

DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2013 - 7:00 P.M.
Administrative Center, 63 Beaver Brook Road

CALL TO ORDER

Richard Hawley, Secretary, called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Eileen Alberts, Gladys Cooper, Gary Falkenthal, Annrose Fluskey-Lattin, Richard Hawley, Richard Jannelli, Kathleen Molinaro, Robert Taborsak, Phyllis Tranzillo

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

RECOGNITIONS

DHS Celebrate My Drive Campaign

Gary Boccaccio, Principal of Danbury High School, said we are fortunate and happy that we received \$100,000 for our My Drive Campaign. Carmela Calafiore, Lisa Frese and Diane Bruno united the entire community and City all in the common goal and positive effort. They worked tirelessly at the Danbury Mall, supermarkets, bowling alleys and theatres. They put in over 250,000 e-mails. We were placed between 2-5; we have a challenge for 'number one' next year. Ms. Bruno thanked everyone for the opportunity. She said without Mr. Boccaccio's support we would not be able to do it. It was the perfect students at the right time, otherwise it doesn't happen. The students then introduced themselves. They were asked to tell the Board about their time and efforts to have this happen. The comments were; it was the longest week, we said never again; but hope the kids do it next year; it was an awesome experience; accomplished what everyone will remember; we stayed after school until 5:00 pm for two months; hard work paid off well; we knew that we were going to win this. Dr. Pascarella asked how the funds were going to be spent. A student told the Board that a Committee has been put together so we can come up with some ideas that would be beneficial to the community and school. There will be a box for suggestions on how to use the funds. 10% is going to safe driving, we don't know what to do with that yet, but it will be for the community.

Two Board members leaving the Board

Mr. Hawley read individual Citations from the Mayor to Robert Taborsak and to Gary Falkenthal who will be leaving the Board: "Mayor's Citation, awarded to Robert Taborsak and Gary Falkenthal in recognition and appreciation for your dedicated service to the City of Danbury Board of Education signed this 26 day of November, 2013".

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

DHS representatives spoke earlier in the meeting under recognition section.

PRESENTATION

Literacy Program, Christine Pruss, Director of Reading & Language Arts K-8

Dr. William Glass introduced Chris Pruss and Pam Dalton. He stated that the Common Core has become very controversial, some States opted in and some opted out. For us, we have opted in. Danbury has been work on it for many years.

Dr. Glass said Chris Pruss will walk you through briefly on the work they are doing and what they plan to do next year. Ms. Pruss thanked her team for being present and for all their work. She spoke about the partnership common core and balanced literacy. She said in 2010 the State adopted the common core. She had a powerpoint presentation. In the presentation, there was an older woman recounting when she and her Mom and Dad were on the Titanic on that fateful day. After she related her story, Ms. Pruss asked the Board questions on how she was able to give such accurate information and who she might be, and if they learned anything new that they had not heard before. A few Board members responded that there was information they had not heard before and guessed at who she might be. Ms. Pruss moved on with the program telling the Board that every elementary school has a language specialist. And there are 18 reading teachers in the system plus STEM teachers. Ms. Dalton distributed several pages to the Board for them to read. Once all the Board members read the pages in the allotted time, Ms. Dalton gave them a test. It was actually a 4th grade test that is given to the children in the program. The Board members were quite surprised how hard the test was.

A few Board members had questions about her program in general. Ms. Cooper thanked Ms. Pruss, Ms. Dalton and their staff for a great presentation. The Board applauded.

ACTION ITEMS

October 2013 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

MOTION: G. Falkenthal moved, seconded K. Molinaro that the Board of Education accept the October 2013 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

Mr. Martino told the Board that during the month of October 2013, the District expended \$10,809,314, resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$25,938,265.

Motion carried at 8:16 pm.

October 2013 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

MOTION: K. Molinaro moved, seconded R. Taborsak that the Board of Education accept the October 2013 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

Mr. Martino told the Board that during the month of October 2013, the District expended \$2,381,255 resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$4,662,316.

Mr. Martino said there is an increase in Title I this year and the IDEA grant. We are now calculating some health care costs coming out of the grant. Mr. Jannelli asked if Title I funds can be used in other areas. Dr. Pascarella said, no they keep a very close watch on how the funds are spent.

Motion carried at 8:21 pm.

Honeywell Energy Efficiency Agreement

Mr. Martino said he put in your Board packet the building systems agreement with Honeywell on the cost savings for lighting replacement and variable speed drive upgrades at Pembroke, Osborne Street and Beaver Brook. This project will be covered under a 3 year 0% financing program from CL&P. The term is 3-4 years depending on the project size at each location. The yearly projected savings will be \$23,214; yearly projected savings after financing will be \$470,403. These estimates are based on Honeywell projections and a 3 year 0% financing from CL&P. Mr. Martino said he met with the City yesterday. We quickly will wrap up Pembroke by the end of January. We have targeted school that we are going after next. Once these projects are finished we are going to do an analysis for the rest of the schools. Mr. Jannelli asked if it is in the budget for next year. Mr. Martino said the payments will come out of our savings.

MOTION: K. Molinaro moved, seconded P. Tranzillo that the Board of Education approve the Honeywell Energy Efficiency Agreement for work at Pembroke, Beaver Brook and Osborne Street

Motion carried at 8:25 pm.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Uniform Regional Calendar/2014-2015 School Calendar Modifications

Dr. Pascarella said the Task Force met to discuss the Uniform Regional Calendar. Presently we have a tier calendar, next year volunteer and after than a mandatory calendar. In developing a common calendar there are a number of factors that can influence the design: number of student days required in the district; special community events unique to a district, the calendar of a receiving high school for districts that only have Pre-K-8 Programs; teacher contracts for the scheduling of PD days; polling and election issues and religious holidays. There are variances in the professional days, etc. It won't affect the end of the school year, but it will common vacation time. We will be looking at the calendar. WSA has been looking at the calendar; they want to start the school year prior to Labor Day. Instead of a State calendar, it will be regional. The Superintendent said they are looking for two to three year schedule. They need to give us time to negotiate contracts and we need time to implement our contracts. By January we will make the modifications and adjust the schedule.

Naugatuck Valley Community College–Middle College Initiative

We met with the President of the college and have been attending a number of meetings. We have an agreement with the College with some our students. We are going to have a look at our 5 year plan. We have an agreement with Naugatuck with some students. We need to expose our Junior and Senior students who have post-secondary experience while in high school. We have this offering now for a number of students, but if we set it as a priority, we can increase the numbers. College courses can help students choose careers as well as build credits students take to college. We are going to talk to the Principal of Abbott Tech. We need to work with them as well. Currently we have 700 students in the AP courses

Technology Grant

Dr. Pascarella told the Board that we are in line for the Technology Grant. He said he needs to thank Dr. Glass and Mr. Martino for that. It is a reimbursement grant, we have to spend money before we can use it. Mr. Martino said we will complete all the wireless in elementary and each will have a brand new cart. We will also have a secondary fiber line running off the high school. We have to come up with \$145,000. We are working with the City on the possible way to fund it.

Energy Efficiency Update at King Street Campus, Hayestown and Stadley Rough

CL&P did their analysis for lighting upgrades. Honeywell has been in to replace motors. Based on the financing 3 years we will finance \$59,000; total savings we are in the good for \$56,000. We will utilize the savings of \$115,000. A really good project

DISCUSSION

Exploration Academy 2014 Opening

Dr. Pascarella said there are some options. I can't tell you how much work we have done. It is worth our effort. The financing is challenging. We are in a good position with STEM. We are going to present the rationale. We don't need to make decisions tonight. Dr. Glass and Mr. Martino put this together for us. Dr. Glass told the Board that much of our stuff is in line. Without the laptop carts they won't have the materials. We worked hours and hours on this. The parents want global studies. STEM will be picked up from Rogers Park and rolled into Mill Ridge. Open with grade 6 for global studies; train the teachers; resources at an adequate level and that it is everything that we promised to the community. The downside, in September if we follow this model, it would be good to go into retreat level. To phase-in would make more sense. Dr. Glass then referred to the matrix. Nothing is cast in stone, all lotteries running simultaneously in one fell swoop. Leave AIS alone it seems to work okay. Mr. Martino said the opening at 600 would be 53.8 fte, \$1.6 million dollars, for a total of \$5.4 million for 600 students. If we shift gears and it opens at 400 level, it will cost less. Dr. Pascarella said we will have 18 new classrooms that we have to open up. Mr. Martino added that we are making a program based budget so you can actually see the numbers.

The Superintendent said we can deliver a quality program. Mr. Taborsak and Ms. Fluskey-Lattin asked is it physically going to work. Dr. Pascarella responded if we opened 7 grade, we would needed additional staff. You will have a principal starting in January. Dr. Glass stated that we will

require a quality program and we will need teacher training. Quality training and building curriculum will be tricky to pull off in a timeframe. February 1st we are going to do the lottery. We won't know our budget approach until April.

Ms. Molinaro said the STEM parents are not happy right now they feel the program has been watered down. We need to have a class A program. Ms. Fluskey-Lattin wants the Superintendent to survey parents as to how many parents would like to be in the program. Dr. Pascarella said he would talk to the PTO folks.

INFORMATION

2014 Board Meeting Dates – No discussion

Redistricting Parent Meeting, December 5th, 7:00 p.m., Broadview

Dr. Pascarella said we will have a presentation that evening on the proposed redistricting. We will have breakout sessions by the schools that will be affected; Mill Ridge Primary, Morris Street, Park Avenue, Shelter rock, South Street and Stadley Rough. We will bring back to the Board at the next meeting to discuss it. Ms. Tranzillo wanted a breakdown of the maps, wants to see the difference between the two plans. Ms. Molinaro did not want the consultant, Mr. Ross Haber, to do the presentation. Ms. Fluskey-Lattin said the parents will want to know the names of the streets.

Safety Task Force Meeting, December 11th, 7:00 p.m., BBAC – No discussion

Revised Board Bylaw 1-1, Filling Vacancies

Dr. Pascarella said we have six people interested in being on the Board. The Superintendent said Ms. Thompson said majority can have no more than 6 to can fill the vacancy of the Board. We are going to schedule interviews for Tuesday, December 10th starting at 6:00 pm. The interviews will be 15 minutes each. Debbie Warner will contact them concerning the meeting date and time. At the end of the interviews on the 10th we will have two new board members.

Board Strategic Planning Retreat, December 5th conference call

Dr. Pascarella said the Nellie-Mae Foundation is interested in working with us further. One key element that was becoming more attractive is they are willing to do that with the Board. They are very interested in Board goals and administrative goals for funding. They will pay for the whole thing. We will have that conversation on December 5th.

BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Board of Education Annual Meeting, December 4th, 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Hawley said that the Annual Meeting is one week from tomorrow. Group photo will be at 5:30 pm.

Special Board Meeting, interview candidates for Board of Education

The Superintendent said the candidates for the two Board Member seats will be interviewed on December 10th. He asked if the Board wants the interviews to be 15 minutes each or 20 minutes each. It was agreed that the interviews will be 15 minutes each.

Exploration Academy Principal Interview Panel

Dr. Pascarella said we need two Board Members for Exploration Academy Principal Interview Panel. Ms. Cooper and Ms. Alberts volunteered to be on the panel.

BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: G. Cooper moved, seconded by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the Board's Self-Evaluation

Motion carried at 9:30 pm.

Present: Eileen Alberts, Gladys Cooper, Gary Falkenthal, Annrose Fluskey-Lattin, Richard Hawley, Richard Jannelli, Kathleen Molinaro, Robert Taborsak, Phyllis Tranzillo

The Board members had a brief discussion

MOTION: R. Jannelli moved, seconded by R. Taborsak, that the Board return to Public Session.

The motion carried at 10:00 pm

PUBLIC SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

G. Falkenthal moved, seconded by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education adjourn its November 26, 2013 Board Meeting and the meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Richard Hawley, Secretary