

DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2013
Administrative Center, 63 Beaver Brook Road

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to develop in all children the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which will enable them to live a productive and self-fulfilling life and engage in responsible citizenship in a global society.

Present: E. Alberts, S. Chilian, G. Cooper, G. Falkenthal, R. Hawley, A. Fluskey-Lattin, R. Jannelli, K. Molinaro, S. Steichen, R. Taborsak, P. Tranzillo, Board Members; Drs. W. Glass and S. Pascarella, J. Martino, and K. Thompson from Administration

Absent: None

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson S. Steichen called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairperson Steichen asked S. Chilian to do the roll call.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Senator Jim Maloney is here for two reasons, one is Head Start funding. He thanked the Board and the Superintendent for their support. He distributed a handout to the Board showing what comparable communities in the State receive for funding. He also said he feels that security is not an educational expense and should not be included in the education budget. He suggests the Board request this money from the City.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION - S. Chilian moved, seconded by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education approve the items on the Consent Calendar, as recommended:

A. MINUTES

Special Board Meeting (Exp), 1/22/13
Board Meeting, 1/23/13
Finance Committee Meeting, 1/24/13
Special Board Meeting (Exp), 1/30/13
Finance Committee Meeting, 1/30/13

B. PERSONNEL

Accept Leave of Absence: Jessica Javier, Shirley Hill
Accept Resignations: Maria Golightly (Adult Ed Only),
Ashley Kelly, Carolyn Millard,
Katie O'Neil

NEW HIRES 1/18/13 – 2/7/13

CERTIFIED

Name	Location	Subject
Lawrence, LeTanya	DHS	SPED Teacher
Mannion, Robyn	STR	L/T Grade 2 SUB - Bal. of 2012-2013 SY.
Saracino, Amber	Psychologist	Pemb., MREC, Non-Pub

Name	Location	Non-Certified Subject
Brown, Lauren	STR/Pemb.	L/T SUB Teacher
Crenshaw, Rod	CRC	CRC-ELP Site Facilitator
Forlenzo, Mark	DHS	L/T SUB Teacher
Gailliard, Keith	RPMS	Safety Advocate
Gallardo, Gabriela	SHR	Temp. P/T ESL PARA
Giannone, Joshua	MRP	FRC-Youth Dev. Coord.
Gonzalez, Kassandra	STR	CRC Enrichment Assoc.
Kelly, Ashley	KSP	L/T SUB Teacher
Maier, Renate	BVMS	Safety Advocate
Mainolfi, Patrick		Temp. Safety Advocate
Panasci, Alyssa	South St.	CRC Enrichment Assoc.
Pirri, Amanda	Park	CRC Enrichment Assoc.
Tarsi, Nicholas	Morris	CRC Enrichment Assoc.
Trevail, Michael	MRP	CRC Enrichment Assoc.
Weimer, Jr., Kyle	Ells	Temp. Safety Advocate
Zilliox, JoAnne	MRP	CRC Enrichment Assoc.
Beekman, Alyson		Substitute Teacher
Fraccaroli, Teresa		Substitute Para/Tutor
Gautrau, Roger		Substitute Para/Tutor
Henderson, Megan		Substitute Teacher
Knapik, Heather		Dental Assistant
LaValle, Christopher		Substitute Teacher
Munoz, Trevor		Substitute Teacher
Pirri, Amanda		Substitute Para/Tutor
Slonski, Stephanie		Substitute Teacher
Thomas, Stacy		Substitute Teacher
Tracey, Olivia		Substitute Teacher
Trindade, Erica		Substitute Teacher

The motion passed unanimously at 7: 10 p.m.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE – Ann Riddle

She is here to invite members to the Read Across America Celebration. A list of teachers who will host the event was sent to S. Steichen.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Danbury High School: None

Alternative Center: Jessica Pacheco spoke on behalf of ACE. She told the Board a little bit about herself and the activities she participates in at the school. Ten ACE students graduated in January this year. It was one of the biggest midyear graduating classes that they have had. She thanked the Board members who attended their graduation ceremony. The first Parents Night of the second semester will be on February 25 and she invites all to attend. ACE has also been working on raising awareness and funding for Alzheimer’s Disease by writing letters to Senator Michael McLachlan. He replied to all the

letters and visited ACE on February 5. A day has been planned in Hartford to raise awareness of Alzheimer's Disease. ACE is teaming up with WCSU for projects coming up this Spring. ACE students are participating in the STARS program where visits are made to other alternative schools in Connecticut. She thanked the Board on behalf of the school for the repairs made to their building and appreciates being allowed to be a representative for the school to the Board.

ACTION ITEM

2013-2014 Budget

Dr. Pascarella respectfully requested that this item be tabled until the next Board meeting on February 23. Dr. Pascarella said he has been in contact with the Mayor and with Hartford today with regard to the ECS money. There is a lot of confusion regarding the ECS grant, alliance grant, the categorical grant, in terms of how it is to be expended, and how it will be accounted. Mayor Boughton is in Hartford today to try to get clarity. He agrees that we should have an extension. Dr. Pascarella wrote the Mayor and indicated to him that we will submit a budget request to the City by the end of the month. Currently, our budget on hand would be 5.94%. As soon as we have more information, he asks the Board to go through it and make a determination. We can then construct the budget and send the draft to the Mayor for his consideration.

J. Martino said many calls were made to the State, including Brian Mahoney's office. He explained that ECS money comes through the City, and with this new \$3.7 million dollar increase in ECS, the question has arisen as to whether this is new money and whether it has to go towards new programs. When this question was posed to the State, we did not get a definitive answer. J. Martino said these funds will come in directly to the Board of Education, which is interesting, because all normal ECS funds work through the City. He said it is still undecided on how that money will come in, if it is truly just straight operational dollars, which can go right towards our bottom line budget, or if it is \$3.7 million dollars of truly new programs. J. Martino continued by saying that the \$1.7 million dollars of alliance money is not included in the \$3.7 million dollars.

J. Martino reported that the priority grant is staying whole, as is. There are no cuts in the priority grant. R. Jannelli asks if the funding of the \$3.7 million dollars comes with no strings attached as part of the ECS funding, would the City take part of that or will it come to us at 100%. J. Martino responded by saying that is still undecided. R. Jannelli also said because of the uncertainty and timing, he would like to suggest that once central administration is comfortable with getting a set of facts to go with, that a meeting be scheduled up as soon as possible with the Finance Department. Clarifying questions were asked by the Board members which were answered by J. Martino and Dr. S. Pascarella.

MOTION: S. Chilian moved, seconded by P. Tranzillo that the Board of Education table the Motion to Adopt the Superintendent's Fiscal Year 2013-2014 budget which was to be presented to the Mayor.

The motion passed unanimously at 7:29 p.m.

PRESENTATION

Sequestration

Dr. Pascarella said that sequestration is much of their title money. He said we will be meeting with our legislators on March 2. He is trying to get Senator Murphy and Blumenthal's Office to attend and also people from the State. The sequestration, from what he understands, looks as though it will pass through and they expect to retrench before they actually start applying the cuts. He said if it does do that, it will impact our money, particularly for Title I. It could affect funds that are allocated for extensions and support and some of the summer learning, but it could be about one-quarter of a million dollars that we could lose. Questions were asked by Board members and a discussion ensued.

ACTION ITEMS

A. Stadley Rough School Additions and Alterations

MOTION: S. Chilian moved, seconded by R. Taborsak that The Board of Education authorizes the Chairperson of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools to approve the final plans, contract specifications, and cost estimate for the additions and alterations to Stadley Rough School and sign the ED042 form and submit it to the State of Connecticut for approval.

R. Taborsak said it is his understanding that the State will reimburse the City and Dr. Pascarella said it should be about 50%. K. Molinaro said this is the smallest of the alternations with four classrooms. There is an issue with asbestos but it is not a dramatic issue. It will cost between \$3.9 and \$4 million dollars and the date of completion is targeted for September 2014. They are going to add parking spaces, and they have to do some resizing of the storm drainage. She said that the new building will have the locks that you can lock from the inside, card access, roller shades on the windows, etc.

The motion passed unanimously at 7:34 p.m.

B. Mill Ridge Middle School Additions and Alterations

MOTION: S. Chilian moved, seconded by E. Alberts that The Board of Education authorizes the Chairperson of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools to approve the final plans, contract specifications, and cost estimate for the additions and alterations to Mill Ridge Middle School and sign the ED042 form and submit it to the State of Connecticut for approval.

Dr. Pascarella said that this has been a challenge as the school was not built for 600 students. The concern was the hallway, and it took a lot of work and time, but he is impressed with the architects. They have come in and created a wonderful venue now. They took a problem and made it a value added.

The motion passed unanimously at 7:39 p.m.

C. School Based Health Center at Ellsworth Avenue School

MOTION: S. Chilian moved, seconded by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education approve the establishment of a School Based Health Center at Ellsworth Avenue School if the funding application is awarded and funds are received.

Chairperson Steichen asked if there is space at the school. Dr. Glass said it is one of the largest areas we have in any of the schools. He said it will not be a problem and will be a very nice addition. R. Taborsak asked if the Health Center will be accessible to all the elementary schools or just confined to Ellsworth Avenue School. Dr. Pascarella said it is only accessible to Ellsworth Avenue School, but that there has been talk of trying to do a mobile model, but that was not acceptable to the State. Dr. Glass said we just completed the demographic profile that was part of the submission, and that is why it is contained to one school. It had to meet a particular poverty threshold. He went on to say if it were opened to the district, it would fracture that poverty threshold because it would take into consideration all of the schools in the aggregate. Dr. Pascarella said we have a relationship with clinics and nurses that do provide for all the students. P. Tranzillo asked if we are adding to Park Avenue, why not create enough space to add a School Based Health Center. Dr. Pascarella said Park Avenue is the largest addition, but the funding is not there at this time.

The motion passed unanimously at 7:44 p.m.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Middle School Magnet Programs Parent Survey Results and Program Recommendation

Dr. Glass read the results of the survey. The first choice for an educational model was the STEM Academy (59%), the second was the International Studies Academy (16.5%), the third was Performing Arts (12.1%), Comprehensive Middle School (8.3%) was fourth, and Business and Finance came in fifth (4.1%). There were a total of 315 families that answered the questions. No families skipped a question. Another question asked about which educational model would be the second choice for your child, and 32.5% picked International Studies Academy, 21% picked STEM, Business and Finance came in third with 21%, Performing Arts came in at 13% and a Comprehensive Middle School came in at 11% based on 314 families. Another question on the survey was which middle school would your child normally attend, and 43% of the families were from Broadview and 57% were from Rogers Park. Also, another question posed is if it meant a longer bus ride, would you support your child travelling to another middle school to attend a specific themed academy? Ninety-two (92%) said they would be willing to have a longer bus ride. Dr. Glass explained that a hard copy of the survey was sent to the families and then later a robo call was made and asked them to go to the website. Another question posed was if two of your children attend middle school at the same time, would you be willing to enroll them in different schools based on student choice or availability in a specific academy. Eighty (80%) percent said they would be willing to split the kids. Another question posed was whether the family believed the increase of parent and student choice offered by these academies creates a benefit for your child, ninety-six (96%) percent said yes. Another question posed was whether the family would be willing to send their child to a themed-based academy for only eighth grade. Sixty-seven (67%) percent said they would be willing to do that. The same question was asked using seventh and eighth grade, and the number jumped to 91%. Another question posed was if your child is currently enrolled in middle school, would you still consider enrolling him or her in a new magnet program in either seventh or eighth grade, 87 to 88% said yes. The survey was sent to all K-8 parents. Most of the people that responded were families of middle school youngsters.

A. Fluskey-Lattin suggested that the survey be resent because she feels the parents were confused about getting the paper survey and did not know they had to get on the website. Discussion ensued and it was decided to resend the survey to receive more data from all the K-4 parents. Another question would be included to ask if the family surveyed had a child attending the magnet school.

AIS Magnet School Lottery Update

Dr. Glass explained that the results are on Exhibit 13-39 of the Board's packet. He said that there were 800+ applicants, and this number represents the number of applicants we have received in the past five years. J. Martino added that this was the first year the application was online, and of the 818 applications, we only had 194 hard copies.

Teacher/Administrator Evaluation Update

Dr. Pascarella said there has been a decision made by the State Board. The administration is moving ahead and will follow the Marzano model that we adopted. He said that the PEAC Committee made a recommendation to the State Board. The State Board created three options for a district. Those options will go to the committee made up of teachers and administration, and our current committee is made up of administrators, Board reps, and union representation. That would be an appropriate committee to do it. They need to come to a consensus about which alternative they would recommend to this Board. If we cannot resolve it, the State Commissioner will resolve it.

Dr. Glass said we tried to push back on the testing metric piece, but they refused. They said we must do the test component, the observation component, a parent survey component and a student survey component. Those four components must be in. Once you look at having the complete model, then there are three options:

- You can do one-third of your schools starting July 1, 2013;
- You can choose to do 50% of your teachers in all schools;
- You can create something that is an amalgamation of this, but it still has to meet the criteria of being 100% of the model itself.

Dr. Glass said the committee is a wonderful committee because it has NEA representation, Danbury administrator representation, elementary, middle and high school teacher representation and administrators at large. Dr. Glass further said they are thinking of going with third, fourth and fifth grade teachers because they have to administer the CMT, tenth grade teachers because they have to administer the CAPT, and then taking Kindergarten, first and second grade teachers and doing a little bit of a different model with them that does not have the metric of the CMT or CAPT in it and the social workers and psychologists leaving those folks alone as well.

In simpler terms, taking the tested grades and using those as Year 1, and anyone who is not a classroom teacher, i.e., social worker, psychologist, art teacher, etc., would be put in Year 2. Year 2 everyone has to be done. He feels that because this is such a work in progress and there has been very little clarity coming from Hartford on this, we want to go slow. As they are going through this study with the NEAG School of Education, they are finding that it is falling apart. The Marzano framework, which we have selected is fine. Dr. Glass said we have purposely held the reins back a little to see what is happening out in the field and it is not good news. This January the NEAG School of Education has scheduled findings to the State Department of Education. We believe that it will be grossly flawed in terms of the current model and that significant changes will occur, but we will be in a wonderful position because we will have the Marzano model fully implemented, with one caveat, which is we do not have a lot of administrators anymore, and that priority of keeping teachers in front of kids will cause us a problem when this model goes live in two years. We are hoping to eventually end up with a cyclical model. Dr. Glass said the dream is every three years so each year we would do one third of our staff. We will probably end up at best at 50% Year 1, 50% Year 2. During Year 2, the

first 50% self-evaluation, and Year 3, they get evaluated again, and the other 50% go on self-evaluation, so every other year, I get directly evaluated and in interim years, I do a self-evaluation.

Board members asked clarifying questions and Dr. Glass answered them. Dr. Glass said on February 22, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. the Teacher Evaluation Committee will hold its meeting at Beaver Brook Administration Center. On February 25, we will have a second meeting.

DISCUSSION

Summer Learning (9th grade transition)

Dr. Pascarella said that they are looking into extending the school year and the opportunity with summer learning for a number of reasons. He said they were also asked to look at the attendance pattern at the middle schools. Dr. Pascarella reported they have submitted more unification of our approach towards absences. This was done two years ago. The problem at the middle schools has been the accountability piece. The middle schools have no credit-bearing courses. Therefore, there are a lot of things that go into making judgments about youngsters at that grade level. At the high school, if you do not pass the course, you have to repeat it to get the credit by going to summer school. In the middle school, you may be retained. That is taken very seriously. So there is not the ability to say if you do not attend a certain number of days, you will not get your credit. He further said when the expectations across the departments became common, in terms of learning objectives and the common form of assessment, the teachers were teaching towards that pace, and the students were not keeping up. It was not an intellectual problem; it was an efficacy problem, in terms of their work habits and accountability.

Dr. Pascarella said the recommendation has been to not only hold them accountable, but to provide them with the skills and the correct organizational habits to succeed at the high school. This summer we would like to create a middle school program that is intended for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students who need to review grade levels in math and language arts before moving on to the next grade level. The students will be recommended for this program by their teachers and guidance counselors. Currently, the students will move ahead unless there are reasons for retention and there is Board Policy around that. We are saying now that if the student's profile fits one that needs more accountability because you have not put in the effort, then you have to go to a summer school program, and if not, there will be other repercussions. He said their hope is that as they move to the high school, their attitude will change. If not, retention will be a serious possibility for some or placements into other programs, such as Endeavor or ACE. The other part is if the student gets into the high school but they are not familiar with the facilities or the expectations, they might want to try the high school in the summer, so we would have a summer transition program for eighth grade students. Other possibilities are being looked into for fifth and sixth graders. We will have to pay for these required programs. We also have secondary students who did not pass a course and they do not have credit, so we would like to offer a credit-bearing course at the high school. There are some schools in Connecticut that provide a Carnegie unit of credit but it has a standard of so many hours. It would be offered to students looking to make up one-half of a credit, but you must pass one-quarter of the semester in order to enroll in the class. Dr. Pascarella said we have offered this in the past but it has not been successful, and he feels the reason is that we did not identify students until May or June and we ran out of time. Our goal is to get this out by March so people can plan for it. We also want to offer an accelerated program at the high school for students who are looking to earn one credit, which would include Algebra, Geometry or Chemistry. Students must have met the pre-requisite to enroll in accelerated courses and it is

happening during the year. The expense would be on the student for these courses. This is the concept for moving forward. Board members asked clarifying question and a discussion ensued.

BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

CABE Day on the Hill, March 6th, 8:30 a.m., Hartford –

All members were asked to report to Debbie Warner to let her know if they will be attending.

MOTION: K. Molinaro moved, seconded by R. Taborsak that the Board of Education convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing confidential personnel related matters.

The motion passed unanimously at 8:28 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Present: E. Alberts, S. Chilian, G. Cooper, G. Falkenthal, R. Hawley, A. Fluskey-Lattin,
R. Jannelli, K. Molinaro, S. Steichen, R. Taborsak, P. Tranzillo, Board Members;
Drs. W. Glass and S. Pascarella, J. Martino, and K. Thompson from Administration

Absent: None

Chairperson Steichen called the Executive Session to order at 8:45 p.m. and turned the meeting over to K. Thompson. A brief discussion ensued.

PUBLIC SESSION

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

The motion passed unanimously at 9:15 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: K. Molinaro moved, seconded by E. Alberts that the Board of Education adjourn its February 13, 2013 meeting and the meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Richard Hawley, Secretary