

DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2017 – 7:00 PM
Administrative Center, 63 Beaver Brook Road

CALL TO ORDER

The Chairperson, Ralph Pietrafesa, called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was then held for Mrs. Simone Simon from Broadview Middle School who passed away over the weekend.

ROLL CALL

Present: Ralph Pietrafesa, Gladys Cooper, Holly Robinson, David Metrena,
Eileen Alberts, Michael Ferguson, Kathy Molinaro
Absent: Richard Jannelli, Patrick Johnston, Richard Hawley, Frederick Karrat
Also Present: Dr. Pascarella, Dr. Glass, Joe Martino, Kim Thompson, Kelly Truchsess

RECOGNITIONS

- Mr. Pietrafesa publicly recognized former chairperson, Eileen Alberts, for serving as chair for the last three years and thanked her for her service.
- Mr. Pietrafesa thanked Mr. Ingersoll of Ingersoll Auto of Danbury, who was unable to attend due to travelling, for his donation of 30 laptops (15 for RPMS; 15 for DHS).

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION- None

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION - K. Molinaro moved, seconded by M. Ferguson that the Board of Education approves the items on the Consent Calendar, Exhibits 17-01 through 17-04, as recommended:

A. MINUTES

11/22/16 Superintendent Evaluation Committee Meeting
11/22/16 Board Meeting
12/7/16 Annual Board Meeting

B. PERSONNEL REPORT

Accept Leave of Absence: Adriane Ballaudo
Accept Resignations: Kim Doan-Sullivan, Patricia McCarthy (CRC facilitator only),
Ryan Mennett, Donna Merritt, Suzanne Morris,
Kristina Murphy, Patricia Parker-Knight,
Stefanie Pritchard, Rachel Torres-O'Leary,
Lauren Szast, Raymond Scott Weisner,
Rebecca Whitney, Danielle Winstanley
New Hires: See Exhibit 17-04

C. DONATION

Accept donation of 30 laptops from Ingersoll Auto of Danbury (15 for RPMS, 15 for DHS)

Motion passed at 7:05 pm.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE - None

ACTION ITEMS - None

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

DHS: Ali Primavera, BOG President; Monique Delima, Treasurer

ACE: Deanna Hernandez

Ali and Monique from DHS stated the following:

- Construction is still going well and the noise has been minimal with occasional rumbles in the building.
- The first semester ends on January 25th with no snow days.
- One of the school's goal was to get 100% of seniors to apply to college. Just under 70% have applied and over 80% have filled out applications.
- 1,060 out of 1,100 students have registered and payed for AP Exams.
- Electronic on site class registration begins on March 6, 2017 as well as Spring Conferences.
- Board of Governors held Ugly Sweater Contest where staff and students participated and won gift cards to Bagelman and the Hatters Cafe

Deanna from ACE stated the following:

- On November 15, 2016 seniors attended the Financial Reality Fair at WCSU where students participated in a variety of activities which provided them with financial tools on living life independently.
- On November 22, 2016 ACE held its annual Thanksgiving celebration. Over 400 people attended and it was again a huge success.
- Breakfast with Santa was cancelled this year due to weather conditions.
- On November 28, 2016 seniors participated in Financial Aid Night at NVCC where assistance was provided on completing financial aid forms.
- On December 2, 2016 first period attendance award winners participated in a reward trip to the Danbury Ice Arena.
- ACE students continue to participate in Math and Reading intervention groups using the IXL learning software program. Re-testing results showed students who attended twice a week sessions showed academic growth.
- On December 21, 2016 students in English I who were reading the novel The Color Purple, were treated to the play on Broadway thanks to a donation made to the school.
- On January 7, 2017 incoming DHS students were interviewed for acceptance to ACE for the second semester. Additional interviews will be held on January 21, 2017 with hopes of accepting 15 to 20 new students.

PRESENTATION – None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- A. Dental Program Update - Dr. Pascarella informed the Board of the resignation of Kim Doan-Sullivan, the district's Dental Service Coordinator. The dental program will now be moving under a civic program. Mr. Martino stated that we have some losses inside the program. We also have to carry additional malpractice insurance when running the program that the district does not have available in the budget. The program will still provide the same services and

same dentists at Ellsworth, School Based Health Center and Park Avenue, but will be overseen by civil services. Dr. Sal stated that there were a lot of billing issues and with Ms. Doan-Sullivan leaving this is a good opportunity to transfer and maybe enhance the program for our students with more consistent services. Dr. Pascarella also stated that the district's nursing coordinator, Kathy O'Dowd will be the liaison between the school and the program. Dr. Pascarella sensed reservations from the Board and asked if the Board needed to review the decision. Mr. Martino stated that he will meet with the committee next week and make a final decision. Dr. Pascarella will look into the program transfer some more and report back to the Board.

- B. Graduation Requirements - Dr. Pascarella stated that the high school has to update course selection for the current 8th grade class. Dr. Pascarella stated that there will need to be a policy committee to make the accommodations. It will be a regulation change due to redefining of some of the credits and the amounts. Dr. Pascarella asked for a policy committee meeting on January 25, 2017.
- C. Shelter Rock Modular Classrooms - Mr. Martino stated that insulation is being put up, doors being installed, heat is on, internet on and PA system is on. The walkway is heated, enclosed and secure. Hoping for Certificate of Occupancy by January 16, 2017.
- D. Budget Process and Timeline - Mr. Martino stated that there will be a finance meeting coming up mid next week and he will then do a presentation at next Board Meeting. Mr. Martino and Dr. Pascarella met with Mayor Mark Boughton on lobbying efforts.
- E. District Substitutes - Dr. Pascarella stated that the district is having a difficult time with substituting classes. The recent flu virus has hit the district hard. He stated that between having to sub for illnesses and professional development, we cannot keep up with all the work we are asking the departments and programs to do. Due to the amount of staff out, some of the professional development that was due to happen on January 11, 2017 had to be cancelled. Dr. Pascarella has assigned a committee to work on a system for next year to make changes to prevent the subbing issues. Dr. Pascarella also stated that he met with the Commissioner and all the alliance districts are having the same issues with subbing. Ms. Thompson stated that we currently have 200 subs in our sub pool, 75 of which are also subbing in surrounding districts. Ms. Thompson is looking at the data to see what other trends may be causing staff to be out. Dr. Pascarella did state that money is not the issue with the sub pool as Danbury is on the high end of the pay scale for subs.

DISCUSSION

- A. Alliance, ECS, OPM Mandate - Dr. Pascarella stated that the State was \$20 million short and they have notified all of the school districts that they will have to reduce their ECS. The Commissioner advocated not reducing anymore of our Alliance staff. We had a few staff we were not able to rehire such as SIOP Coaches. There is also some purchasing of supplies that we will also hold off on. Dr. Pascarella said that the good news is that we do not have to lay anyone off.
- B. State RFP for Charter School - Dr. Pascarella stated that for about 4 years there has been a moratorium on Charter schools. However with shortage of all money, The State Department has put out a Request for Proposal (RFP). Dr. Pascarella asked the Board to consider putting in an application for a Charter school. Dr. Pascarella stated that there is only so much money. That money is dispersed through all funding systems, of which a Charter is part of. If a Charter comes into town, there are related costs for us to be concerned about such as nursing services, SPED assessments and transportation. If we get a Charter school there would be

300 to 325 students. Dr. Pascarella stated that we would get \$3,000 per student or up to \$11,000 per student that would come to the school system. A Charter school application could bring in extra money to the district. Dr. Pascarella stated that in order for this to work, the Board would have to enter into a compact unit agreement with the Teachers Union. The Board would be permitted to say which policies would need to be implemented such as certification and safety. Other than salary and benefits, the Union would have control over the rest of the contract such as being able to raise funds, work on Saturdays and extending the school day if the compact provides that. Dr. Pascarella stated that there are a few schools in town interested in applying for a Charter. Dr. Pascarella has approached Mr. Jim Maloney because he has the resources for the after school work. Mr. Maloney has an interest to speak with the Board as well as the Mayor and Teachers Union. The application is not due until July. Dr. Pascarella would like the Board to think about it. Mr. Pietrafesa asked Dr. Pascarella to get more information so the Board can review and have a workshop regarding the Charter school.

INFORMATION

A. Modern Band Music Program

Dr. Pascarella stated that he sat down with Music Department and came up with ideas on how they can support the Band Program. The Music Department provided a draft on a Modern Band Program and Little Kids Rock. Dr. Pascarella is looking into what structural things we need to change to help to build the program. Mr. Martino stated that equipment and uniforms are very expensive and the bandmates themselves put in a small fortune. Dr. Glass stated that Mrs. Jill Russell-Benner started a program called Little Kids Rock. This program asks for the district to provide the space and they will provide the equipment and professional development teaching. Dr. Pascarella stated that he will keep the Board informed with this draft.

BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

A. Board Committees and PTO Liaisons

- Mr. Pietrafesa asked Board members if they were able to review the committee's list. Ms. Molinaro stated that TDEC evaluation cannot have six members, it must have five. Ms. Alberts agreed to leave that committee so there could be five.
- Mr. Pietrafesa stated that he met with the Cabinet a few weeks ago. Going forward the Board will be getting presentations ahead of time so they may be reviewed prior to the Board Meeting. Mr. Pietrafesa also stated that we will get updates on outcomes on items that come up during Public Participation and Executive Sessions.
- Mr. Pietrafesa stated that moving forward, chairpersons will be voted for during the first meeting as per the bylaws by the Board of Education.
- Mr. Pietrafesa stated that emails will no longer be sent to private emails. Ms. Debbie Warner will now send all emails through the DPS email system.
- Mr. Pietrafesa stated that there will be a policy committee meeting on January 25, 2017 at 6:30 pm prior to the Board Meeting.

BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS

Ms. Robinson attended the Mill Ridge Primary PTO meeting on January 10, 2017. She stated the meeting was fairly well attended. The Principal, Dr. Cronin, explained about the flooding that happened at the school. Teachers are moving back in and no personal items were lost. The parents in attendance were happy with the explanation they received and communicated by Dr. Cronin. Ms. Robinson also stated that MRP will be holding their annual APEX Fun Run again this year in the gymnasium at Westside Middle School Academy. Ms. Robinson stated this is a great fundraiser and that students earn donations per lap they run.

Ms. Cooper requested that when committee notices are sent out, if they could go out to all Board members versus just committee members. She also invited the Board to attend New Hope Baptist Church on January 16, 2017 at 10:00 am for their annual Martin Luther King Day program and that the Danbury High School Band will again be performing this year.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Ms. Molinaro moved, seconded by Mr. Metrena, that the Board of Education convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a confidential personnel matter regarding the selection of the Director of Student Services.

Motion carried at 8 pm.

Present: Ralph Pietrafesa, Gladys Cooper, Holly Robinson, David Metrena,
Eileen Alberts, Michael Ferguson, Kathy Molinaro
Absent: Richard Jannelli, Patrick Johnston, Richard Hawley, Frederick Karrat
Also Present: Dr. Pascarella, Dr. Glass, Joe Martino, Kim Thompson

Ms. Thompson updated the Board on on Director of Student Services job description. Dr. Pascarella then addressed the Board in support of candidate for Director of Student Services.

MOTION: Mr. Ferguson moved, seconded by Ms. Robinson, that the Board of Education return to Public Session.

Motion carried at 8:20 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Ferguson moved, seconded by Ms. Robinson, that the Board of Education adjourn its meeting of January 11, 2017 and the meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Kathy Molinaro, Secretary

(Meeting was videotaped)