

SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT

REGULAR MEETING

MARCH 28, 2013

The regular meeting of the Southington Board of Education was held on Thursday, March 28, 2013 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 FOR SAFETY AND PERSONNEL ~ 6:30 P.M.

An Executive Session meeting was held 6:30 p.m. through 7:08 p.m. (*Minutes attached*).

3. BOARD RECOGNITIONS

At 7:13 p.m., in Celebration of Excellence, the Board recognized Kate O'Reilly, sixth grader at J. F. Kennedy Middle School, who was the 2013 Southington Public School Town-wide Spelling Bee Champion and Mark Murdy, eighth grader at J. F. Kennedy Middle School, who was the 2012-2013 InvestWrite Competition State Champion. The students were presented with a Certificate of Excellence from the Board by Mr. Goralski.

4. RECONVENE MEETING ~ REGULAR SESSION

The regular session was reconvened at 7:35 p.m. by Chairperson, Mr. Brian Goralski. Board members present were Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mrs. Patricia Johnson, Mrs. Terry Lombardi, Mrs. Jill Notar-Francesco, and Mrs. Patricia Queen. Board member absent was Mr. Zaya Oshana.

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; and Dr. Perri Murdica, Senior Coordinator of Pupil Personnel Services.

Student Representatives present were Miss Abigail Harris and Miss Whitney DiMeo.

There were approximately 20 people in the audience.

5. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Miss Harris and Miss DiMeo.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES ~ MARCH 14, 2013

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

“Move to approve the Board of Education minutes of March 14, 2013, as submitted.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications from Audience

Arthur Cyr, 103 Berlin Avenue, addressed school security that was discussed by the Board of Education in Executive Session and asked that it be public and not a secret. He hoped that there would not be armed guards at all the schools. Mr. Cyr attended the Board of Finance meeting where they cut the Board of Education proposed budget by \$1.1 million. He spoke of trust, transparency, and the glass being half full or half empty. He was disappointed that the Board of Finance gave the Board of Education an increase and did not make it a zero-dollar budget increase. He felt that the impression of townspeople was that in April, May and June the schools stock up with supplies with leftover money in the budget. He felt that there is never a budget surplus because the Board of Education spends every penny.

Sabina Vance, 74 Ferncliff Drive, announced that Tuesday, April 2, 2013 is World Autism Awareness Day, which is the kick-off of Autism Awareness Month. The school district will be observing that day by encouraging staff and students to wear blue to support autism awareness. There will be an optional staff dress down day in each building and in Grades K-8 there will be a hat day fundraiser with all the proceeds going to Autism Speaks. Ms. Vance distributed a handout to the Board (*Attachment #1*).

b. Communications from Board Members and Administration

Communication from the Board Members:

Mrs. Queen reported that she attended the Board of Finance meeting last night. As expected, they approved an \$84,233,304 Board of Education budget recommendation to the Town Council for 2013-2014, which reflects an increase of \$1.58 million or a 2.18% increase from the 2012-2013 budget, but a reduction of \$1.1 million from the proposed budget. From the Board of Finance budget workshop, she expected this result; but, she attended the meeting last night because she wanted to hear the rationale for the significant reduction to the Board of Education proposed budget. While there was plenty of explanation for the math behind their final numbers, there was no explanation offered for why the Board of Finance cut the proposed Board of Education budget. Prior to the budget workshops and last night's meeting, the Board of Finance asked substantial questions of our administration who invested a significant amount of labor to provide detailed responses to those questions via the infamous "grid." She did not hear any discussion around these questions or their answers. Because of the lack of discussion by the Board of Finance, Mrs. Queen assumed that the reason the Board of Finance cut the proposed Board of Education budget was out of deference to the taxpayer. She heard the term, "the taxpayer," thrown around frequently as if "the taxpayer" is of a singular opinion, to cut costs regardless of any cost/benefit analysis. Yet, at the public hearing held by the Board of Finance, the voices of the taxpayers present overwhelmingly asked the Board of Finance to support the

Board of Education budget as proposed. One voice in particular stood out to Mrs. Queen that night. It was that of a small business owner who speaks every year at the Board of Finance public hearings on the budget. Six years ago, when Mrs. Queen first started following the budget process very closely, the small business owner spoke vehemently and at length about the challenges of a small business owner and the need for the town to cut the budget and minimize taxes. This year, Mrs. Queen noticed a significant shift in the small business owner's attitude. The business owner's remarks focused on how she supported the public schools in town and thought the Board of Education and Dr. Erardi, in particular, were doing a really good job but asked for a little caution in implementing new programs. The remarks of this particular taxpayer made Mrs. Queen think of two things. First, was the question asked by the chair of the Board of Finance over the last three years of "How can the Board of Finance be assured that money allocated to the Board of Education is money well-spent? How does the Board of Finance know that the Board of Education is doing a good job?" Mrs. Queen stated that each year Dr. Erardi responds by pointing to rising standardized test scores, graduation rates, local, state and national recognition of individual students, staff and our school system.

Mrs. Queen continued that the second thing was the concept of trust. She hears Dr. Erardi and Chairman Goralski speak to this concept at budget time in three ways: 1) Every dollar in the proposed budget had a designated purpose; 2) the Southington community can be assured that the standard of education in Southington will be of excellence and, 3) open communication on every issue including budget is a given. Mrs. Queen believed that the remarks of the small business owner and resident in town at the last Board of Finance hearing symbolized the trust Dr. Erardi and the School Board has earned from the Southington community. From that, she was hopeful, the realization will come that a superior public education not only serves the students, it is an asset to the town as a whole and can only serve to enhance the local economy.

Mrs. Queen felt that the landscape around public education is changing and changing dramatically. The Board has tried to share that message with the fiscal entity responsible for recommending the budget. The message is that we need to keep up with changing times, or we will be left behind. Based on the action taken by the Board of Finance in significantly cutting the Board of Education proposed budget, she was not sure that the Board of Finance understood that. She felt that the Board of Finance must think that the budget they approved last night will allow the Board of Education to maintain services, and they think that is enough. But, the Board of Education knows that simply maintaining services is not enough in the world we now live in, and over time holding our education system in place will prove ultimately to be a backward motion. She felt that the Board of Education needs to continue to move forward or the goal of excellence was at risk.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco reported that CREC was hosting and sponsoring a school safety forum called, "School Safety: It's Everybody's Business," from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on May 1, 2013 at the Convention Center. She had signed up to attend. Several topics that they will be discussing include: bullying prevention, improving school climate, improving student supervision and communication during crisis events, visual weapons screening and recognizing physical behaviors of armed persons.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco noted that the CREC Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts students put on a spectacular production, which is comparable to anything seen on Broadway. Southington has students who will be participating in this year's performance of *Hairspray* on

May 3, 4, 9, 10, and 11 at 7:30 p.m. If Board members were interested in attending, she will get information on how to obtain tickets.

Mr. Derynoski attended a Technology Advisory Committee meeting and they are planning a Career Day, which would be all day at the high school next year. The Southington High School FIRST Robotics Team 195 is holding a fundraiser from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 7 at the Smokin' with Chis Restaurant to help support their activities and competitions. He gave the flyer to the Board Recording Secretary to e-mail to the Board members (*Attachment #2*).

Mrs. Clark reported that yesterday she attended her first 3-to-3 Institute, which is a program begun by the State Department of Education. She pointed out that Southington's 3-to-3 Program is being funded by the Graustein Foundation. There are eight communities within the state of Connecticut who are participating in this institute and looking at early childhood education from age three to the third grade. They discussed what the community is doing to reach the three-year-old to Grade 3 population. Mrs. Smith stated that they received this grant and it is free to the community. She credited Mrs. Christine Boulanger, Grant Writer for Southington, who procured the grant. There is compelling evidence that high quality curriculum and instruction focused on data-driven decision-making and instructional leadership create and sustain the environment for young learners that are central to effective reform and future success. This is a one-year study in how to better organize and structure our services for children ages three through Grade 3 so that they will become lifelong learners and partners in leading us to the 21st Century with all the skills and developmental needs that are necessary. There are four major goals: 1) to align within our district and community the early childhood programs that currently exist, both public and private; 2) improve effective instructional practice, instructional coherence and meaningful learning in community and school district programs in Grades Pre-K through Grade 3; 3) to build capacity and sustainability by creating partnerships between the community and the school district in order to develop a common language; 4) to assist in leveraging resources to build a continuum of high quality early learning environments stressing that the parents are the first teachers.

Mrs. Johnson stated that one of the grants that the Southington Education Foundation recently awarded was to Maryjane Sullivan, the music teacher at Strong School for the project called, "Ukulele Buddies" for third graders. Years ago, Southington started the stringed instrument program for third graders, which was discontinued due to budget cuts. Mrs. Johnson stated that Mrs. Sullivan wanted to include senior adults in this program and for a number of weeks she has been attending this class and is learning to play the Ukulele.

Mr. Goralski announced that the Third Annual Southington Education Foundation Spelling Bee would be held on April 4, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at the high school. Mrs. Queen, Mrs. Notar-Francesco and Mr. Goralski comprise the team representing the Board of Education.

Mr. Goralski announced that the middle school drama performance of *Annie* will be held on April 4, 5, 6, 10 and 12 at 7:00 p.m. at J. F. Kennedy Middle School. There are 109 students participating. He thanked Mr. Christopher Palmieri, Assistant Principal at DePaolo Middle School, and his staff for producing this drama club performance.

Communication from Administration:

Dr. Erardi reported on the following:

1. Town Council Public Hearing: Dr. Erardi reminded the Board that the Town Council will be holding their public hearing regarding the budget on April 22, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at DePaolo Middle School.
2. End of the Year Calendar: Dr. Erardi announced that administration will bring to the Board of Education the end of the year closing dates for action at their April 11th meeting. He noted that SHS seniors' parents are anxious to make plans for commencement 2013 for Friday, June 21. Dr. Erardi stated that in collaboration with Mr. Madancy, Mr. Pepe, Mr. Cox and the Building Committee he would also be bringing to the Board a half-day schedule that will be needed to appropriately close up the middle school buildings because everything needs to be in storage on June 22.
3. SHS Athletics – Spring Use of the Turf Field: Dr. Erardi announced that the high school spring sports season will open April 3, 2013. The same fee structure for winter sports will be used. The Turf Advisory Committee is putting together a meeting with the neighbors so they understand the use of the field. The committee wants to be proactive.
4. Council Request – Policy Review: Dr. Erardi reported that the Town Council requests to go into sub-committee with the Board of Education Policy Committee to address the sub-committee's thoughts on the access sidewalks.
5. Safety – Joint Meeting: Dr. Erardi stated that in no way is there a plan to share in secrecy the safety initiative that the School Board has been working on for an extended period of time. The reason why the conversations take place in Executive Session is about the perpetrator and how much information that person should have. The Board of Education will be meeting on Monday, April 8 with the Town Council and Board of Finance members to share the plan. There will be a developmental roll out of that plan to all constituents within the community, students, parents and staff. He is proud of the work that the School Board has done to date regarding keeping the students and staff safe.
6. Thank you – Phil Goodwin: Dr. Erardi announced that Phil Goodwin, Purchasing Agent, has been a cabinet member in great standing. Mr. Goodwin will be moving forward professionally in the town of Hamden. Dr. Erardi stated that it is difficult to replace loyalty, trust and honesty, which are the qualities of an outstanding employee. He thanked Mr. Goodwin for all of his work.

c. Communication from the Student Representatives:

Miss Harris reported on the following:

- Southington High School is sending five teams to the Southington Education Foundation Spelling Bee on April 4, 2013.
- The Junior Prom will be held early this year on April 6 at Coco Key Convention Center in Waterbury.
- The high school is promoting making good choices and the junior class had an assembly this week with a group called "Impact" that promotes safe driving. The

group was comprised of family members who have lost loved ones due to car accidents. The group addressed using cell phones and texting while driving.

- On April 4, the Advisory Committee will be doing a follow-up on the use of cell phones while driving.

Miss DiMeo reported on the following:

- The Drama Club's annual production last week was *Kiss Me Kate*.
- On Tuesday, the students were relieved that there was only a delay of school and not a cancellation due to the weather.
- The Unified Theater production is April 3 at 7:00 p.m.
- April 9 is the National Honor Society Induction. It is a required event for all National Honor Society members.
- She will not be attending the April 11 Board of Education meeting because she is participating in the French Exchange. The Spanish Exchange will be occurring with students taking trips to Costa Rica. There are 50 Southington students who will be studying abroad.

8. OLD BUSINESS

a. Town Government Communications

Mr. Goralski stated that Mrs. Queen addressed government communications with her earlier comments. He thanked Dr. Erardi for representing the Board of Education last night and asking for an explanation of the budget cut from the Board of Finance, so that the Board of Education can better work with them in the future.

Mr. Goralski addressed safety. He stated that community input was valuable and that we can only be as safe as all the knowledge we have. He encouraged the public to offer their opinions on how to make our schools safer.

b. Construction Update

Dr. Erardi stated that Mr. Cox was unable to attend the Board meeting. He thanked the community for voting to move forward with the middle school construction project with a resounding 1,377 approval votes to 334 votes against.

Mr. Goralski added that the Building Committee will be going out to bid in early April and construction will be starting, as planned, on June 22, 2013.

c. 2020 Vision Long Term Planning

Mrs. Queen thanked the committee comprised of Terry Lombardi, Dr. Perri Murdica, Holly Boudreau, Jessica Bruenn, Marisa Calvi-Rogers, Jen Discenza, Dan Murdzek, Kelly Nichols, Amy Perry, Tina Riccio, Julie Zellner and herself. She noted that the group of educators represented the high school, elementary, and middle schools. The educators on the committee recently acquired 092 certifications, as well as a wealth of current knowledge and thinking around education today. She quoted Dr. Erardi that these are "hardworking teacher

leaders.” She noted that each volunteered countless hours and intellectual capital to this project, and contributed both individually and collaboratively.

Mrs. Lombardi added that some school districts like to look outside for ideas of best practices, and some look inside for their own best practices and talent. She felt that this committee was an example of looking inside and maximizing our own talent. She noted that the Board did not need to hire a consultant like many other districts have done for \$50,000 because these educators put in many hours with the leadership of Dr. Erardi, and maximized our own talent for the future of our children. The questions that will be addressed during tonight’s presentation are: 1) When a Southington student graduates, what is it that they need to have and do for tomorrow? 2) When we look at the job market, what are the skills and the environment that students are going to be confronted with? 3) What is the Board’s responsibility to prepare the students when they are confronted with the outside world and the future job market?

Marisa Calvi-Rogers, Business and Marketing teacher at Southington High School, introduced the Vision 2020 Plan for the Southington public school district. It was the culmination of a lot of data collection and analysis. The committee first determined who the stakeholders were, where they should get the information from, and what the objective was, which was to prepare our students for the future. They met with and surveyed elected and appointed officials, community members, business owners, faculty, staff, parents and teachers, and determined the five priorities that the stakeholders felt needed to be a focus in order to prepare the students for the future. The five priorities were: 1) critical thinking skills; 2) partnerships; 3) individualized learning; 4) communication; 5) research and development.

Holly Boudreau, Grade 8 Language Arts teacher at DePaolo Middle School, addressed critical thinking. She pointed out the quote by Richard Paul and Linda Elder under critical thinking, which is *“It presupposes assent to rigorous standards of excellence and mindful command of their use. It entails effective communication and problem-solving abilities and a commitment to overcome our native egocentrism and sociocentrism.”* Ms. Boudreau pointed out some parallels of that quote to the Southington Public Schools Mission Statement. The quote talks about how we rise to challenges, which our mission statement reflects. The quote talks about informed, adaptive problem-solvers, as well as improving themselves and others. Southington is already focused on critical thinking. Today, we have the Common Core State Standards that have been adopted by most of the United States. Those are being aligned with our current curriculum. Southington has globally competitive, internationally benchmarked curriculum standards, but they are looking at it across all subject areas. Through the completion of this alignment, they are going to provide the students with multiple opportunities to practice those critical thinking skills. Today they have Webb’s Depth of Knowledge, which is a tiered development of questioning where they start with the literal and move to analysis, synthesis and evaluation, which addresses metacognition. Metacognition is thinking about thinking and being a reflective practitioner. You develop the ability to evaluate and change your course due to the awareness of your own thinking. The stakeholders asked the committee to work with Southington students as critical thinkers. The students will have instruction and multiple opportunities for critical thinking and to practice it.

Tina Riccio, World Language teacher at Southington High School, addressed partnerships. She stated that to support the development of those critical thinking and creative thinking skills, the committee is proposing a shift in the current graduation requirements to allow for more authentic learning experiences Grades K-12. These experiences would be made

possible by increased partnerships with local universities, local businesses and the town itself. These partnerships would have a local focus, but the skills acquired would have global applicability. As a result of these more diverse, authentic and less traditional school experiences the learning would become more individualized and customized to each student. To accommodate this shift and to allow for these opportunities, they propose a more flexible school day, various locations for learning, and a move from textbooks to e-books. With these changes and adjustments, learning is the constant and time becomes the variable.

Jen Discenza, School Counselor, Department Chair at J. F. Kennedy Middle School and Director of Adult and Continuing Education, addressed individualized learning. She noted that it was important to expand classroom choices to meet each student's needs. A trend from the data collection was to have the students navigate through failure and that we need to teach responsibility and adaptability through our educational programming. Expanding classroom choices may be done through increased internship experiences. The community and business stakeholders support the need for a higher percentage of our students to be participating in internships. We need more integration in interdisciplinary projects focusing on interactive learning experiences. The current development of the STEM Center in town is an example of expanding classroom choices and from making a shift from our traditional practices and offering authentic learning experiences to our students. Asset Building Classrooms and the Student Success Planning are two initiatives that are aligned that they are currently working on. The educators are responsible for educating the whole child, encompassing academic, career, personal, social, and emotional development. As this work is developed in the district, achievement expectations and student ownership of learning will increase. Currently, Southington is more departmentalized with our curricula. The Common Core State Standards is requiring more interdisciplinary work. There is a need to create opportunities for making connections across disciplines. An example of this might be a math teacher and a technology teacher working collaboratively with students on a project. Integrating opportunities for all students K-12 will create well-rounded, successful students and, in order to do this, we must shift our traditional focus and put more emphasis on the following themes: Life skills, critical thinking, communication and global citizenship. She stated that early development of these critical thinking and problem-solving skills is imperative. This is about merging our current educational system and shifting from traditional practices. A current example would be this year's implementation of the Advisory Program in Grades 6-12. Right now, our teachers are merging their roles as educators and as advisors in supporting the development of the whole child while making meaningful connections with their students.

Amy Perry, Grade 7 Math teacher at Kennedy Middle School, quoted the slogan "Teach less, learn more," which Singapore, world leader in education, has adopted as their mantra. The teachers in Singapore learn how to cultivate authentic learning experiences. They are student-directed rather than teacher-directed. They utilized 21st Century and critical thinking skills and they challenge students to solve real world problems. For example, at the NIE [National Institute of Education] school in Singapore, students are given seed money to create their own business. Their charge is to develop and engineer a unique, innovative product. The students learn how to write business proposals and market their plan. They learn terms such as profit margin, losses, gains and they actually go out and sell their product. The students go to the open market and all the money that they earn goes directly into the school so that other students will have that same opportunity to create their own business. These experiences are rich, meaningful and engaging. They help to build character, give students room to exercise initiative, and become productive agents in shaping their own learning process. These student-directed experiences foster

creativity and entrepreneurship so that students learn how to be successful and can thrive in our global market. The stakeholders believe that this is the direction that Southington needs to go for our children to be successful.

Dan Murdzek, Grade 5 teacher at Flanders Elementary School, spoke to the importance of communication. The committee felt that communication and technology go together. As it exists today, we have an imbalance across our district between schools and classrooms within our schools. They find themselves trying to catch-up with technology that, as it exists today, is outdated. Tomorrow, what they envision is to be well-researched, prepared and committed as pioneers in technology rather than the followers and the chasers. They would like to see the students learning from other students and teachers teaching other teachers across borders, across oceans and reaching out beyond our district limits. The stakeholders noted that the communication skill is lacking in our students. Today, in Southington, we have general courses such as Mass Communication and Public Speaking. What they envision in the future would be more directed curriculum, with classes mirroring those of universities and actual departments in communication. The committee would also like to see issues, such as body language, ethical language and etiquette, addressed. Students have to know that the way they communicate with peers is not the way to communicate in a business world. Sensitivity and intercultural communication has to also be addressed. For example, when a graduate from Southington goes on a business venture to Bangladesh, it is important to realize that the left hand is considered unclean and they should be doing things with their right hand. Excessive smiling is considered immature. If the students do not learn the ways to access that kind of information, then Southington is not doing a good enough job for our students.

Jessica Bruenn, Grade 5 teacher at Strong Elementary School, addressed students applying effective communication skills outside of the classroom. She stated that there is a need to increase extracurricular opportunities for all students, which might be achieved by offering a Saturday club or activity or an activity during the summer in order to maximize student involvement. She quoted Aristotle, "Children learn to do by doing."

Kelly Nichols, Learning Specialist for the TEAM Program at DePaolo Middle School, addressed professional development, which is a critical component of the strategic plan moving forward. She discussed that currently there is limited opportunities for collaborative planning, teaching and learning for staff. The committee is proposing that teacher leaders continue to be developed and that we provide more opportunities for collaboration amongst our teachers by providing common planning time. The success of Vision 2020 Strategic Plan to prepare the students for an ever changing global society depends on Southington school district's ability to act as a change agent. The most crucial part of this shift is looking closely at how the district does things today and how things can be improved moving forward for tomorrow. In an effort to make changes at a more efficient pace, the roles of the levels of authority must shift ultimately leading to a more fluid approach to change within our district. The organizational chart must move freely to allow decisions to be made at various levels. For the Strategic Plan that the committee is presenting this evening to move forward, this change is essential.

Marisa Calvi-Rogers summarized that this is a true paradigm shift from the traditional model of education as we currently know it today to what it needs to be in order to properly prepare our students for success in the future. What is next, where do we begin and how do we prioritize? This Strategic Plan serves as a guiding principle and all actions of the district have to tie back to these concepts. The stakeholders identified six priorities that need to be investigated,

evaluated and take action on within the next three to five years. They are: 1) Learning is the constant; time is the variable; 2) Curricular changes reflecting 21st Century Skills for global citizenship; 3) Equitable infrastructure, technology and safety; 4) Partnerships that create experiences beyond school; 5) Changing graduation requirements; 6) Building staff capacity through professional development.

Mrs. Carmody thanked the committee for their hard work and doing an excellent job presenting this. She agreed that building staff capacity with each other in professional development is wonderful. She loved the idea of student ownership of learning, which is a paradigm shift. She also loved the interdisciplinary implementation of Common Core. She felt that so many things she read in their report Southington is doing. She felt that they have to continue to investigate, evaluate and take action when we can.

Mr. Derynoski stated that the committee should be very proud of what they have accomplished and that this was a great start and where the country is going. He felt that their efforts put Southington in the forefront of where the rest of the country is heading. He liked the quote that “we have to be the leader, not the follower.” He felt that was critical to student and staff learning. He thought that the results that he saw tonight were amazing.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco stated that some of the items that were discussed in the presentation she has heard at CABC, CREC and CAPSS, and some of the things that have been resonating are things like “time is a variable.” She felt that the Board members have to be ambassadors to the legislators and to give them the direction. As a district, they can promote this, but it really has to be a state and national initiative that grows beyond Southington.

Mrs. Queen addressed “learning is the constant, time is the variable.” She first heard about this in the CAPSS piece on how to improve our schools in Connecticut. What made so much sense to her was a student mastering what needs to be learned in the objectives as opposed to a student sitting in a seat for the prescribed number of K-12 years. She felt that was a major change, which ties in with changing graduation requirements. Maybe a student is done in two years less or maybe another takes two years more, which is okay as long as they are mastering the objectives by the end.

Mrs. Lombardi pointed out that they could respond back to the Board of Finance that they can continue to be a status quo district in education if that is what the town and parents want. The Board of Education does not have to look into the future or have a vision. She asked if the Board members were elected to be status quo for the education of our children. If the answer to that is no, then they need to take the Vision 2020 to heart. She suggested that the Board of Education go before the Board of Finance with all the other stakeholders who were recruited for the first step to tell them what they have found. One of the priorities was equitable technology, which we do not have; however, we can stay status quo on that, too.

Mrs. Clark loved the sentence that “learning is the constant, time is the variable” because it made her think of her high school experience. In New York, they took Regent’s classes and she took a chemistry class in her sophomore year. The twist with this Regent’s class was that she did not have to attend class. In the 1970s that was unheard of, and it was scary. It was a most memorable class because she had a teacher who was a facilitator whom she could contact by phone at 10:00 p.m., if she had a question when doing her homework. However, the class was discontinued because that was not the way things were done. Now, she is seeing actual

change where the 2020 Vision Committee thought “out of the box.” They may give an opportunity to a learner who may not be awake at 7:30 a.m., but is spot on at 11:00 p.m. She loved the item that time is the variable.

Mrs. Johnson thanked the 2020 Vision Committee for this blueprint for the town. She was encouraged about “time is a variable” because it was something that the Board has heard before from Chris Richter, a teacher at Kennedy Middle School. In a presentation, he told the Board that his students were following the Presidential election and how they were in contact with him all night long. She noted that one of the Board’s goals now was to present this to everyone.

Mr. Goralski asked the 2020 Vision Committee to consider what the next steps are for the Board of Education. He stated that the Board will continue to spread their vision and that he will share the last slide of their PowerPoint presentation in his comments at the Town Council Budget Hearing and provide a hard copy for them. He asked the committee to come back to him with their comments individually or to the whole Board via e-mail on what are the next steps for the Board of Education. He asked the committee to help guide the Board and give them direction.

Dr. Erardi stated that the framework of the presentation would stand tall on a national and international platform. There is not a \$50,000 consultant fee because it was done internally and with outstanding teacher leaders. There will be a draft sent to the Board mid-week that will look for publication in regard to the framework of this. What is most exciting, but was not mentioned, is bringing this work to life. The teacher leaders have already begun to look at a funding stream for personalized learning, and there could be some exciting news coming to the Board of Education in the near future on how this could be done. He was proud of the work that took place, which at times was contentious, very open with opinion, and, at all times, offered the opportunity for every person to grow as an administrator. He noted that Julie Zellner who is part of the committee could not attend tonight.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco felt that the vision in its entirety should be taken to the Town Council and it should be extended to the legislators as well. She felt that everyone needed to be thinking along these lines. Mr. Goralski stated that he would give hand-outs to the Town Council, copies to the Board of Finance, Planning and Zoning, town leaders, and the state legislative delegation.

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Adoption of 2014 Board of Education Meeting Dates

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

“Move to approve the 2014 Board of Education meeting dates, as presented.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

b. Presentation of the Southington Public School Teacher Evaluation Plan 2013-2014 ~ First Reading

Dr. Erardi noted that Mrs. Smith's work in this area has been masterful in partnership with Bob Brown [SEA Union President]. He believed that this document is a consensus endorsement by the executive board of the teachers union and has the full support of the administrative team.

Mrs. Smith distributed the work that has occurred to date by a large and comprehensive committee that consisted of teachers, principals, and administrators (*Attachment #3*). She explained that the intent this evening was to hand out the draft document to the Board for them to review for two weeks before the next Board of Education meeting. The first page in the packet is the *Teacher Evaluation Roll Out to Staff*, which was the committee's plan on how they would use consistent language to explain it to the staff when this is rolled out after the April vacation. It also gives the Board a map to follow as they review the packet and shows the four domains: 1) Planning for Active Learning; 2) The Classroom Environment; 3) Instruction; 4) Professional Responsibilities and Teacher Leadership. Also included is the document that the committee is proposing for data collection purposes when observations are occurring in classrooms. The four domains that evaluators are using are listed, which represent the common core of teaching and learning expressed in a different way. What they are expecting to see when they go into classrooms is not very different from what Southington has always expected to see, but re-phrased and used with current language.

Bob Brown, SEA Union President, spoke to the trial pilot that they had with the data collection system when they visited a high school math class, middle school social studies class, and an elementary class. He agreed with Mrs. Smith that much of this new plan is what they already do, but some of the vocabulary has changed. The observation form is basically the best practices of how to teach.

Mrs. Smith explained that, once the plan is rolled out, it is important to administratively have professional development for common understandings of practice so there is consistency from administrator to administrator and teacher to teacher in defining what is best teaching. She noted that one of the challenges, when they observed a classroom, was objective data. She stated that the Southington Teacher Evaluation Plan is based on objective data. Mrs. Smith explained the Southington Public Schools Teacher Evaluation and Support Plan, which was part of the packet. It is Southington's version of the SEED [System for Educator Evaluation and Development] Plan from the State of Connecticut. Southington is recommending to modify the SEED Plan to meet our local needs with one major change. Instead of following the SEED recommendation of 10 observations by each administrator of each teacher, they will follow legislation that requires a minimum of three. She pointed out that most districts are following the legislation rather than the SEED state recommendation. Mrs. Smith stated that there will be a presentation on this plan at the April 11, 2013 Board of Education meeting and that it is a draft. If the Board supports this document, the state needs to be notified that this is Southington's official plan for 2013-2014 and it needs to be presented to the state prior to April 15, 2013.

Mrs. Carmody asked what the timeline was for implementation of this plan. Dr. Erardi replied that the original timeline was full implementation for the start of the 2013-2014 school year; however, that timeline has changed. Administration is recommending to the Board of Education that 50% of all staff in each building become a part of the new plan moving forward. For 2014-2015, it would be 100%. In the General Assembly, there is legislation pending that would delay the Teacher Evaluation Plan for an entire year and then have full implementation the following year.

Mrs. Carmody was happy to see that teachers were a part of this committee. One issue that bothers her was that part of a teacher's evaluation would be based on the success of their students on standardized tests. She abhors that and cannot see how the state legislators could make that part of the plan. She asked if that was addressed in the packet. Mr. Brown replied that it was in the plan and that it was 22 ½%. He explained that 45% is student performance and half of that, which is 22 ½%, if it is a standardized test area. Social Workers do not give standardized tests and that is one of the difficulties. He explained that there is so much misunderstanding about this. It is not about whether the students do well the teacher will get a high grade and, if they don't do well, the teacher will get a low grade. The teacher is going to set a goal based on the students that they have. The teacher will look at previous tests and then set a goal for how many are going to receive a certain score. It is going to be massive paperwork for teachers and administrators.

Mrs. Carmody felt that there was a misconception by the public that teachers object to this Teacher Evaluation Plan and that is not the case. The goal is to have the very best teachers in our classrooms; however, the objection is the manner in which the state mandates that this be done without helping school systems at all.

Mrs. Queen questioned how standardized test scores could be factored in for all grades when standardized tests are offered in Grades 3-8 and Grade 10 in the high school. Mrs. Smith replied that there are standardized assessments that exist within various departments and they could have two non-standardized tests assessments as well.

Dr. Erardi noted that Kim Hunt, Personnel Manager, was also valuable in this process and thanked her for her efforts.

Mr. Derynoski stated that this was a great document, but the problem he has is that the state legislators write laws, thinking they know best about education and have never been in a classroom. They implement something like this not realizing the burden that it puts on the staff, community, and taxpayers. This is not an inexpensive program and will cost a lot of money. He asked where the funds are going to come from. This is a big unfunded mandate.

Mr. Goralski invited Mr. Brown to attend the next Board meeting.

c. Non-Renewal of Interim Teachers

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

"Move that the contract of Myrna Rosario and Michelle Opalenik be non-renewed for the 2013-2014 school year."

Mr. Goralski explained that the school administration makes this recommendation within the guidelines and requirements of state law, and is in no way a reflection of the quality of service of these employees. In all cases where teachers have high quality service, we do our best to keep these teachers in our district.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

d. Approval of Out of State Overnight Field Trip

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

“Move to approve the field trip to Springfield, Massachusetts for the Southington High School Key Club, as presented.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

10. ADJOURNMENT

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

“Move to adjourn.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Blanchard
Recording Secretary

**SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION
MARCH 28, 2013**

Board Members Present: Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mrs. Colleen Clark (arrived at 6:33 p.m.), Mr. David Derynoski, Mrs. Patricia Johnson, Mrs. Terry Lombardi, Mrs. Jill Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Patricia Queen, and Mr. Brian Goralski (arrived at 6:36 p.m.).

Board Members Absent: Mr. Zaya Oshana.

Administration Present: Dr. Joseph V. Erardi, Jr., Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Karen Smith, Assistant Superintendent, Mrs. Sherri DiNello, Director of Business and Finance, and Mr. Philip Goodwin, Purchasing Agent.

3. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Terri Carmody, Board Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR SAFETY AND PERSONNEL

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

“Move to go into Executive Session, excluding the public and the press, for the purpose of discussing Safety and Personnel, and upon conclusion reconvene to public session.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The Board went into Executive Session at 6:30 p.m.

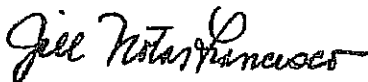
MOTION: by Mrs. Clark, seconded by Mrs. Johnson:

“Move to reconvene into public session.”

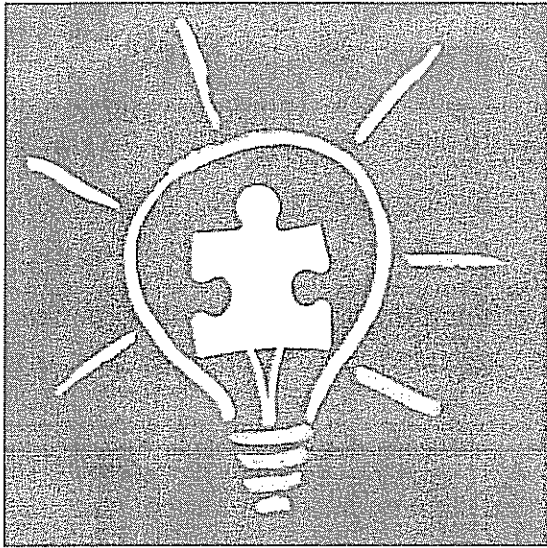
Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The Board exited Executive Session and recessed at 7:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jill Notar-Francesco, Secretary
Southington Board of Education



The SPS will be participating by encouraging staff and students to wear blue on April 2nd.

We are also having a district wide staff dress down day on April 2nd (optional) with a suggested donation of \$5 to Autism Speaks.

In addition, K-8 students will have a hat day on April 2nd (each school individual decision) with a suggested donation of \$1.

**World
Autism
Awareness
Day**

April 2nd

Each April 2, Autism Speaks celebrates Light It Up Blue along with the international autism community, in commemoration of the United Nations-sanctioned World Autism Awareness Day. Light It Up Blue is a unique global initiative that kicks-off Autism Awareness Month and helps raise awareness about autism. In honor of this historic day, many iconic landmarks, hotels, sporting venues, concert halls, museums, bridges and retail stores are among the hundreds of thousands of homes and communities that take part to Light It Up Blue.

For more information you can go to the following link:

http://www.lightitupblue.org/Markslist/showHomePage.do?utm_source=autismspeaks.org&utm_medium=text-link&utm_content=heroes&utm_campaign=liub2013

Smokin' with Chris

Fundraiser Luncheon to Benefit

SHS FIRST ROBOTICS TEAM 195

DATE: Sunday, April 7, 2013

Time: 1:00pm – 3:00pm

**Place: Smokin' with Chris Restaurant
59 W Center St, Southington**

Cost: \$25.00 per person

Buffet Menu includes:

**Pulled Pork Sandwiches, BBQ Chicken, Coleslaw,
Potato Salad, Cucumber Salad, Chips and Salsa**

Not Included: Soda/Drinks/Gratuity

50/50 Raffle Tickets At The Door

Special Performance by JJBOS

Tickets for sale prior to Robotic Team 195 Meetings

- Wednesday's from 6:00pm – 7:00pm, at
Saucier's – 991 S Main Street, Plantsville.**
- OR contact Bonnie for tickets – 860-628-2702**

Seating is limited, so get your tickets soon!

No Take Out Food Available

Must have ticket to attend

Teacher Evaluation Roll Out To Staff

1. **Included for implementation in 2013-14:** classroom teachers, high school family consumer science, social studies, science, English language arts, math, world language, special education, literacy specialists, speech language pathologists, high school business, technology education.

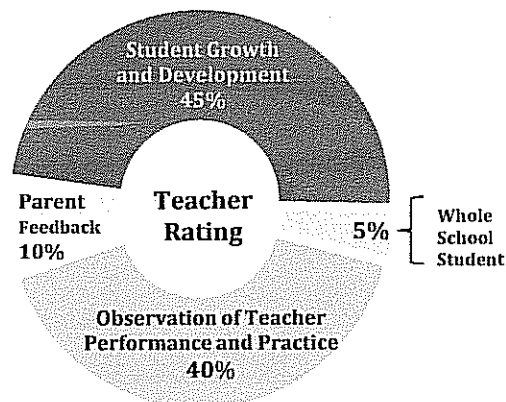
It was the consensus of the full committee to **wait one year** to implement the new Teacher Evaluation Plan for the following: social workers (K-12), guidance (K-12), psychologists (K-12), library-media specialists (K-12), art (K-12), P.E. (K-12), music (K-12), ELL (K-8), health (9-12), math specialists, and middle school unified arts. These teachers will follow the current evaluation system for one year (blue book).

2. Observations:

Teacher Category	Guideline Requirements
First and Second Year Novice Teachers, Non-Tenured, TEAM	Minimum 3 formal observations, all will include a post conference, 2 will include a pre-conference
Below Standard and Developing, Tenured and Non-Tenured	Minimum 3 formal observations, all will include post conference, 2 will include pre-conference and an additional 2 informal observations
Meets Standards and Exceeds Standards, 3 rd & 4 th Year Teachers, Tenured and Fast Track Non-Tenured*	Minimum 1 formal observation including pre and post conference and 2 informal observations

3. Each teacher will set 5 goals:

- Student learning objectives (SLOs) (45%)- 2 goals
- Teacher performance and practice (40%)- 1 goal
- Parent feedback (10%)- 1 goal
- School-wide student learning (5%)- 1 goal



The individual summative teacher evaluation rating will be based on the four categories of performance, grouped in two major focus areas: Student Outcomes Related Indicators and Teacher Practice Related

Indicators ~ Every educator will receive one of four **performance ratings**:

- **Exceeds Standard** – Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
- **Meets Standard** – Meeting indicators of performance
- **Developing** – Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
- **Below Standard** – Not meeting indicators of performance

4. Definitions of Indicators:

Teacher Practice Related Indicators: An evaluation of the core instructional practices and skills that positively affect student learning. This focus area is comprised of two categories:

- a) **Observation of teacher performance and practice (40%)** as defined in the Connecticut Framework for Teacher Evaluation and Support, (see below) which articulates four domains and eighteen components of teacher practice
- b) **Parent feedback (10%)** on teacher practice through whole school surveys.

Student Outcomes Related Indicators: An evaluation of teachers' contribution to student academic progress, at the school and classroom level. There is also an option in this focus area to include student feedback. This focus area is comprised of two categories:

- a) **Student growth and development (45%)** as determined by the teacher's two student learning objectives (SLOs)
- b) **Whole-school measure of student learning (5%)** as determined by aggregate student learning indicators.

5. Connecticut Framework for Teacher Evaluation and Support ~ this is the basis of your Teacher Performance and Practice Goal. Observations will focus on these 4 domains:

DOMAIN 1: Planning for Active Learning

- 1a. Ensuring that content/curriculum is at an appropriate level of challenge and meets student learning needs.
- 1b. Developing and organizing coherent and relevant units, lessons and learning tasks
- 1c. Support content area literacy skills, and when appropriate, numeracy skills, across the curriculum
- 1d. Selecting appropriate assessment strategies to monitor student progress

DOMAIN 2: The Classroom Environment

- 2a. Creating an environment of respect and rapport
- 2b. Establishing a culture for learning
- 2c. Managing classroom procedures
- 2d. Managing student behavior
- 2e. Organizing physical space

DOMAIN 3: Instruction

- 3a. Communicating with students
- 3b. Using questioning and discussion techniques
- 3c. Engaging students in learning
- 3d. Using assessment in instruction
- 3e. Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness

DOMAIN 4: Professional Responsibilities and Teacher Leadership

- 4a. Engaging in continuous professional growth to impact instruction
- 4b. Collaborating with colleagues to develop and sustain continuous improvement
- 4c. Communicating, collaborating with, and engaging appropriately with families about their students and the instructional program
- 4d. Demonstrating other professional behaviors

6. Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

Each teacher will write two Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). Teachers whose students take a standardized assessment will create one SLO based on standardized indicators and one SLO based on non-standardized indicators. All other teachers will develop their two SLOs based on non-standardized indicators. There will be further PD on writing SLOs.

7. Parent Engagement Goal and School Wide Goal:

These two goals will be set based on discussions had in August as to what your individual school needs.

Domain 1 ~ Planning for Active Learning

a. Ensuring that content/curriculum is at an appropriate level of challenge and meets student learning needs.	
b. Developing and organizing coherent and relevant units, lessons, and learning tasks.	
c. Supporting content area literacy skills, and when appropriate, numeracy skills, across the curriculum.	
d. Selecting appropriate assessment strategies to monitor student progress.	

Domain 2 ~ The Classroom Environment

a. Creating an environment of respect and rapport.	
b. Establishing a culture for learning.	
c. Managing classroom procedures.	
d. Managing student behavior.	
e. Organizing physical space	

Domain 3 ~ Instruction

a. Communicating with students.	
b. Using questioning and discussion techniques.	
c. Engaging students in learning.	
d. Using assessment in instruction.	
e. Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness.	

**SOUTHINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TEACHER EVALUATION AND SUPPORT**

Domain 4 ~ Professional Responsibilities and Teacher Leadership

a. Engaging in continuous professional growth to impact instruction.	
b. Collaborating with colleagues to develop and sustain continuous improvement.	
c. Communicating, collaborating with, and engaging appropriately with families about their students and the instructional program.	
d. Demonstrating other professional behaviors.	