

# **SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION**

## **SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

### **REGULAR MEETING**

**NOVEMBER 18, 2010**

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The regular meeting of the Southington Board of Education was held on Thursday, November 18, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. at Walter A. Derynoski Elementary School, 240 Main Street, Southington, Connecticut.

At 7:17 p.m., for the first part of the Celebration of Excellence, the Board of Education recognized James DiNello, a senior at Southington High School, who placed seventh nationally during the Impromptu Speaking event held at the Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda National Leadership Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. Mr. Goralski presented James with a Certificate of Excellence plaque.

For the second part of the Celebration of Excellence, the Board of Education recognized Mr. Jeff Shaw, K-12 Music Coordinator and Band Director, and the Southington High School Marching Band for receiving their fourth consecutive State Championship. Mr. Goralski presented Mr. Shaw and the Marching Band with a Certificate of Excellence plaque. Certificates for individual members of the band were given to Mr. Shaw to distribute.

The Derynoski School PTO provided refreshments.

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairperson, Brian Goralski. Board members present were Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mrs. Rosemarie Fischer, Mrs. Patricia Johnson, Mrs. Jill Notar-Francesco, and Mrs. Kathleen Rickard.

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, and Mr. Frederick Cox, Director of Operations.

Student representative, Christopher Amnott, was present.

#### **2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mr. Amnott led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES ~ October 28, 2010**

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

**“Move to approve the minutes of October 28, 2010.”**

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

#### **4. COMMUNICATIONS**

##### **a. Acceptance of letter of resignation from Michelle Schroeder, Board Member**

**MOTION:** by Mr. Derynoski, seconded by Mrs. Fischer:

**“Move to accept the letter of resignation from Michelle Schroeder, Board Member.”**

**Motion unanimously approved by voice vote.**

##### **b. Appointment and Swearing in of Board of Education replacement for Michelle Schroeder.**

**MOTION:** by Mrs. Fischer, seconded by Mrs. Notar-Francesco:

**“Move to appoint Patricia Queen to the Board of Education to complete the term to end in November 2011.”**

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

Mr. Goralski invited Mrs. Queen to join the Board at the table, gave her a nameplate, and asked Mrs. Leslie Cotton [Town Clerk] to swear Mrs. Queen in as a Board member.

Mrs. Cotton told Mrs. Queen to raise her right hand and asked if she solemnly swore that she would be true and faithful to the constitutions and the governments of the State of Connecticut and the United States of America, and that she would faithfully discharge, according to law, her duties on the Southington Board of Education to the best of her ability, so help her God. Mrs. Queen replied that she did so swear.

##### **c. Communications from Audience**

**Mr. Leonard Marcheselle** applauded the many schools that had Veterans Day ceremonies honoring the Veterans both living and dead. He believed that by doing so they are teaching the children of today why we are what we are. He congratulated Flanders Elementary School for the ceremony that he was invited to attend. The Veterans who were invited to the event were offered an enjoyable breakfast. After breakfast, the children put on a beautiful and meaningful patriotic performance. The selection of songs that were sung and played by the orchestra brought back many memories to the Veterans in attendance. Grades 1 through 5 read their essays about what a Veteran meant to them. He noted that Board member Mrs. Notar-Francesco also attended. After the band played “America the Beautiful” the Veterans were presented with Certificates of Appreciation that included their name, rank, branch and years in the service. Also, there was a Veterans slideshow presentation that was a “tearjerker.” Mr.

Marcheselle stated that Dan Murdzek [Flanders teacher] gave the closing remarks and there was not a dry eye in the cafetorium when he was finished. Mr. Marcheselle noted that this was the third year that he attended their program and every year it has gotten better. On behalf of all Veterans who were at Flanders, he thanked Mrs. Mazzarella [Principal of Flanders School], Mr. Murdzek, and all the staff at Flanders for a job, as they would say in the service, "Well done, soldiers."

Karen Smith, Principal of Derynoski School, welcomed everyone to her school. She was delighted to have some student leaders, representing all the students in her building, who were there to read their character essays. The school not only strives for excellence in every academic area, but also in social, emotional and behavioral areas as well. An underlining foundation of Derynoski School is the Character Education Program. She introduced three members of her staff: Mrs. Stephanie Parsons, Guidance Counselor, Mrs. Natalie Kalasky, School Psychologist, and Mrs. Kathleen Jardine, Social Worker.

Mrs. Parsons was delighted to spotlight and share Derynoski School's Grade 5 student leaders with the Board. The student leaders, who are selected by their teachers at the end of Grade 4, demonstrate good character. These students are kind, respectful, responsible, and trustworthy and do what is right, even when no one is looking. They are wonderful role models for other students and adults. During their fifth-grade year, they are involved in a number of activities that help to foster and promote a sense of caring, connection and community within the school. They assist the principals with the monthly Character Counts celebrations where various students from every classroom are recognized for showing good character.

Mrs. Kalasky explained that she, Mrs. Parsons, and Mrs. Jardine get together with the students for a half day at the end of their fourth-grade year for a workshop on leadership. The workshop is a fun way for the students to learn, practice and reinforce leadership skills. There are various activities that are interactive; the students learn about good communication skills, collaboration skills, and decision-making skills versus problem-solving and productive thinking.

Mrs. Jardine explained that during the half-day student leader training, each student randomly selects a character trait to explain in an essay. The character traits are caring, respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, citizenship and fairness. There are six student leaders. She noted that Julia Brilla was ill this evening and would not be reading her essay. In January, Mrs. Jardine has a showcase downstairs with all the essays that the students have written.

The following students read their essays on their selected character trait:

Nicholas Ragozzine	-	Citizenship
Emma Topper	-	Trustworthiness
Will Barmore	-	Caring
Katarina Rothstein	-	Respect
Emma Topper read her brother's (Daniel) essay about Fairness.		

Everyone sung a song regarding Character Counts to the tune of YMCA.

**d. Communications from Board Members and Administration**

**Communication from the Board Members:**

Mrs. Carmody complimented the teachers at Thalberg School, Mr. Beecher Lajoie [Principal of Thalberg School], his office staff, and the students. She explained that there was a power outage at the school on Monday, and she went to pick up her grandchildren. She acknowledged that it ran so smoothly, with everyone getting safely home by 11:30 a.m.

Mr. Derynoski reported that he attended a few PTO meetings during the week. He noted that both Thalberg and Derynoski Schools were doing a great job with their fund raising and activity planning. At Derynoski School, the PTO had a guest speaker, Fire Officer Dube, who did a presentation on fire safety that he thought was one of the best he had ever seen. He thought that it would be a good program for the other schools.

Mrs. Johnson noted that Fire Officer Dube not only speaks to PTO groups, but to any interested adult group as well. She encouraged groups who were interested to call him at the firehouse. She also noted that at the PTO meeting Mrs. Dobratz, who teaches second grade, gave a presentation on the new spelling process. Mrs. Johnson stated that Mrs. Dobratz explained the core words very nicely to all the parents. The Derynoski PTO also talked about redoing the courtyard with different student groups taking charge of the courtyard to make it functional and "Green." They are planning to have a fishpond, pumpkin patch, scarecrows and a colonial garden to tie in with Grade 5 history lessons.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco agreed that Mr. Murdzek did a wonderful job at Flanders School with the tribute to the Veterans. She noted that it was the seventh year of this program by Mr. Murdzek and that it got better all the time. She thought that it was a rich learning experience for the students.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco stated that she attended the CREC Council's November meeting. She reported that on January 7 at 8:00 a.m., CREC would be holding their annual legislative breakfast. This will take place in the Legislative Office Building in Hartford. Members of administration and the Board are invited to attend. She planned to encourage all of our State representatives to be there. The CREC Council's next meeting is January 19 at 11:30 a.m. The Chairperson of the Education Committee, Andy Fleishmann, has been invited. Bruce Douglas also extended an invitation to school superintendents and Board Chairs.

She stated that Commissioner of Education, Mark McQuillan, was in attendance at the CREC Council meeting. He discussed his legislative agenda, which included five items related to the Sheff Stipulated Agreement and one that revolved around reforming the kindergarten age requirement. Mrs. Notar-Francesco stated that she was highlighting the most significant proposals. The Commissioner talked about creating opportunity for students by allowing for the creation of "Crandall Innovation Schools." Crandall refers to Prudence Crandall and holds a positive educational connotation. This proposal seeks to encourage districts in the Sheff region that have closed schools to then utilize those school buildings to create innovation schools that would help the state meet its goals under the Sheff settlement. Districts could also create innovation schools from existing schools. She noted that to receive financial assistance from the

State, the school must consist of at least 25% of students from Hartford. Grants include: 1) a school construction reimbursement of 100%; 2) a per pupil grant for each enrolled Hartford student; and 3) an operating grant of up to \$250,000 a year. Neighboring districts are also encouraged to collaborate to create a Crandall Innovation School.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco reported that the Commissioner is again requesting that he be granted the authority to require districts to accept Open Choice students. He contends that he currently has the responsibility to comply with the court order to increase diversity for children in Hartford, but no authority to carry it out. The Commissioner would establish criteria and require districts to offer seats for Open Choice where the capacity exists within a school district. This is the proposal that was perhaps the most troubling to the CREC Council members.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco reported that another component of the Commissioner's agenda, resurrected from last year, would revise funding for districts accepting more Hartford students. The more students a district enrolls, the higher the dollar amount per student the district would receive. Higher dollar offers greater incentive to districts to participate.

The last legislative proposal from the Commissioner's office attempts to narrow the age range of students entering Kindergarten. He expects to adjust the Kindergarten age of admission, requiring that only students who are five years of age on or before October 1 be enrolled in Kindergarten. Current law requires that students reach the age of five by January 1. This proposal would also eliminate the provision that allows parents to wait to enroll a child until that child is 6 or 7 years of age. Districts, however, could adjust these requirements on a case-by-case basis. This proposal would be phased in over a four-year timeframe. According to Commissioner McQuillan, Connecticut is one of only four states in the nation to have Kindergarten cut off dates in December and January. The great majority of states have cut off dates between August and October.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco would share electronically the complete document outlining the Commissioner's proposals so the Board could see the details.

Mr. Goralski reported that he received a thank you to the entire Board from the Henne Family. The family really appreciated the dedication ceremony. He noted that most of the Board was there that night. Mr. Goralski acknowledged that Mrs. Henne was touched by receiving the shirt with her son's number on it by the Gridiron Club.

Mr. Goralski stated that the Plantsville School Playscape Re-dedication was outstanding. He noted that Mrs. Notar-Francesco brought a yearbook that her daughter had when she attended that school and Mrs. Rickard coordinated the event. He noted that Mrs. Rickard's son and other students who attended the school with the student they were honoring were also present. He noted that it was a very touching re-dedication.

Mr. Goralski pointed out that the Southington High School Marching Band had their banquet last week, filling Kay's Pier with family and friends.

Mr. Goralski stated that Mr. John Myers (Executive Director of the YMCA) contacted him a month ago and that Mr. Thiery shared with the Executive Committee at the Brown Bag Lunch today information regarding the Activate Southington Initiative. Mr. Goralski stated that

it would be on an upcoming Board agenda. Mr. Myers and Mr. Thiery will present an initiative to bring health and wellness to Southington at a different level.

Mr. Goralski announced that Dr. Erardi was selected as the Man of the Year by the Southington YMCA. He noted that, at the ceremony, Dr. Erardi gave the credit to the school system, teachers, students and the Board of Education. He stated that the Board looked forward to the event where they all can celebrate Dr. Erardi's selection as the individual achieving that honor.

**Communication from Administration:**

Dr. Erardi distributed a packet for the Administration Report to the Board (*Attachment #1*).

1. Retired Staff Breakfast / Aspirant Partnership: Dr. Erardi pointed out that on Wednesday, December 8, 3:30 p.m. at Hatton School a panel of retired staff will share their decades of wisdom of what defined outstanding leadership. The aspiring administrators would be able to participate in the panel and ask questions. This was done last year and was the highlight of the Administrative Aspirant Program.
2. SBOE / Home Day Care Providers Summit: Dr. Erardi stated that he was pleased with the growth over time of this focus area. On November 13, in the Plantsville Elementary School Library, 20 home day care providers attended the summit. They are all onboard to prepare students in literacy, numeracy and readiness. They also talked about continued professional development between the school system's preschool, kindergarten, administration, and their work. He would update the Board on this emerging group that has become a tremendous part of the Southington Public Schools.
3. Instructional Rounds: Dr. Erardi stated that there was an article recently published in a national magazine that highlighted what takes place in Connecticut. Monthly, a cohort of superintendents go to a different district to examine a problem of practice.
4. Open Choice – SPS Parent Partnership: Dr. Erardi shared that this was a partnership moving in the right direction. He noted that with the bad weather winter months coming he was sending a letter to parents of students in Plantsville and South End Elementary schools asking if they would host an Open Choice student when there is bad weather or an after school or evening program.
5. Family Resource Center: Dr. Erardi stated that Krista Pringle, Director of the Family Resource Center, would report in December at the Board meeting on the excitement throughout the district with a Family Resource Center that began two years ago.
6. Energy Update: Mrs. DiNello distributed a handout (*Attachment #2*) regarding energy. The district is currently in a contract with Constellation Energy that will expire in December 2011. Southington joined a small consortium of districts to

enter into a contract for the generation of electricity. Mrs. DiNello was contacted by their broker who felt that pricing right now looked favorable; he stated that they should be thinking about extending that contract. She stated that it was a time-sensitive issue that came to her attention this week. The broker supplied the current savings realized from the current contract. She explained to the Board that, although this showed "savings," this is really "cost avoidance" because they have taken the savings to develop the current budget. The current CL&P rate for the generation was in the second section and in the third column was the current rate Southington was paying. They have been avoiding a generation cost of approximately \$200,000 a year with this contract. They are looking for that price to go down a penny per kilowatt-hour; therefore, the broker believes that they could realize an additional savings of close to \$105,000 over the next year if they were to enter into a contract extension. She did not expect that they would see a \$105,000 savings in the electricity account because they do not know what CL&P's rates would be on the other half of that invoice. She hoped that they would balance out, and the savings on the generation would help on any additional cost in the distribution. She asked for a consensus from the Board for the 24-month contract extension. Mrs. DiNello stated that she would have Shipman and Goodwin [legal counsel] review any contract prior to signing. They are talking about proceeding within the next two weeks on the extension depending on the pricing.

Mr. Derynoski stated that he was in favor of pursuing the extension and agreed with having the attorneys review the contract. He felt that, once everything was finalized, it would go through the normal channels through the Finance Committee. Mrs. DiNello replied that they would have to sign a contract prior to the next Board meeting. Mr. Derynoski replied that he would then go ahead and sign the contract. He would not want to hold up taking advantage of any savings. Mrs. DiNello stated that she sent an e-mail to the other districts in the consortium to see if they would want to split the legal costs for reviewing the contract.

Mr. Goralski told Mrs. DiNello that the consensus of the Board was a "yes" to go ahead.

7. CIAC: Dr. Erardi reported that the CIAC, which is the governing body for athletics in Connecticut, met this afternoon regarding a high profile game between Southington High School's Football Program and Manchester High School. He pointed out that Dr. Semmel did extraordinary work coordinating the information for him and the CIAC, and led a very sensitive issue with distinction. Dr. Erardi acknowledged that, two weeks ago, he stated that Southington would be in full compliance with whatever action the CIAC took. Dr. Erardi announced that the CIAC took action this evening with their Board of Control, which is the governing body for the Connecticut Athletic Conference. It consists of approximately 25 individuals ranging in professional pedigree from a building principal, a retired Athletic Director, and to staff members within the CIAC. Dr. Erardi stated that he sits on the CIAC Board of Control representing Connecticut Superintendents. He acknowledged that he stepped away from this agenda item. After a lengthy deliberation, the following sanctions will be in place towards

Southington High School by the CIAC. Southington has been fined \$1,000 by the CIAC and the football program has been put on probation for one year. Probation, through the definition of CIAC, means that the program will be watched and any further issues that reach the level of their concern may sanction our athletes from the ability to play other CIAC schools or to participate in a State football tournament.

Dr. Erardi explained that the third issue was directed toward the head coach, DJ Hernandez, to participate in a module-coaching course. The course is about ethics and sportsmanship. These are the sanctions presently in place. Dr. Erardi noted that there was a news release and he thought that the media was aware of this. He stated that there was clearly an error in judgment and he does not use “age” as an excuse for an error in judgment. Dr. Erardi stated that he makes errors in judgment everyday, and he is not 25 years old.

Dr. Erardi acknowledged that DJ Hernandez was a coach of character, a coach that they trust, and a coach that is right for kids. He continues to have the full support of the high school administration and the Southington Superintendent of Schools.

Mr. Goralski asked if Mr. Hernandez or Dr. Semmel were present for the hearing and investigation. Dr. Erardi replied that there was no hearing and no investigation. The action from the CIAC was through documents that were presented by the opposing school and by Dr. Semmel’s office. Mr. Goralski asked if they were aware of the investigation that took place by the Board as well. Dr. Erardi replied that was correct. They had equity in information from both schools.

### **Communication from Student Representative:**

Mr. Amnott reported on the following:

- He missed the last Board meeting because he attended the FBLA Halloween Party doing community service for the town of Southington, the high school and FBLA. He wore his Michael Jordon costume to the Halloween party.
- His father is a teacher at Derynoski Elementary School and it is an honor to be at the Board of Education meeting in that school.
- He welcomed Mrs. Queen to the Board of Education meeting and stated he has known her for many years because she was the mother of a good friend of his, Bill Queen. He added that Mrs. Queen makes the best chicken parmesan.
- Mr. Amnott reported that the pre-sale tickets to the Southington versus New Britain Powder Puff game would be available in the Athletic Office on Thursday, Friday and Monday from 10:00 a.m. through 3:00 p.m. The game would be played on Monday, November 22 at 6:00 p.m. The pre-sale tickets are \$5.00 and \$7.00 at the gate.
- The Thanksgiving Day tickets for the Southington versus Cheshire football game would be on sale in the Athletic Office through Tuesday. The game is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. The pre-sale tickets are \$7.00 for adults and \$5.00 for students.



- Election Day was held at many of the schools and it was the first time that he voted.
- The Financial Aid Night was held at the high school a couple of weeks ago and it was very eye opening. The college process is winding down for his fellow seniors and he finished sending out all his applications. He hoped that Syracuse would get back to him with an early decision acceptance.
- A representative from Bristol Technical Education Center would be visiting Southington High School on Tuesday, November 23.
- To help the cause of preventing premature births, FBLA and the March of Dimes are conducting the annual Spirit Chain fundraiser. Paper links are \$10 a strip and would be sold during lunch waves.
- The World Culture Night was being held tonight at the high school. Cultures from all around the world were highlighted along with good food.
- The Girls' Basketball team was starting their season with try-outs on Monday with a new coach.
- In light of the success of the Unified Sports Program, a Unified Theater Program would be beginning, led by Mrs. Boorjian and Ms. Cavanaugh.
- The Homecoming Dance will be held on Friday, November 19 at 7:00 p.m.
- The football team has currently qualified for the State Championship.
- Volleyball lost, but still held on to their number one ranking heading into the State Tournament.
- The Girls' Swim team sent eight to the State Tournament.
- Boys' Soccer lost in the quarterfinal of the states.
- Mr. Amnott congratulated James DiNello and the Southington High School Band for their recognition tonight. He noted that the FBLA Advisor, Ms. Davey, was in the audience and she was his all-time favorite teacher. She is a hero of his and has made a great impact on his life.
- Mr. Amnott stated that he attended Mrs. Clark's son's championship football game last weekend and saw many of the students that he coached at YMCA Camp Sloper.
- He thanked Mr. Goralski, Dr. Erardi and Mr. Thiery from the bottom of his heart for writing him a letter of recommendation for college.
- He wished the Board of Education a Happy Thanksgiving and suggested that they enjoy the three "F's" of Thanksgiving – Food, Family and Football."

Mr. Goralski hoped that Mr. Amnott would transition his eventual replacement on the Board of Education and teach the next person the appropriate way to present to the Board, so the entertainment level does not drop off when Mr. Amnott goes to college.

Mrs. Johnson had one addition to Mr. Amnott's fine report. She noted that the Southington High School PTO has taken on a project of revamping and enhancing the high school library. On Saturday, December 4, in the back entrance near the VoAg building the PTO will accept book donations from the community that are age appropriate for high school students. They need fiction books and anyone in the community who wants to donate new or gently used books can do so.

Mrs. Rickard added that Friday night the Best Buddies were at the football game and she thanked Coach Hernandez for giving the two students the opportunity to be water boys at the football game and to wear their football jerseys in school and be part of the team. She stated that it truly made a difference in those students' lives. She thanked the staff for doing that because that was on their own time.

## **5. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **a. Curriculum and Instruction Committee Meeting ~ October 27, 2010**

Mrs. Carmody reported that the committee met on October 27 and the first item discussed was the *Pleads to Read*, which was an enrichment program offered through the Gifted and Talented teachers to the students at Kelley and Plantsville Schools. The students had the opportunity to write a grant and design programming to increase library books at their school. On Monday night this week, the students went before the American Legion Women's Auxiliary to present the program that they designed. To their surprise, the Auxiliary granted each school \$500. She noted that Rachel Wache told the children "if you children are our future, we are very proud of you." Mrs. Carmody stated that the Board of Education thanks the American Legion for all they do to support the children in Southington.

Mrs. Carmody reported that the second item on the committee agenda was the Gifted and Talented presentation by the teachers. They discussed the new enrichment program that they are hoping to implement in our schools. They explained the process and their vision for the program. The program would be offered to all the elementary schools and all different levels. The committee was concerned about the expenses involved and was told that there would be no expense for this year. They were assured that those students, who have already been identified as Gifted and Talented would continue to be given services.

Mr. Thiery noted that the committee would be bringing an update to the Board at the December meeting, particularly about identification. There would be a full Board presentation once the final pieces are in place. Mrs. Carmody added that there was going to be district-wide enrichment programs in all the elementary buildings.

Mrs. Fischer asked if, in December, Mr. Thiery would be bringing back identification of the children who would be part of this program. Mr. Thiery replied that they needed to figure out how this new program interfaces with the requirement to identify students as Gifted and Talented. Mrs. Fischer asked if there would still be the traditional identification. Mr. Thiery replied that it was mandated, but what that identification looks like and how it meshes with this program in a meaningful way is what is on the table. There are a lot of nuances around the legalities of that because it is tied into some Special Education laws. They want to make sure that they get it right both from a legal perspective and from a program perspective moving this enrichment program forward.

## **6. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

### **a. Personnel Report**

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

**“Move to approve the Personnel Report, as submitted.”**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Clark, Mr. Derynoski, Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Rickard, Mrs. Carmody, Mr. Goralski. ABSTAIN – Mrs. Queen.

**Motion carried with eight in favor and one abstention.**

## **7. OLD BUSINESS**

### **a. Town Council / Board of Finance Communications**

Mr. Goralski stated that there was no communication to share.

### **b. Construction Update**

Mr. Cox reported that the Plantsville School project was close to being closed out with the Building Committee. They are waiting for the boiler system to go through another half season before that takes place.

Mr. Cox reported that the South End School project still had some site work that needed to be done in the spring, along with some air conditioning balancing. Both projects were about as close as you can get without closing them out.

Mr. Derynoski pointed out that these projects were run the smoothest that this town had ever seen from start to finish.

Mrs. Rickard thanked Mr. Cox for his efforts in the Plantsville School re-dedication to save the original plaque that was installed at Plantsville School in 1996 and that it meant a great deal to the family.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco noted that in the Building Committee minutes the principal at South End School referred to the heating system and that the building seemed cold at times. Mr. Cox replied that this was when they lost power and the entire school was being run off the emergency generator. The emergency generator is designed to heat or cool and keep communications in the office, cafetorium, bathroom areas and the main hub of the building. It is not designed to heat the entire classroom wing. He was getting the verification on that from the architect. It was to be able to keep the school in session in a consolidated area and for emergency use for the town. Mrs. Notar-Francesco asked if Mrs. Kamerbeek [Principal] was satisfied with that. Mr. Cox replied that she was satisfied and that he was getting a list from the architect on specific rooms that were under the emergency generation power.

Mrs. Johnson asked Mrs. DiNello when the payment of the bond for those two new schools commences. Mrs. DiNello replied that she was not involved with the bond payments. It

was done through the Town Finance Department. The Town Attorney and Town Finance Director handle all bonding for school projects. Mrs. DiNello, however, would follow-up.

**c. Facility Committee Update**

Dr. Erardi reported that the Facility Committee has put together the framework to make a recommendation to the School Board on December 9. The committee would be meeting on Monday, December 6 at 7:00 p.m. at Plantsville School. On Wednesday, November 10, committee members met with two of the companies that continue to show an interest in the North Center School Project. On Monday, December 6, they will look to the proposal already done by Kaestle Boos Associates and compare that to the buy-lease-buy-back initiative that they have been looking at for the past six weeks. They will have a recommendation to the Board of Education for consideration along with details on December 9.

Mr. Goralski asked Mr. Cox about the Feasibility Study and the four architectural firms that went on a walk-through at the middle schools. Mr. Cox replied that, on Tuesday, four architectural firms visited both the Kennedy and DePaolo school sites for a tour, and they are to present a proposal for the Feasibility Study, which is due to the Superintendent's office no later than December 7. Mr. Goralski noted that they would hear about this at the next Board meeting under the Facility Use Report because that is where the middle school discussion has been thus far.

**d. Standards-Based Report Cards**

Mr. Thiery reported that tonight at 6:00 p.m. an auto-dial message was sent to parents that said, "This message is to all elementary school parents and guardians that tomorrow, Friday, November 19, the first marking period report cards will be sent home with your child." Mr. Thiery noted that these are the new standards-based report cards. Two weeks ago, blank copies of each child's report card went home to parents along with a cover letter to familiarize them with the report card. On Friday, the report cards go home with the children. Conferences are next week. Mr. Thiery has said all along in his presentations that the report cards and the conference is a combined, meaningful conversation with the teacher about the child's progress.

Mr. Thiery stated that he was grateful to Mrs. Kamerbeek and the committee who have done exemplary work and he was appreciative of all the feedback the town and district have given that committee because it was invaluable.

Mrs. Johnson thought that this was an exciting program and stated that the Board appreciates the tremendous effort that went into making all of this happen. She asked Mr. Thiery when he would be in the position to give the Board an assessment of the effectiveness of this, including the parent and teacher response to the new report card. Mr. Thiery replied that the intent was to collect feedback in January to give parents and teachers time to process it after the busy holiday season. He stated that they are collecting information all along and anticipates hearing from principals next week after conferences. He expects to hear from teachers about their experience of filling out the report cards and if there were any difficulties or hurdles to overcome. The committee will meet in January to talk about the feedback, what works and what still needed to be done to make this a successful communication vehicle.

Mr. Goralski thanked Mr. Thiery for attending every elementary school PTO meeting. Mr. Thiery replied that he presented to each school. Mr. Goralski thanked him for the time he put in to help parents better understand this process because it is a huge change, but it better identifies progress, concerns, interests and the work of the students.

**e. New Technology ~ Grades 4 & 5**

Mr. Thiery reported that, thanks to the generosity of Mrs. Thalberg and the Thalberg Foundation, they have new technology over late summer and early fall going into all Grade 4 and Grade 5 classrooms. He was pleased to say that the installation in the Grade 4 classrooms wrapped up last week and every Grade 4 classroom in the district now has the technology. He noted that there were many excited teachers. They are still doing some small cabling projects, but the technology was actually in place, wired and ready to go. He has been in classrooms and saw SMART boards used with the children. He felt that it has rolled out very smoothly so far. Mr. Thiery stated that they are looking at training and that fortunately the Plantsville and South End models supplied them with a good knowledge about how to train the teachers during the first year and then how to follow it up in the second year.

Mr. Goralski stated that he made a promise to Mrs. Thalberg when they recognized her at Convocation this year, that once the system was up and running he would like to meet with her and Dr. Erardi to walk through the schools to let her see students engaged using the technology that she brought to the school system. Dr. Erardi acknowledged that he had a meeting with Mrs. Thalberg Friday morning at 10:00. After Thanksgiving, she was planning to come in to look at the innovation that her gift has brought to the classroom. He stated that Mrs. Thalberg proudly carries two overflowing manila envelopes of thank you notes from the students and community that mean the world to her. He thanked those who took the time to write thank you notes to Mrs. Thalberg.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Presentation of Proposed Capital Expenditure Plan**

Mrs. DiNello reported that annually the Board of Education approves the proposed Capital Expenditure Plan. Last year, the plan was sent to the Board of Finance and Town Council members and no formal action was taken on it. Mr. Goodwin, Purchasing Agent, was responsible for the development of the Capital Plan and, in preparation for next year, all the items were carried forward one year and just shifted over. They made an effort to continue to include both middle schools and North Center School in the document. Even though they hope to see renovations in those buildings, it was their thought that the public needs to know the cost of potential projects that would be needed in order to continue to use those buildings if no renovations take place. The administration had made this recommendation to the Finance Committee and the Finance Committee endorsed it. Traditionally, this is done as a first read and then an adoption in December. However, because there are minimal changes in the document from last year, they hope the Board had the opportunity to review it and would adopt it tonight.

Mrs. DiNello was told by Emilia Portelinha, Town Finance Director, that she was planning to take this document and incorporate into the town-wide Capital Plan. Mrs. DiNello was told that the Board of Finance was planning to review that document in the near future. Last

year, the Board of Finance was not presented with a town-wide plan. Although they had the Board of Education information, the final product of a Town Capital Plan was never actually submitted to them for review.

Mr. Derynoski pointed out that they went through this Capital Plan last year and thought that in its present form he agreed with it. Not knowing what the town is going to do as far as funding this, if the Board of Education gets a small token amount, he thought it should be prioritized. Mrs. DiNello replied that they consider the 2011-2012 column to be the priority this year. However, in prior years the Capital Plan was prioritized and last year the Board of Education chose to alphabetize it instead of prioritizing it. She stated that if it looks like the Board might see some funding it would need to be pared down and prioritized. Mr. Derynoski stated that the bleachers at the high school are quickly becoming more of a safety issue and, if the second boiler at Derynoski were to go down, they would be in trouble.

Dr. Erardi stated that Mr. Derynoski raised a terrific point because, if they look at that list closely, there has been no action for such a long period of time and they were adding on to the emergency. For example, the World Language Lab at the high school is a key piece of instruction; it is an analog lab and is over 20 years old. We can "band-aid" it for this school year, but it really needs attention. It is only one of 10 or 11 items. He thought that the administration and School Board had to put some passion and energy around the list.

Mrs. Clark stated that one of things about the list that troubles her was that she was seeing maintenance and repairs on the list, such as roof repairs and exterior masonry repairs. She noted that the Board has been accused in the past of not taking care of the buildings; yet, when they ask for money and are not being funded "they are stuck between a rock and a hard place." She thought that it was time that people take notice of what they are asking for; it is to keep what they have and just make sure it is safe for the students and the rest of the community.

Mrs. DiNello stated that the maintenance piece has been such a large issue. Their new agreement with the town is that the item has a life of over five years, be over \$100,000 and not be considered maintenance. However, they could never absorb \$198,000 in the operating budget in the repair of buildings account. That account this year is \$150,000 in its entirety for 12 schools and the administrative building. Although they did their best to pull out general maintenance items from this list, they had to include certain things that were over \$100,000 in the Capital Plan.

Mrs. Fischer spoke to the VoAg renovation. Its cost was \$1.1 million; years ago, it was about \$800,000 and it keeps going up. She thought that this was where they were going to meet the state requirement with the new high school graduation requirement. That is the space that would allow the Board to meet the requirement and it is prioritized in 2011-2012. She did not think they would ever see \$1,000,000 to do that and asked if they would ever break that down so they can do something to that area. She thought that they should be doing something each year in order to meet the state requirement for 2016 or 2018.

Mr. Cox replied that there was some remediation in the facilities. In the VoAg facility, the heating and ventilation systems are obsolete, there are concrete floors and it is a renovate-to-new type of situation. It was lumped together so that, if they were to move forward on this, they

could get the money from a State grant, so they would not want to break it down. They would want to go for the lump sum.

Mrs. Rickard stated that a couple of weeks ago she reported that at the last meeting of the Capital Bonding Committee there was interest and enthusiasm amongst the members of the Town Council to bond because the process worked so well. They were going to bring the discussion to the full Town Council. Once they receive this Capital Plan, it might give them the impetus to start the process all over again. She did not attend the last Town Council meeting and did not know how the suggestion was met by the full Council. She asked Mr. Goralski to follow up with Mr. Pocock [Chair of the Town Council] to find out if it was received with open arms or not.

Mr. Goralski stated that the only new item that he sees on the list was the foreign language lab. Every other item on the list was the same. He noted that the document was the same document that he has been looking at since he joined the Board of Education. Mrs. DiNello stated that the business office and operations office did not invest a lot of time or energy in updating estimates for costs. If they found that there was some support on the town side to fund these projects, they would get quotes and estimates to update the numbers. Annually, they have been doing that and, for six years while the Capital Bonding money has been spent, nothing has happened with this document.

Mr. Goralski stated that, because this document has been unchanged from last year, he asked the Board to make a motion this evening.

**MOTION:** by Mrs. Rickard, seconded by Mr. Derynoski:

**“Move to approve the Capital Expenditure Plan document for 2011-2012.”**

Mr. Goralski stated that the Capital Plan was the Board’s responsibility just like every homeowner lists their priorities. It is the Board’s responsibility to the community to show what needs to be done in the schools. He was excited that the Capital Bonding Committee, on which Mrs. Rickard and Mrs. Clark sit, was considering repeating a very successful process.

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

**b. Grant Writer Proposal ~ 2010-2011**

Dr. Erardi distributed a handout (*Attachment #3*) that would give the Board a sense of the agenda item. The proposal comes before the Board as program innovation in a very difficult economic time. It is his belief that there is additional opportunity for students through successful grant writing. He believed that the present Central Office staff has full agendas with overflowing job responsibilities. He was sharing with the School Board a practice that was similar to the work that they had done with the redistricting program. He would like the Board to consider and offer direction to administration on whether there was support for a Grant Writer pilot program for six months that would start around January 1 and run through June 30. The proposal was vetted through legal counsel who supports the potential practice. If this has support from the

School Board, the steps moving forward would be to work through the retired staff cohort and offer a person the opportunity, in lieu of the cost of health insurance, to spend a sufficient amount of time in writing grant opportunities for the School Board. The document he distributed represents the current cost of insurance for retired staff if they choose to stay on the school district's health insurance plan. The cost is an annual cost and would be prorated six months. We are self-insured and it is a cost estimate. He asked the School Board if they felt there was enough need to go forward. If they choose to go forward, he was presenting a proposal for funding that was clearly not something that was within the norm.

Mr. Derynoski was in favor of this proposal, but he thought that a six-month exploratory approach would need to document what the success was. He thought that it was a worthy approach and that there is really no actual cost to the Board.

**MOTION:** by Mrs. Fischer, seconded by Mr. Derynoski:

**“Move to support the administration’s request to subcontract a grant writer.”**

Mrs. Notar-Francesco asked if this person would be also researching which grants could be written. Dr. Erardi replied that there was three parts to the work. Grant opportunities come across his desk and there are times that they would love to participate in the competition, but they do not have the opportunity to do so. That information would be sent to the grant writer. They would also be looking for the grant writer to research areas of need. Interestingly, if it works at a high yield for the Board, it is not an uncommon practice for a grant writer to write a percentage of that grant for overseeing it. In some cases, the high-yielding grant writer becomes a self-funded position by the success of the grants that come in to the district. He has seen that happen in one district. The measurement would be the success of the grant writing. At the June Board meeting, the School Board will have the opportunity to weigh in on whether it continues.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco asked if Dr. Erardi expected to find someone who has experience in this. Dr. Erardi stated that he had three or four people in mind that are all very hard working, exceptional writers, but not with a grant background. He thought that the two key elements would be someone's willingness to work hard and ability to write well. Mrs. Notar-Francesco asked if six months was enough time to be able to evaluate this. Dr. Erardi replied that six months would give them the “first blush” of whether to go forward or not. He thought that it was a reasonable amount of time.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco stated that CREC offers services of this sort and asked if that was considered. Dr. Erardi replied that CREC does offer services, but there was an expense tied to the service. He thought that at this particular time he would like to look at this as a stand alone within the district.

Mrs. Carmody asked if he thought that there were enough grant opportunities still being offered at this particular time. Dr. Erardi replied that she asked a great question; he believes that there are grants out there with bigger dollars than ever before. Many of those grants are for districts that do not look like us and do not perform like us. He thought that it was a worthwhile investment just to have the answer that “no, there is not.” The perception clearly is that there are millions of dollars that the district is letting slip through our fingers. The question is truly one that needs to be answered in June with substance rather than perception.



Mrs. Carmody stated that the amount of money they are going to offer a grant writer was really not very much. She asked if it would require someone working every day for four or five hours to do this. Dr. Erardi responded that he would agree on a working condition with the successful candidate. This is a position that could be done in the home, through long distance, and between 10 to 15 hours a week.

Mrs. Fischer stated that the Board has been talking about a grant writer for some time and the only way to know was to do something about it. Even if the Board gets nothing out of it money-wise, they would have the knowledge that they tried it.

Mrs. Johnson was a little uncomfortable with this. She did not think it was a freebie, if, in fact, the insurance that our retired teachers are currently paying was \$8,000-\$11,000 for a six-month period. That does not sound like a small piece of change to her. She was uncomfortable with this kind of cost being associated with people who are not professional grant writers. She was concerned that the Board may have not looked hard enough for a professional grant writer. She knew that grant writers would be representing several different school systems and earmarking and pigeonholing the grants to the needs of the particular system. Before she is comfortable offering this, she would like to know that they had searched for professional grant writers to bring them onboard. She would like to know what other grant writers are working per week and what their salary is. She did not have a problem with their working from home, as long as they could substantiate to the Board that they are, in fact, putting in this time. She was not comfortable with asking our well-meaning amateurs to do this job for, what appears to be, a considerable amount of money. She would like to know that they had exhausted the opportunities for professionals who are already hitting the ground running before they go and do this.

Dr. Erardi replied that the grant writers that districts hire are those who oversee all grants. In these cases, it is a Central Office position with a salary in the ballpark of \$100,000. He thought that they could go out and find part-time folks who professionally write grants. Mrs. Johnson thought that the town hired someone in that position. Dr. Erardi replied that he knew that the town does not have a grant writer. He was comfortable going in that direction; however, they did not have an established funding stream for that type of position. He thought that this direction offers them a precursor to get a sense of the opportunities that exist. If nothing else, the administration would have a complete knowledge of what they would have to do to qualify for grants, which he thought was valuable information. He was comfortable holding on this to bring back information to the School Board on the cost of a part-time grant writer.

Mr. Goralski pointed out that they have a motion on the floor to approve a six-month grant writer position as presented to them, and funded by not receiving payment for insurance. Mr. Goralski added that the Board was not paying anyone anything for this; we would not be receiving his or her insurance contribution. The Board is not taking money from their budget. The Board would not collect the insurance contribution from that employee. He did not see this as a cost to the Board.

Mrs. Johnson noted that the Board has been waiting a number of years and may not necessarily need to move on it this evening. If they could perhaps get more information and vote

on it in December, she did not see any harm in that. She wanted to be careful that they hire the best person for the job and that they are getting someone who was experienced in grant writing.

Mrs. Carmody replied that Mrs. Johnson made some very good points. She thought that it was very expensive financially to hire a professional to look into grants. She felt that this was at least a starting point for the Board. They know that they are going to be facing a very difficult budget season and if this retired person from the system could give them a head start for six months, it would lead them down a path that they could later decide what they would do. She felt that they needed to begin somewhere.

Mrs. Rickard told Mrs. Johnson that she was looking at annual figures. If they are looking at a six-month pilot program, the minimum cost would be \$3,744 and the most, if it were a family, would be \$10,600. Mrs. Rickard thought that this was a creative way to use the resources that they have in the most cost effective way and to try it for six months to see what was out there.

Mr. Goralski pointed out that the people who work in the Southington school district love the district well beyond retirement. This is an opportunity for one of them to come back and do great things for the teachers still working. He thought that their motivation and their writing skills would far surpass the work of a professional. The professional works for his or her pocket and this person would work with a passion. He was willing to take that chance.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Fischer, Mrs. Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Queen, Mrs. Rickard, Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Clark, Mr. Derynoski, Mr. Goralski. NO – Mrs. Johnson. **Motion carried with eight in favor and one against.**

### **c. Administrative Aspirant Program ~ 2010-2011**

Dr. Erardi invited two Administrative Aspirants, Mr. Rick Terino, teacher at DePaolo Middle School, and Mrs. Sandra Chavez, a teacher at Plantsville Elementary School, to the podium to discuss their experience in the program. Dr. Erardi noted that Rick and Sandy had been in the Aspirant Program since its inception in 2009-2010. The Administrative Aspirant cohort meets monthly. They were fortunate last year to partner with Central Connecticut State University with nearly two dozen educators pursuing their 092 certificate for administrator certification. He noted that Rick and Sandy were two Aspirants in two different places and asked them to share their story with the Board regarding their experience in pursuit of becoming an administrator.

Mrs. Sandra Chavez thanked the Board and Dr. Erardi for giving her the opportunity to speak about her personal experience with the Aspirant Program. She flashed back one year to the Plantsville School picnic on the blacktop when Mrs. Corvello asked to have a word with her. Mrs. Corvello told her that Dr. Erardi was starting an Aspirant Program and she thought that it would be a perfect fit for Mrs. Chavez. At the time, Mrs. Chavez did not know what an Aspirant Program was, but she is a fifth-grade teacher and was able to determine that the base word was “aspire.” At that time, she was just starting her second year teaching fifth grade and she was expecting a baby. The only thing she aspired to accomplish at that time was to choose a baby name and master the fifth-grade curriculum. But, Mrs. Corvello talked about her leadership qualities, her rapport with staff members, students, parents and how she always strives to give

110%. Mrs. Chavez decided to attend the first meeting to see what the program had to offer her and what she could share with the program.

The first few meetings were interesting and grabbed her attention. Dr. Erardi provided them with up-to-date articles on leadership, and put together various groups of past and present staff members to give the Aspirants insight on the role of an administrator. He had the Aspirants engaged in vignettes. He gave the Aspirants controversial scenarios and they role-played how they would deal with each situation. These sessions opened her eyes to the many different hats an administrator must wear and taught her quite a bit about herself. She learned that she could be strong and compassionate, opinionated, yet, able to compromise, thoughtful and decisive. After a few meetings, an e-mail arrived from Dr. Erardi to talk about goals. At that point, she felt that she needed to make the decision if administration was truly the direction in which she aspired. After some frank discussions with her administrator, she knew the answer was that she absolutely aspired to be an administrator. The second part of the e-mail addressed timeline. She engaged in frank discussions with her family and came up with a realistic timeline that would work for their personal situation, which was to receive her 092 endorsement within two years after the baby was born and to be actively searching for an assistant administrative position within the next year.

Upon the receipt of her answers to the e-mail, Dr. Erardi set-up a meeting to discuss how he and the Aspirant Program could help her reach her goals. Her first thought was “back to school I go. But, how and where?” These questions were answered when Dr. Erardi, in concert with the Aspirant Committee, set-up a partnership program with Central Connecticut State University. This convenient program allows her to take the necessary classes close to home with a group of peers from Southington. She plans to enroll in this program during the summer. She asked herself what she could do to work toward her goal in the meantime. She stated that Dr. Erardi offered an answer. He suggested that the Aspirants partner with a mentor administrator, and Patricia Corvello, her mentor, has been extremely supportive. They discussed the realistic time commitment involved, and the responsibilities to students, staff, parents, community and the Board of Education. After the holiday break, she will shadow Mrs. Corvello so she may truly walk in the steps of an administrator. She was thrilled that two of her peers from Plantsville School had joined the Aspirant Program this year; one is a seasoned teacher and the other working toward being seasoned. She felt that was the beauty of the program: it offers support and inspiration to staff members in various stages of their careers. She thanked the Board for their support of the Aspirant Program.

Mr. Rick Terino stated that what they have is a program that could be called, “Before and Beyond the Coursework.” It brings together novices, teachers with limited leadership experience, and joins these people with teachers who, like himself, have completed the coursework. The program is both a primer and a refresher. This program creates an administrative learning unit. For example, the Superintendent presents the vignettes, these dilemmas with no one right answer, to the cooperative groups. The groups, in turn, come together as a team and work together towards a resolution. This opportunity to brainstorm with others opens up new ideas, new alternatives, and new options and strengthens a leadership skill set.

This program also keeps one abreast of recent professional publications, with one of Mr. Terino’s personal favorites named, If You Don’t Feed the Teachers, They Eat the Students!, a

manual on how to create and sustain a happy workforce because a happy workforce is a productive workforce. This program affords opportunities to get out among the Southington schools and observe. For instance, under the supervision of Karen Smith, he had the invaluable opportunity to do clinical observation of a Kindergarten teacher utilizing the full evaluation process. As Director of Summer School, he does evaluations. However, in such a limited stint, it is very difficult to get the whole flavor of the process itself. He felt that the Aspirant Program was another avenue for a teacher to exercise the administrative skill set. There are only so many department head, team leader and director positions in the district to gather that practical experience. He enjoyed and appreciated this program so much that he came back for a second year. He invited questions from the Board.

Mrs. Rickard thought that this was another example of a great idea that Dr. Erardi has brought to the district. She stated that Dr. Erardi forwards information to the Board on some of the things that the Aspirants have done. She thought that it was spectacular. She noted that Dr. Erardi talks frequently about promoting from within and she thought seeing the Aspirants' enthusiasm was very refreshing for her.

Mrs. Johnson was expecting Mr. Terino's presentation would be in rhyme.

Mrs. Carmody asked how many teachers were in the program. Mr. Terino replied that currently there were 10 to 12. Mr. Goralski pointed out that there were 24 from the previous year, so there was some overlapping. Mr. Goralski asked Mr. Terino how many years he has been teaching. Mr. Terino replied that he has been teaching for 35 years. Mrs. Chavez replied that it was her fifth year of teaching.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco felt that it was commendable that they work all day and are taking part in the Administrative Aspirant Program, trying to reach the next level. She stated that it was appreciated because the whole school system benefits from this philosophy.

Dr. Erardi commented that much of the success of the Administrative Aspirant program was due to the present administrative team who willingly volunteered to mentor. He noted that Mrs. Smith has four or five mentees and nearly every administrator has at least one mentee.

Mrs. Queen asked Mr. Terino what elements make a happy staff. Mr. Terino referred to the retiree panel that Dr. Erardi mentioned that incorporates custodians, secretaries, as well as teachers. One would have to look at the entire staff and make sure the entire staff is respected, that you are fair with them, that you care about them; you have to develop great empathy, not just for the teachers, but for the other working staff, and that also extends to the community and parents.

## **9. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR STUDENT MATTERS, PERSONNEL AND CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS**

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

**"Move to go into Executive Session, excluding the public and the press, for the purpose of discussing Student Matters, Personnel Matters, and Contract Negotiations, and upon conclusion reconvene to public session."**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

***Linda Blanchard***

Recording Secretary

**SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION  
NOVEMBER 18, 2010**

Mr. Brian Goralski, Board Chairperson, called the Executive Session to order at 9:37 p.m.

**Members Present:** Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mrs. Rosemarie Fischer, Mrs. Patricia Johnson, Mrs. Jill Notar-Francesco, Mrs. Patricia Queen, Mrs. Kathleen Rickard, Mr. Brian Goralski.

**Administration Present:** Dr. Joseph V. Erardi, Jr., Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Frederick G. Cox, Director of Operations.

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

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

**Motion carried by voice vote.**

*Mr. Cox left the meeting at 9:47 p.m.*

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

**“Move that the Board return to public session.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

*The board reconvened public session at 10:45 p.m.*

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

**“Move to add student expulsions to the agenda.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

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

**“Move to expel student 2010-2011-07 as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

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

**“Move to expel student 2010-2011-08 as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

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

**“Move to expel student 2010-2011-09 as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

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

**“Move to adjourn.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

The Board adjourned at 10:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jill Notar-Francesco". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jill Notar-Francesco, Secretary  
Southington Board of Education

## **Administration: Board of Education Update November 18, 2010**

1. **Retired Staff Breakfast / Aspirant Partnership**  
Wednesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> HES – 3:30 PM
2. **SBOE / Home Daycare Providers Summit: November 13<sup>th</sup>**  
(Attachment #1)
3. **Instructional Rounds**  
(Attachment #2)
4. **Open Choice – SPS Parent Partnership**  
(Attachment #3)
5. **Family Resource Center** (Attachment #4)

*[Handwritten signature]*  
11/18/10



**AGENDA**  
**HOME DAYCARE PROVIDERS**  
**November 13, 2010**  
**Plantsville Elementary School**  
**9:30 a.m.**

1. INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME      SDPA
  - Angela Griffis      President
  - Maria Nelson      Vice President
  - Michelle Slimak      Treasurer
  - Barbara Petrosino      Secretary
2. SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE      DR. JOE EARDI
  - a. Grade K Readiness
  - b. State Department of Education Frameworks
  - c. SDPA – SBOE Partnership
3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
4. NEXT STEPS      SDPA
5. ADJOURNMENT

Future discussions will hopefully include:

1. How can we better share professional development?
2. How can our schools share with you what is expected for grade K student skills?
3. How can we work together to support a family resource center?
4. Staff visitations: Daycare providers to our schools and school staff to our daycares.
5. What prevents our community from having the strongest preschool partnership in CT?

# Peer Visits and Revisits IN THE SUPERINTENDENCY

Through a structured network, district leaders receive critical feedback from colleagues, connecting classroom observations to leadership practice

BY LEE TEITEL

A dozen superintendents watched, riveted, as one of their colleagues from a central Connecticut school district slowly, gently but firmly pushed her fellow superintendent on what he had — and had not — done as a follow-up to a school visit three months earlier by the superintendent network.

That daylong instructional rounds visit had ended with the identification, by the host superintendent, of several tangible opportunities for improvement. Now, three months later, the two superintendents were talking about the follow-up in front of the rest of the network group.

“When we talked after the visit,” she started, “you said the most valuable insight was your realization that not everyone on your senior team had the same idea of what good instruction should look like, that you needed to do some calibration. What have you done about that?”

For the next 15 minutes, a rhythm of respectful but consistent probing continued. For each response by the host superintendent, his colleague came back with a series of questions: “What will be your actions, then, to help you

get to that?” “We talked about being less abstract. What would that look like here?” “How did your debriefing with them go? What are you taking from the experience?”

The other superintendents joined in, probing, problem solving, but also sharing their questions and doubts about their own practices. At the end of an hour, they debriefed, acknowledging and appreciating how the openness of the host and the probing questions asked by colleagues set the stage for their learning.

## A Structured Protocol

Where does this kind of superintendent learning come from?

Deep, thoughtful conversations about how superintendents can improve their leadership practice are rare. Those that are anchored in classroom observation data, guided by structured protocols and common understandings of what matters in instruction, and that take place in a collegial atmosphere with high levels of trust and vulnerability are even less common. Yet it is this kind of peer learning in

networks that holds the greatest promise for supporting superintendents in leading district improvement efforts.

The opening scenario (written to preserve the confidentiality of the participants) took place last year among 12 superintendents in the Connecticut Superintendents' Network. Now starting its 10th year, the Connecticut network is the longest-running group of educators to use instructional rounds, a practice adapted from medicine that allows educators to look closely at what is happening in their schools' classrooms and to work systematically with a network of superintendent colleagues to improve teaching and learning in their school districts.

The superintendents meet monthly, with every other meeting taking place in one of their schools. Part of each visit day is spent in classrooms, looking at instruction in fine detail. Their goal in their classroom observations — in contrast to other forms of walk-throughs — is not to “fix” individual teachers, but to improve the systems of support at schools and in districts in ways that will make good instructional practice more commonplace.

The steps and protocols used for a rounds visit — how the host school leaders identify a problem of practice that focuses the visit, how visitors observe in classrooms and other settings, describe what they see and then, based on the evidence, suggest the next level of work — are described in Richard Elmore's article “Professional

Networks and School Improvement” (appearing in *The School Administrator's* April 2007 issue) and in greater detail in *Instructional Rounds in Education*, the 2009 book co-authored by Elmore, Elizabeth City, Sarah Fiarman and me.

### Beyond Observations

The Connecticut superintendents have been observing in systematic ways in classrooms since April 2002. The superintendents have learned to talk in new ways with each other about what they see, replacing vague or judgmental generalizations (“She did a great job of transitioning from the whole-class lesson to independent work time”) with precise and nonevaluative language (“At the end of the lesson, the teacher asked students what materials they needed to get for their upcoming independent work. She took a few responses and released students to go to their desks four at a time”).

Through consistent participation (attendance at the network meetings and visits hovers around 90 percent), they have made classroom observations and debriefings a routine and central part of their jobs. They have learned to appreciate the opportunities to see and share instructional practices from other school districts, and about two-thirds of them have replicated the experience and set up instructional rounds networks among the teachers

## Linking Superintendent Actions to Classroom Improvement

**T**o ensure superintendent actions are calibrated and connected to instructional improvement, the Connecticut Superintendents' Network focuses on the idea of the “strategic through-line” that links what superintendents do to what students are learning in the classroom.

This focus includes all the links in the chain between superintendents and students, embracing the work of central-office personnel, principals, teachers and other staff in supporting and improving the learning of students.

Six years ago, the network began to use the idea of “theories of action” to suggest that superintendents should develop and articulate the hypotheses that undergird their leadership choices — to make explicit that “if we do X, then we expect Y to happen.” These theories needed to be falsifiable, publicly stated, tied to larger strategy and used to shape decision making in the school district.

Once theories of action became widely used (by 2005, having one served as a ticket of entry to join the network, and in subsequent years they have been explicitly used to help focus school visits), the network had some common

language to help it focus on breakdowns or weak links in the chains that connect the superintendent's office with classrooms.

For example, four years ago, many superintendents realized having effective teams was an important link in the implementation of their theories of action and that ineffective teams (senior leadership teams as well as other teams at all levels) blocked the successful implementation of their improvement approaches. The network chose to use its annual retreat to learn more about teams, then voted to add a team observation — sometimes on video, sometimes live — to complement its classroom site-visit protocol. Superintendents read about teams, participated in surveys and follow-up discussions about the effectiveness of teams in their school districts, and coached one another on improving team dynamics.

### Unpacking Practices

More recently, the network addressed the key roles principals play as part of the chain. This has led superintendents to articulate clearer expectations for their principals, practicing and implementing follow-up conversations with

principals when those expectations have not been met, and, generally, paying greater attention to the leadership and supervisory practices they and their principals use in implementing the through-line that connects district strategy with improvements in classroom learning.

The implications of the through-lines work are profound. Paying attention to the chain means paying attention to the role the superintendent needs to play in envisioning and structuring the through-line and in ensuring it is working to benefit student learning. It unpacks the leadership practice of the superintendents (How do I run my senior leadership team meeting? How do I have a difficult conversation with my high school principal about his implementation of the district strategy?).

By including team observations and supervisory meetings with principals in visits, it makes discussable what and how superintendents need to do to improve. The feedback also makes powerful connections between the teaching and learning that take place in classrooms and the district-wide leadership practices at all levels needed to support teaching and learning.

— Lee Teitel

McKee (superintendent in Stonington, Conn.) and Betty Feser (superintendent in Windsor) came back to my office and we held a completely honest mini-network conversation with all of my administrators watching. We set it up as a fishbowl. The three of us sat around and just named it all — what we had just seen, what I had hoped for, what the principal was trying to do. It was powerful for my administrative team to see how three people who were immersed in the work could talk about it in such an honest way.

"After a while the fishbowl broke down because you could see people wanted to go deeper, and my team started asking questions, about teaching and learning, about leadership choices, about their role in next steps for improvement," Conway adds. "I was silent for much of it, since so much of the conversation was between administrators in my district and Betty and Mike as critical friends. The modeling, that this is how leaders talk to each other and this is how they focus on instruction, was terrific."

In her next visit and revisit in Vernon, Conway hopes to do this again. "As I plan it, I hope to have an honest conversation with my revisit team to help get the most leverage from the network visit," Conway says. "I want to use it as a way to make my practice visible — public to teachers. By modeling it with my peers, I want to show teachers as well as other district administrators that this is how we learn from our peers and from each other. They need to get into my head as to how this professional learning happens, to see the strategies and to see how this works throughout the system."

### Deepening Discussions

The revisits have both built on and contributed to a growing sense of community and trust in the Connecticut Superintendents' Network. Along with working on through-lines that look closely at the links between what superintendents do and what happens in classrooms, the revisits have focused on leadership practice in the network and provide a place where it is not only safe but increasingly expected for superintendents to talk honestly about the problems they have, what they do and don't do, and what they know and don't know about bringing high-quality teaching and learning to scale in all their classrooms.

Superintendents report that the revisits set the stage for deeper conversations about practice and engender questions such as:

- ▶ "You decided to do X (after the initial network visit and discussion). Why did you choose that approach?"
- ▶ "You told us you were thinking that X would work. On the revisit, we are seeing Y. Is that what you expected?"
- ▶ "You told us what you were trying and why. What have you learned and what will you do next time?"

As one participant put it, "Hosts will put their leadership practice on the table in the revisit that they wouldn't in the big group. They will, quite openly, ask their peers, 'I wonder if this is working?'" One compared the intensity of the revisit discussions to those of a critical friends network she had been in earlier, "but here these peers have

already been on two visits to my district, have focused on an issue that I have framed, and they have lots of knowledge from being in my classrooms. It's very powerful."

Don't underestimate the importance of this candid peer-to-peer critique. In a world where superintendents often are isolated and expected to be learned, not learners, where opportunities for superintendents to learn and improve practice are few and far between, networks like the one in Connecticut and similar efforts in Iowa and New Jersey are providing something unique and essential.

### Scaling Up

Most superintendents know that to get any improvement at scale, they need to focus on instruction and set up systems for teachers to replace isolated and idiosyncratic practice, let down their guards with one another and share teaching practice.

Superintendents, of course, must do the same for themselves: focus on instruction, set up systems to replace isolated and idiosyncratic practice, let down their guards with one another and share their leadership practice. Only then will our schools and districts go beyond the isolated pockets of excellence (in a general sea of mediocrity) that characterize so many of them and scale up high-quality instruction for all students.

The pioneering revisit work of the Connecticut Superintendents' Network takes the instructional rounds improvement cycle — identifying a problem of practice to shape a visit, observing, debriefing and making suggestions for the next level of improvement work — to its natural next step.

At the same time, although superintendents often see accountability as a dirty word, the Connecticut superintendents are holding each other to account — to what happens in their classrooms, to what they say to each other at and after school visits, and to what actions they take afterward to improve instruction. They are building up from what they are observing in classrooms and, with a certain implacable logic, working together to unpack the core leadership challenges faced by superintendents. In doing so, they are adding to their learning and to that of their colleagues', redefining lateral and reciprocal accountability and contributing to professionalizing superintendent leadership practice. ■



Lee Teitel has led instructional rounds in a half dozen states.

Lee Teitel is director of the school leadership program at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education in Cambridge, Mass. E-mail: [lee\\_teitel@gse.harvard.edu](mailto:lee_teitel@gse.harvard.edu)

or administrators within their districts.

Yet the Connecticut superintendents know that conducting structured, regular classroom observations and generating suggestions for next steps from their peers are not enough. These are necessary but not sufficient steps to districtwide action and improvement. To connect observations with actual changes in their leadership practices, the superintendents' network has pioneered several approaches, including the peer revisit process. (See related story, page 26.)

### Follow-up Visits

The opening scenario, and others just like it that take place regularly in Connecticut, came out of a feature the network added four years ago — a follow-up mini-visit from two peers after the more formal 12-person network visit. The superintendents were aware that the long cycle for a revisit from the entire network (up to 2½ years) did not create much opportunity or incentive for follow-up on the visit recommendations nor did it provide formative feedback on efforts the host superintendent might be trying after the visit.

In 2006, the network, which is sponsored by the Connecticut Center for School Change, asked two peers and a center staff member, Steven Włodarczyk, to spend a half-day at a school site a few months after a visit. The purpose of the visit was to support the host superintendent and follow up on ideas generated at the previous visit. And although this follow-up work was done by the group out of sight of the rest of the network, there was time on the network schedule for a report and discussion of the revisit — which the opening vignette captured.

Although some expressed concern that the superintendents, already committed to one day a month for network business, would be unwilling to sign up for the additional half-day revisits, this never has materialized as a problem. The structure for the revisits varies, although there is the expectation that the revisitors will look at classrooms or evidence relevant to the focused plan for follow-up work identified by the host superintendent at the original visit.

### Peer Accountability

When the revisit idea was proposed in Connecticut, one respected veteran superintendent put his objections bluntly: "I am already accountable to the state and to the kids. I don't want or need to be accountable to my peers."

Several years into this, the accountability picture is more nuanced. On one level it is, quite openly, about peers coming back and checking on the follow-up to suggestions they agreed to make. David Title, in his first year as superintendent in Fairfield, Conn., after being part of the Connecticut network for five years as superintendent in Bloomfield, says the revisits "create a kind of lateral accountability. Your peers are coming back, and you want to look at least competent. Looking good would be even better. ... But nobody wants to have people come back a six months and have it look the same."

Title, honored as his state's superintendent of the year in 2009, also flags the leverage the revisit provides him and others in his system to foster change. "After the visit, my principal would tell the teachers, 'They're coming back to see what changes we have made.' It creates a level of concern for everyone — a nice level of concern that can be very helpful," he says.

Joshua Starr, superintendent in Stamford, Conn., echoes this aspect of the accountability. "When you report back to your peers, it sets a higher bar than simply having the discussion at the center with the network at large," he says.

But the revisit is more than a cursory accountability check on whether the host has followed up. "You can

**"When you report back to your peers, it sets a higher bar than simply having the discussion at the center with the network at large."**

probe a bit more on a revisit, go deeper on some things that you might have just noticed on the first visit but see more clearly the second time around," Starr says.

An intimacy and intensity are apparent during the revisit discussions, in contrast to the more formal network meetings, which include a dozen superintendents, staff from the Connecticut Center, a Harvard professor and a note taker. As one superintendent puts it: "It is so much more intense — more opportunity to give feedback with just the three of you there. It really transfers agency for this to us. We're taking charge of it, peer to peer, not waiting for someone from the center or one of the Harvard professors to speak. It's not being transcribed. It's off the record and that really changes things. Your follow-up can be more pointed and blunt. You can get more direct with people without fear of embarrassing them in front of their peers or staff."

Yet informality can cut both ways, according to another superintendent. "Since it is more of a conversation and not as formal, sometimes the revisit discussions move into 'The Land of Nice.' There can be lots of explanations and back and forth with the (host) superintendent, and we can get to a 'Now I understand what the superintendent is up against' mentality that might actually soften what we say and the value of what we do," he says.

### Modeling Performance

In the view of one participating superintendent, revisits create greater accountability for the visitors.

"In the regular network visits, it is helpful for the school and host superintendent to hear the information, the predictions, the next level of work, but I don't see any real ownership of the outcomes by the visiting superintendents. We come, we make our comments, and then we move on. After we debrief, I discard my notes, and it is over," the superintendent says. "But if I am doing a revisit, I have a deeper sense of ownership and commitment to follow up. I

still have the notes from the visit and revisit for [the school district], and I still talk to the superintendent about what has happened and what has not."

Title points to the merits of this aspect of the accountability. "You feel an obligation to do this (the revisit) for someone else. There are no hard and fast rules about how many times you need to sign up, but we do it for each other. And you learn. You usually pick districts that are working on something similar to you. ... This kind of accountability is lateral and reciprocal; whenever we hear about accountability in education, it is like a dirty word, always about test scores. But this is different. There are no real consequences. It is peer to peer and really about improvement."

Mary Conway, who recently assumed the superintendency in Vernon, Conn., after years in Plainfield, describes the revisit as a form of professional accountability. "It is the same as what I expect from my teachers and administrators — to visit each other, to share practice and to say 'next week I'll be back.' It is not a 'gotcha' but part of a professional conversation (that says) 'I value your input and having you reflecting back my thoughts and what you are seeing enough that I want you to know what I am doing and to talk with me about my leadership practice.'"

Conway used her first revisit in Plainfield to model exactly this professional accountability for her staff. "After we did follow-up observations at the high school, Mike

## Getting Through the Classroom Door

BY ANDREW LACHMAN

**T**he classroom observations that are now central to the instructional rounds work of the Connecticut Superintendents' Network have evolved over nine years. While the visits are now common practice, that wasn't always the case. When the notion of superintendents visiting classrooms was first proposed, the idea was viewed with skepticism and opposition by many of the superintendents.

The Connecticut Center for School Change created the network in response to requests from several superintendents for a forum in which to explore issues of improved student achievement and districtwide instructional improvement. The network started in fall 2001 with a cohort of eight superintendents. During the first year, the group met five times for three-hour discussions around a conference table with Harvard University professor Richard Elmore.

Initially, Elmore raised questions, proposed topics and summarized discussions in a series of short papers. These framing papers shifted the discourse from individual show-and-tell stories to a collective discussion of how superintendents used leverage points, including financial resources, professional development and accountability for administrators' performance, as strategies for driving change to promote instructional improvement.

However, a disconnect developed between the ideal of community practice and the reality of the network's performance. While everyone participated as required by the norms, the conversation was often abstract and unconnected to the real world.

To put practice front and center, Elmore and the center staff strongly recommended the network leave the comfort of the confer-

ence room and visit classrooms together. Site visits would focus on questions about instruction, and visits would provide members with a shared experience. Classroom observations would serve as the building blocks for developing a common language about instructional practice. Follow-up conversations would be descriptive and data-based. To stay focused on the practice and not the person, defined protocols would guide both the visit and the reporting of the observations.

### Elmore's Influence

Not all superintendents embraced the idea. Some did not believe they could learn anything important or useful from the visits. Some were reluctant to offer one of their schools, perhaps because it might have revealed educational shortcomings to their colleagues.

Some perhaps were uncomfortable with having to demonstrate their mastery (or lack of understanding) of instructional practice. One superintendent openly admitted the real incentive to be in the network was the opportunity to listen to and learn from Elmore, a much-admired researcher in the school leadership field. Fortunately, a new member who had only recently joined the network rose to the challenge and offered a school in her district for a group visit. With a great deal of skepticism, the group agreed to give classroom observations a try.

The network's first site visit occurred in April 2002 at an elementary school in a small suburban district. After visiting a half dozen



Andrew Lachman

classrooms for 20-minute observations, the protocol required the superintendents to answer the question "What did you see?" Their reports were mostly generalized: The teacher used evaluative language; students were engaged in reading; there was a nice tone; it was a marvelous lesson; students weren't getting into critical thinking.

In contrast, Elmore's comments about what he had observed in the same settings were precise, specific and clinical. They addressed the number of students working on a specific task with an aide and included verbatim transcripts of the teacher explaining the strategy for solving the problem, and detailed summaries of student work on top of desks.

Moved by the contrast between Elmore's evidence-based approach to seeing instructional activity and their own, the network superintendents began to recognize the value of using classroom visits and subsequent debriefings to develop a shared understanding of good instruction and a strategy for considering alternative approaches to solving instructional problems of practice.

One participant summarized the lesson she learned from that first visit by affirming the "site visit experience brought us to a different level of discussion." The following year, with consensus, the network instituted a schedule of regular classroom observations and debriefs.

Andrew Lachman is executive director of the Connecticut Center for School Change in Hartford, Conn. E-mail: [alachman@ctschoollchange.org](mailto:alachman@ctschoollchange.org)



## **SOUTH END ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

10 Maxwell Noble Drive  
Plantsville, CT 06479  
Phone: (860) 628-3320  
Fax: (860) 620-1667

**Sally Kamerbeek**  
**Principal**

November 12, 2010

Dear Kindergarten and Grade One Parents,

As you know, Southington is participating in the Hartford Region Open Choice Program. We have three kindergarten students and four first grade students enrolled at South End School this year. There may be occasions when there is an after school or evening program that our school or PTO offers and I am looking for families to host these students so they can stay in Southington and participate in the various activities. The Host family would take responsibility for the student after school if there is an evening event. This is an opportunity to fully integrate our new students to our South End Community.

Please let me know if you are willing to be a Host family for one of the students who is in your child's class. You can contact me by phone or email, whichever is more convenient.

Sincerely,

Sally Kamerbeek

Family Resource Center of Southington  
Derynoski School\* 240 Main Street\* Room 120\* Southington, CT06489

860\*628\*3286 x 380

[southingtonfrc@yahoo.com](mailto:southingtonfrc@yahoo.com)

Winter 2010



Hello Southington families!

We are wrapping up our fall programs and looking forward to enjoying the holidays. There is a lot to look forward to in the new year- and we hope that all of you will continue to be a part of the FRCS!

Continued health and happiness to all of you this holiday season. Thank you for being a part of our program.

We look forward to seeing you all soon!

Best,

Krista and Jennifer

Family Resource Center of Southington



## **Having a Healthy and Happy Holiday:**

The holidays, including Thanksgiving, Hanukah and Christmas, are supposed to be fun times for families that don't often find time to get together. Unfortunately, the holidays can also be very stressful and a time when kids can get hurt or sick.

### **Childproofing:**

The first step in having a healthy and happy holiday is making sure that your kids stay safe. While your own home may be well childproofed, if you are spending the holiday with family or friends, keep in mind that their home may not be childproofed at all, especially if they do not have young children. In that case, in addition to closely supervising your younger children at all times, you should ask about guns, a backyard pool, and other common hazards, etc.

### **Food Allergies:**

It is hard enough to avoid things that your kids might be allergic to in your own home, where you have direct control over the groceries you buy and the food you cook. It can be almost impossible when you go somewhere for a holiday dinner, like at Thanksgiving, when a lot of different people may be cooking, some of whom might not even believe in food allergies.

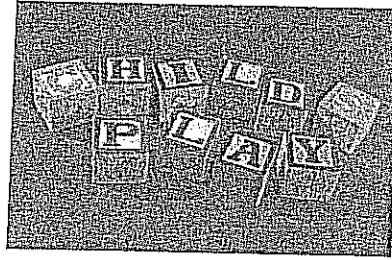
To help protect your child with food allergies, if you can't have your holiday feast in your own home where you have more control over things, it should help to call your host in advance and let them know about your child's food allergies and ask that they not prepare any foods with the ingredient that your child is allergic to, or at the very least, prepare it separately and keep it away from other foods. And have some allergen free alternatives available just in case.

### **Traveling with Kids:**

With long lines, waiting around, and crowded conditions, it is hardly ever easy to travel with kids. You can help it to go a little smoother by bringing enough supplies in a carry on bag, traveling during off-peak times when it might be less crowded, taking non-stop flights, and bringing enough activities to keep your kids amused.

### **Stick to Schedules and Routines:**

In addition to simply getting overstimulated, one of the biggest reasons for meltdowns by infants, toddlers, and preschoolers during the holidays, is that they get off their schedule and become overtired. To avoid this, try to plan your holiday activities around your child's nap, which you should really avoid missing, if at all possible. If there are too many kids together to find a place for a nap for everyone, at least plan a quiet time in the middle of the day so they can get some rest.



## PLAYGROUP:

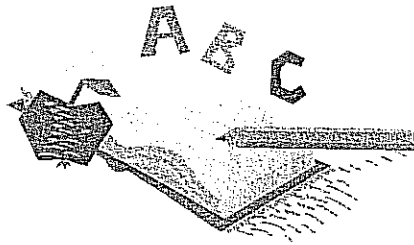
Playgroups are a great opportunity for parents/caregivers with children ages birth to 5 years to come together with others to talk, share their experiences and meet other families in the community. It is also a time for children to develop and strengthen their social skills. Playgroups will be held in 10 week sessions during the school year. This program is free for all Southington residents, so call or email today to find out more or to register. When reaching our answering machine, please leave a message with: your name, children's names and ages, phone number and which group you are interested in and someone will call you to confirm. Because of the limited number of families we can accommodate please register for one of the following groups: **(please note- you must REREGISTER even if you have been attending a playgroup)**

### Playgroup Schedule:

<u>School</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Jan.</u>	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>March</u>
Kelley School	Mondays	9:30-10:30am	10,24,31	7,14,28	7,14,21,28
Flanders School	Tuesdays	6:30-7:30	11,18,25	1,8,15	1, 8, 15,22,29
Derynoski	Tuesdays	9:30-10:45	11,18,25	1,8,15	1,8,15,22,29
South End	Thursdays	9:30-10:30	13,20,27	3,10,17	3,10,17,24,31

### **CONNECTING WITH COMPUTERS:**

Children ages 3 and up are invited to sign up for this new program! Together with parent/caregiver, children will have the opportunity to play with educational, age-appropriate computer software and work on important school readiness skills like pre-literacy and pre-math. They will be having so much fun- they won't know how much they are learning! No computer experience necessary to participate. Call or email Krista to set up your weekly appointment 628-3286 x380 or [southingtonfrc@yahoo.com](mailto:southingtonfrc@yahoo.com)

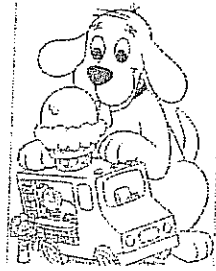


### **ABC Read with Me: Children ages 3, 4 & 5**

Children prepare to read long before they enter school - early literacy is everything children know about reading and writing before they can actually read and write. Early literacy skills begin to develop in the first 5 years of life. The most important thing you can do to foster early literacy is provide an atmosphere that's fun, verbal and stimulating. That is our goal as we read some story time favorites and work on our pre-reading skills

Session 1: Mondays January 10, 24, 31 February 7 and 14 1:00-1:45pm at Thalberg School

Session 2: Mondays February 28, March 7, 14, 21, 28 1:00-1:45pm at Thalberg School



**Calling All Characters: Children ages 3, 4 & 5**

Come and enjoy stories and art projects featuring five of our favorite characters. Characters will include Clifford, Max and Ruby, Curious George, and two new favorites: Llama Llama and Knuffle Bunny.

Session 1: Tuesdays January 11, 18, 25 and February 1, 8 1:00-1:45 at Hatton School

Session 2: Tuesdays March 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 1:00-1:45 at Hatton School

**Goopy, Gloppy, Sloppy:**

Let's get messy! A fun, hands on and hands in class for kids who don't mind getting a little dirty! We will make slime, fingerpaint and more!

Session 1: Thursdays January 13, 20, 27 and February 3, 10 1:00-1:45 At Plantsville School

Session 2: Thursdays March 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31 at Plantsville School

**Kids Can Cook: Children ages 3, 4 & 5**

Research tells us that children are more likely to try foods that they had a hand in preparing. Here is their chance to be a part of the process. All foods will be no bake/no cook recipes that you can easily make with your children at home.

Session 1: Wednesdays January 12, 19, 26 and February 2 and 9 9:30-10:15 at Strong School

Session 2: Wednesdays March 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 9:30-10:15 at Strong School

**EARLY CHILDHOOD COLLABORATIVE OF SOUTHINGTON (ECCS):**

We are a group of concerned early childcare providers, parents, teachers and citizens working to ensure that "all Southington children enter school ready to learn." We are always looking for new members. Come with your energy and ideas! Check our website [www.southingtonearlychildhood.org](http://www.southingtonearlychildhood.org) for more information and meeting dates.

**PARENT/PROVIDER WORKSHOP:**

Goop, Gloop and Messy Things: Incorporating Science

Sponsored by the Early Childhood Collaborative of Southington

Presented by Maureen Meyers

Tuesday, January 18 6:30 pm at Plantsville School

\$5 per person

Call or email to register 860-628-3286 ext 380 or [frcs09@yahoo.com](mailto:frcs09@yahoo.com)

**FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER WINTER WEATHER POLICY:**

When Southington schools have a delayed opening or are closed, FRCS programs are cancelled. Please be sure to listen to local radio or TV stations.

FRCS programs will follow the Southington Public Schools Calendar and be closed on the following days:

December 24-January 1- Holiday Recess

January 17- Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February 21-25- February Recess

**KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION DATES:**

Please call your school to get more information and to confirm the following dates.

**Wednesday, February 16:**

Kelley School- 860-628-3310

Strong School- 860-628-3314

**Friday, February 18:**

Plantsville School- 860-628-3450

**March 1:**

Derynoski School- 860-628-3286

**March 2:**

Derynoski School- 860-628-3286

**March 3:**

South End School- 860—628-3320

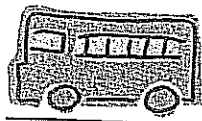
Flanders School- 860-628-3372

Hatton School- 860-628-3377

Derynoski School- 860-628-3286

**March 4:**

Thalberg School- 860-628-3370



Account Name	Southington BOE
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Usage By Month:

January	888,322
February	896,144
March	774,720
April	741,112
May	696,032
June	772,007
July	733,233
August	647,448
September	750,328
October	732,688
November	801,672
December	1,104,026

Current CL&P Rate	Current CL&P Cost
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0.11723	\$101,793
0.11723	\$105,055
0.11723	\$90,820
0.11723	\$86,881
0.11723	\$81,596
0.11723	\$90,502
0.11723	\$85,957
0.11723	\$75,900
0.11723	\$87,961
0.11723	\$85,893
0.11723	\$93,980
0.12711	\$140,333
Average	
0.11805	

9,517,732

Total: \$1,125,671

Current CNE Rate	Current CNE Cost
------------------	------------------

0.09735	\$84,531
0.09735	\$87,240
0.09735	\$75,419
0.09735	\$72,147
0.09735	\$67,759
0.09735	\$75,155
0.09735	\$71,380
0.09735	\$63,029
0.09735	\$73,044
0.09735	\$71,327
0.09735	\$78,043
0.09735	\$107,477
Average	
0.09735	

Total: \$926,551

Extension Rate	Extension Cost
----------------	----------------

0.08622	\$74,868
0.08622	\$77,267
0.08622	\$66,798
0.08622	\$63,900
0.08622	\$60,013
0.08622	\$66,564
0.08622	\$63,221
0.08622	\$55,824
0.08622	\$64,695
0.08622	\$63,174
0.08622	\$69,122
0.08622	\$95,191
Average	
0.08622	

Total: \$820,638

Total Yearly Savings VS CL&P

\$200,120

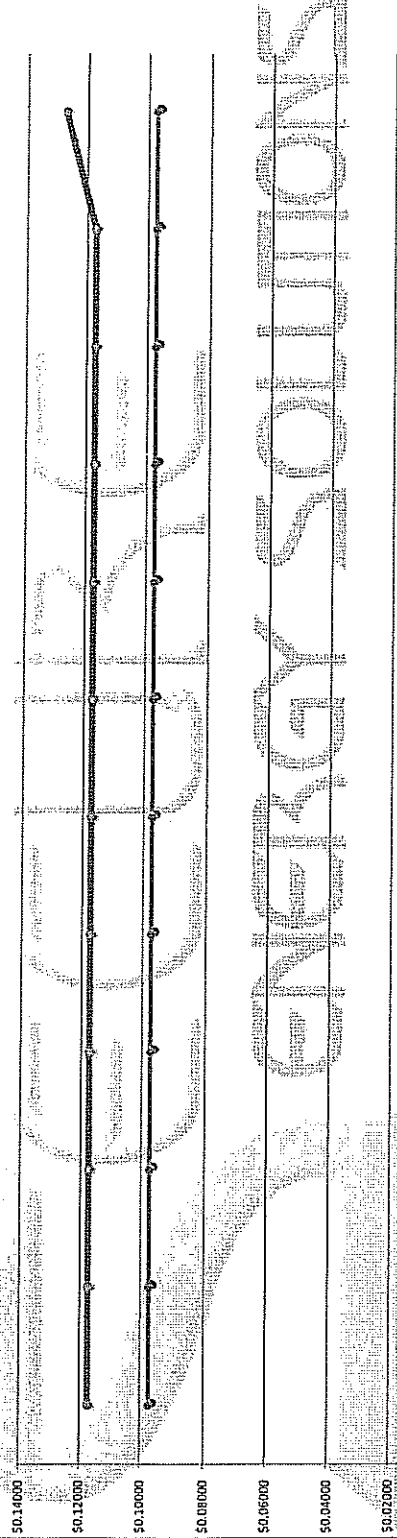
Extension Savings VS Current Agreement

\$105,913

Projected Savings over Extension Term (24 Months)

\$612,067

Rate Comparison



**JOSEPH ERARDI**

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**From:** SUSAN EULEY  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 18, 2010 11:39 AM  
**To:** JOSEPH ERARDI  
**Subject:** Insurance Costs

Joe,

Below is the cost of insurance that our retired teachers are currently paying (rates through 6/30/2011).

Single	624.00 Monthly	7,488.00 Annually
2 Person	1,355.00 Monthly	16,260.00 Annually
Family	1,811.00 Monthly	21,732.00 Annually

Sue

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