

SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT

REGULAR MEETING

JUNE 10, 2010

The regular meeting of the Southington Board of Education was held on Thursday, June 10, 2010 at Strong Elementary School, Marion Avenue, Plantsville, Connecticut.

The Celebration of Excellence recognitions took place at 7:05 p.m. The first celebration was the recognition of the American Legion Auxiliary, Kiltonic Unit #72, for their gift of \$1,000 for grant funding through the Southington Education Foundation. Mrs. Rachel Wache introduced the leadership of the auxiliary who were present. Dr. Erardi stated that the auxiliary designated the donation to the public library to allow Grade K-1 students to go to a designated area, with \$1,000 worth of donated books, to continue level reading in order to prepare the students for the following grade.

The second part of the Celebration of Excellence was the recognition of Betty Perlot and Tina Riccio, Southington High School teachers, for their involvement with the University of Connecticut's Early College Experience Program. Dr. Erardi announced that Mrs. Perlot and Mrs. Riccio were both honored with awards from the University of Connecticut.

The third part of the Celebration of Excellence was the recognition of the 2010 Connecticut COLT World Language Poetry Recitation Contest medal winners who were:

Besnik Qeriqi – French 5/6

Jenny Drozd – German II

Betzabeth Casas – Native Spanish

Marc Hermann – German I

Paulina Piotrowski – German IV

Mrs. Perlot noted that there were 1,100 students competing from 94 schools around the State and only one student in each category was allowed to participate from each school. She pointed out that 14 Southington High School students participated and five received medals. Besnik, Jenny and Betzabeth recited poetry in their chosen World Language.

The fourth part of the Celebration of Excellence was the recognition of the Southington High School All-State Athletes by Dr. Erardi assisted by Mr. Goralski and Mrs. Carmody who presented the All-State Athletes with plaques.

Fall Sports

Field Hockey: Jennifer McGurgan

Girls' Volleyball: Alexandria Broytman, Katie Byrnes

Cheerleading: Chelsea Cyr, Alana Marzcek

Winter Sports

Gymnastics: Katelyn Hyde, Rebecca Mirando, Olivia Morrell, Toni Penta

Spring Sports

Softball: Jessica Davenport

Dr. Erardi noted that for the first time in the history of Southington High School that every All-State athlete was female.

The fifth Celebration of Excellence was the recognition of the DisAbility Poster Contest and Essay winners by Lynn Johnson and Sharon Neupaver of the Southington DisAbility Commission. Ms. Johnson stated that every year the DisAbility Commission holds a town-wide poster contest for all fifth grade students and awards prizes to the winners. This year, they also had an Essay Contest for juniors and seniors at the high school. She stated that the contest winners showed how important it is to be aware of those who are disabled.

The last Celebration of Excellence was the recognition of the top three scholars of the Class of 2010 who were:

Taylor Malone – Valedictorian
Alaina Mulhearn – Salutatorian
John Snyder – Essayist

Mr. Goralski stated that Mrs. Debi Albaitis, who puts together all the Celebrations of Excellence throughout the entire school year, took the Record-Journal newspaper article about Taylor Malone and framed it for Taylor. He wanted to recognize Mrs. Albaitis for helping make these celebrations occur and at the same time give Taylor Malone a memento of his achievement.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:55 p.m. by Mr. Brian Goralski, Chair. Board members present were Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mrs. Rosemarie Fischer, Mrs. Jill Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Patricia Johnson, Mrs. Kathleen Rickard and Ms. Michelle Schroeder. Absent were Mrs. Colleen Clark and Mr. David Derynoski.

Present from the administration were Dr. Joseph Erardi, Jr., Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Howard Thiery, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Sherri DiNello, Director of Business and Finance; Mr. Frederick Cox, Director of Operations; and Ms. Frances Haag, Senior Special Education Coordinator.

Student Representative, Christopher Amnott, was present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Amnott led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES ~ May 27, 2010

MOTION: by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Ms. Schroeder:

“Move to approve the minutes of May 27, 2010.”

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Rickard, Ms. Schroeder, Mr. Goralski. **ABSTAIN:** Mrs. Notar-Francesco. **Motion carried with six in favor and one abstention.**

4. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications from Audience

Michelle Brennan, 1487 East Street: She distributed a handout to the Board (*Attachment #1*). She stated that she was the proud mother of two Grade 2 children at Hatton School and wanted to address her concerns about the third grade class size at Hatton School for the academic year 2010-2011. She commented that she had the greatest respect for teachers, staff, Board of Education and everyone whom they have encountered at Hatton School. She has volunteered in the classroom and realized how difficult it is to meet the educational needs of each individual child. It is hard to imagine how different these classrooms would be when they have eight to 10 more children in them. Many of these children have special education needs and/or paraprofessionals with them. She stated that, with the current class size and the “pull outs” in this grade, the continuity of every lesson is going to be difficult, never-mind differentiation. She stated that she understood budgeting and the ease of line item elimination. She felt that they could not look at the loss of a teacher as a line item. The children are in school for the best education and deserve the best to perform and succeed. She felt that increasing class size would compromise this endeavor. Ms. Brennan questioned why there was a grid showing minus two teachers for the district when so many children would be affected. She asked how it was decided on who would bear this load. According to the grid published on May 11, 2010, Hatton would have three Grade 3 classes. Why was the decision made to have only two? Other schools on the grid show similar smaller class sizes; i.e., Flanders, South End, and Strong Schools. She stated that Mrs. Notar-Francesco pointed out that class size of Grade 5 at Derynoski might be as high as 25 students and that Dr. Erardi indicated that there would be conversations with the parents to let them know that class sizes would be high. Mrs. Brennan noted that no one told the Hatton parents that class sizes could be up to 25 students. She questioned why there was not a Pay-to-Play system in place for school athletics because the students are in school to learn. They would then be able to save the Gifted and Talented Program and keep class sizes small. She felt that already many parents pay to have their children play in after school leagues and camps and did not think affordability was an issue for the majority. She asked the Board to find other ways to save money so they could focus on educating the children.

b. Communications from Board Members and Administration

Communication from the Board Members:

MOTION: by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mrs. Fischer:

“Move agenda items 8.b and 8.c to follow agenda item 4.c.”

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Rickard, Ms. Schroeder, Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Johnson, Mr. Goralski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

MOTION: by Mrs. Rickard, seconded by Mrs. Carmody:

“Move agenda item 5.b, Finance Committee Meeting, to New Business agenda item 8.i.”

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Rickard, Ms. Schroeder, Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Johnson, Mr. Goralski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Goralski stated that Finance Committee meeting agenda items had to be moved because that meeting did not take place since there was not a quorum.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco stated that the Board has been receiving many e-mails about the third grade class at Hatton School. She asked when the class sizes would be re-visited again. Dr. Erardi replied that the important information that is being shared with parents, who have been in communication, was that annually they set a date that they use as a placeholder. They work the class size grid and the allotment of elementary school teachers to the best information that they have at that particular time. The review will continue as enrollment and mobility continues throughout the summer. Traditionally, they bring this to the School Board at the first meeting in August and that is the current plan.

Dr. Erardi addressed the comments made by Mrs. Brennan. As a point of clarification, the conversation regarding Derynoski Elementary School with Grade 5, and the opportunity to contact parents because of 25 students in a class, was solely due to the Derynoski redistricting program that they had been working on for the past four to five months.

Mrs. Johnson was surprised by all the information that has been forthcoming from people regarding the third grade at Hatton School. She stated that the May 11, 2010 grid that was referenced clearly shows that there were three classes for third grade at Hatton School. She asked if there was a different benchmark that the Board was not privy to. Dr. Erardi replied that the information that the School Board had was the information that building administrators were working with. He stated that nothing has changed. He pointed out that Mr. Thiery held a meeting with the elementary school principals and there was a consistency across the board of information in moving forward in regard to hiring and the commitment they have right now in all the classes. For a point of clarification, he would be happy to send the Board the current information on Friday morning. He asked Mr. Thiery if things have changed.

Mr. Thiery responded that there was a change. He stated that the grid the Board received at the May 11 meeting was the grid at that moment for reallocation purposes showing the class sizes and the distribution of teachers at that time. Not until reallocation occurred did they know exactly how many teachers they would officially be working with because that was the final budgetary decision. Once they knew how many teachers they were working with, they worked with the elementary principals to prioritize where the teachers would go. It is very difficult to ascribe any reduction or expansion of classes to the budget. Every year at that time, they look at all the class sizes K-5, using the teachers that they have after the budget is settled, and try to make the class sizes fit the district priorities. The priorities frequently are things that the Board has talked about; i.e., the Board is more tolerant of class sizes of 23 or 24 in Grades 4 and 5. He stated that they hate to see those numbers in Grade 3; but, typically, will not tolerate them in Grades K, 1 and 2. They changed two sections in the district because Grade 1 class sizes had crept up in a couple of schools in those weeks to sizes that were 22. They took sections away from a fourth grade and a third grade and made those look like third and fourth grades in other

schools that were already at those levels. They did not make a school look different than other schools at those grade levels. It is a balancing out and is done prior to June 1 because by contract they need to notify teachers of their assignments. He visited schools with the teacher union representative and Mrs. Hunt [Personnel Director] to let teachers know where they were being redistributed. Every year, there is a natural expansion and contraction of sections. It is based on populations within the schools themselves rising and falling each year.

Mrs. Johnson was interested in receiving those benchmark numbers. Mr. Thiery responded that he would send the grid to the Board the next day. He noted that it would look the same, except there were two sections that were changed from the May 11 grid.

Mrs. Fischer stated that at some point in time they had a grid presented to the Board that they discussed. Mr. Goralski added that it was at the budget adoption meeting. Mrs. Fischer continued that since that time another grid was published. Mr. Thiery replied that it was produced for the administration to work with the assignments. Mrs. Fischer asked if that was typical because her concern as a Board member was that it obviously would have been nice for them to see that grid because the community contacts them and they receive e-mails and they were in the dark.

Dr. Erardi commented that she was absolutely correct that, if there was a change in the grid, the School Board should have had it and they will have it tomorrow morning. He pointed out that the grid will go through a number of changes this summer and the Board has the data of mobility where there are approximately 100-150 students coming in or moving out of the district. It is a fluid document until it comes back to the School Board in August. There will be numerous changes taking place. However, Mr. Thiery will get something out to the Board as quickly as he can tomorrow morning. He noted that the document that was shared with administration was done in a principals' meeting as a starting point for hiring. In essence, they determined how many teachers they were going to need for next year. In the hiring process that began today, administration may tell the candidate that they want to hire them, but are not quite sure in which building they are going to be assigned. He stated that was how tenuous and how mobile this document was. The weigh-in by a number of parents has been very heavy this year. It is heavy because administration continues to stretch dollars that they don't have and class size that they are trying to maintain. He noted that there are hot spots everywhere. The document is looked at every day and changes every day. The macro on that document is the number of teachers and the micro is yet to happen.

Mrs. Fischer stated that she does not want to belabor the point but, if they know that there are so many changes between now and August, do they react that fast to any change. Historically, do they change the grid that often? She could appreciate that they have hotter spots this year than prior years. She did not think that they would immediately jump on making adjustments when they poll and find changes. She would not imagine that grid should change that frequently. Dr. Erardi pointed out that the grid becomes more complex every year when the Board becomes further stretched for dollars and that is the position that they are in this year. The veteran Board members will see that there are many more hot spots than they have ever seen before simply because they are working with fewer teachers. He noted that they were watching that very closely.

Mr. Goralski stated that at the budget adoption meeting, he recalled seeing that chart, but he does not recall the number for that grade. He remembered the Board commented as a group that there were five or six circles on that chart and he believed that Hatton had a couple of those circles.

Mr. Goralski noted that many school groups were associated with the Relay for Life this weekend. He thanked Michelle Passamano [Executive Secretary to Mr. Thiery] for the Board of Education's role in the Relay this year that will be evident in the Friday night video with the dance routine that she put together. He noted that a great number of people participated in that video and that Mrs. Carmody was a superstar.

Mr. Goralski reported that he had the privilege of attending the UNICO dinner. He noted that it was the classic partnership between community groups and the school system because they celebrate the top 25 students.

Mr. Goralski thanked Dr. Erardi for hosting the Scholar Luncheon with the top 10 students and to honor the teachers who played a pivotal role in their life.

Mr. Goralski reported that he, Mrs. Rickard, and Mrs. Clark attended the Unified Arts banquet. He thanked Mr. Swallow [Athletic Director] for his support of that program, the two teachers that run the program and the parents, community, and UNICO for funding it. It was one of the best banquets he has attended. He stated that every athlete received a letter and that it was a wonderful celebration.

Mr. Goralski thanked the Southington Land Trust and the Parks and Recreation Department for hosting Nature Day on Thursday, June 4, for all the fourth graders. It was a nice day to learn about nature at Panthorn Park.

Mr. Goralski reported that the Southington Education Foundation had a wonderful celebration that afternoon where they gave out grants again to Southington's teachers. Mr. Goralski thanked them for enriching education in this community. This Friday, one of those grants is being celebrated with the Southington Kids Speak Out, which is public speaking of elementary students at South End School.

Mr. Goralski thanked the staff, teachers, administrators and everyone involved in making Southington Public Schools great. He stated that the Board continues to look forward to the great work everyone does and to do their best to support all that work.

Mr. Goralski recognized Christopher Amnott, the 2009-2010 Student Representative. On behalf of the Board of Education, Mr. Goralski presented Mr. Amnott with a Certificate of Excellence. He stated that Mr. Amnott kept the Board informed about the high school. Because of his marketing background, he did a great job advertising all the things about the school. He thanked Mr. Amnott for making the Board meetings much better. Mr. Goralski stated that the Board was very happy to hear that Mr. Amnott would return next year as the Student Representative.

c. Communication from Student Representative:

Mr. Amnott reported that the Yearbooks were for sale in the library. There was a brief meeting for all returning boys' soccer players in Room 262 today and they are doing a Relay for Life booth. There was a Freshman Ice Cream Social today from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. He reported that the volleyball team was playing the State Championship on Friday against Staples.

Mr. Goralski pointed out that he forgot the Communication from Administration and apologized for going out of order.

Communication from Administration:

Dr. Erardi noted that Mr. Amnott's parents were in the room and he was sure that they were very proud of him. He did not feel that he has ever met a more polite, genuine, young man than Christopher Amnott. He was pleased to know Christopher and that Christopher would be coming back next year. Dr. Erardi hoped that Christopher never changes because he is a terrific young man.

Dr. Erardi distributed a packet for the Administration Report to the Board (*Attachment #2*):

1. SHS Principal Search: Dr. Erardi reminded the Board that the interviews would start on June 22, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. He announced that the application for the high school principalship closes on Friday, June 11. He stated that they have a rich applicant pool and that three outstanding candidates would be presented on June 22. He told the Board that they would receive their informational binder on June 18.
2. Funding – Choice Programs: Mrs. DiNello reported that she is currently representing CASBO (Connecticut Association of School Business Officials) on the ad hoc committee on funding for public school Choice Programs. To date, they have had two meetings. At the first meeting, they decided to go back and ask that the charge of the committee be changed. They are no longer just looking at Choice funding; they have opened it up to look at studying the Educational Cost Sharing (ECS) grants as well as Choice funding. This committee is taking on a very big task with a short timeline. At their June 7 meeting, they got the history of how the ECS grant formula was developed. From all the information that she has heard, it is really a matter of the adequacy of the funding level and not as much as how the money is distributed. The committee meets once or twice a month through January.
3. SEF / JAD Partnership: Dr. Erardi stated that the courtyard at DePaolo Middle School, in collaboration with the Southington Education Foundation, has been turned into a theater in the round. It will be open and on display on Wednesday, June 16 at 2:45 p.m.
4. New Teacher Orientation: Dr. Erardi invited the Board to attend the August 23, 9:00 a.m. New Teacher Orientation and be part of his introductory remarks.
5. Commencement – June 18: Dr. Erardi reported that the high school commencement is scheduled for June 18 at 5:30 p.m. for the Class of 2010.
6. Final Day of School – June 21: Dr. Erardi reported that the 2009-2010 school year is coming quickly to a close with the last school day on Monday, June 21 with an early dismissal.

8. b. Presentation of New Curricula

Mr. Thiery reported that they had two curricula brought forward to the Curriculum and Instruction sub-committee of the Board. This year, the curriculums that were renewed and reviewed were the K-12 Guidance Curriculum and the Library / Media / Information Technology Curriculum. The committee heard and reviewed the curricula from the committees that re-wrote them. They are in the standard UbD format. For both areas, it is their second go-round on this and it was a matter of updating, editing, and revising based on their practice. The committee decided that the curricula were solid and passed them on to the Board for their review and approval.

Mrs. Carmody thanked both the School Counselors and the Library / Media / Information Technology staff for an excellent job in presenting their curriculum to the Curriculum and Instruction Committee. She stated that the committee was very impressed and could tell that they did a lot of hard work and answered all their questions. Mrs. Notar-Francesco concurred with Mrs. Carmody that it was very well done. A lot of work went into it and she was very pleased with what she saw. She strongly recommended endorsement.

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

“Move to accept the new curriculum for the School Counseling and the Library / Media / Technology Literacy Curriculum.”

Mr. Goralski stated that the binders were approximately 1,000 pages and he trusts the committee and knows the work that Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Notar-Francesco put into everything. He told the teachers that all three Board members on the Curriculum and Instruction sub-committee truly read every page of everything the teachers gave them. He thanked the teachers for all their work.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Rickard, Ms. Schroeder, Mrs. Carmody, Mr. Goralski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

c. Presentation of Textbook Recommendations ~ First Reading

Mr. Thiery reported that at this time of year, along with the curricula, they bring forward textbook recommendations for new textbooks. Some of them are completely new and some are just new additions of previously used textbooks. This year, textbooks were presented for English, mathematics, science, social studies and language arts. He stated that the committee heard presentations, saw samples of the books, looked at the reading levels of the books and had very in-depth discussions. They discussed some of the new trends, including in the areas of mathematics and science, online support and online additions for the books. They will be able to acquire matching e-copies for every hard copy of the books they purchase in both chemistry and mathematics this year if they go with these books. He noted that the committee fully endorsed these books.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco asked if this was a first reading. Mr. Thiery replied that it was and that per policy, there are two readings. In the past, they have asked for a waiver of the second reading based on budgetary restrictions. If they take a first reading at this meeting and a second

reading at the next meeting, they would meet their time criteria to get these books ordered. He stated that it was at the discretion of the Board whether they wanted one or two readings.

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

“Move to waive the second reading and approve the purchase of textbooks as recommended by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee.”

Mrs. Carmody asked the teachers that were holding the new textbooks to hold them up so everyone could see how beautiful they are because the Board is spending a lot of money on them. She stated that the books are exciting. She stated that the new books were very large and very heavy and thought they did a good job picking them.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco pointed out that some of these books had Internet connections where certain homebound activities can happen on the Internet, which means that the book does not need to go home with the student and the wear and tear on the books would be saved. She questioned the English book that they were recommending, Everyday Words from Classic Origins, and asked if there was further discussion on the levels that it was going to be used for.

Mr. Thiery replied that Mrs. Hackett was in the audience and he believed that there was discussion about distributing the usage of that book across multiple grade levels. It was piloted in Grade 11 this year and there was discussion at the sub-committee level about the value of that book to multiple grade levels. Mrs. Regina Hackett, English Department Chair at the high school, stated that she brought the concerns up regarding this book at the last English Department meeting. Mrs. Notar-Francesco asked her to explain to the full Board what that book was like. Mrs. Hackett replied that it was called, “Everyday Words from Classic Origins.” Rather than rote memorization of vocabulary, this book takes Greek and Latin roots, helps the students learn the roots and then apply them to learning new words wherever they find them. They piloted it this year in Grade 11 and students said how impressed they were with themselves that they knew more words on the SAT, made educated guesses, and really understood the formation of the words. She received some very good responses from the students. When she presented the idea to the department that they should start this with the ninth graders, they were open to that. They divided the book up and they are going to do two lessons with Grade 9, four lessons with Grade 10 and, this year, they are going to do the whole book with Grade 11. Once it starts to overlap, they will reassess and decide how well it went and how they want to divide it up for the future.

Mrs. Johnson asked when this assessment was going to take place. Mrs. Hackett replied that the first assessment started this year with Grade 11. The next one would begin this coming August when they return to school and they are ready to start using it with the ninth, tenth and eleventh grade. A year from now, they should know how it went and how successful it was. Mrs. Johnson noted that the Curriculum and Instruction Committee, which is very excited about this particular concept, would be interested in hearing about how the assessment went especially with the ninth and tenth graders. Mr. Thiery replied that he would be sure to follow-up on that.

Mr. Goralski stated that he remembers a previous Board member whom he has a great deal of respect for and now he always questions copyright dates. He noted that the copyright date for the book Mrs. Hackett was presenting to the Board was 2002. He asked if that should be

of any concern. Mrs. Hackett replied that it was vocabulary with Greek and Latin roots that were pretty old to begin with.

Mrs. Johnson mentioned that now they are into having Internet access for the students in their homework, she thought that it was important for parents to realize that this is a capability and that they don't constantly ask their children, "Where is your book? How can you do your homework without the book?" She thought that parents have to be alert to the fact that the students will be able to access their homework assignments through the computer. She thought that it was an important piece of information for parents to have. Mrs. Notar-Francesco thought it could be brought to their attention at Parent-Teacher Conferences. Mr. Goralski thought it could be mentioned at Open House.

Mr. Goralski questioned the copyright dates for the math and science textbooks because they were not as current as some of the other books. He was told that they were the most current books available right now. Mrs. Notar-Francesco commented that she would be more concerned with the history textbook copyrights. Mr. Goralski replied that the history copyrights were all 2010.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Rickard, Ms. Schroeder, Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Fischer, Mr. Goralski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Policy & Personnel Committee Meeting ~ May 27, 2010

Mrs. Fischer reported that the Policy & Personnel Committee met on May 27 and discussed two items. The first item is on the agenda this evening, which is the job description for the Interim Director of the Alternative High School. The second item is the Acceptable Use Policy for Staff, which the committee would be revisiting and bringing to the Board in the future.

6. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

a. Personnel Report

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

"Move to approve the Personnel Report as presented."

Mr. Goralski recognized the years of service of the staff who are on the Personnel Report who are leaving. Not only is Ms. McGrath retiring, but there also are many more great educators with 30-plus years that are in the Personnel Report. He thanked them all for their years of service.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Johnson, Ms. Schroeder, Mrs. Rickard, Mrs. Carmody, Mr. Goralski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

7. OLD BUSINESS

a. Town Council / Board of Finance Communications

Mr. Goralski reported that he received a letter from the Water Department thanking the Board for their role in helping to promote the Medical Disposal Program.

Mr. Goralski stated that there was a public hearing on June 14 at 7:00 p.m. regarding the Mount Vernon Road sewer extension.

Mrs. Johnson questioned the delays in the next Facility Committee meeting. Dr. Erardi replied that the Board of Education Sub-Committee of Facilities, which includes a member of the Board of Finance, Town Council and town staff, have reoccurring meeting dates of the first and fourth Tuesday of every month. They are looking to July 6, 7:00 p.m. at Plantsville School to be able to finalize their work to bring forward to the School Board, Town Council and Board of Finance. In July, their work will move through Phase I to public communication at all three Board levels and then they would begin to look at Phase II with the same Facility Committee. Phase II is looking at what has to happen with the middle schools. Mrs. Johnson noted that meeting would take place two days before the next Board of Education meeting on July 8. Several Board members stated that they would be away that week. Mr. Goralski asked Dr. Erardi to check with the Board members for availability on July 8 for a quorum.

b. Construction Update

Mr. Cox reported that the Building Committee met early in the week and reconfirmed that the playscape equipment is still on schedule to be installed early in July at Plantsville Elementary School and during August at South End Elementary School. He passed around a photo that was over a week old that showed what the former South End Elementary School looked like on Monday, June 1. It was leveled. The Building Committee scheduled grading for the fields and parking lots to begin the day after school ends for the year. He noted that they were right on schedule at this point.

Mr. Goralski asked where they put the bricks that the PTO had an interested in. Mr. Cox replied that a small pile was put just inside the gate by Newfield Construction. The concern is the liability of going on the site with improper footwear. He noted that Mrs. Kamerbeek [Principal of South End School] was told where to find it.

Mrs. Johnson questioned the snowmelt system on the promenade at the high school. Mr. Cox replied that he was looking at two options. They spent the remaining dollars on the project out of the Capital Building Committee to remove some of the concrete and add some additional drainage. He believed that helped the situation, but they are still dealing with the problem that, when the slabs move, they don't always settle back level. He was looking at a method of boring holes and pumping in hydraulic concrete to bring up the lower slabs to reduce a tripping hazard. He noted that has been done throughout the town at municipal buildings. He was getting prices on that versus having a company come in and doing some grinding. Mrs. Johnson asked if this was covered by insurance. Mr. Cox replied that the committee tested the concrete and has photographs of the installation that was done all according to plan. They have testing results of each load of concrete that was okay. It is just a very wet area and it was unanticipated that they were going to have that problem with water freezing under the slab and causing that movement. Mrs. Johnson concluded that it was on the Board of Education's "dime." Mr. Cox agreed.

Mrs. Fischer asked, if it was a reoccurring cost, should they remove it and put something else there. She did not know what the cost has been to “Band-Aid” it. Mr. Cox replied that the cost to do the repairs has been minor. The overall cost of the project was \$220,000 and they have put about \$20,000 of that into repairs after the fact. He hoped that their efforts this summer out of the Board’s budget would be substantially less than that. He noted that they had this condition at Plantsville School this past winter where some new concrete moved during the winter.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. Appointment of SAA Negotiating Committee

Mr. Goralski thanked the Board members who responded. They have experienced and new members serving on this committee. The committee is comprised of:

Mrs. Patricia Johnson
Mrs. Jill Notar-Francesco
Mrs. Rosemarie Fischer
Ms. Michelle Schroeder

Mr. Goralski distributed information from legal counsel regarding the process of when the meetings take place. He stated that any communication should go through Mrs. DiNello who is the contact at Central Office for the negotiations. He asked the SAA Negotiating Committee to share any vacation conflicts with Mrs. DiNello. He stated that a letter would be sent to the municipal fiscal authorities to invite them to an Executive Session meeting with the Board of Education prior to their next meeting to inform them of the process. The Board was going to be polled to see if, on July 8, they would have a quorum. Once that was confirmed, the letter would be sent.

d. Draft Policy ~ Social Networking ~ First Reading

Mr. Thiery reported that this policy came before the committee a couple of times over the last month. It addresses the evolving need to set standards around how our employees use the various social networking tools that are now available; i.e., Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc. This came to the committee by way of legal counsel with a recommendation that they have a policy. When they searched for model policies, most towns do not have this and are currently developing it. Mr. Goralski thought that it was good work and thanked the committee for the new policy.

e. Job Description ~ Interim Director of Alternative High School

Mr. Thiery reported that this job description was brought to committee over the last couple of meetings and was an adaptation of the job description for the Assistant Principal at Alta that was developed and approved by the Board last year. It represents the change to a slightly different position as Director of the Alternative High School as an interim position. The changes were very subtle.

MOTION: by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Ms. Schroeder:

“Move to approve the job description as presented.”

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Rickard, Ms. Schroeder, Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mr. Goralski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

f. Tuition Students ALTA 2010-2011

Dr. Erardi distributed a handout (*Attachment #3*) that was a timeline for a proposed Regional Alternative Program for 2010-2011. He was trying to set the stage for the Board’s July 8 meeting. This would be an agenda item for discussion at that time. Before July 8, the Board would have a draft brochure that would include what the program presents. They will have a proposal for the Board of what tuition would be for students considered for the program. He hoped that the Board members would share their thoughts with administration prior to July 8. The plan is to start very slowly and to maintain a program that was moving in the right direction. He anticipates 2010-2011 opening day to have approximately 30-35 students. Their philosophy is that, although they may have eighth graders ready for the Alternative Program, they would like that eighth grader to be a ninth grader next year to exhaust ninth grade opportunity; there is terrific guidance and counseling support for students in Grade 9. They are very reluctant to move any Grade 8 student directly into the Alternative Program.

Dr. Erardi’s projection would be to pilot approximately five students. He would have finite plans for the Board on July 8 and to assure the Board that there would always be room for Southington High School students. He was sharing this with the Board now so, if there were questions or concerns, it could be addressed.

Mrs. Fischer noted that for 2010-2011, Dr. Erardi said there would be 30-35 students. She asked if that included the five proposed students. Dr. Erardi replied that it included only Southington students. Mrs. Fischer summarized that they would max out at 40 students or higher. Dr. Erardi stated that they were ending this year with about 50 students and next year they were expecting 30-35 back. Mrs. Fischer questioned if not moving eighth grade students directly into the program was a new philosophy. Dr. Erardi replied that it always was the philosophy of the program.

Mrs. Rickard thought the target at Alta that they could handle was up to 60 students. Dr. Erardi replied that was correct. Dr. Erardi thought that at the beginning of the school year they would have 40-50 Southington High School students after referral from guidance.

Mr. Goralski noted that this would be a reoccurring item and would be showing up under Old Business at future meetings.

Mr. Goralski pointed out that the next two agenda items 8.g and 8.h would follow Executive Session.

Mrs. Rickard mentioned that Mr. Derynoski had a family emergency on his way to the meeting tonight and had intended to make the Superintendent’s Evaluation; however, he just texted her that it was going to be impossible to attend.

g. Superintendent's Evaluation ~ 2009-2010

This agenda item to follow Executive Session.

h. Superintendent's Contract ~ 2010-2011

This agenda item to follow Executive Session.

i. Finance Committee Meeting ~ June 8, 2010

Mrs. DiNello reported that the Finance Committee meeting on Tuesday needed to be cancelled. The Finance Committee packets were provided to the Board by the mail courier for items that needed action. The first item for review was the Transfer of Funds.

- **Transfer of Funds:**

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

"Move to approve the Transfer of Funds, as submitted."

Mr. Goralski noticed that some of the money they are transferring is for maintaining the buildings. He noted that at Strong School they needed paper towels and there is a transfer taking place to do that. He felt that part of that was their own doing with the freeze that they had in place. He appreciated the scrutiny that the principals had and that they were comfortable asking when they needed it.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Johnson, Ms. Schroeder, Mrs. Rickard, Mrs. Carmody, Mr. Goralski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- **RFP Athletic Training Services – Award**

Mrs. DiNello reported that at the last meeting the Board agreed to put out a RFP for Athletic Training Services for a three-year period. The proposal that they are recommending was from Select Physical Therapy, the current vendor. Their proposal was at a cost of zero for 2010-2011, \$14,900 for 2011-2012 and \$14,900 for 2012-2013.

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

"Move to award Bid T020 for Athletic Training Services to Select Physical Therapy for three-years."

Mr. Goralski asked how many bids were received. Mrs. DiNello replied that they sent out six proposals to area vendors and they received one by the June 1 required date.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Johnson, Ms. Schroeder, Mrs. Rickard, Mrs. Carmody, Mr. Goralski. **ABSTAIN:** Mrs. Fischer. **Motion carried with six in favor and one abstention.**

- **Bid #S032 Approval – Hot Water Heater – Strong Elementary School**

Mrs. DiNello stated that they were looking to replace the 400-gallon hot water heater with two 100-gallon units. They are utilizing funds available in the Repairs and Maintenance accounts from the 2009-2010 budget. The bid will be returned after the June 24 Board of Education meeting and a purchase order needs to be in place by June 23. She asked the Board to allow the Superintendent to approve the awarding of this bid.

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

“Move to approve Bid #S032 for the Hot Water Heater at Strong School and waive the bid award process, authorizing the Superintendent to award the bid.”

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Johnson, Ms. Schroeder, Mrs. Rickard, Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mr. Goralski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- **Bid #T024 Approval – Dividing Curtain for High School Gymnasium**

Mrs. DiNello stated that this item was approved in the 2010-2011 budget under the Property / Facility / Maintenance Account. They would have time to get this bid out and bring it before the Board at the July 8 Board meeting due to the fact that it is next year's funding. This is just to approve the document.

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

“Move to approve Bid #T024 for the Folding Dividing Curtain for the Southington High School West Gym.”

Mrs. Carmody asked if this would be ready for the next school year. Mrs. DiNello replied that the goal was to make the award during the month of July and plan installation for August so that it would be ready for the school year. Mr. Goralski noted that this item was in a separate line in the budget. Once the Board approves the bid when it comes to them, a letter would be sent to the Town Council as a formality because the money was already in place.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Ms. Schroeder, Mrs. Rickard, Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Johnson, Mr. Goralski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- **Financial Update / Purchasing Plan 2009-2010**

Mrs. DiNello stated that the Board should have received a Financial Update regarding the current budget status. She anticipates balancing the budget at year-end; however, there are unexpected funds currently in the supply account because of the freeze that was put on all the locations by holding back 25%. She asked the Board to approve the Purchase Plan for additional textbooks, supplies and technology needs throughout the district.

MOTION: by Mrs. Rickard, seconded by Mrs. Carmody:

“Move to approve the Purchase Plan 2009-2010, as presented.”

Mrs. Notar-Francesco noted that earlier in the day she discussed with Mrs. DiNello her concern about the supplies at the schools. She wanted to be reassured that the schools were not lacking anything because they held that 25% and that they were going to now use it for other things.

Mrs. DiNello was confident that they made it through this school year and they have been in constant communication with the building principals and, if there was something that they needed, all they had to do was let her know. She would be working with them as they expend the supply line items to ensure that they focus on areas of need for next year.

Mr. Goralski noted that the teachers sacrificed all year to make this happen. There were so many unknowns on the State level concerning the potential reduction of State funding as they started their budget. There are unknowns in every budget the Board does because they never know what the State is going to give them. This was the only way they could attempt to balance the budget if the State was to cut funding at the last minute. The only way they now have this money was by the students and the staff sacrificing this entire school year. He noted that in the Purchase Plan 95 percent of the items directly correlate to student use.

Mrs. Fischer asked if the Purchase Plan would allow for teaching for next year. If they did not need the supplies, and they purchased the items on the plan, then it could help for the future. Mrs. DiNello replied that was correct. One of the main areas that will be provided would be in the textbook area because they had so little funding for textbooks in the current budget. They could get a jumpstart on ordering textbooks for the 2010-2011 year. It would then free up money in that line item next year to make a dent in the very long list of textbooks that are needed. If there are some issues of class size in the month of August, this could also provide an area that the Board could look at transferring money prior to the start of the school year to fund additional teachers.

Mrs. Johnson stated that under Director of Operation Purchase Plan is the JFK Repair Brick Veneer at the chimney and wanted to know if that was supposed to be JFK or DES. Mr. Cox replied that it is JFK. Mrs. Johnson asked if there was a greater need at Derynoski. Mr. Cox responded that it was needed at both locations but, since it was the chimney, it would be a priority.

Mrs. Fischer questioned the desks at JFK for additional students. She asked if they could move desks for JAD over to JFK rather than buy new ones. Mrs. DiNello was told that there were no desks at this time that could be moved from JAD. They exhausted looking into the basement at SHS, as Mrs. Carmody had requested. Those have been all cleaned out and they no longer have those stored in the basement at SHS. Right now, the desks at Alta are currently the size for middle school students, so they need high school desks there. They really do need additional desks. Mrs. Fischer asked if they could move the middle school size desks from Alta to JFK. Mrs. DiNello noted that both middle schools have about 20 desks that were approved in the current budget.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Johnson, Ms. Schroeder, Mrs. Rickard, Mr. Goralski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- **Student-Based Supplement Grant**

Mrs. DiNello reported that this item was something new that just came to her office two weeks ago. The State had an issue and was concerned about meeting their Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements for funding special education to local communities in the area of Special Education Excess Costs. In an effort to insure that they were meeting their MOE requirements, they have chosen to transfer money from the transportation of our Public School Children Grant to a new grant that they are calling an Excess Cost Student-Based Supplement Grant. What that means is that originally the Town of Southington was to receive over \$525,000 for public school transportation. They knew that there was going to be a cap on that of a small amount, but they decided to move additional funding (to the tune of \$128,000) from the public school transportation revenue to a grant that was sent to the school system on behalf of Special Education Excess Cost. She was not anticipating this money. She noted that she had been keeping the Board informed of the percentages that they were receiving for the Excess Cost Grant during the year. Currently, the Town budget would have a very large shortfall from the last minute decision of not funding the Public School Transportation Grant appropriately. Because they were not anticipating this money, they were able to balance their special education budget and it is administration's recommendation for this school year to allow the Town to keep the \$128,000 to assist them in meeting their revenue requirements for balancing this school year. She requested that Mr. Goralski include in his letter that we are not making any assumptions on how they would treat it next year. The State might do something similar next year and, until she knows what percentage they would be funding the Excess Cost, she would not want to promise that in the 2010-2011 year they would be able to make that same recommendation.

MOTION: by Mrs. Rickard, seconded by Ms. Schroeder:

“Move that the Board of Education give the Student-based Supplement Grant received in June 2010 to the Town in order to make up the deficit in the School Transportation Grant.”

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Johnson, Ms. Schroeder, Mrs. Rickard, Mrs. Carmody, Mr. Goralski. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Goralski questioned the Self Insurance numbers. Mrs. DiNello pointed out that as the budgets were adopted last month, she shared with the Board that the claims for the months of February and March were less than they had anticipated. On Friday, when she received the Self Insurance report for the month of April, the Board of Education's claims were over \$400,000 less than what the budget had anticipated. This bodes well as they continue looking at the 12-month projections and the fact that the Town and the Self Insurance Committee agreed to reduce the original planned funding for next year. In her 11 years at Central Office and her four years working for the Town, this was truly unprecedented that the expenditures for the past three months have been less this current year than they were the year before.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco asked Mrs. DiNello if she was going to contact Ovation Benefits just to make sure of the accuracy of these numbers. Mrs. DiNello replied that she was in contact with the Town Finance Director because it seemed too good to be true. They are planning to ask Ovation to explain to them where their costs seemed to be decreasing and make sure there was an explanation for it. She keeps waiting to find out that there was a mistake on the

administrative side and a new bill will arrive. Mr. Goralski stated that question by Mrs. Notar-Francesco was why the Board was very happy to have her sitting on the Self Insurance Committee.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR PERSONNEL MATTERS AND SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION 2009-2010

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

“Move to go into Executive Session, excluding the public and the press, for the purpose of discussing Personnel Matters and Superintendent’s Evaluation 2009-2010 and, upon conclusion, reconvene to open session to complete the agenda.”

Motion carried by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Blanchard

Recording Secretary

**SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION
JUNE 10, 2010**

Mr. Brian Goralski, Board Chairperson, called the Executive Session to order at 9:15 p.m.

Members Present:

Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mrs. Rosemarie Fischer, Mrs. Patricia Johnson, Mrs. Jill Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Kathleen Rickard, Ms. Michelle Schroeder, Mr. Brian Goralski. Absent were Mrs. Colleen Clark and Mr. David Derynoski.

Administration Present:

Dr. Joseph V. Erardi, Superintendent of Schools

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

“Move to go into Executive Session, excluding the public and the press, for the purpose of discussing Personnel Matters and Superintendent’s Evaluation 2009-2010 and, upon conclusion, reconvene to open session to complete the agenda.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

MOTION: by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mrs. Fischer:

“Move to return to public session.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The board reconvened public session at 10:30 p.m.

g. Superintendent’s Evaluation ~ 2009-2010

Mr. Goralski stated that they would release a statement to the press and to the public representing the Board's appreciation for the work that the Superintendent has done for Southington. The goals that Dr. Erardi shared are public and those goals are what he was evaluated on. Mr. Goralski stated that the Board has found that Dr. Erardi has met or exceeded expectations in all measurable areas. Mr. Goralski stated that the Board continues to recognize and value Dr. Erardi's integrity, energy and dedication in making Southington's public schools the best they can be.

h. Superintendent's Contract ~ 2010-2011

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

“Move to approve the compensation package for Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph V. Erardi with a 3% base salary increase and other contract language modifications as discussed by the Board of Education.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

MOTION: by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Ms. Schroeder:

"Move to adjourn."

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jill Notar-Francesco".

Jill Notar-Francesco, Secretary
Southington Board of Education

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

6/10/10

My name is Michelle Brennan. I live at 1487 East St. I am the proud mother of 2 second grade children and I am here tonight to speak of my concerns about the third grade class size for Hatton school for the academic year 2010-2011.

I would like you to know that I have the greatest respect for the teachers and staff we have so far encountered at Hatton school. They have been kind, patient, accommodating and willing to bring out the best in my children. I have been volunteering in the classroom with these children since their kindergarten year 2008-2009. I always thought I would be a good teacher until I realized how difficult it is to meet the educational needs of each individual. It is hard to imagine how different these classrooms will be when they have 8 to 10 more children in them. Many of these children have special educational needs and/or paraprofessionals with them. With the current class size the 'pull-outs' make the continuity of the lesson difficult. With a larger population; continuity, never mind differentiation will be near to impossible.

I understand budgeting and the ease of 'line item' elimination. These children deserve more examination. We cannot look at the loss of this teacher as a line item. These kids are here for an education. They deserve the best we can give. We want them to perform and succeed. Increasing class size will only compromise this endeavor. Studies have shown time and again that smaller class sizes perform better. I think we all know that. A study by JD Finn and associates in The Journal of Educational Psychology in 2004 concluded; "Small class sizes were associated with significantly higher academic performance in every school subject in every grade of the experiment (K-3) and in every subsequent grade studied(4-6)". Isn't this what we want?

In reviewing the Board of Education meeting minutes and projection grids from past few weeks, the numbers make me ask some questions.

Why do we say only a minus 2 teachers for the district when so many children will be affected and how is it decided who will bear the load? According to the grid published 5/11/2010, Hatton would have three third grade classes. Why then was the decision made to have only two? Other schools on the grid show similar smaller class sizes; Flanders, South End, even Strong.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco noted that the class size of the 5th grade at Derynoski might be as high as 25 due to students choosing to stay. Mr. Erardi indicated that conversations with the parents should be had to let them know that class sizes would be approaching 25, why aren't we at Hatton afforded the same conversations?

My children are very athletic and play many sports and I hope they continue to in the future. However they go to school to learn. Why can't we move to a pay to play system for school athletics? Already many parents pay to have their children pay in after school leagues and camps, so I do not think affordability is an issue for the majority.

I implore you to look at the individuals that make up this class and brainstorm other ways to save money so that we can focus on educating our children. Talk to the teachers and

administrators they know the children best.

When my children first started their formal education I attended a PTO meeting with Dr. Erardi who was beginning his first year in Southington. His words resonated with me then; that the Southington Public school system would be a premier system in the state. I think with the quality of our staff and students we can be this, but we have to think of another way to meet our budget constraints rather than eliminating programming that will assist our students in learning. After all is not the objective education. We need to look beyond the line item.

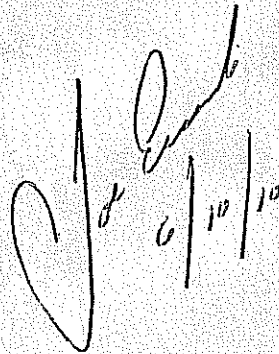
Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Brennan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michelle" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Brennan".

Michelle Brennan
1487 East St.
Southington, Ct

Administration: Board of Education Report June 10, 2010

- 1. SHS Principal Search**
 - a. Board Interviews – June 22nd – 5:30 PM**
 - b. Informational Binder – June 18th**
- 2. Funding – Choice Programs** (attachment #1)
- 3. SEF / JAD Partnership** (attachment #2)
- 4. New Teacher Orientation** (attachment #3)
- 5. Commencement - June 18th**
- 6. Final Day of School – June 21** (early dismissal)



A handwritten signature, possibly reading "J. [unclear]", is written above the date "6/10/10".

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

**AD HOC COMMITTEE ON FUNDING FOR
PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAMS**

Meeting of June 7, 2010
9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue, Room 307
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

DRAFT AGENDA

- | | | |
|------|--|--------------|
| I. | Welcome and Introductions | A. Taylor |
| II. | Approval of Minutes of May 3, 2010, Committee Meeting | A. Taylor |
| III. | Review and Discussion of Revised Charge to Committee
and Operating Guidelines | M. McQuillan |
| IV. | Reports on Financing Public Education in Connecticut | |
| | a. Overview of Education Cost Sharing Formula | B. Mahoney |
| | b. Office of Policy and Management Report (2007) | K. Guay |
| | c. CEA Power Point Presentation | J. Yrchik |
| V. | Other | |
| VI. | Adjourn | |

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

Ad Hoc Committee on Funding for Public School Choice Programs

**Draft Minutes
(Subject to Change)**

Monday, May 3, 2010, Meeting

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Ad Hoc Committee on Funding for Public School Choice Programs met on Monday, May 3, 2010. The meeting was held in Room 307A of the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

Committee Members Present: Joseph Brennan, Joseph Cirasuolo, George Coleman, Sherri DiNello, James Finley, Kathleen Guay, Alex Johnston, Fred McKinney, Mark McQuillan, Kathleen O'Connor, Sharon Palmer, Robert Rader (designee), Allan Taylor, John Yrchik

Committee Members Absent: Vincent Candelora, Deborah Heinrich, Theresa Hopkins-Staten, Douglas McCrory, Dudley Williams

Mr. Taylor welcomed the committee and thanked all members for their participation. Committee members introduced themselves.

II. Review and Discussion of Charge to Committee

Committee members reviewed the charge to the committee, adopted by the State Board of Education on March 3, 2010 (copy in official file). A lengthy discussion ensued, including the following topics:

Charge to committee: Was the charge intended to be narrow in scope and focus solely on choice programs? Is it possible to focus on just one facet of funding, in isolation of the overall system? Should we take the opportunity to begin our work with a focus on public school choice funding and expand our scope thereafter? Board action will be required to expand the charge.

Factors impacting the work of the committee: Need to clarify what are the preferred design features of a new funding system (i.e., what do we mean by "fully funded"?); must consider limited resources of the State vs. what can be done to move toward increasing the State share to 50 percent; should review successful funding structures in other states, particularly with regard to eliminating the achievement gap; need to communicate and

coordinate efforts with the Governor's Commission on Educational Achievement, particularly about the common objective of reviewing funding for public education.

While committee members acknowledged that it may be difficult to reach consensus on these matters, they noted that it is important to work together toward a successful resolution. To facilitate this, it was suggested that a process be developed to guide the committee toward reaching consensus, including a provision concerning how to handle instances in which consensus is not reached (i.e., voting).

III. Committee Meeting Schedule

A list of tentative meeting dates was distributed (copy in official file). Committee members were asked to e-mail the State Board Office confirming their availability. All meetings are scheduled for Mondays, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

If a committee member is unable to attend a meeting, a designee may be appointed to attend on his or her behalf.

IV. Other

Next steps: Commissioner McQuillan will submit a revised charge to the State Board of Education for consideration at its June 2, 2010, meeting. He will also draft committee guidelines for the committee's use as it works to reach consensus on developing recommendations for the full Board. At the next meeting (June 7, 2010), Chief Financial Officer Brian Mahoney will give an overview of ECS funding; John Yrchik will make a presentation on previous funding studies; and committee members will review the 2007 final report from Governor M. Jodi Rell's Commission on Education Finance, which is located on the Office of Policy and Management Web site:

www.ct.gov/opm/lib/opm/budget/educationfinance/edufinancefinalreport.pdf

Chairman Taylor adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

VI.F.

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO BE PROPOSED:

June 2, 2010

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education rescinds its March 3, 2010, resolution, as amended, to form the Ad Hoc Committee to Study Funding for Public School Choice Program; and

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education approves the proposal to form an Ad Hoc Committee to Study Education Cost Sharing and Choice Funding, as described in Commissioner McQuillan's June 2, 2010, memorandum to the State Board of Education, including the charge to the committee; the objectives, deliverables, and timelines; and the appointments thereto; and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of 7:0 this second day of June, Two Thousand Ten.

Signed: _____
Mark K. McQuillan
Secretary

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Mark K. McQuillan, Commissioner of Education

DATE: June 2, 2010

SUBJECT: Ad Hoc Committee to Study Education Cost Sharing and Choice Funding

The Legislation and Bylaws Committee recommends the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee to study and recommend changes to (1) Connecticut's Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula; and (2) current models used to fund students enrolled in statewide charter schools, magnet schools, regional vocational-agriculture schools, and the OPEN Choice program. The aim of this study shall be to consider alternative ways to fund public school students (particularly in urban and rural areas) and to propose legislation that will remedy the weaknesses now identified in the State's public school financing system.

Statement of the Problem and Revised Charge to the Committee

The variety, complexity, and sheer number of statutes governing State funding for public schools, and, in particular charter and magnet schools, are a growing concern for municipal leaders everywhere in Connecticut, particularly those in the State's urban centers. The statewide environment for choice programs' growth was improved through legislation passed in the 2010 General Assembly. Also, the need for growth in choice programs to comply with the Sheff v. O'Neill Stipulated Agreement requires the proposed study and recommendations. By common agreement, the system professing to support public school choice is ineffective, destabilizing, unfair, and inadequately funded.

The prevailing belief is that until basic principles can be at least identified and captured in new legislation, Connecticut will stand little chance of finding a better way to fund these important public school choices. It is to this end that the Ad Hoc Committee will be convened and charged with researching and recommending new funding models all of Connecticut's public school choice programs. This change rescinds the charge of March 3, 2010.

Objectives

The objectives of the Ad Hoc Committee shall be to:

1. Engage national experts to study Connecticut's public financing laws to compare them with others in states where local property taxes are the primary revenue source for financing public schools. How are they alike? How are they different?
2. Identify how states with a heavy reliance on property taxes fund magnet schools, charter schools, or other schools of choice. To what degree do these states contribute general funds to offset the impact of these schools of choice?

3. Review the strengths and limitations of national funding models based on weighted student financing formulas (i.e., "the money follows the child"); compare and contrast what impact these formulas have had on public school financing in general, like ECS. Are there priority differences between the two that are reconcilable, or not? Is our ECS formula sufficient to meet the needs of our students living in economically depressed communities?
4. Identify common principles and assumptions to guide the creation of this framework.
5. Propose recommendations leading to legislation that will provide a balanced, coherent system for funding public schools statewide founded on the principles of equity, choice, and local control.

Deliverables

The Ad Hoc Committee shall submit the following products to State Board of Education:

1. A comparative analysis of Connecticut and other states nationally relative to the State's total contribution to public school funding as opposed to the contributions of local municipalities;
2. A comparative analysis of Connecticut's magnet and charter statutes as compared to 3-5 other states, preferably in the New England Region;
3. A summary of what the current research says about the effects of laws supporting weighted student financing in boosting student achievement and providing equal access to students living in poverty;
4. A declaration of the common principles and assumptions that will guide the recommendations for legislative reform; and
5. A report and presentation by national experts recommending proposals and/or funding models that achieve the stated purposes of Objective 5; and a timeline for achieving those recommendations over the next five years.

Timeline

1. The Committee shall hold its first organizational meeting on or before March 15, 2010, and establish a schedule of monthly meetings to complete its work before October 1, 2010.
2. The Committee shall engage the consultant services of a scholar or outside expert on or before July 15, 2010.
3. The Committee shall complete its statement of principles and assumptions by September 30, 2010.
4. The Committee shall present deliverables 1-4 to the State Board of Education at its regular meeting in October 2010.
5. With the assistance of its consultant, the Committee shall complete by January 15, 2011, a report for the State Board of Education, outlining its recommendations for legislative reform in the areas identified.
6. The Committee shall present its report to the State Board of Education at its regularly scheduled meeting in February 2011.

Committee Composition

The Ad Hoc Committee shall consist of 16 members, listed below. These members, and the Co-Chairs of the Committee, shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the State Board of Education.

1. Chairperson of the State Board of Education;
2. Chairperson of the Legislation and Bylaws Committee of the State Board of Education;
3. One member of the Legislation and Bylaws Committee of the State Board of Education;
4. Commissioner of Education;
5. Three members of the General Assembly;
6. The President of the Connecticut Business and Industry Association or designee;
7. The Executive Director of Connecticut Association of School Business Officials or designee;
8. Executive Director of Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents or designee;
9. Executive Director of Connecticut Association of Boards of Education or designee;
10. Executive Director of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities or designee;
11. Executive Director of the Connecticut Education Association or designee;
12. Executive Director of the American Federation of Teachers or designee;
13. Executive Director of ConnCAN; and
14. Secretary, Office of Policy and Management or his designee.

Authority

The Ad Hoc Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to the State Board of Education, and shall be granted an operating budget of up to \$50,000 for the purposes of conducting research and preparing reports. At the discretion of the chairperson, committee members may be divided into work groups to complete the tasks identified above and report back to the committee of the whole, following deadlines established by the chair.

Pilot 2010-2011 Alta Program

Regionalization of the Program to Include Tuition Based Students

Timeline:

On or before July 1:

- Brochure (draft) of program to include
 - Student profile
 - School year
 - Daily schedule
 - School of choice
 - School of opportunity
- Finalize tuition cost

July 8, 2010 Board Meeting:

1. Agenda item – Regionalization of the Alta program to include roll-out, revenue, and proposed next steps.

Pending 7/8/2010 Board Action

On or before August 1:

1. Mailing of brochure to area school districts
 2. Host area administrators / guidance directors on Thursday, August 19, 2010 for an informational working breakfast (9:00 a.m.)
- Proposed pilot to begin with up to (but not to exceed) five out-of-district students.

Joe Cawati
8/12/10