

DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 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: S. Chilian, G. Cooper, G. Falkenthal, R. Hawley, A. Fluskey-Lattin,
K. Molinaro, S. Steichen, R. Taborsak, P. Tranzillo, Board Members;
Drs. W. Glass and S. Pascarella, J. Martino, and Atty. K. Thompson from
Administration

Absent: E. Alberts, R. Jannelli

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson S. Steichen called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairperson Steichen asked S. Chilian to do the roll call.

Chairperson Steichen recognized the Danbury High School Wrestling Team. They won State Champions.

She also congratulated the DECA Club. They competed today at the State Career Development Conference. They had over thirty of our groups place and two groups placed first for the media packet they prepared promoting Danbury High School throughout the community.

RECOGNITIONS

Danbury Education Foundation 2012-2013 Classroom Excellence Grant Awards by Mayor Mark Boughton – Mayor Boughton distributed grants to Elizabeth DiResto, Shelter Rock School, for “Home Literacy Program for ELL” in the amount of \$995; to Beth Manning, Rogers Park Middle School, for “STEM Unit Elevators”, \$1,281.02; to Gabrielle Apuzzo and Jackie DiNardo, REACH, “Addressing the Achievement Gap Through Positive Relationship Building Interaction,” \$1,500; to Joey Walko-Robinson, Rogers Park, King Street Schools, Mill Ridge Primary and South Street School, for “Assessing Musical Performances in the String Orchestra Classroom,” \$1,464.82; to Joanne Tolles, ACE, “Tools of Engagement”, \$1,500; to Marlene Frank and Jennifer Looby, Rogers Park Middle School, “Unified Theater,” \$1,000; to Cathy Buhrman and Kathy O’Neill, Hayestown Avenue School, for “Fun with Senses and the Sense Organs”, \$1,622.78; and to Scott Carrizzo, Danbury High School, for “Updating Film Equipment at DHS”, \$4,999.89. He congratulated the recipients for a job well done.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Kathy Keefe is a parent of an AIS student and said she did not get the robo call to do the amended survey for the new middle school. She suggested that the call state that it is for Danbury parents regarding the new middle school so others receiving it would know it did not pertain to them and

could hang up if they choose. She is curious as to why the last question asked if the participant was a parent of an AIS student. She suggested that the Board allow AIS students to be grandfathered into the new middle school if it were to be used as an international studies middle school.

Christiane Weisman is also a parent of an AIS student and one of the things that stuck in her mind from the initial presentation was the question of commitment of the parent and student if they choose AIS. Along the lines of the previous speaker, she feels that if the students have made the commitment, they should be grandfathered into a new international studies middle school.

Ruby Vasquez is a parent of a student in the school readiness program at Mill Ridge Intermediate. She asks what will happen to the program with regard to the new venue. She asks if it will be the same curriculum, hours, and the same support it presently offers for working families.

Amy DeMunda is a parent of a student in the school readiness program at Mill Ridge Intermediate. She would like to know what the next step will be for the children in that program and would like the Board to make it a priority.

Yatanna Ward is also a parent of a student in the above program and shared the same concerns as the previous speakers.

Councilman Tom Saadi is here and would like to thank the Board for all the work it has been doing, particularly with the Safety Task Force. He questioned some of the costs that the Task Force talked about at their last meeting. He has spoken with the Mayor and knows he is working with the legislative delegation. He hopes that we might be able to achieve some sort of cost sharing and savings with a State-approved consultant. Mr. Saadi also talked about the mental health approach. Dr. Glass spoke at a conference and much of it was on mental health. He stated that statistics show that intervention at an early age can avoid such tragedies as Sandy Hook, whether they are internal, within the school, or brought upon a school externally. He wanted to reiterate a final suggestion to have a school safety guru and either share that cost with other departments or somehow ask the State to assist.

Kathy Snow is here as a parent of two children at AIS. She is here for three reasons: She is in favor of the idea of a one-hour early dismissal in lieu of professional development days on a regular basis. The second topic is regarding the Safety Task Force. She would like to know if the Board will have some formal communication about when the meetings are in the Minutes or will it just be posted on the District web page? Lastly, is her concern for the new middle school at Mill Ridge Intermediate. She said if the theme for that middle school is decided to be an international theme, she would strongly urge the Board to approve grandfathering the students in from AIS.

The Board recognized Joyce Emmett and thanked her for all her hard work, wished her well in her retirement, and gave her a standing ovation.

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

Board Workshop, 2/6/13
School Safety Task Force Meeting, 2/7/13
Finance Committee Meeting, 2/11/13
Board Meeting 2/13/13

B. PERSONNEL

Accept Leave of Absence: Jeanne Serwacki, Lorena Tesbir, Linda Ward
Accept Resignations: Daniela Batista, Priscilla Eller, James Fiddes,
Evone Osdranus, Asya Takken, Caryn Wahlbrink
Accept Retirement: Rosa Middleton (20 years, 3 months)

New Hires 2/8/13 – 2/21/13

Name	Location	CERTIFIED Subject
Haughney, Meghan	Hayestown	SPED
Non-Certified Subject		
Bishop, Timothy	Park Ave.	CRC Enrichment Associate
Montafia, William	KSI	Temp. Safety Advocate
Rodrigues, Jamie	South St.	CRC Enrichment Associate
Santander-Munoz, Jenny	KSI	CRC Enrichment Associate
Saunderson, Chris	South St.	Literacy Interventionist
Urena, Paola	SHR	CRC Enrichment Associate
Arconti, Maryann		Sub PARA/Tutor
Hartel, June		Substitute Teacher
Heckmann, Laura		Substitute Teacher
Hine III, Charles		Substitute Teacher
Maxwell, Douglas		Substitute Teacher
Moros, Jacqueline		Substitute Teacher
Pesacreta, Bethany		Substitute Teacher

The motion passed unanimously at 7:26 p.m.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE – Ann Riddle

Ann Riddle is here to remind everyone about Read Across America, and she handed out a list of teachers who would like to have participants.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Danbury High School: - None

Alternative Center: Jessica Pacheco is here to say that ACE started off the second semester very well. The First Parents Night went well and parents were able to speak to the teachers on a one on one basis. Principal Linda Schreiner said the students improved on attendance and academics. She wanted to congratulate the students who won Perry Awards. A reception for these students and their parents was held on Parents Night. A two-day hike on the Appalachian Trail will take place in March. On March 1, students will be participating with Darla Shaw’s WCSU class celebrating Read Across America. The students are planning a Wellness Day in conjunction with Housatonic Valley

Coalition Against Substance Abuse. The school would like to thank the Board for the Danbury Education Grant to help improve technology.

PRESENTATION

Summer Learning Programs

- Presented by Dr. Sal Pascarella and Dr. William Glass

Dr. Pascarella said we are looking at extending the school year with Extended Summer Learning Opportunities. He elaborated on the four-page attachment that is included in the Board packet. R. Taborsak said he is in favor of enrichment programs. He also feels the cost is not attainable for all students. He likes the idea of the Transitions Program for incoming ninth graders to the high school. He asked a question about the eighth graders who do not attend the summer learning programs and what will happen to them. S. Chilian said some of the students we are talking about have mental health issues. She feels it is not just an academic issue. J. Emmett said there are so many sets of circumstances behind youngsters not passing. It is very individualized. She feels there are outstanding counselors at the middle school level who are instrumental in assisting these youngsters. Chairperson Steichen talked about attendance policies being instituted at the middle school level. Dr. Glass said we have identified kids through Power School. He said we also have the Endeavor Program and the ACE program for ninth graders who are not ready for the high school. Dr. Glass said we are paying for the elementary and special education summer programs, but we will not be able to reach all the secondary students because of our fees but there are expenses we need to cover. The Board members asked clarifying questions and a discussion ensued.

ACTION ITEMS

A. Middle School Magnet Program

MOTION - S. Chilian moved, seconded by R. Taborsak that the Board of Education approve an additional theme of International Studies for the Mill Ridge Middle School Academy

Dr. Glass said we had about 155 parents responding to the survey and the results were identical to the first survey. To answer the questions of the parents, we got into a technology bind in terms of actually doing the survey because the nature of the robo calls that we do only go to everyone. He said that about three years ago, we had a meeting with the parents and they indicated they would like to see a middle school magnet like AIS. He continued to say for any Danbury parent whose child is currently enrolled who wishes to come to talk with Mrs. Nitowski and the Focus Group about continuing and going forward, we will grab your thoughts and aggregate them and share them with the Board. Dr. Glass said the staff does not have the ability to grandfather students in. It is a policy decision. We will be able to share the results of the Focus Group with the Board to make the feelings of the parents known.

The motion passed unanimously at 8:00 p.m.

B. January 2013 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

MOTION - S. Chilian moved, seconded by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education accept the January 2013 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

During the month of January, 2013, the District expended \$7,574.382, resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$52,664.579, which represents 38.8% of the General Fund total budget, which represents 45% of the General Fund total budget.

J. Martino said the concern now is the current security costs which we are incurring with the guards, and we are working with the City to see how we can balance these costs. R. Hawley asked if there have been any discussions at the State and Federal level to come forward with funds and grants. R. Taborsak said some staff openings have not been filled and asks if we are making a good faith effort to fill these positions. Atty. Thompson said the openings we are talking about are the ESL and bilingual positions. There are three outstanding positions. She said she is having tremendous difficulty finding certified bilingual candidates to fill those positions and she is still actively looking and working with the State on certification issues to see if there are alternatives we can use. Dr. Pascarella said we plan to talk with the Commissioner about it, and on Saturday, March 2, there is a meeting with the legislators and we can discuss it at that time also. Travelling to recruit candidates in the past has proved to be unsuccessful. Various avenues to fill these vacancies were discussed.

The motion passed unanimously at 8:10 p.m.

C. January 2013 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

MOTION - S. Chilian moved, seconded by K. Molinaro hat the Board of Education accept the January 2013 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

During the month of January, 2013, the District expended \$1,620,044, resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$8,094,699, which represents 29.3% of the Grants budget, which represents 36.15% of the Grants budget.

The motion passed unanimously at 8:11 p.m.

D. 2013-2014 Budget

MOTION: S. Chilian moved, seconded by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education adopt the Superintendent's Fiscal Year 2013-2014 budget as recommended by the Finance Committee for submission to the Mayor as required by City Charter

R. Hawley said it was a consensus of the Finance Committee by a vote of 4 to 1 to accept the Superintendent's budget. He said it is basically an increase of 5.98%. However, working with the City with regard to self-insurance, as well as other cost savings initiatives, it would actually bring that budget down to 4.13%. We also have an Alliance Grant tied into ECS money and that would further reduce that down to 2.9%. Although the actual increase is 5.98%, it reverts down to 2.91% as far as additional funding, pending all approvals and these cost savings measures. J. Martino said the ECS money is conditional funding. Danbury's new allocation is \$3.7 million in ECS. He said that it is thought that this will follow the Alliance format but the hope is that there might be some change so we could use it toward general operating funds, but as of right now, we cannot. As of right now, it is to

be used for primarily new programs, such as new ELL teachers and all day kindergarten teachers. He said there is a stipulation to move the Head Start dollars into that, so right now he has identified \$1.4 million that can move into that new funding mechanism. Various clarifying questions were asked by the members of the Board and a discussion ensued.

In Favor: S. Chilian, G. Cooper, R. Hawley, A. Fluskey-Lattin, K. Molinaro, S. Steichen,
R. Taborsak, P. Tranzillo
Opposed: G. Falkenthal
Absent: E. Alberts, R. Jannelli

The motion passed at 8:37 p.m.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Gun Violence Prevention Conference, 2/21/13

Dr. Pascarella said he attended the forum which was attended by about 200 people. Vice-President Joe Biden spoke and he received valuable information. He felt it was a worthwhile forum and is looking forward to some good things coming to pass.

Legislative Meeting, 3/2/13

Dr. Pascarella told the Board members of a meeting to be held at Beaver Brook Administrative Center on Saturday, March 2, at 9:30 a.m. At the present time, there will be a representative from Senator Murphy's office, State Representative David Arconti, State Representative Jan Giegler, State Representative Dan Carter and Mayor Mark Boughton. We are waiting to hear from Senator Blumenthal's office.

DISCUSSION

Teacher Evaluation

Dr. Glass said the State is backing away from the Danielson model. We went with the Marzano framework and we are in good shape with that. They have given us the choice of designing our own model, which is as follows: One hundred (100%) percent of our teachers and administrators will be trained in the Marzano framework starting July 1. Secondly, our administrators will be trained in the entire model. The third point is we will do it with 6th through 12th grade, the two middle schools, ACE, and Danbury High School. He further said that whatever we do we have to buy into 100% of the model that the State is requiring. This includes using the Marzano model, 45% says you must use the CMT or the CAPT and student learning objectives (SLOs), you must do community surveys and you must do student surveys. As far as the pupil personnel services, such as guidance counselors, social workers, psychologists, speech pathologists, etc. we have chosen to leave them aside until the following year. In two years out, we must do 100% of our schools and 100% of the certified staff. Dr. Glass said we are hoping that in January the Neag School of Education from UCONN completes a study of pilot districts and comes back and says this is not doable. Dr. Glass feels the State might come up with a more reasonable approach and the hope is it will be a three-year model, where we would do one-third of our teachers the first year, the second third the second year and the remaining

in Year 3. He said a less desirable option would be to do 50% of the teachers in Year 1 and 50% in Year 2. If that becomes the model, we will still have difficulty having enough administrators to do the evaluation piece. The worst case scenario would be if they said that every year we have to evaluate 100% of your staff. We do not believe this will come to fruition. We have to submit our plan by April 15 so we will be bringing the model to the Board. We have one more developmental session. Members of the Board asked clarifying questions and a discussion ensued.

STEM Lottery Update

Dr. Glass said the lottery has been run. Most of the people have accepted the slot. We should know by the end of the week whom were accepted into the program.

INFORMATION

School Calendar:

High School Graduation – June 19, 2013

Last day of school (as of 2/22/13) is June 21, 2013

BOARD CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

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

Dr. Pascarella asked the members of the Board to contact Debbie Warner if they choose to attend.

BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS

G. Cooper commented that at some point she would like to go over the committee procedures. She would also like to thank Dr. Pascarella and G. Bocaccio, on behalf of her pastor, to have the band perform at her church.

MOTION: K. Molinaro moved, seconded by R. Taborsak that the Board of Education convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing on-going collective bargaining.

The motion passed unanimously at 9:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

Absent: E. Alberts, R. Jannelli

Chairperson Steichen called the Executive Session to order at 9:02 p.m. and turned the meeting over to Atty. Thompson and a brief discussion ensued.

PUBLIC SESSION

MOTION: S. Chilian moved, seconded by P. Tranzillo that the Board of Education return to Public Session.

The motion passed unanimously at 9:25 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: K. Molinaro moved, seconded by G. Falkenthal that the Board of Education adjourn its February 27, 2013 Meeting, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Richard Hawley, Secretary