

SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT

REGULAR MEETING

APRIL 24, 2014

The regular meeting of the Southington Board of Education with Executive Session was held on Thursday, April 24, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. in the Municipal Center Public Assembly Room, 200 North Main Street, Southington, Connecticut.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Goralski, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS A PERSONNEL MATTER

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

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

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

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

Present from the administration: Mrs. Karen Smith, Interim Superintendent of Schools, and Mrs. Kim Hunt, Personnel Manager.

The Board went into Executive Session at 6:35 p.m.

At 7:15 p.m., Mr. Goralski declared the Executive Session had ended and the Board recessed to the Celebration of Excellence.

3. CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE

At 7:20 p.m., in Celebration of Excellence, the Board of Education recognized Matthew Garry, a Grade 8 student at J. A. DePaolo Middle School, for receiving Honorable Mention by the Connecticut Writing Magazine for his writing. His entrance into the competition was one of 900 submissions. On behalf of the Board of Education, Mr. Goralski presented Matthew with a Certificate of Excellence.

Mr. Christopher Palmieri, Assistant Principal at J. A. DePaolo Middle School, was acknowledged for providing outstanding work and leadership at DePaolo Middle School during the medical leave of absence of Principal Frank Pepe. He was presented with a Certificate of

Excellence by Mr. Goralski on behalf of the Board of Education and administration. Mr. Palmieri recognized and thanked the DePaolo staff, saying that he could have not done it without their support.

At 7:25 p.m., Mr. Goralski declared a recess.

4. RECONVENE MEETING ~ REGULAR SESSION

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

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

Student representative present: Miss Gabrielle Baker.

There were approximately 24 people in the audience.

5. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Goralski requested a moment of silence in memory of Kathleen Murphy, former English teacher at Southington High School and Kennedy Junior High School (retired in 1998), and Eugene Leone, former teacher and DePaolo Junior High School Principal (retired in 1986), both of whom recently passed away.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES ~ April 10, 2014

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

“Move to approve the Regular Board of Education minutes of April 10, 2014, as submitted.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

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

“Move to move Agenda Item 10.a ‘Appointment of Assistant Principal of Southington High School’ to Agenda Item 6.b.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

a. Special Meeting Minutes ~ April 23, 2014

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

“Move to approve the Special Meeting Minutes of April 23, 2014, as submitted.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

b. Appointment of Assistant Principal of Southington High School *(formerly Agenda Item 10.a)*

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

“Move to appoint Dianne Holst-Grubbe to the position of Assistant Principal at Southington High School, effective July 1, 2014 with a starting salary of \$123,019.”

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES ~ Mr. Oshana, Mrs. Queen, Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Clark, Mr. Derynoski, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, and Mr. Goralski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Mrs. Holst-Grubbe thanked the Board and stated that she was honored that they have chosen her for the position. Mr. Goralski welcomed her to Southington as the newest administrator.

Mr. Goralski declared a recess at 7:40 p.m.

The regular meeting resumed at 7:46 p.m.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications from Audience

There was no communication from the audience.

b. Communications from Board Members and Administration

Communication from the Board Members:

Mr. Derynoski reported on a Technology and Engineering Advisory Board meeting held that morning and commended Nancy Chiero and Justin Mirante for doing an outstanding job. They are coming to the end of redefining the manner in which the current curriculum could be addressing students for the future. All the advisors in attendance completed forms based on the current curriculum in the different areas of communication, construction, manufacturing, and the Project Lead-the Way program. They identified the careers by title that students could look for in the future. He noted that this should be helpful for the Guidance Counselors and students to set the stage for their futures.

Mrs. Queen, as CABE liaison, shared that on May 13 there will be a legislative wrap-up workshop. She noted that about one month ago she and Mrs. Notar-Francesco listened to a webinar regarding what was happening to date with legislation pertaining to education, and that they both plan to attend the May 13 workshop that is presented every year in the spring as a summary of what the new legislation might be with regulations and court decisions.

Mrs. Queen noted that there was a grant opportunity for a \$1,000 unrestricted grant being offered by the Connecticut Council for Education Reform and that Mrs. Smith was interested in participating. This is a contest for school leaders who are communicating with parents about the Common Core in a positive way. Mrs. Smith acknowledged that they plan to pursue writing the grant in-house.

Mrs. Clark updated the Board on the progress of the Age 3 to Grade 3 Collaborative and getting the message out about the importance of early childhood education. She noted that the newest member was Dr. Mary Yuskis, who is also a member of the Early Childhood Collaborative of Southington (ECCS). In the near future, the Board will be seeing Dr. Yuskis talking to community stakeholders such as the YMCA, nursery schools, businesses, and any community member who has an interest in advancing early childhood education. The Early Childhood Collaborative will be acting as a clearinghouse for all interested parties. She noted that Dr. Yuskis would be participating with 62 other communities within the Graustein Foundation area, so they can exchange ideas regarding the advancement of early childhood education. The collaborative is in the process of developing an Early Childhood Collaborative website.

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

“Move to move Agenda Item 9.e ‘Enrichment Update ~Middlesex Community College Partnership’ to Agenda Item 7.d.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Goralski announced that the Chamber of Commerce would be holding their annual dinner at the Aqua Turf Club on Saturday, April 26, 2014. He noted that Kathy Rickard (former Board of Education member) was being honored as the “Business Person of the Year” and that Dr. Joseph Erardi, Jr. (former Superintendent of Schools) was being honored as the first-ever recipient of the Samuel Woodruff Award. He noted that the information came to his attention a little late, and that he hoped people will be able to attend to honor them both for the work that they have done for the community.

Mr. Goralski noted that Mr. Brian Durbin, social studies teacher at Southington High School, has published his second book of a trilogy. Mr. Goralski explained that Mr. Durbin was raising funds for the Wounded Warrior Project or the Fisher House with the all proceeds and donations from his books going to those projects. Mr. Durbin distributed a copy of his book to the Board members.

Communication from Administration:

Mrs. Smith reported on the following:

1. The Dream Team:
Connecticut has a Dream Team composed of 97 teachers who were nominated to represent the state of Connecticut out of a pool of 600 applicants. Rosemary Burdick, who is a Math Specialist servicing both our middle schools, was selected to be a member of the Common Core State Standards and Smarter-Balanced Dream Team. This is a team of teachers who will be evaluating questions,

performance assessments and Common Core Standards assessments in the areas of Mathematics and English Language Arts.

2. Energy Recognition:

Mr. Cox explained that on Tuesday he participated in an Energy Recognition ceremony at the State Capitol with two of our HVAC Maintenance Technicians. The recognition was from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection regarding businesses and school districts that had accomplished energy reductions and conservation during 2013. Southington High School was the only organization to be recognized for the Peak Performer Summer Savers Award. Mr. Cox stated that the school district received a total of \$147,472 in reimbursements from Northeast Utilities over the course of nine years for our conservation and load management. However, he noted that the Southington school system started working with the utilities before they even started reimbursements.

Mr. Oshana commented that there is a lot of discussion about the money that the Board spends, but there is very little discussion about the money that the Board saves or reduces in terms of expenses. He hoped the Board could continue to publicize those types of cost savings, which is a big difference from cost avoidance.

3. Alta Honor Roll:

Mrs. Smith announced that eight Alta students have achieved the rank of honors during the third marking quarter. She will be visiting Alta to celebrate this achievement with Mr. Levin [Director of Alta] and the teachers.

4. Calendar of Major Events:

Mrs. Smith provided the Board with a calendar of major year-end events. The individual building event celebrations from now to the end of the year will be electronically sent to the Board from her office. This calendar of major events will also be online for the Board to reference.

5. Plantsville Elementary School Selection Update:

Mrs. Smith announced that the committee just completed the second day of interviews. There were over 75 applicants that were reduced to 10 for in-house interviews. The committee members are still discussing which four candidates of the 10 will go forward to her office for the next round of interviews. From that point, three candidates will be selected to interview before the Board members in early May, with an anticipated recommended hiring for May 22, 2014.

6. Town and BOE Partnership:

Mrs. Smith reported that she had been invited to two meetings to talk about partnership. She noted that the second meeting focused on the Covanta Energy Saving Program, which is an organic waste recycling program. On May 12, at the Town Council regular meeting, members of the Board of Education will be invited to attend the meeting to hear a short presentation from Covanta about ways that organic waste can be collected and saved. This not only has a major recycling benefit with tonnage, but also as environmental education for students in all the schools.

c. Communications from Student Representative

Miss Baker reported on the following:

- The CyberKnights Robotic Team took first place in the qualifying rounds at their competition in Boston. They are currently competing against 400 of the best teams in the world in St. Louis, Missouri.
- The Marching Band will be traveling to Washington, D.C. this Sunday and will be enjoying various activities.
- All the Exchange trip students have returned safely and she has heard many wonderful stories.
- Academic Awards Night will be held on May 7, 2014.
- Scholarship Awards Night will be held on May 15, 2014.
- Junior Prom is May 3, and Senior Prom is May 17, 2014.
- Advanced Placement (AP) tests begin in less than two weeks.
- Southington High School is hosting SATs on May 3, 2014.
- All the sports teams have winning records.

Mr. Goralski commented that the recent school play [*Aida*] in which Miss Baker starred was incredibly successful. He stated that her performance [as Aida] was very professional.

d. Enrichment Update ~ Middlesex Community College Partnership (Formerly Agenda Item 9.e)

Mrs. Smith noted that the Board of Education has been implementing a wide range of enrichment opportunities across grade levels this year. She explained that this presentation was on an enrichment opportunity that was developed this year with Middlesex Community College in Meriden. Mrs. Smith introduced Ms. Kimberlee Kalat, a social studies teacher at DePaolo Middle School who is working on her administrator certificate (092) and has taken on this enrichment program as her project.

Ms. Kalat presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Middlesex Community College Partnership with the Southington Public Schools (*Attachment #1*). She gave a background on her initial contact with the college in the fall. In January, she and Karen Smith visited the site in Meriden, which she noted is a beautiful, renovated building that has three state-of-the-art computer labs. At that time, they decided to offer the enrichment program to all sixth graders at both DePaolo and Kennedy Middle Schools.

Ms. Kalat explained the selection process and that there were 44 seats with 22 seats per session. The 44 students were asked to choose their first choice of the two sessions offered. Session 1 enrichment classes offered in the morning were: 1) Using the New York Times for Critical Reading and Thinking; and 2) Creating Animation and Video Games in "Scratch." She explained that "Scratch" is a program created by MIT students. Session 2 enrichment classes offered in the afternoon were: 1) Introduction to Video Production; and 2) Make Your Own Website. These were college level courses offered to sixth grade students in Southington.

Ms. Kalat explained the session times on Saturdays that started on March 15 and ended on April 12, 2014, which was the day that families were invited to view the final presentations of their students.

Ms. Kalat shared some of the student comments asked by the college professors on what was the best part of the sessions. The comments were very enthusiastic about the courses offered. She also noted that the parent comments that she received via email were very supportive of the courses offered. Ms. Kalat introduced students Trevor Messina from Kennedy Middle School, and DePaolo Middle School students Morgan Duling and Katherine Drechsler who spoke about their experience and also presented their work. Trevor Messina shared an article that he wrote for the New York Times course. His article was about "Paying for Good Grades." Morgan Duling and Katherine Drechsler presented a video on anti-bullying that they created together.

Ms. Kalat introduced Mrs. Tami Christopher, Director of the Meriden Center of Middlesex Community College in Meriden, who partnered with her in putting together this Enrichment Program. Ms. Christopher explained about the process on her end prior to selecting the students. She also noted that she was a graduate of Southington High School. Ms. Christopher remarked on the professionalism and dedication to student learning from the administration in Southington with whom she worked. She explained that they created an RFP proposal that was sent to Middlesex Community College faculty, other college colleagues, and to professionals at local businesses. After the proposals were received, they were reviewed by the Dean of Academics and then those selected were sent forward to the school district administration. This program has been offered by Middlesex Community College for the past two years. The college does an extensive assessment about the experience of the students because they don't test. To evaluate the program they ask for feedback from the students, parents, and instructors. She pointed out that the instructors were enchanted with the students that Southington sent to them, and read some of their comments, which were very impressive and complimentary.

Ms. Christopher explained that the students were asked what they would like to see offered for future sessions and their top choices for future enrichment classes were:

- Music, Theater and Art
- Starting Your Own Business – Entrepreneurship
- Nature and Outdoor Learning
- Physical Fitness and Nutrition
- Math
- Sports
- Web and Graphic Design

The students' top choices for session times were Saturday mornings and afternoons, second choice would be Sunday afternoons, and a few students would like to do their enrichment during school hours.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco asked what the attendance level was for the courses. Ms. Christopher noted that it was very good. Students told them in the beginning if they had an obligation and could not attend class. The information for the missed class was then provided to the student.

Mr. Derynoski was interested in knowing the feedback from the professors in comparing the sixth graders to the college students.

Mrs. Queen thanked Ms. Kalat for taking on this project for enrichment. She asked if this was something that the parents paid for. Ms. Kalat responded that originally it was supposed to be "Pay for Play." However, in January when she met with Dr. Erardi and Mrs. Smith, they told her that they had grant money to fund the whole program. This opportunity opened the program to all sixth graders, not just the identified gifted and talented students. She hoped that they could offer something like this again in the fall. Mrs. Smith stated that it was not an earmarked grant; however, with the Title funds that they received, they were allowed some creativity. This was an approximately \$12,000 cost.

Mrs. Queen requested a year-end list of all of the different enrichment programs and a summary regarding whether the program could continue along with the funding.

8. REPORT OF INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

a. Policy and Personnel Committee Meeting ~ April 17, 2014

Mrs. Clark reported that the committee reviewed the job description for the Director of Operations that had not been updated for several years. She hoped that the Committee could bring it to the full Board at their May 8, 2014 meeting. She thanked Mr. Cox and Mrs. Hunt for their input. She noted that the Curriculum and Instruction Committee has been invited to the Policy and Personnel Committee meeting on May 1, 2014.

9. OLD BUSINESS

a. Town Government Communications

Mr. Goralski reminded the Board that Monday, April 28, 2014 was the Public Hearing on the Town and Board of Education budgets with the Town Council at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Center Public Assembly Room. Mrs. DiNello noted that it was originally scheduled for the Derynoski Auditorium, but because of the attendance at the Board of Finance Public Hearing they chose to move the meeting. She would confirm and follow-up with the Board.

Mr. Goralski reminded the Board of the following Budget meetings:

- Monday, May 12, 2014:
Town Council meeting when they take the final vote on the town budget at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Center Public Assembly Room.
- Wednesday, May 14, 2014:
Town Board of Finance meeting when they set the mill rate for next year in the Town Hall Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, May 22, 2014:
Regular Board of Education meeting and reallocation of the Board of Education budget.

b. Construction Update

Mr. Cox reported that it has been a very busy time with students and staff moving into the new classroom areas and new administration areas at the middle schools. On Monday, April 21, 2014, the bus loop had the students entering the brand new front entrance of the buildings. He stated that the feedback has been positive from students who love the new environment in the

classrooms and media center. Mr. Goralski noted that there was a lot of work happening at the Building Committee level, and stated the importance of Mr. Cox representing the school district.

c. Teacher Evaluation Plan

Mrs. Smith stated that there was no new information at this time.

d. Administrator Evaluation Plan

Mrs. Smith stated that there was no new information at this time.

e. Enrichment Update ~ Middlesex Community College Partnership (*Moved to Agenda Item 7.d*)

10. NEW BUSINESS

a. Appointment of Assistant Principal of Southington High School (*Moved to Agenda Item 6.b*)

At 8:40 p.m., the Board returned to Executive Session following the Regular Meeting for the purpose of discussing the Superintendent Search.

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

At 9:58 p.m., Mr. Goralski declared the end of Executive Session.

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

“Move to return to public session.”

Motioned carried unanimously by voice vote.

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

“Move to adjourn.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The Board meeting adjourned at 9:58 p.m.


Respectfully submitted,

Linda Blanchard

Recording Secretary



Selection Process



- All students in sixth grade at both middle schools were invited to participate in the Middlesex Community College Partnership.
- If there were more than 44 students by the deadline, we would have resorted to a lottery system.
- On the date of the deadline, there were 44 seats filled (22 seats per session).
- After the deadline, 5 more applications were received.

Sessions Offered


The 44 students were asked to choose their first choice of the two sessions offered.

Session 1

- 🕒 Using the NY Times for Critical Reading and Thinking
- 🕒 Creating Animation and Video Games in "Scratch"


Session 2

- 🕒 Introduction to Video Production
- 🕒 Make Your Own Website



Session Times

- Both sessions included a ½ hour break
- Classes were held for 5 consecutive Saturday's from March 15 through April 12



Session 1
9:00 am - 12:30 pm

Session 2
1:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Last Day

Families were invited to view the final presentations at the last session.






Student Comments

What was the best part of Session 1?

Everything!

“ The different ways we learned about the critical reading on the New York Times and also the ways we created the scratch animations. ”

“ When we got to look at some Scratch projects and animations for ideas. I also liked when we got to make our own scratch projects or animations. ”




Student Comments

What was the best part of Session 2?

66 Making a cool Website and making the PSA. 22

66 The instructors! Especially Professor M. and Professor C. 22

66 Awesome, fun, kind teachers. I would really hope to have this program available for next year! 22



Parent Comments

66 We also thought it was a great program. [Student] enjoyed being there and has passed on what she learned about blogs. She enjoyed filming and editing the movie she worked on. What a great offering for all of the kids!! Thank you for your generosity in making this available to the kids!! 22

66 My daughter really enjoyed it, and was sad the last class that it was over! [The professors] gave great guidance and had such enthusiasm, they were both wonderful!! We would definitely sign up for another enrichment program again if the opportunity presents itself. 22

