

DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2012 – 7:00 p.m.

Administrative Center – 63 Beaver Brook Road

Present: Eileen Alberts, Shirley Chilian, Gladys Cooper, Annrose Fluskey-Lattin, Richard Hawley, Richard Jannelli, Kathleen Molinaro, Sandy Steichen, Robert Taborsak, Phyllis Tranzillo, and Drs. Glass, Pascarella and Ms. Thompson from Administration

Absent: Gary Falkenthal

CALL TO ORDER

The Chairperson, Gladys Cooper, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Cooper asked Kathleen Molinaro to do the Roll Call.

RECOGNITIONS

2012 CAPSS/WCSA Student Leadership Awards Winners

The Superintendent, Dr. Sal Pascarella, asked the Principals to introduce their students to the Board. The principals also introduced the parents of the students and the student and parents were applauded by the audience.

Danbury High: Matthew Friedmann and Matilda Johnson

The principal of Danbury High School, Gary Bocaccio, told the Board with pride and pleasure he presents this award to two of the hardworking students at DHS; Matilda Johnson and Matthew Friedmann (Matt arrived late, received his award and the audience applauded).

Matilda Johnson is a diligent and conscientious young lady. She is inquisitive and pensive about the world showing concern not just for her local community but her global community as well. She is in the honors program and taking AP courses. As a leader, she has been charismatic and diplomatic as the leader of African Student Union which is a new club to Danbury High. Among other activities, she was involved in the DHS production, outdoor track, member of the step team, Mock Trial Club and Key Club. Somehow she finds time to work at Target.

Mathew Friendmann is a hard working and dedicated student. He has been very active throughout DHS with activities like school government, DHS production, key club to mention a few. He was elected to office in the Key Club and is a Senior Class vice president. Matt is always motivating others to help, coming up with creative ideas, taking time out of his busy

work schedule and class load to help in any way he can. He shows great respect and ability to get along with everyone he encounters. He is passionate about politics. Matt is also a representative to the Board of Education. He will attend WestConn in the fall.

Alternative Center: Joshua Ferretti and Taylor Maher

The principal of the Alternative Center, Linda Schreiner, told the Board that Taylor Maher had a previous commitment and was not present. Joshua Ferretti was also not present but he was expected to arrive.

Joshua Ferretti, who was nominated by staff member, Glenda Armstrong, told the Board that Joshua has had a struggle with academics at two other high schools before he came to ACE this year. His Mother is a graduate of ACE and when her son was unable to achieve the success he deserved, she reached out to her ACE family. This was a good decision for Josh. He is a great addition to the school. He has a warm, gentle, intelligent, nurturing manner that is enhanced by a great sense of humor. He is the kind of student that ACE was meant for. He plans to attend Norwalk Community College in the fall majoring in technology. (Joshua and his Mom arrived and was applauded by the audience.)

Taylor Maher, was described by the Principal as an outstanding young woman whom everyone at ACE is tremendously proud of. She has shown incredible strength in getting to where she is today and has demonstrated a commitment to succeeding and to excellence. Though being a very private individual, Taylor has participated in most after school activities over the years and contributes greatly to her school. Taylor plans on pursuing nursing as a career which will serve her and her community well. We are proud to have Taylor at our school.

Broadview: Natalia Szurawski and Julian Lanson

The principal of Broadview Middle School, Edward Robbs, told the Board that neither of the students could make it tonight, but it will be a matter of record in the minutes of this meeting.

Julian Lanson was selected as student of the month in September 2011. He is consistently on the honor roll and has received certificates for outstanding achievement in math and gold-level President's Award. He visited Australia for two weeks with People to People Program filling in a ditch to slow the effects of erosion on a cattle ranch in 2011. He has been on the Broadview math team and involved in the Summit Program. He wants to attend Harvard to become a physicist.

Natalia Szurawski is an amazing young lady; consistently on the honor roll; volunteers at the Dorothy Day; cleans Danbury Streets with Adopt a Street Program and volunteers at the local nursing homes as well as volunteering at church. Her extra-curricular activities include mentoring for the STEM program at WestConn, dance competition for 9 years, martial arts for 5 years, horseback riding and the Danbury Music Center's Nutcracker. She also wants to

attend Harvard and major in geological science. (Natalia arrive with her Mom and received applause from the audience).

Rogers Park: Mary Zanine and Connor Cyr

The principal of Rogers Park Middle School, Patricia Joaquim, told the Board that Connor Cyr could not be here tonight.

Mary Zanine is an excellent student. She is friendly, helpful and a hard worker. She has a positive attitude toward learning which makes her a welcome addition to any classroom. Mary is a member of the National Union Honor Society as well as one of the students selected for Flight Night. She is very involved in Girl Scouts; their latest project is helping children through the Big Brother/Big Sister organization; in her spare time she loves to play the piano. She is a sports enthusiast, playing both lacrosse and field hockey.

Connor Cyr is an outstanding individual who has excelled in and out of school. He has contributed to the community through Boy Scouts; distinguishes himself from other by his work ethic and deep understanding of the world around him. He consistently shows empathy for others. His quiet leadership sets a high standard for his classmates.

DHS Girls Basketball Team

State Representative Jan Giegler presented a congratulatory citation to the DHS Girls Basketball Team and Coach Jackie DiNardo for their historic win (FCIAC Championship).

The Superintendent asked the team and their Coach Jackie DiNardo to come to the Board table to receive the citation.

Representative Giegler said she is honored to be here tonight to present this citation to the Danbury High School Girls' Basketball Team. They were invited to the general assembly where they were treated to pizza and were given their citation.

Representative Giegler said she is also honored to present a citation to Coach DiNardo. Her career spans 25 years of coaching and 400 career wins. The Captain of the Team, Ashley, said it is an honor to get the recognition for winning and thanked Ms. Giegler. She then asked the team to identify themselves. Coach DiNardo then thanked Ms. Giegler for the hospitality and said it was an honor to represent the team. She said, "come see us next year, we are going to do it again".

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Wendy Hesse said she was happy to tell the Board that they got the funds for the gifted and talented for next year. This is where people would want to bring their children because of our

program. We are meeting with the Connecticut Association of Gifted and Talented and the Danbury Public Schools. She then read a letter from the organization stating that this letter is pointing to professional development among other activities. Also at this time she stated that she wanted to thank the Board for coming to the Girl Scouts.

CONSENT CALENDAR

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

MINUTES

Finance Committee Meeting	5/9/12
Board Meeting	5/9/12

Board member Ms. Steichen asked that there be a correction on Page 6 of the Board Meeting Minutes of May 9th and the corrected minutes be on the next Board agenda for acceptance.

PERSONNEL

Accept Leaves of Absence:

Jeffrey Forzani	Tyra Lohmann	Lisa Patel
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Accept Resignations:

Quincy Austin	Diane Dias	Stephanie Fielek,
Lynn Meyers	Amy Parkinson	Margaret Prejean
Caitlin Ryan	Linda Siladi	Michelle Tran
Nicole Veach	Megan Heibeck (para position only)	

Accept Retirement:

Judith D’Andrea	Joanne Kaltenstein
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Motion carried at 7:30 pm.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE - None

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

ACE: Vanessa Grant told the Board that ACE’s graduation will be on Tuesday, June 19th at 9:30 am at ACE and also the same date at 7:00 pm at WestConn at Warner Hall.

INFORMATION

Rogers Park Middle School trip to Puerto Rico, January 17-22, 2013

Staff member from Rogers Park told the Board that we have taken a number of students on this trip in the past. The purpose of the trip is merging the language and culture. We expect to travel on January 17th and return on the 22nd. We will be spending a day in a Puerto Rican school attending all the classes. Ms. Cooper said that this is going to be an action item on the next agenda, so if the Board has any questions about the trip she would appreciate it if they would ask them now that the staff member is present to answer them.

One Book, One Community “Breakfast with Buddha”

The Superintendent said the Kick Off was a Press Conference Program on May 16th at City Hall. This is our third year of attending at WestConn. The Author, Roland Merullo, will speak on Tuesday, October 9th at 7:30 at WestConn.

PRESENTATION

Update on High School Initiatives Gary Bocaccio, Dr. Meghan Martins and Dan Donovan

The Chairperson, Gladys Cooper told the Board to let the High School staff complete their presentation and once they are finished, we will have a question and answer session. Please jot down any questions you may want to ask.

The principal, Gary Bocaccio introduced Dr. Martins and Mr. Donovan to the Board and also told the Board that there were DHS counselors and coordinators in the audience that contributed immensely to these initiatives and without their efforts and support, these initiatives would not be able to be carried out.

The presentation’s overview covered background, adult practices, student outcomes, adult interventions, and progress to date, next steps and challenges. Mr. Bocaccio started out by showing a slide of the demographics of the 2,879 students for the 2011-2012 year stating that DHS is made up of: 46.6% white, 33.1% Hispanic, 11.1% African-American, 8.6% Asian, 6.0% Multi-racial. He gave statistics on free/reduced lunch status; ELL students and attendance by grade. He then turned the presentation over to Dr. Martins who gave the results from the years 2007 through 2011 for CAPT’s reading, math, science and writing. She also presented graduation rates; 2006-2011 advanced placement test results as well as AP total and disaggregated enrollment. Mr. Donovan then spoke about discipline referrals by grade, total number of student referrals, DHS in-school suspension and outside suspension trends. Dr. Martins then spoke briefly about the scientific research-based intervention referrals from September to April. Dr. Glass told the Board that the Cambridge Report for 2008 covered criteria, rating and recommendations. Dr. Martins spoke about the curriculum development initiatives and challenges. She mentioned that the Student Tutoring Center was funded by a GE grant that Anne Mead worked on. The graduation requirements slide showed credits and department/course work which the Board had previously approved. It also stated the initiatives

and challenges for counseling services; intervention framework; data-driven decisions and English learner support. Mr. Donovan spoke about the Freshman Academy and their initiatives and challenges. He stated that there were 7 teams covering 730 Freshman. He stated that Anne Mead was involved in getting Nellie Mae support for Inter-disciplinary. Dr. Martins then gave an overview of teacher survey results, failure rate analysis, what the next steps and challenges are.

Mr. Bocaccio thanked the DHS team for their support. He said there are so many great programs presently at DHS and that the students who attend the school are happy to be there. There are wonderful social initiatives that the students are involved in. When you walk the halls of DHS and find the staff of 200 teachers comparing notes about various programs and their approach to these programs – what works well and what needs improvement – you automatically know that the students are going to benefit from the teaching staff and the vast programs that are offered. I am extremely proud of what has been accomplished at DHS. Our administrators are committed to our students learning and their efforts show by how many students are in AP programs and honor society. We recognize the challenges and assure the Board that we are continuously addressing those challenges. Mr. Bocaccio told the Board that even though there is such a large diverse population of students at DHS, there is an atmosphere of respect. He also stated that there are 50-plus languages spoken in the student’s homes. He closed the presentation by saying that he is proud to be the principal of such a great high school.

The Chairperson, Ms. Cooper, thanked everyone for giving the Board the presentation and asked if there were any questions. The questions ranged from how many students are pregnant; dropout rate; attendance and how to handle absenteeism; advancement tests; what colleges accept, credit recovery software. Mr. Bocaccio said that the word is out there that we have the programs that meet all students’ needs. He also stated that they have programs for parents.

Board members praised Mr. Bocaccio for his leadership, his compassion and understanding necessary in leading Danbury High School. He was asked if he could put on the website all the programs that are offered at DHS including all the great events that are going on at the school. He responded that he thought it would be a great idea. He said most of what he said tonight is on his newsletter, but it would be good to have it on the website.

ACTION ITEMS - None

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

CCJEF Update

The Superintendent said that on Friday he and Mr. Hawley will be going to a meeting. He said that he hopes that strategy on the next steps will be brought up at the meeting. They have

working with them a law firm from New York, Debevoise & Plimpton, as this goes to trial. He told the Board that he will keep them posted on how the meeting goes.

Conditional Funding Update/Draft Plan

The Board had a draft from the Superintendent on Conditional Funding dated May 11, 2012. A short discussion ensued on the items listed on the draft and the cost of those items. Dr. Pascarella said one of the strategies is to lower class size; still monitoring 6th grade and if we put in the kindergarten program next year we are committed to twice as much next year. He said he needs to figure out what will be best.

BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Memorial Day Parade, May 28th, 9:30 a.m.

Ms. Cooper asked the Board who will be walking in the Memorial Day Parade. She did get a few members to say it might be possible.

BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS - None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: S. Chilian moved, seconded by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing performance of Board members and Board operational effectiveness.

Motion carried at 9:35 pm.

Present: Eileen Alberts, Shirley Chilian, Gladys Cooper, Annrose Fluskey-Lattin, Richard Hawley, Richard Jannelli, Kathleen Molinaro, Sandy Steichen, Robert Taborsak, Phyllis Tranzillo, and Drs. Glass, Pascarella and Ms. Thompson from Administration.

Absent: Gary Falkenthal

ADJOURNMENT

K. Molinaro moved, seconded by S. Chilian, that the Board of Education adjourn its May 23, 2012 meeting and the meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm.

Richard Hawley, Secretary