

DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2016 – 7:00 PM

Administrative Center, 63 Beaver Brook Road

CALL TO ORDER

The Chairperson, Eileen Alberts, called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

BOARD ROLL CALL

Present: Eileen Alberts, Gladys Cooper, Michael Ferguson, Richard Hawley,
Patrick Johnston, Frederick Karrat, Kathleen Molinaro, Ralph Pietrafesa

Absent: Holly Robinson, R. Jannelli and D. Metrena

Also Present: Drs. Glass, Pascarella and K. Thompson, J. Martino and K. Truchsess

RECOGNITIONS

John Webber, DPS 2017 Teacher of the Year: (State Representative, Jan Giegler, presented certificate to Mr. Webber)

Dr. Pascarella asked Sandy Antanasoff, Principal of ACE, to say a few words about John Webber. She said some students at ACE are reluctant to learn, but not in John's classes. He makes learning fun. She said her office is next to his classroom and she can hear how engaged the kids are. He takes them on field trips and is currently involved with the Still River Watershed project. He is my right hand man and I am truly grateful to have him work with me. He likes being in his classes. The audience and Board applauded.

Ms. Giegler said that education is so important to all of us. It is really special, John, that you became Teacher of the Year someone so dedicated to working with adolescences. Being creative in your teaching at ACE is so important. Representatives of the Danbury districts send their congratulations and I present you with this award certificate signed by the Secretary of State and the Speaker of the House.

John told the Board that the best part of tonight is seeing Deanna here representing ACE. He said that there are people all over the district that have been helpful to him. The biggest thanks is to my wife; there is a lot that goes on at ACE after school hours, not to mention the field trips and being away from home for three days. I also have to thank Sandy; she was my mentor in the Best Program – even when she was not at ACE I would ask for her opinions. He also thanked the Safety Advocate and other teachers in the system. He said the Safety Advocate would take over any situations that came up so that he could continue to teach his classes. They were very important. He introduced his Mom and Dad and his two children to the Board. The Board thanked him for his dedicated service to the children in Danbury and congratulated him on being selected “Teacher of the Year.”

Ms. Alberts asked Boy Scout Jack Gorman to introduce himself. He said he was attending the meeting so that he could earn his Citizen's Badge.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Phyllis Kinlow, spoke on behalf of the NAACP. She told the Board that she was here tonight to discuss the hiring of ethnic minority teachers and administrations for Danbury Public Schools. She said our children will grow up to live in a world that is increasingly diverse and it is our job to prepare them to be comfortable and successful in that world. In order to do that, it is to their advantage to receive their

education from a faculty that reflects that diversity. The Superintendent expressed difficulty in recruiting minority faculty and administrations. The Danbury area NAACP is willing and qualified to provide assistance this area. NAACP already has an Education Committee in-place and has worked on various issues in the past with the school Board. They are willing to assist with recruitment, interviewing and retention of qualified minority teachers, administrators and professionals. Here are some of our ideas and please let us know how we can help:

- Identify and address barriers to hiring minority candidates
- Develop and share a plan for recruiting qualified minority professionals
- Define specific metrics to measure our effectiveness, including statistical breakdowns and student surveys
- Set up recruitment booths at job fairs of Historically Black Colleges and Universities
(On December 1 and 2 there will be a job fair at Yale)
- Develop relationships with education departments at local colleges and universities to recruit minority interns.

Ms. Alberts thanked her for coming to the Board and addressing minority recruitment.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION - M. Ferguson moved, seconded by R. Pietrafesa that the Board of Education approves the items on the Consent Calendar, Exhibits 16-131 through 16-133, as recommended:

MINUTES

9/28/16 Board Meeting
10/5/16 Board Workshop

PERSONNEL REPORT

Accept Resignations:	Janet Albanesi	Lisa Hughes	Jennifer Rasamny,
	Kristy Swanson	Frazier Termon	Anika Walker-Ross
Accept Retirements:	Sandra Turner, 45 years		
New Hires:	(see Exhibit 16-133)		

Motion carried at 7:23 pm.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE - None

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

DHS Representatives - None

ACE Representative, Deanna Hernandez, told the Board that Kyle Trocolla and John Webber took 12 students on their first October Educational trip of the year hiking the Appalachian Trail – they camped out and had a successful trip. ACE students participated in the following activities: Suicide Prevention Walk on September 18th at Tarrywile Park, collaboration with WCSU Education Professor Darla Shaw and retired ACE teacher Nancy Berman facilitating the event where students shared thoughts of “What makes a great teacher,” regional collaborative with the Still River Watershed project which promotes river and lake cleanup to enhance and protect our environment. We are pleased that students had 88% attendance participation rate for the month of September as this is an improvement from last September and in alignment with our school-wide goal of improving attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism.

Ms. Alberts thanked Deanna for her report and for attending the meeting.

PRESENTATION

Hiring and Affirmative Action, presented by Kim Thompson

Kim Thompson gave the Board a presentation on Hiring and Affirmative Action in the Danbury Public School System. She told the Board that the district has had difficulty in recruiting minority staff and administration has put in-place the following goals to meet the challenge:

- Goals #1 Support continued minority hiring into open positions in ratios that drive toward an overall workforce that better reflects the demographic diversity of the student population
- Goal #2 Support SDE efforts to expand pool of talented, diverse educators in locally based teacher preparation programs
- Goal #3 Establish culturally responsive educational practices for existing educator teams that will help all students, especially students of color and immigrant students, engage in effective learning

Ms. Thompson showed charts and graphs on statistics as follows:

Percentages of Certified Staff for 2016-2017

- 2% Asian
- 2% Black/African American
- 9% Hispanic
- 87% White

Student Population by Ethnicity

	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>Black/African American</i>	<i>Asian</i>	<i>White</i>
2016	5,028	847	773	4,276
2015	5,019	823	714	4,058

She explained to the Board the next steps administration will be taking:

- Plan implementation with continued hiring data minority
- Implement Exit Survey for certified and non-certified cohorts at new/2 years/5 year seniority

Ms. Cooper thanked Ms. Thompson and Dr. Pascarella for putting this presentation together for the Board and said it is important that the Board stays informed. Ms. Alberts added her appreciation to Ms. Thompson on behalf of the Board.

Dr. Pascarella said that he is going to Delaware State College to discuss possible teacher recruitments. He also said that he teaches at Sacred Heart University and has 40 students, only 1 minority in his class and other cities are experiencing the same challenges that we are. We talked about combining and working together with the local districts to try to bring folks to Connecticut.

ACTION ITEMS

2017-2018 Calendar

MOTION: M. Ferguson moved, seconded by P. Johnston that the Board of Education approve the 2017-2018 School Calendar

Motion carried at 7:58 pm.

2016-2017 Superintendent's Goals & Objectives

MOTION: M. Ferguson moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education approve the 2016-2017 Superintendent's Goals & Objectives

Some members of the Board asked if the font could be made bigger as it was hard to read. Dr. Pascarella said it could be, but it was done in a smaller font to keep it to one page. He also said the goals stay the same what changes is the activity to meet those goals.

Motion carried at 8:02 pm.

Completion of School Construction Projects

MOTION: M. Ferguson moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education accept the Danbury Head Start of Northern Fairfield County, State Project No. 034-0133 N, school construction project as complete and authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to certify and execute the SCG-049F form

Motion carried at 8:03 pm.

CIFC Head Start Food Service Agreement

MOTION: M. Ferguson moved, seconded by P. Johnston that the Board of Education approve the Food Service agreement for the CIFC's Head Start Programs

Mr. Hawley asked about the payment schedule – why is breakfast for adults less than for a child? Mr. Martino said that is the contract that we have. Ms. Molinaro said Head Start gives us those prices. Mr. Martino said we provide meals for them and we get in return a small marginal profit. Ms. Cooper ask how many children are we feeding. Mr. Martino said there are approximately 280 students in the Head Start Program, but he didn't have the precise number. It is not part our enrollment numbers.

Motion carried at 8:05 pm.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Enrollment Update

Dr. Pascarella said the October enrollment is official. We hired a group to do a study for us. We are going to have some real challenges. Mr. Martino said there is growth in the middle schools. We seem to be adding students all year long. We had to add teachers. There was 6% increase at South Street; drop in Pembroke; the two middle schools are coming into parity. Mr. Hawley asked if there was cooperation with teachers for transfers Ms. Thompson replied definitely yes.

Shelter Rock Portable Classrooms Update

Mr. Martino said the contract is moving along. Timeline and bonding are all in-place and at the next meeting there will be a much tighter timeline.

Danbury High School Construction Status

The Superintendent said the construction workers have been phenomenal. Mr. Martino told the Board that the footings are going in now and the cooperation has been great. Dr. Pascarella said there was some concern about the playing fields but it is working out.

Revised Student Trip Application

The Superintendent said that there are some modifications made to the form for the student travel application. The modifications will be included in our regulations on how the trip is guided. We are

going to start using this form right now. If a trip is cancelled it will state what provisions are made and also insurance protection.

Vo-Ag Update

Mr. Martino said we presently have 19 students in this program. We have three vans at \$8,000 per year. There are no reimbursements. We did put a cap for 15 students. We would like to have a central stop at DHS and parents would have to shuttle their children to and from that location. We are exploring our options. We need to put some parameters around it. Only 2 of the 19 are seniors. Bethel does a central stop for their kids. He said the grown has been great. The Superintendent said we would have to tell parents about this early in the Fall.

DISCUSSION

Aspirant Program (The Delta Program 2016-2017)

Dr. Glass handed out to the Board an update of the Delta Program. He said that he is pleased with the way it is working. He mentioned that John Webber is one of the Aspirants. Dr. Glass told the Board that the Aspirants spend one full day each month shadowing their mentoring principal. In addition there are other activities which are determined by arrangement with mentoring principal and central office administration. He highlighted some of the topics that will be covered by the facilitators.

ASPIRANT

MENTOR

Matt Calvanese

Helena Nitowski

Elementary School

Jill Russell Benner

Edie Thomas

Middle School

John Webber

Sandra Atanasoff

Alternative School

Dr. Glass said he will keep the Board posted. It has attracted a lot of folks. It is a “grow your own principal, administrator and leader program.

INFORMATION

Meet the Candidates, October 18, 7:00 pm at Broadview Auditorium

BOARD CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

Ms. Alberts said the DHS jamboree is on October 22nd from 5:00-9:00 PM

BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS

On October 14th there will be a “Build a Globe” program at Morris Street School from 1:00-3:00 pm.

Ms. Cooper asked Ms. Truchsess if the numbers in Special Education are going up. She said they have by a couple hundred. 13% increase, while the state of Connecticut’s average is 14%. There are not enough teachers in the state to meet the growth demand. Things in our district are going very well.

Ms. Cooper thanked the members of the Superintendent’s Evaluation Committee for taking the time to meet and discuss the evaluation form. She said hopefully we will have a brief information session about the form and she would get back to the Board members on when that will be.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: R. Hawley moved, seconded K. Molinaro that the Board of Education convene in Executive Session for the purposes of discussing negotiations between:

- (1) Danbury Board of Education and the Danbury School Administrators Union
- (2) Danbury Board of Education and the NEA-Danbury (Teachers), with possible action in public session.

Motion carried at 8:35 pm.

Present: Eileen Alberts, Gladys Cooper, Michael Ferguson, Richard Hawley,
Patrick Johnston, Frederick Karrat, Kathleen Molinaro, Ralph Pietrafesa

Absent: Holly Robinson, R. Jannelli and D. Metrena

Also Present: Drs. Glass, Pascarella and K. Thompson and J. Martino

Ms. Alberts call the Executive Session to order at 8:40 pm and turned the meeting over to Ms. Thompson. There was a brief discussion.

PUBLIC SESSION

MOTION: K. Molinaro moved, second M. Ferguson that the Board of Education return to Public Session

Motion carried at 8:54 pm.

MOTION: R. Hawley moved, second by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education ratifies the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Danbury Board of Education and the Danbury School Administrators Union, as proposed.

Motion carried unanimously at 8:55 pm.

MOTION: R. Hawley moved, seconded by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education ratify the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Danbury Board of Education and NEA-Danbury (Teachers), as proposed.

In favor: E. Alberts G. Cooper M. Ferguson R. Hawley
K. Molinaro R. Pietrafesa F. Karrat

Abstain: P. Johnston

Motion carried at 8:56 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

R. Pietrafesa moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education adjourn its October 13, 2016 Board meeting and the meeting adjourned at 8:57 pm.

Michael Ferguson, Secretary

(meeting was videotaped)