robotics competition was held over the weekend at SHS, thirty-two teams from Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire attended. Southington High School placed first.
- The National High School Dodgeball Tournament was held at Cheshire High School. Southington won by a large margin. The team composed of faculty including Dr. Semmel and there was a ton of school spirit.
- Spring sports have begun. The turf is now being used for these sports as well.
- She is excited that the graduation date will be finalized and hopes for no more snow.

Miss Krar reported on the following:

- AP tests are coming soon, registration was due on March 14.
- High school marking term ends tomorrow.

- SHS Drama Club is performing “*Aida*” this weekend. Gabby Baker is the lead and it is one of the best shows so far.
- Last weekend the Flanders Drama Club presented “*Alice in Wonderland*”. She co-directed the show, along with Katie Miller. It was fantastic.
- The middle school Drama Club is presenting “*Shrek*” next weekend to be held in the SHS auditorium.
- The National Honor Society Induction will be held on April 8 with 90 students being inducted.
- The National Honor Society book drive was two weeks ago. Several bins of books were collected and will be distributed to K-8 classrooms and also to the Friends of the Southington Public Library.

Mr. Goralski stated that he attended the performance last weekend by the Unified Arts Theater. The show was phenomenal and disappointed no one. He thanked the staff involved in the organization and stated that it was great to see how the program has blossomed.

8. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

a. Board of Education Finance Committee Meeting ~ March 10, 2014

a. Apple Equity Lease Proposal

Mrs. Notar-Francesco stated that we currently have several Apple Equity Leases with their last payment to be made this July, for the 2014-2015 school year. This means that next summer we would roll over these leases to new leases, and we would be able purchase a very large amount of technology equipment, approximately \$700,00 worth, all at once. Concurrently, our middle schools will be receiving all of their new technology equipment.

Administration would like the ability to alter and phase in the timing and acquisition of this new equipment. They would like to renew leases at an earlier date to avoid large fluctuations in new equipment in certain years. This would adjust the lease schedule to better fit our needs, without affecting the budgeted payments.

After much discussion and many questions, the Finance Committee supported this plan to roll over two leases in 2014-2015 and another two leases in 2015-2016.

MOTION: by Mrs. Notar-Francesco, seconded by Mr. Derynoski:

“Move to approve renewal of Apple Leases 5 & 6 in 2014-2015 and Apple Leases 7 & 8 in 2015-2016, earlier than the scheduled lease date.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco reported on other highlights of the Finance Committee meeting.

Time and Attendance

The Finance Committee had hoped to have a recommendation for the full Board on this item. However, the Committee will bring a recommendation back to the full Board at a later date. Mrs. DiNello is in the process of gathering additional information and references for a recommendation.

VoAg Tuition Estimate

Administration has shared with the town's Finance Director that we anticipate tuition revenue of \$556,200 on an out-of-town student base of 69 students attending the Ag Science program next year.

Oak Hill Update

As many are aware, the lease for Oak Hill in which they rent classroom space in our schools will end on June 30th. Oak Hill no longer needs to lease space because of their declining enrollment. There is a budget impact to next year's budget of \$33,000 for the loss of this rental income. This will result in a deficit in Thalberg School's electricity account of \$33,000. Additionally, our out-of-town special education transportation account may also increase with two students needing to be transported out of town. The Board needs to be aware of this as the budget goes through the process of being finalized.

Financial Update

Three timely pieces of information from the meeting:

1. Mrs. DiNello shared that there is a projected deficit in the fuel oil account due to increased fuel oil usage. At the Committee meeting, it was thought to be about \$70,000, but it may be even larger than originally discussed. This year, due to the extremely cold stretch of winter and the school construction at DePaolo, there has been increased consumption of fuel oil causing this projected deficit. Administration believes that the consumption at DePaolo is due to removal of insulation and ceiling tiles. We will look to a possible reimbursement within the construction project.
2. The first payment of the State's Excess Cost Grant appears to be at the reimbursement rate of about 80%. Mrs. DiNello planned to confirm the per-pupil number that was used by the state in their calculation. We await the second reimbursement in May to assess what the overall reimbursement rate will be for this grant for the year.
3. We will continue to hold back the 25% in the supply account at the school level, but there is no spending freeze being requested at this time by the administration.

The Finance Committee has planned meeting dates to the end of the year. They are May 20th and June 9th at 6:30 pm.

b. Policy and Personnel Committee Meeting ~ March 18, 2014

Mrs. Clark stated the BYOD pilot was ending and the Technology Planning Committee is working on a draft policy to bring back to the Policy and Personnel Committee for review. She stated that Dr. Erardi presented them tonight with a survey developed by administration to all Southington school employees asking those living outside of Southington if, given the opportunity, they would have their child attend a Southington school tuition based. Samples of policies from other towns were shared. Information from that survey will be discussed by the Policy and Personnel Committee. The committee also looked at the job description of Assistant Superintendent which will be presented later on for a first read. The Curriculum & Instruction Committee will be invited to a future meeting to further discuss the ABA program and lead ABA therapist position. Mrs. Lombardi stated that she would like the minutes to reflect that she was in attendance at this meeting as well. The next meeting of the Policy and Personnel Committee will be April 21.

9. OLD BUSINESS

a. Town Government Communications

Mrs. Notar-Francesco stated that she attended the Board of Finance meeting earlier this evening and was pleased to report that the budget passed as presented, 5-1. She commended the Board of Finance for their work, the considerable amount of time and energy they put in, and for diligently asking questions to understand the work we do. It was an incredible moment for Southington to pass as presented.

Mr. Goralski thanked Mrs. DiNello for the work she does, and she was also in attendance at the Board of Finance meeting. It is a great tribute to her, Dr. Erardi, Mrs. Smith and their entire team. We can now say when the Town Council votes on the budget, the community is a team of one, and he looks forward to our community continuing to grow.

b. Construction Update

Mr. Cox stated that the comments from Dr. Erardi caught him temporarily speechless. He has enjoyed the past twenty years in his position and certainly under the leadership of Dr. Erardi. He stated that the middle schools are still on schedule to move into the new additions during and following the spring vacation. He stated that the Plantsville School project should be brought to closure next month. Mr. Goralski stated to Mr. Cox that he was someone we could count on with these projects and will be sorely missed.

c. Administrator Evaluation Plan Update

Dr. Erardi stated that there was no report this evening.

d. Teacher Evaluation Plan Update

Mrs. Smith stated that the Teacher Evaluation Committee continues to meet regularly and is working to establish summer meeting dates to reflect on further changes. They continue to work together as a small subcommittee revising some forms to make them more efficient, and she is requesting a motion for more flexibility with the plan with the options addressed at the last Board of Education meeting.

MOTION: by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mrs. Notar-Francesco:

“Move to accept the following flexibility options for the teacher evaluation and support plan: (1) No use of CMT/CAPT/SBAC as assessment measure under the Teacher Evaluation and Support Plan for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years and; (2) One (1) Student Learning Objective (SLO) per year will be required.”

Mr. Derynoski asked if this motion was in part due to the mandates passed on by the state. Mrs. Smith stated that they were given an opportunity to revisit the plan adopted in the last school year, and options have been made available which do amend the plan; therefore, a motion is requested. There is always a possibility for more changes down the road to stay in compliance.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Derynoski stated that it has been a joy and an honor to work with Mr. Cox over the past twenty years. He has learned so much from him, and respects him for what he has done for the town of Southington, thank you.

10. NEW BUSINESS

a. Energy Performance Contracting Proposal

NORESCO was authorized by the Town's Energy Committee to perform a Scoping Audit Review of energy consumption at all Town buildings. NORESKO presented the results to the Committee on September 6, 2013. In November 2013, the Town entered into a contract with NORESKO for an Investment Grade Audit. The audit was completed in early February 2014 and NORESKO then obtained quotes for all the trade work that would be involved in each approved project. Representatives from NORESKO gave a presentation on their plan to fund the equipment upgrades through energy savings. Once under contract, NORESKO will guarantee the projected savings to the Town. Depending on the number of projects chosen, there could be some supplemental costs to the Town. The highest priority projects identified by the Committee are replacing Southington High School's Energy Management System, hot water system, and HVAC roof top units.

Discussion and several questions followed the presentation.

Mr. Goralski stated that this is a town project. This endeavor came to the Board through the Town's Energy Committee. He stated that there is concern regarding the financial piece and asked that the Board of Finance get involved in the process and requested that NORESKO give their presentation to them as well. NORESKO will be presenting to the Town Council on April 14, 2014. What was needed is a consensus from the Board of Education to support the item before them.

A consensus was taken to support the Board of Education participation in the Energy Performance Contracting Proposal.

CONCENSUS: All in favor, no one opposed.

b. Adoption of 2015 Board of Education Meeting Dates

Dr. Erardi presented the regular meeting dates for the ensuing year. Mr. Goralski read Mrs. Johnson's statement asking to consider moving the February date, as it is so late in the month. Mr. Goralski proposed moving it up one week to February 19. Board consensus was to change the date to February 19.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco questioned why there was only one meeting scheduled for April. She suggested meeting twice, April 16 and 30. Consensus of the Board was to keep the date as scheduled on April 23.

MOTION: by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. Oshana:

“Move to approve the proposed schedule of regular Board of Education meeting dates for 2015, with the exception of changing the February date to February 19th.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

c. Non-Renewal of Interim Teachers

Interim teachers were hired to fill positions for the 2013-2014 school year typically for teachers who are on leave or in positions that will likely be available for one year. To officially terminate the services of these teachers, the Board must vote by May 1 to non-renew their services for the coming year. This action is in keeping with the requirements of state law and is in no way a reflection on the performance of the teacher.

MOTION: by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. Derynoski:

“Move that the contract of Kevin St. Pierre, Kimberly Bellonio, Brittany Saucier and Jenifer Shields be non-renewed for the 2014-2015 school year.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Goralski thanked these teachers for their service and again stated that this is in no way a reflection of their work.

d. Substitute Teachers ~ Retired SPS Educators

Dr. Erardi proposed an April-June pilot of a per diem rate of \$100 per day for retired Southington teachers working in short term assignments, thus increasing our substitute pool by twenty-three.

MOTION: by Mr. Derynoski, seconded by Mr. Oshana:

“Move to approve a \$100 per diem pay rate for retired Southington teachers April-June pilot to see how it affects teacher coverage.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

e. Establishment of 2014 Graduation Date / Last Day of School / End of the Year Dates

MOTION: by Mr. Derynoski, seconded by Mrs. Carmody:

“Move to tentatively approve the last day of school and Southington High School graduation as Thursday, June 19, 2014 and to approve the End of the Year dates.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

f. Job Description ~ Assistant Superintendent ~ First Reading

Mr. Goralski thanked the Policy and Personnel Committee for bringing this to the Board. He encourages any Board member with questions or comments to share them with Mrs. Clark as Chairperson of the Committee by the next meeting.

g. Student Expulsion 2013-2014-06

MOTION: by Mrs. Notar-Francesco, seconded by Mr. Derynoski:

“Move to expel student 2013-2014-06, as stipulated by the Superintendent of Schools.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

MOTION: by Mr. Derynoski, seconded by Mrs. Lombardi:

“Move to return to Executive Session to complete the Executive Session Agenda.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The Board returned to Executive Session at 9:29 p.m. Mr. Michael Riccio, Southington Town Council Chairman, Dr. Erardi, Superintendent of Schools and Mrs. Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, were in attendance. All Board members except Mrs. Patricia Johnson were in attendance. Mr. Oshana left the Executive Session meeting at 10:06 pm.

Mr. Goralski declared the end of Executive Session at 10:14 pm. At that time, the Board returned to public session.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: by Mr. Derynoski, seconded Mrs. Clark:

“Move to adjourn.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 10:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Smolinski
Recording Secretary