

# DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 23, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

Administrative Center, 63 Beaver Brook Road

Present: E. Alberts, G. Cooper, M. Ferguson, R. Hawley, R. Jannelli, A. Fluskey-Lattin, D. Metrena, K. Molinaro, R. Pietrafesa, R. Taborsak, P. Tranzillo, Board Members; Dr. W. Glass, J. Martino, Dr. S. Pascarella, Atty. K. Thompson, Administration

Absent: None

## CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Alberts called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll call was taken by K. Molinaro

## RECOGNITIONS

### DHS student, Janine Kerr, 1<sup>st</sup> Place Life Science Award at CT State Science Fair

Janine's project is to control a certain type of weed called milfoil. It is growing in many lakes and streams and is a serious ecological problem. She is trying to control it using natural milfoil weevils that are in the environment so it will not cause any problems in terms of pest management. She will be attending the International Science Fair in Los Angeles in May with six other award winners from the State.

### DHS Girls Basketball Team, FCIAC Western Division Champions, FCIAC Champions

(Danbury is one of just 2 FCIAC schools since 1961 to win 3 consecutive FCIAC Championships); Head Coach Jackie DiNardo.

Coach DiNardo said it has been an exciting four years. Each player introduced themselves and announced their GPA. She applauded the athletes for not only their athletic ability but their academic accomplishments. Chairperson Alberts congratulated the team and Coach DiNardo for a great job.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Marissa Hayes is the parent of three boys and a huge supporter of Health and Nursing Services Coordinator, Kathy O'Dowd's proposal to control celebrations with food and snacks given to students in the classroom. As a certified health coach, she applauds Kathy for putting this proposal together. She believes Kathy is moving Danbury in the right direction and other districts will follow.

Christina Ilardy is a parent of two children in the Danbury Public Schools. She feels the inclusivity issue is a huge problem and very difficult to maintain if you have a child with food allergies and restrictions.

Angelina Stojakovic has a six-year-old son with food allergies who was exposed to food in the classroom, and she is in favor of the K. O'Dowd's proposal.

Monica Bevilacqua, Head Start Director, and Jessie Watkins, the Senior Program Manager are here with a brief overview of their outcomes report. She thanked the Board for all their support. She distributed a letter from Senator Maloney to each of the Board members on the state of their funding and the program.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

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

**A. MINUTES**

- 4-9-14 Board Meeting
- 4-14-14 Finance Committee Meeting

**B. PERSONNEL REPORT**

Accept Leave of Absence: Kate Schiff  
Accept Resignations: Matthew Ariniello, Chris Saunderson

New Hires (April 4-17):

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Non-Certified Subject</b>
Michelle Tapia	Park Ave.	CRC Enrichment Assoc.
Michele Pues	DHS	P/T Para
Kellie Iasiello	South St.	SPED Tutor
Nathan Wilda	DHS	Freshman Boys' Lacrosse Coach
Lauren Gillingham	GRP	Grade 5 L/T Sub Teach
Nadine Crowder	GED	GED Proctor/Administrator
Hector Ruiz	GED	GED Proctor/Administrator
Carla Schoepp	GED	GED Proctor/Administrator
Kristin Panno	RPMS	SPED L/T Sub Teach
Patricia O'Neill	Hayes	SPED Tutor
Rausheda Clemons Moore	SHR	CRC Enrichment Assoc.
Emily Freundt	Park Ave.	CRC Enrichment Assoc.
Laura Halas	BVMS	CRC Enrichment Assoc.
Megan DeAngelis	Morris	Kind. L/T Sub Teach
Tracy Sanicola Galbraith	BVMS	CRC Enrichment Assoc.
Carol Stavola	Morris	CRC Enrichment Assoc.

**In favor of:** E. Alberts, G. Cooper, M. Ferguson, R. Hawley, A. Fluskey-Lattin, D. Metrena, K. Molinaro, R. Pietrafesa, R. Taborsak, P. Tranzillo

**Opposed:** None

**Abstained:** R. Jannelli

**The motion passed at 7:27 p.m.**

**EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE** - None

## **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

### **DHS: Nick Goetz, President**

Nick spoke about the \$100,000 received from Celebrate My Drive. The students and staff put a tremendous amount of effort into this campaign, and he thanked everyone who participated. He said ten tables were added to the courtyard to benefit the students. He said the electrical sign will be placed on the front lawn of the school. The Junior Prom will take place on May 9 at the Amber Room. The theme is the “Roaring Twenties, A Gatsby Affair.” The Senior Prom will take place on May 23 at the Matrix. The theme is “The Last Night on the Titanic.” He said the DHS Spring sports teams are off to a great start. DECA is going to the national conference in Atlanta, Georgia, May 2 to May 7, and they will be presenting their projects, such as “Celebrate My Drive” and many more.

### **ACE: Johnathon Gonzalez, Natasha Mendoza**

Natasha spoke about two hiking trips the students participated in as part of their Outdoor Education Program. Two teachers chaperoned a recent trip this week to the Appalachian Trail with ten students. Parents’ Night is scheduled for April 24 at 5:30 p.m. Dinner will be provided. Parents are encouraged to participate in a six-week seminar regarding the use of positive discipline. During the month of May, ACE will host visitations for 41 students who may be interested in attending in the Fall. Seniors will be visiting two colleges during the month of May, Lincoln Tech in Shelton and Ridley Lowell in Danbury. Five seniors completed financial aid forms in April through a special session at WCSU. All five students were awarded \$5,000 or more in a Pell Grant to assist with college tuition in the Fall.

## **PRESENTATION**

### **Pembroke & Stadley Rough School Governance Council Update**

Edie Thomas, Principal of Pembroke School, said there are amazing people on the Committee who are very dedicated. Five teachers were selected to serve. Twenty-two parents volunteered and seven were selected. She turned it over to Edwin Pena, who is a fourth grade teacher and president of the Council and the PTO President, Ms. Clifford. Edwin said they are working on repaving the parking lot, doing a Summer Reading Night on May 13, focusing on ELL parents. He said they are putting together a Game Night. They are also working on response time for emergency services. Next year, they are going to do Common Core Nights. They are looking to work on a Bilingual Lending Library. Edie Thomas said all the information is on the Pembroke School website.

Ed Wachowski, principal of Stadley Rough School, and Tasha Gordon, a parent at the school, who is filling in for the Chairperson of the Committee are here tonight. One of the things that they began to work on last year was the creation of a Family School Compact. E. Wachowski distributed a Compact for each grade level to the members of the Board. The Compact outlines what they believe are the responsibilities of the school, the home, the parents, and the students. Another project they introduced last year was the parent involvement policy, which is their philosophy of what they believe parent involvement should be and ways that parents can be involved in the learning of their children.

They also are thinking about helping new families to the school by having existing families volunteer to act as parent liaisons at each grade level. Also, they worked on creating and implementing evenings for parents on the Common Core Standards. They held two grade-specific evenings for parents where they delved into specific strategies children would be working on with regard to the Standards. Ms. Gordon said they started with the Common Core and the parent liaison. They are finishing up on Common Core and are focusing on the literacy group. They have noticed when they do competitions, it peaks the students' interests. They have talked about several different ways to engage the students. Their focus is reading. E. Wachowski said they have accomplished a lot over the last two years. Annrose Fluskey-Lattin complimented the school for their efforts.

### Healthy Food Certification

Jeanine Giordano, Operations Manager for the School Lunch Program and the District's resident dietician is here to speak about healthy food certification. She said that as we look towards new nutrition policies and procedures we potentially want to put in place, she feels it is important to recognize what we have been doing and what we continue to do next year, which is healthy food certification. They are guidelines that were set in place by the Connecticut State Department of Education that focuses on limiting total fats, trans fats, saturated fats, sodium and sugars while putting a more positive light on vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean meat, legumes, and low fat dairy.. Every member received a bag containing a handout with all the information and snacks that are offered currently that fall under the healthy food certification. Districts must recertify annually, and for the districts that do certify compliance, there is a reimbursement to the National School Lunch Program of ten cents per reimbursable lunch. The foods included in this healthy food certification are the foods sold at our school stores, our vending machines, our school cafeterias and our fundraising activities that take place on school premises, whether or not they are sponsored by the school. She will be passing on info to Dr. Pascarella so that they can become certified for the 2014-15 school year.

### ACTION ITEMS

A. March 2014 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

**MOTION:** K. Molinaro moved, seconded by R. Taborsak that the Board of Education accept the March 2014 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

R. Hawley asked J. Martino to elaborate on the expense and encumbrance summary and a discussion ensued. During the month of March, 2014, the District expended \$10,094.875 resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$75,305.117. The fiscal year-to-date expenditure represents 63.66% of the General Fund total budget.

**The motion passed unanimously at 8:04 p.m.**

B. March 2014 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

**MOTION :** K. Molinaro moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education accept the March 2014 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

During the month of March, 2014, the District expended \$1,787.679 resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$12,720,506. The fiscal year-to-date expenditure represents 51.5% of the Grants budget.

**The motion passed unanimously at 8:05 p.m.**

C. ECS/Alliance Grant

**MOTION:** K. Molinaro moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education approve the submission of the ECS/Alliance District Grant

R. Hawley asked verifying questions which were answered by Dr. W. Glass.

**The motion passed unanimously at 8:08 p.m.**

D. School Lunch Prices

**MOTION:** K. Molinaro moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education approve a ten cent increase in school lunch prices for 2014-2015 school year.

**The motion passed unanimously at 8:09 p.m.**

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Legislative Meeting 4/11/14; Legislative Day November 14, 2014, 9:00-12:00

The meeting was held on April 11. Dr. Pascarella thanked all that attended. He said they went through much of the unfunded mandates. They had a good conversation about special education, teacher evaluation, use of pesticides, the DCF regulations on reporting mandates, the uniform chart of accounts, and the uniform regional calendar. Dr. Pascarella said that next year will be voluntary to have a regional calendar, and in 2015 it will be a requirement. There is a Legislative Day scheduled for November 14, 2014, where we can be more proactive in introducing new ideas while perhaps mold some of the current legislation that is going on. Overall it was a very good meeting.

Copier Bid Update

J. Martino said we went out to bid for a four-year copy lease. It was advertised twice in *The News Times*. There was a pre-bid meeting over April break. Twelve vendors attended a non-mandatory meeting. The bids were closed April 30. He will report back to the Board in mid-May. It will then go to Council for approval of the lease in June and get copiers placed in July.

Facilities Update

Dr. Pascarella said Pembroke parking lot has been a problem and they have talked to the City. Dr. Pascarella said there was a fund for parking lot repair and that is being looked into. Other parking lots and playgrounds are in bad shape and they have talked with the City. A walk through of the new middle school will be done shortly and should be ready by July 1. The 20-20 Committee met and we did have our enrollment projections done by P. Prowda who confirmed that the square footage we have at the high school together with the number of students has far surpassed the requirement for reimbursement. We are in need of additional space. We will be going to the high school to search out some possibilities with the City next week and we will call for a new 20-20 Committee Meeting. The matter of the Morris Street School roof is still pending at the State. R. Palanzo and J. Martino went up for a State review about three weeks ago and they are awaiting an approval letter. The Osborne Street roof has already been bid and being scheduled for placement. Great Plain is in the

process of going through the motions to get approved. Ann Rose Fluskey-Lattin asked clarifying questions which were answered by J. Martino and Dr. Pascarella.

#### City Council Education Budget Committee Meeting, April 22<sup>nd</sup>

Dr. Pascarella reported the budget was submitted and the Mayor's budget was less than we requested. On May 6, we will begin to work on recommendations. Every position that we look at, whether or not we need it, will be put on hold. We have a better number at the high school now with class selection. The closer we get to May, the better handle we will have on what courses will have to be moved around. Dr. Pascarella thanked the Board Members and the Cabinet for an exceptional job in explaining the information in detail. R. Jannelli said the presentation was terrific. A. Fluskey-Lattin and R. Jannelli asked clarifying questions which were answered by J. Martino.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### Food Allergies & Wellness Policy

K. Molinaro reported K. O'Dowd and Dr. Fong, District Medical Advisor, presented last night at a Policy meeting. K. O'Dowd presented to the full Board tonight and explained why she felt this is a safety issue for the students. K. O'Dowd said they took a look at the monthly food celebrations that take place in the classroom. Currently the practice is that the students are permitted to have a food celebration once per month for their birthdays. This is done at the discretion of the classroom teacher. It is permitted, not required. To date, they have only permitted store bought items for safety reasons. Currently, the nurses have been checking the food labels and the teachers are aware of the children that have food allergies. Unfortunately, there have been times where that has been bypassed, and there have been some accidental or near accidental episodes. K. O'Dowd feels it is time to step up our safety measures. She has had a lot of positive feedback from parents whose children do not have food allergies. This is mostly an elementary school issue. For the safety of all of the students in the district, the proposal is to eliminate outside food from these classroom celebrations. K. O'Dowd has met with all of the principals, and one of the agreements they came to is that at the elementary level, children bring their own snack every day. If they feel they cannot get passed having an alternative celebration without food, then the snack time where the students bring their own individual snack would be acceptable. The free and reduced children would be provided with a snack from the cafeteria. K. Molinaro asked that K. O'Dowd participate in the Spring newsletter. A letter was previously sent out and another will go out before the end of the year and again in the Fall. K. O'Dowd presented at Citywide PTO. She talked with leaders of the schools. This is a collaboration. Chairperson Alberts said it is important for Board members to bring it to the PTO of the school they are assigned. K. Molinaro wants to be sure that we cannot take away from celebrations. We are not changing the policy. We are changing the regulations. A. Fluskey-Lattin, R. Pietrafesa, R. Jannelli, M. Ferguson, and R. Taborsak asked clarifying questions which were answered by K. O'Dowd. Chairperson Alberts would like K. O'Dowd to put her power point presentation on the district website. Dr. Pascarella felt that K. O'Dowd did her due diligence by notifying the teachers, the principals, parents and other groups.

#### Revisions to Teacher Evaluation/Professional Development Plan

Dr. Glass explained at length the April 23 Executive Summary for the Board of Education which is included in the Board packet. He said the State will probably ask us to submit our plan sometime in early June. R. Jannelli asked clarifying questions and Dr. Glass answered accordingly.

## **INFORMATION**

### **Educator Certification Compliance Report**

The State has received our compliance report and we are in full compliance with the Connecticut General Statutes. Dr. Pascarella said it is difficult to have 100% compliance.

### **Head Start Child Outcomes Report, March 2014**

Head Start of Northern Fairfield County presented the Board with a Child Outcomes Report which is Included in the Board packet.

## **BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Chairperson Alberts reports that Ted Carroll, the Director of the Greater Hartford Leadership Council, will be here on Wednesday, April 30 to speak with us at 6:30 p.m. Chairperson Alberts asked everyone to make every effort to be there.

Chairperson Alberts met with parents at the Eden Drive Community Center last week. There were very few parents in attendance and no one spoke English except the interpreter. The parents asked about the Board of Education and the people on the Board of Education and what we do. Chairperson Alberts spoke to them about the roles and responsibilities of parenting and how important they are to their children's education. She shared that it was a wonderful experience.

Chairperson Alberts attended the City Council meeting on April 22, and in her thirteen years on the Board and attending meetings such as those involving the school budget, this was the most professional presentation she has ever seen. She commended the Cabinet on a job well done.

Chairperson Alberts announced that there will be a Parents' Night at ACE on Thursday, April 24. They are serving dinner at 5:30 p.m. with a meeting to follow at 6:30 p.m.

On May 2, at 7:00 p.m., there will be a budget presentation to the community at the the Greek Assumption Church. R. Jannelli said the Mayor will attend as well as some Council people. R. Jannelli said it is an outreach to the community as to what we do and what the numbers mean. There is child care for those that have children.

## **BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS**

There was a Superintendent's Evaluation Committee Meeting held tonight for the full Board. G. Cooper thanked all for attending. She has three members that were absent and she will distribute packets to them to bring them up to date. There will be another meeting on May 21 at 6 p.m. for the full Board. Food will be provided. G. Cooper said it was a great meeting, and she is looking to move forward with the information being distributed this evening.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION:** K. Molinaro moved, seconded by R Taborsak that the Board of Education convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing administrative appointments.

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

Present: E. Alberts, G. Cooper, M. Ferguson, R. Hawley, R. Jannelli, A. Fluskey-Lattin, D. Metrena, K. Molinaro, R. Pietrafesa, R. Taborsak, P. Tranzillo, Board Members; Dr. W. Glass, J. Martino, Dr. S. Pascarella, Atty. K. Thompson, Administration

Absent: None

Chairperson Alberts called the Executive Session to order at 9:27 p.m. and turned the meeting over to Dr. Pascarella. The Board unanimously appointed Tina Hislop as principal of King Street Primary School. Other positions will be reviewed and finalized at the next meeting.

### **PUBLIC SESSION**

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

**The motion passed unanimously at 9:40 p.m.**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** G. Cooper moved, seconded by R. Taborsak that the Board of Education adjourn its April 23, 2014 meeting. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

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Richard Hawley, Secretary