

DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 2013

Administrative Center, 63 Beaver Brook Road

CALL TO ORDER

The Chairperson, Sandy Steichen, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance. The Chairperson asked for a moment of silence for the Boston Marathon victims.

ROLL CALL

In attendance: Eileen Alberts, Shirley Chilian, Gladys Cooper, Gary Falkenthal, Annrose Fluskey-Lattin, Richard Hawley, Richard Jannelli, Kathleen Molinaro, Sandy Steichen, Robert Taborsak, Phyllis Tranzillo

Also in attendance: Superintendent Dr. Pascarella, Dr. Glass, Ms. Thompson and Mr. Martino from Administration

RECOGNITIONS

Barbara Stauder, DSABC Chair and Praxair Liaison inducted in the CT Mentoring Hall of Fame, sponsored by the Governor's Prevention Partnership

Mary Arconti told the Board that DSABC recommended Barbara Stauder to the CT Mentoring Hall of Fame for this honor. She has been chairperson of DSBC for 4 years, and has done an outstanding job for the Danbury School system. Barbara thanked the Board for all their support and stated that it is a great program,

Rachel Saunders, DHS teacher, selected to the 2013 LearnZillion Dream Team

Rachael Saunders told the Board that she was selected from more than 3,000 teachers, instructional coaches and administrators throughout the country for the highly selected Dream Team. 200 teachers were chosen based on their understanding of the Common Core State Standards and their ability to create high quality, highly conceptual lessons that are easily understood by students. As a member of the team, I will receive an all-expense paid trip to San Francisco in May for Teachfest through the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. LearnZillion provides teachers with the technology and support to translate their classroom expertise into screencasts, a sophisticated but simple use of the computer screen for teaching. I look forward to the experience and I wish to thank the school system for their support. Dr. Pascarella congratulated Rachael.

Joseph Martino – 2013 Rising Star Award

Dr. Pascarella told the Board that on behalf of the Connecticut Association of School Business Officials, Joseph D. Martino has been nominated for the 2013 Rising Star Award. Dr. Glass and I

recommended Joe to receive this CASBO award. He is well deserving of this award and has been a real asset to the District. The Board congratulated Joe on receiving this honor. There will be a President’s Dinner on May 16th where Joe will be presented with the award.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Kathy Kelly whose children attend Danbury Public Schools requested that the Board look into automatically accepting the children that are now in the Elementary Magnet School to move up to the new proposed Magnet Middle School without a lottery. She wants the same culture for the children that now attend AIS for the new middle school.

Stephanie Fanning, a parent, came this evening to ask the Board of Education to review the attendance policy. She stated that whoever wrote the policy did a thorough job. She would like to see other reasons for an excused absence other than illness or an event that is school related. If a child has to be pulled out of school for a competition, not school related, or some other event she does not want to say the child is ill in order for the student to have an excused absence. Since there are other big events in the children’s lives, she is asking that the Board review their attendance policy and possibly have “other” excused absences that are not school related.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION - S. Chilian moved, seconded by G. Hawley that the Board of Education approve the items on the Consent Calendar, Exhibits 13-77 and 13-78, as recommended:

MINUTES

Safety Committee Meeting 4/3/13
 Finance Committee Meeting 4/8/13
 Board Meeting 4/10/13

PERSONNEL

Accept Resignations: Thomas Lupinski Anatasia Palella
 William Herzog (ELP Site Facilitator Only)
 Brooks Kelly (ELP Enrich. Assoc. Only)

Accept Retirements: Celeste Becker (11 years) Casper Cheeks (25 years)
 Barbara Dylewski (25 years) Patricia McShea (15 years)

New Hires – April 5th -19th:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Non-Certified Subject</u>
Ring, Shannon	STR	CRC Enrichment Associate
Rysz, Anne	DHS	PARA
Abate, Amy		Sub Teacher
Ames, Joanne		Sub Teacher
Bieglecki, Amanda		Sub Teacher
Perreault, Mariya		Sub Teacher
Schade, Marlene		Sub Teacher
Viola, Meghan		Sub Teacher

Alvarez, Carlos
Garcia, Jovanna
Mc Call, Kendra

WERACE WIA Intern
WERACE WIA Intern
WERACE WIA Intern

Motion carried at 7:16 pm.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE - None

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Danbury High School – no representatives

Alternative Center: Jessica Pacheco told the Board that 16 poets entered the Poetry Contest again this year; on Tuesday we were visited by speakers from the WESCON nursing program who spoke on healthy relationships; on Thursday, 12 plus students and 2 teachers left for a 3 day, 14 mile hike on the Appalachian Trail in Massachusetts; ACE is participating in their annual “Pennies for Pasta” for Leukemia charity where a box is placed in each guidance center and whatever box with the most money will get a pasta party supplied by Olive Garden; after Memorial weekend students will be going on their yearly White Water Rafting trip down the Hudson River and camping out for 2 nights; Students and staff are creating an Inspiration Station Booth for the Spring Forward for Sandy Hook race near Rogers Park on May 18th. The idea to have a booth was inspired by the students and in honor of a teacher at ACE who lost her goddaughter in the Sandy Hook tragedy.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION

Dr. Glass told the Board that the middle schools and high school will give a presentation on Course Pass/Fail Rates. A slide presentation was provided showing support programs as well as statistics.

Before the discussion began, Dr. Pascarella stated that two years ago we were notified we had two failing schools. We brought Cambridge in who did an analysis and an in-depth study and came up with a plan to reduce the achievement gap - we then focused on the high school. That put us in a position to get support from the State, not only monetary support but regulations as well.

Dr. Pascarella then called on, Patricia Joaquim, Principal of Rogers Park and Ed Robbs, Principal of Broadview Middle School. (Ms. Battaglia and Ms. Rhodes were also present as support for Broadview.) Ms. Joaquim told the Board of the initiatives they put in place in order to get students to come to school every day; implementation of intervention programs that the teachers and administrators worked on to solve student problems and thereby giving the students support for their academics. In addition to Intervention programs others include CMT Boot Camp, WESCON Tutors, X-period, guidance and PPS Support and professional development. After School programs were developed to be sure students were being helped with homework as well as other after school activities. She stated that she and Mr. Robbs work closely together and share information. Mr. Robbs also stated that some of the programs that Ms. Joaquim has at her school are the same at Broadview and he is seeing a difference in some students academically. The Board asked questions i.e., is there bus service for the after school programs and if not, can that be looked into to make it easier for the parents and students. Several other questions were asked concerning the absentee initiative program concerning personal calls to parents when a child is absent.

Dr. Pascarella then called Gary Boccaccio, Principal of Danbury High School and Meghan Martins, Associate Principal of Instruction and Dan Donovan, Assistant Principals to talk about DHS and what they have done to close the achievement gap.

Ms. Martins handed out a 2012-2013 Student Support Framework document. Mr. Boccaccio told the Board that there are 3 Tiers: Universal Supports, Select Support and Focused Supports. Under the Universal Supports there is student tutoring center, after school programs, discipline code, student-led conferences, summer acceleration program, college counseling support just to name a few. Under Select Support there are mandated referral to STC, weekly attendance letters, reading and math labs, STAR Program and Dean of Student Support includes home visits, attendance and behavior, organizational planning. Under the focused support meetings after interventions, attendance review board and under Dean of Student Support, directed study hall, regular home visits court referrals, alternative school placements. Meghan Martins elaborated on some of the above as the Board asked related questions.

Drs. Pascarella and Glass thanked the administrators for their support of Danbury's programs and congratulated them on doing a great job.

The Board Chair also thanked them for coming to the Board meeting and for their continued support.

ACTION ITEMS

March 2013 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

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

For the month of March 2013, the District expended \$8,344,777 resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$74,535,712. The FYTD expenditure represents 64.37% of the General Fund total budget.

Motion carried at 8:29 pm.

March 2013 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

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

For the month of March 2013, the District expended \$1,635,101 resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$11,453,516. The FYTD expenditure represents 51.2% of the Grants budget.

Motion carried at 8:31 pm.

457 Deferred Compensation Plan

MOTION - S. Chilian moved, seconded by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education approve the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan

Dr. Pascarella asked Joe Martino to tell the Board about this Deferred Compensation Plan. He stated that it does not replace the current 403(b). It is a free service whereby an employees can save money

above the limits of the 403(b) criteria. It is an approved service and at no cost to the Board. Many school systems have adopted the plan.

Motion carried at 8:37 pm.

Transfers – March 2013

MOTION: S. Chilian moved, seconded by R. Taborsak that the Board of Education accept the March 2013 Transfers

Motion carried at 8:40 pm.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Update on Employee Dependent Audit

Mr. Martino told the Board that they are working with the Sterling Group on the health plan. 56% of the employees have already handed in their form; 36% have moved off the plan. Our projection is \$75,000 for dependents. Ms. Chilian asked about the retirees and if any meetings were set up. Mr. Martino said that Mr. Sterling will be coming in to do that. When early retirement ends next year, there will be more people. Ms. Thompson said for the audit it was not only checking off a box, a person had to produce several documents as well.

Dr. Pascarella stated that the budget appropriation was not beneficial to Danbury. If the Appropriation Committees recommendations are approved, it will have a negative impact on us. We are staying with the government’s budget.

DISCUSSION

School Safety Task Force consensus

Kathleen Molinaro, Co-chairperson of the School Safety Task Force told the Board that the Special Task Force has approved of everything that we have done. Kim Thompson, Co-Chairperson said there are three improvement items:

ITEM #1 Physical Plant and Protocol Improvements – Hiring a consultant

ITEM#2 Mental Health Services.

ITEM#3 Staffing, to be considered at the May 8th Board Meeting.

Ms. Molinaro said they received a lot of support. Parents came and were involved in some of the discussion. Safety issues were mention for the vulnerable schools. We need to talk to Richard Jalbert to get the City to put money in the capital budget. The police have done an outstanding job. Chief Baker and his police officers are sitting in the parking lots doing their paperwork before signing off for the day. Joe Martino said KSI and KSP are not yet card controlled, DHS will be next. Ms. Molinaro stated that lockdown drills have been successful in all the schools. Kids now go along as just part of their routine. Ms. Thompson said this will be an on-going discussion. Ms. Chilian said since these are public buildings shouldn’t the city be securing the buildings. Mr. Martino responded

that the physical hardware falls under the Board. He also stated that in the first week of June there will be a consultant here visiting every school for the entire week.

The Board asked that the consensus of the Special Task Force on School Safety be on record in these minutes for information purposes, not for voting.

PHYSICAL PLANT AND PROTOCOL IMPROVEMENT

That the Board of Education:

Select one of two consultants to conduct an assessment of school safety, with particular attention to physical facilities and existing safety protocols and plans throughout all building locations

Endorse the standardization of all emergency plans, to specifically include use of a common language, with those plans tailored to meet individual building needs

Continue to fund those smaller safety improvements, such as locks, cameras, key card access, and panic buttons, in keeping with the implementation schedule presented by the Director of Finance and the Coordinator of Sites and Facilities

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

That the Board of Education:

Approve the Superintendent's current budget request for an additional 3.5 pupil service staff, if sufficient funding is available

Urge continued, additional professional development for all staff in this area

Continue to advocate to the State Department of Education for the provision of additional funding for the expansion of School Based Health Centers in our District

Continue to make every effort to support access to additional mental health services already available in the community

STAFFING

That the Board of Education:

Continue to endorse the current security staffing model in place, to include School Resource Officers ("SROs") at the secondary level and Safety Advocates at all levels, including the elementary schools

All Safety Advocates receive centralized, consistent comprehensive screening and training

Continue to support a collaborative effort with the Danbury Police Department to continue with the current system of assigning police officers to particular quadrants of the City, with opportunities to make random stops at schools within their area of responsibility

All Board members were in agreement with the Special Task Force on Safety consensus report.

Redistricting

Dr. Pascarella said we are coming around with the redistricting. Ross Haber Associates will conduct our redistricting plan. We have supplied them with maps and other information. The district is a lot different now than it was 20 years ago when redistricting was set up.

School Lunch

Mr. Martino said he received a letter regarding school lunch. We are currently studying the prices over the next 5 years. We have not raised lunch prices in 3 years. He said he will get back to the Board with additional information.

BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT - None

BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS

Operations/Policy

Ms. Chilian, Chairperson of the Operations/Policy Committee, stated that the Superintendent was asked to come up with a draft on the Intra-district Magnet School Policy. We will be bringing that policy to you at the next meeting and you will be able to ask questions.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Thompson stated since the Paraprofessional Contract had been previously discussed in Executive Session there was no need to have a further discussion in Executive Session and that the Board could vote. The Board members agreed.

PUBLIC SESSION

MOTION: S. Chilian moved, seconded by R. Taborsak that the Board of Education ratify the Paraprofessional Contract.

Motion carried unanimously at 9:20 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

K. Molinaro moved, seconded by R. Taborsak, that the Board of Education adjourn it April 24, 2013 Board meeting and the meeting adjourned at 9:21 pm.

Richard Hawley, Secretary