

# DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2010 - 7:00 PM

Administrative Center - 63 Beaver Brook Road

**Attendance:** R. Austin-James, G. Cooper, I. Fox, R. Jannelli, J. Scozzafava, R. Taborsak and Drs. Dylewski, Glass and Pascarella, Mr. Longo, Ms. Emmett and Ms. Thompson from Administration.

**Absent:** E. Alberts, M. Fazio, K. Gailliard, K. Molinaro, S. Podhajski

## CALL TO ORDER

The Chairperson, Irving Fox, called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

## RECOGNITION - Dan Scavone, Athletic Director

Dr. Rossi, Principal at Danbury High School, introduced and welcomed Dan Scavone to Danbury's team. Mr. Scavone told the Board that it has been a pleasure these last couple of weeks on the job and he is really enjoying it; a lot of good things are happening at DHS and he has several long and short term plans. Dr. Sal asked about his background. He told the Board that he taught for 12 years; experience in sports medicine; degree in exercise science; opened a high school and developed a program in Beacon Falls and established a culture in a new district; also has been an assistant principal. He stated that it is a growing experience for him. Mr. Fox said on behalf of Board, I welcome you and wish you many years of success.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mrs. Gabriel has been teaching at Morris Street School for seven years. She does not presently have a para and the last few weeks have been most difficult. There are 4 year olds in the class and I cannot give them or the other students one on one time.

Kimber Windlow, parent of KSP told the Board that she has had experience making tough decisions. She would like to see smaller class sizes (she passed our information on class size together with charts). She spoke about closing the achievement gap and dropout rates, etc. KSP has 24 students across the board; which is the highest in class sizes than all the other schools in Danbury.

Sandy Steichen, a parent of a DHS student told the Board that the Principal promised improvement under his direction. This is the first time the students have no text books; particularly the honor students because Dr. Rossi has expanded the number of honor class without checking or taking inventory prior to this school year. He acted surprised at this situation at one of the meetings. (Ms. Cooper called Point of Order and Mr. Fox told the parent that she cannot express personal complaints or comments about the personnel). She then said, "I can't say they don't have text books". My daughter has not had a math or chemistry book. It is criminal.

*NOTE: (Later in the meeting, Dr. Pascarella told the Board that we don't have text books for some of our programs - tomorrow we are going to do some ordering. We have a better idea of what we need to do. Teachers are not utilizing text books, they are using class sets.)*

Alfonso Robinson told the Board that he usually does not speak, but stated that the Board is a quasi government and the reason why is that you are elected by the people, me. I feel a decision by the City Council was wrong and in my opinion illegal. I let the Board make the decisions for the Board. The salary increases that were given were wrong, I would vote you out – the City Council should not have been involved. I feel when there is an Ad Hoc meeting; the Board should have been invited. I am not saying I agree with the increases – it is separate of powers issue. The City was off base.

Lisa McCarthy, parent of a first grade student said there is a job posting for full/part time teacher. Smaller class sizes are better for everyone. Pulling kids out for the core activity concerns me. Hope is that this is looked into and the pieces in question are looked at. 100 kids will be affected either the ones pulled out or the ones that stay.

Sally Wilson, the first grade at KSP is over population; lack of continuity that might be; seeking equality at KSP, especially our 1<sup>st</sup> graders. First grade is a critical year to establish reading, writing and math. There is a 20% difference in KSP numbers. We appreciate Dr. Glass and Dr. Pascarella putting on the table a part time teacher, we consider this part time an interim solution – however, we are looking for the final solution which would be a full time teacher.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

**MOTION** - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by R. Taborsak that the Board of Education approve the items on the Consent Calendar, Exhibits 10-141 as recommended:

MINUTES

Bi-Monthly Board Meeting Minutes, 9-7-10

**Motion carried at 7:28 pm.**

### **EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE**

Ms. Mirochine, NEA Danbury President told the Board that they had a new teacher luncheon. The one teacher that we lost did find a position in another district. She stated that she is currently in discussion with Dr. Pascarella over some issues and concerns.

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

DHS Representative, Rebecca Leonard told the Board that the Freshman Academy is up and running under the administration of Mr. Donovan. Shaquilla Taylor told the Board that Monday night was open house for parents; also the ROTC celebration turned out to be a huge success.

## **PRESENTATION**

### Effect of new State Laws on Local Boards, P.A.10-111 - Presented by: Drs. Glass and Pascarella

Dr. Glass told the Board that tonight he is going to review the most significant changes to the education legislation that will need to be addressed by our district. Below is an outline of what the legislation covers:

- 1) Graduation Requirements
- 2) Online coursework and AP
- 3) Student Support and Remedial Services
- 4) Employment of Teachers
- 5) Charter Schools
- 6) Innovation Schools and Schools in Need of Improvement
- 7) Parent Teacher Conferences
- 8) Student Discipline and In-School Suspension

Dr. Glass said as always, we will continue to update the Board as we proceed with the implementation of actions to comply and adhere to the spirit of the new legislations.

### School Utilization Committee - Presented by: Drs. Dylewski and Glass

Dr. Dylewski told the Board that this is an informational item. Last year we had looked at the building when Head Start moved out, that plan has changed since their building was not ready. Looking at saving dollars to reduce our budget, this was figured in the refiguring of the Mill Ridge/King Street Campus. The Committee will meet tomorrow. The Mayor and Mr. Maloney have been invited. We will be formulating a blueprint of our plan in November for the Board. This Committee will look at where are going as a district; do we want to look at other theme schools or focus schools; Dr. Glass will co-chair this Committee with me, he will handle the education programmatic issues and I will do the utilization of our schools. That is the charge of the Committee. Ms. Cooper and Mr. Taborsak will be on the Committee. Dr. Glass said when we had the 20/20 Committee, the Mayor wanted to look at the programs in our schools. Mr. Jannelli had some questions about the timeframe of when Head Start will be moving; Mr. Scozzafava said the schools are City buildings. The Lutheran School is going to be torn down, it is a City problem. This is a good time to build since interest rates are low, but it takes a lot of time. The Board needs to work with the City on this. Mr. Fox asked if we would have funds in our operating budget if the space would become available tomorrow. When the space gets freed up, how are we going to hire people to fill the space? If we don't have the funds, then this whole situation is mute. Dr. Pascarella said the infrastructure at the middle schools is not safe. We have to take advantage of what the State is going to give us. Mr. Jannelli asked if Mr. Scozzafava will keep the Board abreast every month of what is going on with this with the City. They have \$10 million dollars and they need to do something. Mr. Scozzafava said he will keep the Board informed about the City's plans.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

### City/School Meeting

Dr. Pascarella said he will keep the Board informed as these meeting take place.

## Staffing/Enrollment

Dr. Pascarella said we used funds for bodies rather than materials and that he met with parents on class size. We cut a bus and from the phone calls I have been getting, I don't know if that is going to work. Lack of supplies at the High School in a way was a shock – it is embarrassing. There are wonderful programs going on at the high school, but they are silent. We don't have text books for some of our programs - tomorrow we are going to do some ordering. We have a better idea of what we need to do. Teachers are not utilizing text books, they are using class sets.

Mr. Longo said there are 97 vehicles on the road by 3:30 pm. There have been delays in pick up times and delays in returns. He stated that he would like to fine tune it before we restore the bus that was removed. A Board member asked where the funds would come from. Mr. Longo stated the funds to add the bus back would be a challenge at this time. Possibly we could provide some relief from the compensation fund.

*Recess at 8:35-8:47 pm*

## ACTION ITEMS

### June 2010 & FY 2009-2010 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by G. Cooper, that the Board of Education accept the June 2010 & FY 2009-2010 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

**Motion carried at 8:50 pm.**

Mr. Longo told the Board for the month of June 2010, the District expended \$15,423,931.32, resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$106,847.804.11.

### June 2010 & FY 2009-2010 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by R. Taborsak that the Board of Education accept the June 2010 & FY 2009-2010 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

**Motion carried at 8:51 pm.**

Mr. Longo told the Board for the month of June 2010, the District expended \$3,504,734.74, resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$21,593,446.87.

### July 2010 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by G. Cooper, that the Board of Education accept the July 2010 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

**Motion carried at 8:52 pm.**

Mr. Longo told the Board for the month of June 2010, the District expended \$739,943.34, resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$739,943.34.

July 2010 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by R. Taborsak, that the Board of Education accept the July 2010 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

**Motion carried at 8:53 pm.**

Mr. Longo told the Board for the month of July 2010, the District expended \$209,162.18 resulting in a fiscal year -to-date expenditure value of \$209,162.18.

August 2010 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by Mr. Taborsak, that the Board of Education accept the August 2010 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

**Motion carried at 8:55 pm.**

Mr. Longo told the Board for the month of August 2010, the District expended \$3,712,368.20, resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$4,452,311.54.

August 2010 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by J. Scozzafava, that the Board of Education accept the August 2010 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

**Motion carried at 8:56 pm.**

Mr. Longo told the Board for the month of August 2010, the District expended \$637,058.85, resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$846,221.03.

**INFORMATION**

Draft Superintendent's Goals & Objectives 2010-2011

Dr. Pascarella told the Board that these are the same goals. The objectives have been changed. I tried to make them user friendly – it is about teaching and learning. Focus for teachers and planning and implementation of those plans. The Superintendent went through briefly the goals:

Goal 1	Teaching and Learning	6 objectives
Goal 2	Parent and Community Engagement	3 objectives
Goal 3	Personnel	1 objective
Goal 4	Administration and Operations	3 objectives

The Chairperson, Mr. Fox, stated that this is the primary tool that we are going using to evaluate the Superintendent. These goals and objectives should be given to the Superintendent Evaluation Committee for their approval. Mr. Jannelli said the problem in the past is that these goals are not immeasurable. Mr. Fox stated that he would formally refer this to the Superintendent Evaluation Committee and hopes they can get that scheduled before next week. Mr. Jannelli asked about modifying the 5-year goals. Dr. Pascarella said as part of the grant application \$300,000 for the high school and middle school calls for a document, embedded in the grant is the reformation of the 5 year Strategic Plan; the information was taken from the community. We worked that into a grant.

#### Voluntary Employee Life Insurance

Mr. Longo explained a voluntary employee life insurance program that he has been working on. The plan varies by group membership. Some staff members have \$10,000 others staff members have multiples of their annual salary. He told the Board that he has been working with a current vendor to find a way to offer all eligible employees (full time employees) that are currently covered by life insurance. The voluntary life insurance offers the employees the purchasing of additional life insurance at no cost to the Board the contracted rates are for \$100,000 term life insurance in addition to their base coverage; without questions about current health status. This is a low cost solution for our employees. As an example of cost, 40-44 years of age will be approximately \$14 per month. The plan will offer a maximum of \$500,000 or 5 times your annual salary whichever is less. Only the employee who leaves this district for another district can convert this into whole life and carry the policy with them to their new employer. If a staff member retires, the policy will not be portable. Mr. Longo stated that there will be minimal cost in bookkeeping and the administration paperwork is minimal. He stated that he would like to see this offered to our employees. It will be managed by payroll deduction directly to the life insurance company. If the Board is in agreement we can offer this coverage to our employees at no cost to the Board. To qualify you must carry the basic group life insurance. The Superintendent said he commends Mr. Longo for planning this for our employees.

#### Adult Education Program Compliance & Quality Review (October 25-29)

Dr. Dylewski told the Board that the Danbury School District has been identified as one of four districts selected for the 2010-11 Adult Education Program Compliance and Quality Review. The last time was in 2000. While compliance with federal and state requirements will be expected, the monitory process will also focus on program quality and improvements. The site visit for Danbury is planned for the week of October 25-29, 2010. At our new facility at 10-12 Crosby Street this week, we had a very successful opening. Mr. Nolan, our landlord, is very accommodating. If you come and see the new facility I know you will be very impressed.

#### Proposal for grant opportunity to improve healthcare in the community (CT Institute for Communities)

Ms. Sue Levasseur told the Board that Mr. Maloney contact her stating that they wish to apply for a grant to increase health utilization for children in this area and targeted to our schools. It would be for adding a new health center in the elementary schools. They were confident that the funding would be every year. A Board member asked where we would have space for a health center. Ms. Levasseur said they looked at Ellsworth Avenue School. That school already has an examining room which could accommodate a health center. There is \$150,000 in the grant to start off if renovation needs to be done.

He is looking for us to say this is something we want to do. He wants our willingness to participate. Dr. Pascarella said he will bring this request back to the Board as an Action Item.

### Charter School

The Board members had questions about Charter Schools. Dr. Pascarella said both political candidates are discussing the Charter School concept. There is something that is going to happen with Charter Schools. We are putting in an application. Dr. Sal responded to a question asking if the Charter School would be Danbury's Charter School.

Dr. Pascarella said he will have an Action Item on the next agenda for hiring the teacher at King Street School.

### **BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

#### 2010 CABE/CAPSS Convention, November 19-20, 2010 @ Mystic Marriott

Mr. Fox reiterated the date for the CABE/CAPSS Convention. He said he is going to be on the Interview Committee to elect CABE officers. Mr. Fox also stated that Dr. Glass and the Superintendent are presenting at this Convention.

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

#### Sites and Facilities – Joseph Scozzafava, Chairperson

The Chairperson told the Board that they did have a meeting and he has a report with him. He stated that they will be meeting with Honeywell and Mr. Palanzo. Mr. Jannelli asked for a report on Head Start. He said he will be back in two weeks with a report.

#### Community Relations – Richard Jannelli, Chairperson

Mr. Jannelli had to cancel the meeting scheduled for today because they did not have enough people. He said one of the programs we are working on is Adopt a School. He distributed to the Board what they were going to be discussing at the meeting, if everyone had attended. Friday, Dr. Pascarella and I are going to meet with the *Tribuna* newspaper to reach out to the community. I am trying to get some of the Asian newspapers involved as well. This is one of the ways we are trying to get our message out.

#### Operations/Policy – Robert Taborsak Chairperson

Mr. Taborsak said there was an Ad Hoc meeting for hiring administrators. Ms. Thompson, Director of Human Resources had a summary, but it would be better if that summary was given when we had a full complement of the Board.

#### DSABC – Richard Jannelli, Member

Mr. Jannelli said DSABC will have their annual fundraiser in October – the Board will receive an invitation for that.

#### Magnet School Trustees – Gladys Cooper, Trustee

Ms. Cooper said the first meeting of the Magnet School Trustees will be in October.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION:** J. Scozzafava moved, seconded by R. Jannelli that the Board of Education convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a confidential personnel matter and update on negotiation and litigations.

**Motion carried at 9:20 pm.**

**Attendance:** R. Austin-James, G. Cooper, I. Fox, R. Jannelli, J. Scozzafava, R. Taborsak and Drs. Dylewski, Glass and Pascarella, Mr. Longo and Ms. Thompson from Administration.

**Absent:** E. Alberts, M. Fazio, K. Gailliard, K. Molinaro, S. Podhajski

Discussion ensued regarding strategy for negotiations with our bargaining units.

## **PUBLIC SESSION**

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

**Motion carried at 10:12 pm.**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

G. Cooper moved, seconded by R. Jannelli, that the Board of Education adjourn its September 22, 2010 meeting and the meeting adjourned at 10:14 pm.

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Kathleen Molinaro, Secretary

*(meeting videotaped)*