

SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT

REGULAR MEETING

DECEMBER 11, 2014

The regular meeting of the Southington Board of Education was held on Thursday, December 11, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Center Public Assembly Room, 200 North Main Street, Southington, Connecticut with Executive Session scheduled for 7:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brian Goralski, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Present from the Board: Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. Brian Goralski, Mrs. Terry Lombardi, Mrs. Jill Notar-Francesco, Mr. Zaya Oshana and Mrs. Patricia Queen. Absent were: Mr. David Derynoski and Mrs. Patricia Johnson.

Present from Administration: Mr. Timothy Connellan, Superintendent of Schools, and Mrs. Sherri DiNello, Director of Business and Finance (*left at 7:15 p.m.*).

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

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

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL MATTERS, STUDENT MATTERS, SOUTHINGTON ADMINISTRATORS CONTRACT, AND TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Goralski declared the Executive Session ended at 7:30 p.m.

3. RECONVENE MEETING ~ REGULAR SESSION

The regular session was reconvened at 7:36 p.m. by Mr. Brian Goralski, Chairperson. Board members present were Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mrs. Terry Lombardi, Mrs. Jill Notar-Francesco, Mr. Zaya Oshana and Mrs. Patricia Queen. Absent were Mr. David Derynoski and Mrs. Patricia Johnson.

Present from the administration were Mr. Timothy Connellan, Superintendent of Schools; Mrs. Sherri DiNello, Director of Business and Finance; Mr. Peter Romano, Director of Operations, and Ms. Meg Walsh, Director of Pupil Personnel Services.

Student representatives present were Christopher Iverson and Elizabeth Veilleux.

There were approximately 17 people in the audience.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by the student representatives.

Mr. Goralski called for a moment of silence in memory of Mr. Scott Robinson, retired Head Custodian at Strong Elementary School, who served the district for over 30 years and recently passed away.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Regular Meeting ~ November 13, 2014

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

“Move to approve the regular Board of Education minutes of November 13, 2014, as submitted.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

b. Special Meeting ~ December 4, 2014

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

“Move to approve the special Board of Education minutes of December 4, 2014, as submitted.”

Motion carried by voice vote with an abstention by Mr. Oshana.

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

“Move to move Agenda Item 10.c ‘Appointment of Director of Technology’ to Agenda Item 5.c.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

c. Appointment of the Director of Technology

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

“Move to appoint Jamie Olander as the Director of Technology with a salary of \$128,000 and a start date to be determined by the Superintendent of Schools.”

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Clark, Mr. Oshana, Mrs. Queen, Mr. Goralski. ABSTAIN – Mrs. Lombardi, Mrs. Notar-Francesco. **Motion carried with five in favor and two abstentions.**

Mr. Goralski welcomed Mr. Olander to the Southington Public Schools. Mr. Olander took the podium and stated that he currently was employed by the Hartford Public Schools and looked forward to growing technology in Southington. Mr. Goralski called for a brief recess to welcome Mr. Olander.

The regular Board of Education meeting reconvened at 7:50 p.m.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications from Audience

Dawn Stomsky, 218 Summit Street, spoke about bus issues and concerns that Plantsville area parents have regarding students who have to walk through the downtown area of Plantsville and the hazardous conditions to walk to Kennedy Middle School. She discussed her numerous phone calls to central office to discuss a Class Action suit that parents planned to take in order to have bus transportation for their children and the steps that they needed to take to do this. She noted that after one month of phone calls she was able to get an appointment with Mr. Connellan on December 30, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. Ms. Stomsky spoke of another family's hearing in October regarding the same issue and that the final decision was that the route in question was not hazardous as defined by the Board Policy. Ms. Stomsky refuted the items listed in the Board Policy that were given to deny transportation, such as the posted speed limit, line of sight and visibility issues, and truck delivery loading zones. Ms. Stomsky asked for documentation that delivery trucks are not legally permitted to park to deliver goods and block the sidewalk.

Mr. Goralski asked Ms. Stomsky to follow-up with all her concerns with Mr. Connellan at their December 30 meeting. He noted that the hearing Ms. Stomsky spoke about was a public meeting and that there were minutes from that meeting and that she could contact the family for the letter that was sent to them. Ms. Stomsky responded that she had that letter in her hand. Mr. Goralski added that he looked forward to hearing from Ms. Stomsky and Mr. Connellan after their December 30, 2014 meeting.

Bob Brown, 587 Burritt Street, President of the Southington Education Association, spoke in favor of keeping the half-day Wednesdays in next year's school calendar. He noted that, two years ago when they were in contract negotiations, they surveyed teachers and their biggest concern was that teachers needed more time because of new initiatives such as Common Core, SRBI, Differentiated Instruction, new evaluation system relying on data collection, IEP, etc. He noted that the half-day Wednesdays was a way to provide the teachers with more time. He pointed out that collaboration was needed to do these new initiatives and could not be accomplished on teachers' own time. Mr. Brown noted that over the last six years more instructional time with students has been added and took away from work and collaboration between teachers outside the classroom.

Richard Terino, President of the Southington Administrators Association, stated that the administrators were unified with the teachers union in endorsing the 2015-2016 school year

calendar. He reminded the Board that they requested a study to be done two to three years ago about teacher time taken out of the classroom for the purpose of Professional Development. He noted that the early release Wednesdays were a step to resolving that problem and reinstating student contact time. On behalf of the administrators, he implored the Board to adopt the calendar as proposed.

Denise Sicotte, 23 Church Street, spoke as a concerned parent and as a member of the STEPS Parents Committee. She addressed the issue of safety and endorsed Ms. Dawn Stomsky's comments. She understood that safety was an objective of the Board of Education and that the Superintendent launched the anonymous Safe Schools Tip Line to help support a safe environment for all students. She questioned why parents, who address the Board of Education and Superintendent, are not taken seriously about safety concerns for their children who are required to walk an unsafe and hazardous route. She noted that it was the job of the parents and administrators to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the students in their care and not wait until something happens.

b. Communications from Board Members and Administration

Communication from the Board Members:

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

“Move to add Agenda Item 10.d. ‘Student Expulsion 2014-2015-04’ to the agenda.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mrs. Lombardi thanked the Southington High School Cheerleaders for their community service by caroling last Friday at the senior centers in town on their own time and bringing joy and smiles to the seniors.

Mrs. Lombardi announced that Computer Science Education Week across the country is December 8 through 14, 2014. She noted that Southington took part in “An Hour of Code,” which was a one-hour introduction to computer science. She noted that it is not in the curriculum; however, it is math, engineering and language-arts based. She reported that Thalberg School signed up and that Kate Wakefield was trained, on her own time, for eight-hours. Last Monday, Thalberg School hosted an hour of code for every grade. Mrs. Lombardi stated that several children completed 4,000 lines of code, which is remarkable at the fifth grade level. This effort was developed by a non-profit group funded by Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, College Board, and the Boys and Girls of America. Mrs. Lombardi pointed out that this was an enrichment opportunity that did not cost any money.

Mrs. Lombardi reported that on December 7, 2014 a fifth-grade group from Thalberg School called the “Red Eagles Robotics Team” competed at the state level at the FIRST Lego League Competition and placed 13 out of 48 teams in the state. They were the only fifth-grade group that competed with middle school teams and it was the first time that they competed.

Mrs. Queen congratulated the students at DePaolo and Kennedy Middle Schools that were inducted into the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) this past month. Beyond performance in the classroom, the leadership and citizenship expectations set for students to

achieve this honor is incredibly high. One of the components to middle school philosophy is the notion that it is a time of exploration in academics, music, athletics, theatre, art, community service, and clubs of all kinds. Students do not have to specialize their time in a way that we, as a society, ask of them as they get older. Consequently, driven and high-achieving students are very busy. She noted that Mr. Pepe [Principal of DePaolo] commented on how difficult it is for parents and guardians to make all the activities that comprise a NJHS member's resume as part of their families' lives, and yet, somehow they do it. It is really amazing, and so important to student success. She extended her appreciation and congratulations to the parents.

Mrs. Queen reported that she and Mrs. Notar-Francesco attended the CABE and CAPSS Conference on November 14, 2014 and attended several workshops. She pointed out that she emailed Board members a summary of her notes and encouraged them to review them.

Mrs. Clark reported that she attended a meeting of the Early Childhood Collaborative of Southington and they are trying to get the word out about the importance of early childhood education. They are collaborating with other communities about communicating the message. She noted that Southington is one of 32 communities statewide who has benefited from the Graustein Foundation funding of the Early Childhood Collaborative.

Mr. Oshana would like to see the report back from the administrators on how each of the schools did with the ice storm and 90-minute delay in the start of school. He had photos from the high school showing no sand down and that it was very icy in the parking lot for the start of school after the delay. He felt that it was frightening that the parking lot and walkways were not addressed because there was time to prepare.

Mr. Oshana stated that a study was done a couple of years ago about teacher time out of the classroom and that there was talk about doing a follow-up. He asked when that follow-up would be done and requested that a long enough timeframe be looked at for the data to be accurate. He thought that the last report was stunning about the time out of the classroom and he would like to see where they are now. He asked Mr. Connellan to work on a timeframe and report back at the next Board meeting when it can be done. Mr. Goralski agreed with getting an update on this.

Mr. Goralski reported that he was invited to the annual YMCA Polar Plunge event and committed the Board of Education as a team. This year, the co-captains from previous years are not able to participate. Mr. Goralski noted that Mr. Bob Lasbury [high school math teacher], a previous co-captain, will not be available that weekend and has appointed Dr. Marty Semmel [Southington High School Principal] as his co-captain replacement and Mr. Connellan has agreed to be the other co-captain. Mr. Goralski challenged the public to support this worthy cause for Southington children attending the YMCA Camp Sloper. He also challenged all schools to have at least one staff member participate in the jump to help grow the team and fundraising effort and requested that central office administration send out an email regarding this.

Mr. Goralski stated that he wanted to send a holiday letter to all staff, which he does annually, thanking them for their service and wishing the staff a happy, healthy new year. He will put together the letter to be sent before the Christmas break and have the Board members review it first.

Communication from Administration:

Mr. Connellan reported on the following:

1. League of Innovative Schools: Mr. Connellan stated that this Friday will be the third meeting of this group and the focus of this meeting will be using the Scoble Best Practices Self-Assessment tool which has been internationally benchmarked and looks at three strands: Teaching and Learning, Organization, and School Leadership. The teams at the secondary schools in our district have been focusing on those areas using the self-assessment tool. They will be meeting with other schools in the district tomorrow and having conversations around that as the next step in this process.
2. District Professional Learning Community: Mr. Connellan stated that they had the first meeting of the District Professional Learning Community that revolves around best practices and using data to drive instruction. Administrators from all of our schools and district-wide administrators are involved in this. It is facilitated by CREC. This will be used for development of a Strategic Plan that will help better frame the Vision 20/20.
3. MORE Commission Special Education Work Group: Mr. Connellan reported that he was appointed to be part of the MORE Commission that will be meeting in Southington on December 18. The community is welcome to attend the two-hour meeting and share information. Some people are invited to present testimony and there will be time for people from the community to make some general comments. Mr. Goralski asked Mr. Connellan to share the location of this meeting with the Board members when he finds out.

c. Communications from Student Representatives

Mr. Iverson reported on the following:

- The Model United Nations Conference, which is organized by the World Affairs Council of Connecticut, was held at the University of Hartford and they held a mock United Nations. On the Political Committee, Southington High School won the best delegation for Poland and the students on that delegation were Kevin Corcoran, Kunal Kataria, Andrew Rogalski and Vincent Zhang, which means their performance was the most accurate and the best out of the room. There were about 150 students participating. Mr. Iverson pointed out that he and John Pac are state officers for Model United Nations.
- Political Debate Club, which used to be named Young Democrats and Republicans, will have State Representative David Zoni as a speaker after school this Friday.
- Friday, December 12, FBLA will be hosting a Business Teachers Breakfast at Southington High School before the start of school.
- Southington High School held a Pep Rally for the first time in a long time and it did not cater to one sport.
- PSAT scores will be released soon. The Guidance Department will be taking classrooms to the computer labs to introduce them to the College Board website to see their scores and areas where they excelled or were in need of help.
- Mr. Iverson addressed Mr. Oshana's comments regarding the parking lot and sidewalks at the high school during the 90-minute delay. He noted that he parks close to the school and that he will let Mr. Oshana know if he does find that it is slippery.

Miss Veilleux reported on the following:

- The Music Department concerts for Chorus, Orchestra and Band will be held December 17 – 19, 2014.
- Winter break is coming soon.
- The football team is still undefeated and will be going to state championships this Saturday.
- College 101, which is a seminar for juniors and seniors, will be held shortly. They will be able to talk to college freshmen who graduated last year from the high school to get a firsthand viewpoint from them on their first semester experience in college.
- The Drama Club production of *Father of the Bride* will be held this weekend.
- The Book Club, which is sponsored by Ashley Christensen and teachers Mrs. Paul and Mrs. Simpson, is currently Skyping with Thalberg School fourth graders and reading the book together with follow-up discussions. She pointed out that there are other Book Clubs at Southington High School assigned to different fourth-grade classes at Thalberg. It shows the younger students that reading is not only a valuable life skill, but is also for fun.

Mrs. Clark asked what book they were reading with the fourth graders. Miss Veilleux replied Out of My Mind by Sharon Draper.

Mrs. Queen asked if the student representatives were involved with the Think Tank at the high school. She asked if they could find out what is happening with the Think Tank. Miss Veilleux and Mr. Iverson both replied that they would find out more information and report back to the Board.

7. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

a. Personnel Report

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

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

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Policy & Personnel Committee Meeting ~ December 1, 2014

Mrs. Clark reported that the committee continued their review of the Attendance Policy and is looking at a sample policy from CABA as well as current practices within the schools. Administration will develop regulations and present them to the committee to understand how the policy will be implemented at each school. While the regulations are the same, some of the implementation methods are different, depending upon the schools. The committee would like to have a unified implementation of those regulations. The committee had questions that administration will answer and address at the next committee meeting. Mrs. Lombardi thought that those questions were critical before the attendance policy is implemented. Mrs. Queen added that state laws changed which was the reason for discussion on this policy. Mr. Oshana agreed that consistency of the policy in all schools was important.

Mrs. Lombardi noted that in Vision 20/20 they talked about the physical classroom is not the only place where learning will be taking place. It could be also outside of the classroom or outside of the school. She questioned how attendance would be applied to this new concept. Mrs. Clark added that this is another question that the committee needs to ask.

b. Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting ~ December 2, 2014

Mrs. Carmody reported that the committee met with Mr. John Duffy who gave a presentation on a new requirement to have all students in Grades 6-8 involved with science project-based learning. With this new requirement, students will have four choices for their project work. Most of the project work will be done outside of the classroom. The teachers have all agreed to work with the students step by step. The project-based learning fits into all the high school reform acts. As a former teacher, she was happy to see that projects are back.

Mrs. Carmody reported that the committee observed a fifth-grade math class on the topic of fractions and estimation that was given by Mr. Garofalo. She noted that it was a new way to look at math. Mrs. Carmody will send a report to the Board from Ms. Dale Riedinger on some of the new requirements of math in the middle schools. Mrs. Carmody reported that, due to Title I grant funding, they are able to add two math specialists.

c. Finance Committee Meeting ~ December 3, 2014

a. Transfer of Funds

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

“Move to approve the Transfer of Funds, as submitted.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

b. InfoSnap: Online Registration Program

Mrs. Notar-Francesco reported that, at the last Finance Committee meeting, the committee heard a presentation on InfoSnap from Michelle Passamano, District Registrar. The committee acknowledged the tremendous benefits of this program for the district, beginning as early as the upcoming Kindergarten registration. The committee strongly endorsed bringing this forward to the full Board for approval.

Mrs. Passamano gave a PowerPoint summation on the InfoSnap Online Registration Program that would provide real time accurate student data and benefit the school system. She explained that it is a data management system that would be integrated directly into our current PowerSchool portal. From the Southington Public School website, parents would be guided to the registration page that will also include a student update section as well. Mrs. Passamano walked the Board through the process of logging in, creating an account, registering a student, and named forms that would be incorporated, such as field trip permission forms, address verification, permissions slips, health information, emergency notification information, handbook and policy sign-off forms, free/reduced lunch application forms, car parking spots, and PTO registration, to name a few. These paper forms are distributed annually by the district and

schools. This would cut down on the number of paper copies distributed and the man hours to produce those copies. Mrs. Passamano explained the benefits of this program, such as time savings for staff, cost savings, convenience for parents, confirmation that all families receive and review required forms and policies, consistency in verification of residency and real-time accurate data. Mrs. Passamano explained that the new families entering the district would still meet with the District Registrar for a welcome meeting and verification of residence after completing the registration online. Parents can scan / upload documents directly into this system prior to the meeting with the Registrar. The data entered is immediately live in PowerSchool. The student is not active in PowerSchool, but schools can see who is registered and they can get an accurate count for enrollment. Mrs. Passamano explained the convenience of this program for parents, especially if more than one student is being registered. They have the ability to add another student with the general family information being carried over from the first student. Parents can register their grocery store loyalty cards directly into the system, bringing money to the schools. Parents don't have to wait for the demographic information cards and various applications to be distributed at the start of the school year by the district and schools. She explained that reminders could be sent to families to update their information online during the summer via a phone blast.

Mrs. Passamano explained that there are 21 districts currently in Connecticut who are using InfoSnap. She had contacted two districts and they both stated how beneficial the program was and that it was well-received by families and their districts.

Mr. Goralski questioned what parents do if they do not have computer access at their home and what was the cost to the district to implement the program. Mrs. Passamano replied that they could go to the Southington Library; however, at central office she will have a laptop set-up in her office where parents could enter the information. At Kindergarten registration, the Technology Department would be prepared to have a minimum of five laptops set-up at each school for that purpose.

Mrs. Queen noted that as a parent she remembers completing form after form with the same information for each child and stated that this program would eliminate all that. She questions field trip permission forms. Mrs. Passamano replied that they would be incorporated in the program, as well as PTO memberships, and that it was endless what they could be able to do with this program. Mrs. Queen noted that, when the schools went paperless, it was difficult for the PTOs at the secondary level to attract members because there was no form to remind parents. She asked if there could be reminder emails because people forget without the forms in front of them.

Mrs. Clark asked if Mrs. Passamano would be able to add or make adjustments to the software. Mrs. Passamano replied that InfoSnap would have to do that, and pointed out that it is a powerful program on what it could do.

Mrs. Lombardi noted that one of the Board's priorities is to look at shared services between the Board of Education and the Town and leverage any resource that they have. She asked Mrs. Passamano to look at the capability of the system to do other types of registration, such as for Parks and Recreation. Mrs. Passamano replied that she would look into that possibility. Mrs. Lombardi noted that this would be a request for administration to do.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco explained that the start-up cost for the InfoSnap Program is \$7,650 with the first payment to be \$6,120 for the first year. The next payment would be due July of 2015 for \$12,240. Mrs. Passamano noted that in the contract it states that for the school year 2016 the price would be approximately \$18,500, which is based on the enrollment.

Mrs. DiNello added that the first year membership is usually \$26,000; however, Mrs. Passamano was able to work with the company knowing the goal was to start with Kindergarten registration and that they would be well into this school year before that would happen. After a follow-up phone call from the Finance Committee, InfoSnap agreed to a first-year membership of 17 months instead of a 16-month membership. If the Board was to approve this for February for the incoming Kindergarten registration, then approximately \$13,000 (which includes startup) would be paid in the current budget; next year the only cost within the operating budget would be the second payment of the \$12,240. Within the 2016-2017 school year, they would be paying on a per-pupil basis.

Mrs. Lombardi questioned if this was a technology platform in which the data resides in the “cloud” versus on our servers. If it does, that would be a good thing because the operating cost would be lower. She wanted to know the capability of expansion because it would not cost for hardware. Mrs. DiNello replied that she would look into that because it is interfacing right now with PowerSchool. The Meal Pay Plus system that is currently being used for paying for school lunch interfaces with PowerSchool. They would have to look into whether that is being hosted or if it is on our server.

Mr. Goralski noted that the InfoSnap program is incredibly compatible with PowerSchool, which could be a problem with shared services with the town; however, it was worth looking into.

Mrs. DiNello added that the pricing was off the state contract bid, so they do not have to go through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process.

Mrs. Queen asked if the company was addressing the security of the data. Mrs. Passamano noted that the contract has an entire section pertaining to security.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco thanked Mrs. Passamano for her initiative in researching this and bringing it to the Board. She thought that it was an amazing program.

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

“Move to approve funding the InfoSnap Online Registration Program with implementation to begin with the incoming Kindergarten Class.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

c. Bid Approval – Lawn Mowing & Trimming (Flanders, Hatton, Strong, Thalberg) Bid #2015-BID-19

Mrs. Notar-Francesco noted that this was the standard bid document that the Board is accustomed to; however, administration has included within the language an opportunity to end the contract if shared services are explored by the Board of Education and the Town.

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

“Move to approve bid #2015-BID-19, Lawn Mowing and Trimming for Flanders, Hatton, Strong, and Thalberg Schools.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco explained that the Finance Committee also discussed leasing versus purchasing future maintenance vehicles. She stated that Mrs. DiNello requested direction on whether or not to continue the practice of including new lease funds in the 2015-2016 budget for the replacement of another vehicle. The Finance Committee recommended that they continue to include the new lease in the budget, but that they will also revisit this at year end to see if our financial projections support an outright purchase instead. The Finance Committee also requested that the list containing the fleet of vehicles be updated with mileage and current condition of the vehicles and requested some information about the next vehicle that will be considered. This information will be coming to the Board within the upcoming budget discussions.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco stated that the committee gave Mrs. DiNello the ability to move forward and lock in a price for oil with the consortium since oil prices have dropped considerably over the last few weeks. The Town usually joins the Board of Education and the Consortium, but at this point they prefer to wait until the Commodities Manager is hired. However, the committee discussed the various alternatives and possibly waiting, but decided that it would be best to commit now rather than holding until sometime in January. The Finance Committee gave Mrs. DiNello the green light to work with the consortium and Mrs. DiNello did lock in at a \$2.50 per-gallon price. Mrs. DiNello followed up that the Town reconsidered and actually did join in and purchased at the \$2.50 purchase price also.

Mrs. Notar-Francesco stated that the future Finance Committee meeting dates are: February 2, March 23, May 4, and June 8, 2015.

9. OLD BUSINESS

a. Town Government Communications

Mrs. Lombardi reported on the highlights of yesterday's Self Insurance Committee Meeting. She stated that the actual claims are exceeding the budget amounts and if they trend on this on an annual basis, they will surpass the current budget. The Self Insurance Committee unanimously agreed on a funding level of \$25.1 million for next year, which equates to an 8.7% increase over this year's budget. At this time, they do not know what the net effect is on the Board's budget until they receive some additional information from our consultants. The Self Insurance Committee also discussed the breakdown of the percent contributions between the Board of Education and the Town. She stated that Mrs. Notar-Francesco provided the committee with some historical information, which showed that looking at the past five years the Board of Education's contribution rate has been 75%. They discussed a potential half-percent decrease; however, they will be moving forward with a 76% contribution rate for the Board of Education budget next year. They agreed that there is a need for a policy to be put in place regarding how often they look at the contribution rate and the methodology that will be used.

Mr. Goralski thanked the Board members who represent the Board of Education on the Self Insurance Committee and wished that other elected officials took the same diligence representing their Boards and attended the meetings regularly. He understood that some members' attendance on that committee is sporadic and that if they stayed abreast and attended regularly perhaps they would see more clearly the facts and evidence presented by the Board of Education members on the committee. He thought that the percentage the Board of Education pays is important. He felt that the insurance consultant that was hired is paid to give advice and, if the other members attended regularly, they might have better faith in the consultant.

Mrs. Queen reported that there was a Facility Advisory Committee meeting yesterday. There was discussion around changing the language in the policies of the Southington Community Turf Field with regard to the booster clubs. The actual wording is still being worked out, but the concept is a change in language from 'payment owed' to a request of a 'contribution' from stakeholders who have a vested interest in the long-term sustainability of this venue. Mrs. Queen thanked Mrs. Clark whose input around this issue helped formulate this shift in thinking on her part. She thanked Mr. Connellan who facilitated further discussion with central office staff to explore the viability of this idea and supported it. The Facility Advisory Committee is receptive to this change in language. She understood from the Chair of that committee that the current policies and procedures document was meant to be a working document as operation of the community turf field is in year two, and that, ultimately, the committee wants to do what is right for all parties involved. Mrs. Queen reported that for the Buy-a-Brick Campaign, the bricks are ready to be installed and the VoAg students will be involved in the installation. Protocols around snow removal have been established. The committee drafted a letter to offer businesses the opportunity to advertise at the field. For the concession stand, the Ansul system and hood will be installed by spring. Currently, the concession stand has been winterized. She noted that Attorney Mark Sciota is working on putting the food service permit, which is currently held by the Gridiron Club, in the name of either the Facility Advisory Committee or the Town of Southington.

Mrs. Carmody questioned Knightvertising and the selling of banners. Mrs. Queen replied that the committee has not settled on the pricing yet. Mrs. DiNello added that she has information that could be helpful with the cost of the banners so the Facility Advisory Committee would have a reference point for what was done in the past. Mrs. Queen questioned the site location of the banners. Mrs. DiNello pointed out that she had that information as well to share with her.

Mr. Goralski reminded the Board that the Board of Finance and Board of Education are having a joint workshop to review recurring questions that come up during the budget season. The Board of Education is hosting it at Hatton School on Tuesday, December 16 at 7:00 p.m. He asked the Board members to get any questions to him or Mrs. DiNello to be passed along to Mr. Leary.

Mr. Goralski reminded the Board that they endorsed and supported the idea of a thank-you breakfast to be co-hosted with the Town Council. The official invitation went out to staff at central office and the maintenance department, and to town staff. It will be held December 18, 2014 in the Municipal Center Assembly Room from 9:00-10:30 a.m.

b. Construction Update

Mr. Romano reported that construction at both middle schools is ahead of schedule right now in Phase 10, in a total of 12 phases. The kitchens are now fully operational, and the dishwasher and stove that needed to be retrofitted are now installed. He noted that Mrs. DiNello had a Grand Opening for the kitchens that went well. There is another round of furniture that is scheduled to arrive during the Christmas break.

c. Capital Plan 2015-2020 ~ Second Reading

Mrs. DiNello stated that at the last Board of Education meeting she gave a brief overview. She thanked Mr. Romano and Ms. Jones for their work in putting the document together. She noted that Mr. Connellan mentioned some changes that they will be looking at moving forward with the overall document.

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

“Move to approve the Capital Plan, as presented.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

10. NEW BUSINESS**a. Proposed 2015-2016 School Calendar ~ First Reading**

Mr. Connellan reported that all of the administrators, union bargaining units, and PTOs reviewed the draft of the proposed calendar, and he received very few comments. However, people were questioning why they were not starting in the last week of August as past practice. He pointed out that it was not about August, it was about where Labor Day falls on the calendar. For 2015-2016, Labor Day falls later in September. They like to start out with shorter days for the younger students and this calendar models that approach. They also moved half-day professional development days out of weeks where there was another day off or early release day. They looked at where parent conferences fell on the calendar. The elementary school administrators wanted their conferences in the month of November rather than in December because of all the events that occur in December. They looked at whether to have the Wednesday before Thanksgiving as a day off or an early release day, and the teachers and parents were split on that. Because that week is already broken up, they decided on having the full day off and capture a full day of instruction later. The rest of the calendar is typical. He noted that the April break is earlier on the calendar because of where Good Friday and Easter fall on the calendar. The last day of school with no snow days would be June 15. The calendar is aligned with other districts. Also, on the calendar in the middle column they denoted the conference days.

Mr. Goralski asked the Board to share any comments that they receive on the calendar through the Superintendent's office so it can be disseminated to the whole Board before the second reading. Mr. Goralski asked Mr. Connellan to thank Mrs. Smith for the information that she shared about the professional development early release days. Mrs. Carmody had no problem with continuing with the professional development days because the instruction that the students are receiving as a result of that is superior. Mrs. Queen could not overstate how

important she thought early dismissal days for professional development are, and she wholeheartedly endorses this calendar with those early dismissal days.

b. Resolution ~ CCSU and Town of Southington

Mr. Connellan noted that Mrs. Susan Saucier is the Project Manager of the Drug Free Communities Grant and this resolution was a formality in order to continue the work that they have been doing. Mrs. DiNello added that all the invoices are paid through the Southington Public Schools Business Office; however, Mrs. Saucier gives the approval on how this grant is spent. The school system is just facilitating the payment and does the drawdown of funds to reimburse the accounts when payments are made out of the Educational Grant Account.

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

“Move to approve the resolution as long as Susan Saucier remains the Project Manager of the Drug Free Communities Grant.”

Mr. Goralski noted that, should Mrs. Saucier be replaced, they would need another resolution.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

c. Appointment of the Director of Technology (Moved to Agenda Item 5.c)

d. Student Expulsion 2014-2015-04

MOTION: By Mrs. Notar-Francesco, seconded by Mrs. Clark:

“Move to expel student case number 2014-2015-04 as stipulated by the Superintendent of Schools.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: By Mrs. Clark, seconded by Mr. Oshana:

“Move to adjourn.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Blanchard
Recording Secretary