

Board of Education Regular Meeting

Tuesday, April 24, 2007 7:30 PM

Town Campus Hammonasset Room, 10 Campus Drive , Madison, CT 06443

I. Call to Order / Attendance

II. Executive Session - 5:30 p.m.

III. School Community Session - 7:30 p.m.

III.A. Recognition: Michaels Achievement Cup
(Daniel Hand High School Athletics)

III.B. Public Participation

IV. Board of Education Student Representatives' Report

Speaker (s): Jeff
Cavallo and Emma
Norris

V. Superintendent's Report

Speaker (s): Dr. H.
Kaye Griffin

V.A. Update: Development of Master Schedule at
Daniel Hand High School

Speaker (s): Barbara
Britton and Dan
Zittoun

V.B. Overview: Madison Public Schools Summer Program
2007 - Brain Waves

Speaker (s): Anita
Rutlin, Assistant
Superintendent for
Curricu

V.C. Update: Radon Testing Results

Speaker (s): Bill
McMinn and John
Bowers

V.D. Discussion: Preliminary Recommendations for
2007-2008 Budget Reductions

Speaker (s): Dr. H.
Kaye Griffin

V.E. Update: Kindergarten Enrollment 2007-2008

Speaker (s): Dr. H.
Kaye Griffin

VI. Board Members' Comments

VII. Board Committees / Liaison Updates

VII.A. Planning Committee

Speaker (s): Members:
Kathleen Rossini,
Chair; Becky Coffey;
Debra Frey

VII.B. Personnel Committee

Speaker (s): Members:
John Dean, Chair;
Becky Coffey; David
Yo

VII.C. Policy Committee

Speaker (s): Members:
Holly Sellers, Chair;
Harriet Gowanlock;

VII.C.1. First Reading: School Activity Funds
Policy and Regulation #3453

VII.C.2. Discussion: Employees Self-Funding Health
Insurance Plan Policy and Regulation #3543

VII.D. Finance Committee

Speaker (s): Memners:
Becky Coffey, Chair;
Harriet Gowanlock; D

VII.E. LEARN Liaison

Speaker (s): Liaison:

VIII. **Audience Response to Information Presented**

IX. **Consent Agenda (Items 9.1 - 9.7)**

IX.A. Bills Payable: \$253,397.86

IX.B. Line Transfers: \$139,185.36

IX.C. Donation of \$5,280 for Jeffrey School Field Trips from Jeffrey School PTO (Reference Policy #3281)

IX.D. School Health Services Standing Orders 2007 - 2008 (Reference Policy #5120.3.3)

IX.E. Connecticut Department of Education Special Education Grant Application for: Special Education IDEA, Part B, Section 611; Preschool Special Education, IDEA, Part B, Section 619 (Reference Policy #9540.8)

IX.F. Donation of Automatic External Defibrillator (\$1,959) for Daniel Hand High School from Daniel Hand High School Class of 2006

IX.G. Grant Application for Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs)

X. **Action Item: Employees Self-Funding Health Insurance Plan (Reference Policy #3543)**

XI. **Action Item: Reschedule Board of Education Meeting Date from 6.5.07 to 6.7.07 (Reference Policy #9510)**

XII. **Action Item: Minutes 4.3.07 Meeting**

XIII. **Old Business**

XIV. **New Business**

XV. **Future Agenda Items**

XVI. **Adjournment**

Public Participation Guidelines:

Members of the community are invited to speak on topics of interest and / or topics to be addressed in the agenda. The Board of Education may choose to interact with participants, but will not act upon topics that require further study before action is taken. The participation time will be limited to three (3) minutes per person and fifteen (15) minutes overall to guarantee efficient operation of the entire meeting.

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Consent Agenda:

The following agenda items are designated as routine and appropriate for approval as a single action by the Board of Education, if so desired. A Board member may request removal of any item from the consent agenda for review and discussion.

Board of Education Meeting
April 3, 2007
Town Campus

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order / Attendance

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Chairman Robert Hale at 6:35 p.m.

Present: Becky Coffey, John Dean, Debra Frey, Harriet Gowanlock, Robert Hale, Diana Lynch, Kathleen Rossini, Holly Sellers, David Youngerman.

Also present: Dr. H. Kaye Griffin, Superintendent.

MOTION: by Lynch, seconded by Frey to enter Executive Session at 6:35 p.m. to discuss personnel issues.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Lynch, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

2. Executive Session

Contract Negotiations were discussed.
Personnel issues were discussed.

MOTION: by Rossini, seconded by Youngerman to adjourn Executive Session at 7:20 ~~8~~-p.m.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Lynch, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

The public session of the Board of Education meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Hale at 7:30 p.m. Chairman Hale led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Becky Coffey, John Dean, Debra Frey, Harriet Gowanlock, Robert Hale, Diana Lynch, Kathleen Rossini, Holly Sellers, David Youngerman.

Also present: Dr. H. Kaye Griffin, Superintendent; Anita Rutlin, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; district administrators; faculty; staff; students; community members.

3. School Community Session

3.1 Recognition: Connecticut Drama Association Awards (Daniel Hand High School Drama Students)

Dr. Griffin recognized the following members of the Daniel Hand High School Drama Club in attendance at the Board meeting: Michael Landon; Kathleen Horton; Emsie Bartsch; Kaitrin Kinnaire; Jess Coer; Shannon Tobin; Cynthia Brunelle; and Michael DiBaccaro. Dr. Griffin acknowledged the following members of the Drama Club not in attendance: Hannah Simkins; Wendy Blair; Brynn Tobin; Cassie Schmidt; Allie Brodbeck; and Erin Picone. Dr.

Griffin also recognized the advisor to the Drama Club, Brian Olsen and the assistance provided by Assistant Principal Fran Thompson.

Dr. Griffin stated that the Daniel Hand High School Drama Club participated in the 71st Annual Connecticut Drama Association Festival on March 23rd and 24th. The team received a special commendation for Strength in Comic Rhythm and Timing for the Creation and Development of Characters in an Artistic Manner. The team also received the award for runner-up in Overall Theatrical Excellence. Individual honors were presented for Best Actress to Cynthia Brunelle; Best Actor for Michael DiBiccaro; and Shannon Tobin for Best Student Director.

The members of the Daniel Hand High School Drama Club were presented with certificates of recognition from the Board of Education.

3.2 Recognition: Connecticut Debate Association Championship (Daniel Hand High School Debate Team)

Dr. Griffin recognized the following members of the Daniel Hand High School Debate Team: Dalia Fuleihan and Emily Wilkins. The advisor to the Debate Team, Martin Glasser was unable to attend the meeting, however, Dr. Griffin acknowledged the Principal of Daniel Hand High School, Barbara Britton.

Dr. Griffin reported that the Connecticut Debate Association Championship was held on Saturday, March 24th. Twenty-six schools participated that had placed 1st – 5th in earlier regional competitions. The team comprised of Ms. Fuleihan and Ms. Wilkins won three debates and missed qualifying for first place by less than one percentage point. She added that these students will compete on the varsity team next year.

Ms. Fuleihan and Ms. Wilkins were presented with certificates of recognition from the Board of Education.

3.3 Recognition: National Academic WorldQuest Competition (Daniel Hand High School Students)

Dr. Griffin recognized the following members of the Madison WorldQuest team: Max Calfo; Nick Gonsalves; Alex Taubes; and John Zhang. The advisor to the WorldQuest team, Laura Bomke, was unable to attend the meeting, however, Dr. Griffin acknowledged the Principal of Daniel Hand High School, Barbara Britton.

Dr. Griffin stated that WorldQuest is sponsored by the World Affairs Forum which is dedicated to educating people on international affairs and America's role in the world.

The Madison WorldQuest team competed in the 2007 regional competition in Connecticut and bested 12 other teams. The Madison team also won at the regional level last year. Since they won the regional event, they competed at the National Academic WorldQuest in Washington D.C. on March 24th where they took top prize from among 46 competitors.

Certificates of recognition were presented to the members of the Madison WorldQuest team.

3.4 Recognition: School Library Media Month Celebration

Dr. Griffin read a proclamation (on file) from the Board of Education declaring the month of April as Annual School Library Media Month.

Dr. Griffin acknowledged and thanked the following Library Medial Specialist in attendance: Sandra Bizier; John Wiggins-Strada; Noel Heimer and Cynthia Schneider. She also acknowledged and thanked the followed Library Media Paraprofessionals in attendance: Barbara Gulick and Victoria Chaffee.

3.5 Public Participation

There were no public comments.

4. Board of Education Student Representatives' Report

There was no student representatives' report.

5. Superintendent's Report

5.1 Presentation: Information and Technology Literacy Program Curriculum Guide K-12

Anita Rutlin, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, distributed to the Board a copy of the Information and Technology Literacy Program Curriculum Guide K-12 (on file). She stated that the review process began with two major questions: 1) What would the world be like in 20 years? and 2) What skills will students need to be prepared for that world? Ms. Rutlin commented that the key skill students need is learning.

Ms. Rutlin reported that the entire team of Library Media Specialists, along with other members of the faculty, was involved with the development of the curriculum guide.

Cynthia Schneider, Program Coordinator for Library Media Services, presented the Board of Education with a PowerPoint (on file) that summarized the Information and Technology Literacy Program Curriculum Guide K-12. Ms. Schneider commented that the role of the Library Media Specialist has evolved from one that was responsible for the print collection to a teaching position that works in concert with the other members of the teaching staff. The use of flexible scheduling has allowed the Library Media Specialists more opportunities to provide lessons in conjunction with classroom teachers. She added that requests in the 2007-2008 budget to expand the print collection and the summer reading list are all part of the Information and Technology Literacy Program.

Following the PowerPoint presentation, there was discussion of the impact of new technology on the library media curriculum. Ms. Lynch requested statistics on the print circulation and technology-based media usage.

5.2 Update: Kindergarten Enrollment 2007-2008:

Dr. Griffin reported to the Board that current enrollment for Kindergarten for the upcoming school year is 155. Student are still being enrolled.

6. Board Members' Comments

Chairman Hale reported that the state legislature is still in session. He urged Board members to contact their representative regarding ECS funding. He also stated that two acts are being reviewed: 1) an act regarding in-school suspensions; and 2) HB72-73 that provides flexibility in regard to expulsions.

7. Distribution of Executive Summaries from Board Committees / Liaisons

Executive summaries from Board Committees / Liaisons were distributed.

8. Audience Response to Information Presented

None.

9. Consent Agenda (Items 9.1 – 9.6)

9.1 Bills Payable: \$648,215.61

9.2 Line Transfers: \$106,265.88

9.3 Budget Expenditure Report as of 3.29.07

9.4 Donation: \$6,000 for Island Avenue School Field Trips from Island Avenue PTO.

9.5 Donation: \$4,000 for Brown School Grade 5 Field Trips from Brown School PTO.

9.6 Donation: \$4,000 for Brown School Grade 6 Field Trip from Brown School PTO.

MOTION: by Coffey, seconded by Sellers to approve the consent agenda.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Lynch, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

10. Action Item: Minutes 3.20.07

MOTION: by Sellers, seconded by Dean to approve the minutes of 3.20.07.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Lynch

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

11. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

12. New Business

Dr. Griffin read the following letter of intent to retire to the members of the Board of Education:

As all of the Board members know, for the past several weeks, members of the Personnel Committee and I have been collaboratively negotiating a settlement agreement for the third year of my current contract with the Madison Public Schools. Additionally, members of the committee and I have had productive conversation regarding development of a new three-year contract which would commence on July 1, 2008 and extend through June 30, 2011. Although I would typically respond to the committee's offer in the context of a meeting of the Personnel Committee, I am choosing to address the entire Board this evening to bring closure to the negotiations process and the discussion surrounding my contract as Superintendent of Schools for the Madison Public Schools.

I wish to express gratitude to the committee for the generous offer of both a wage settlement for school year 2007-2008 and the proposal for a new future three-year contract. Please know that I appreciate the time and effort you have put into the negotiation process on behalf of the entire Board of Education. It was apparent to me in our discussions that you had garnered the support of the full Board prior to any offer of wage settlement and continued employment. As usual, you worked effectively and efficiently as a team, in spite of the sometimes stressful and negative environment you have faced over the past few weeks.

Over the past several days, I have contemplated my response to the contract settlement offer in light of my personal and professional goals. Additionally, I have forced myself to think objectively about the future of the school district and the timing of my own retirement from public education. You will recall that when we negotiated my last contract, I originally stated that I preferred a two-year contract with a month-to-month arrangement for maximum flexibility in

processing my retirement and to accommodate the Board's need to conduct a search for a new superintendent.

Well, I have now *revisited* my original plan for retirement and decided that an impending important birthday and an opportunity to participate in the VERIP option are two current variables that prompt me to the decision point, which we all face eventually as a career milestone.

Therefore, I respectfully decline your offer to settle my current contract and to consider signing a future three-year contract. With that said, I am officially announcing my intent to retire from public education after having completed 38 years of service, with 19 years in Connecticut, all of which have been in Madison. To this end, I am requesting that the Board take action to approve my participation in the VERIP retirement option this evening, resulting in my official retirement date becoming effective June 30, 2007.

Because I can fully understand how this decision could place the Board and the district in a tenuous situation at such late notice, I am accepting the Personnel Committee's offer to continue in the role as the Interim Superintendent of Schools until the new superintendent is hired, with an expected July 1, 2007 to December 31, 2008 timeline given the need to involve the school community in an extensive search process.

I am certain that you recognize that this letter has been a difficult one for me to compose, in that my work here in Madison has been my professional focus for so many years and that I have been committed to fulfilling the role of chief executive officer and instructional leader of the school district. I have never taken the charge lightly nor have I taken it for granted.

Working with each of you, and the Board members who preceded you, the incredible administrative team leading our schools, the talented and dedicated staff, and, of course, those bright and wonderful students and their parents in the Madison Public Schools has been an honorable professional experience of which I will always be proud.

Please know that I will continue to work hard each day as the Interim Superintendent to contribute to a smooth transition of the school district toward a new era under new leadership.

Thank you.

Chairman Hale responded that it will be difficult for the Board to accept Dr. Griffin's retirement request and that it will be difficult to find a person to "fill her shoes".

Ms. Frey commented that Dr. Griffin raised the bar and set the standard for what the Board expects. She added that Dr. Griffin has shown unquestionable integrity, been focused on the instructional needs of the district and has been an effective administrator.

Ms. Rossini stated that she will accept Dr. Griffin's retirement with a heavy heart and that Dr. Griffin has been a mentor to the Board and the staff.

Ms. Gowanlock stated that she was profoundly grateful to Dr. Griffin for her service and thanked her for her leadership on many levels. She added that Dr. Griffin has always put the needs of the students and district first.

Mr. Dean thanked Dr. Griffin for her years of service.

Mr. Youngerman expressed an ante dote related to an event the Board members attended with Dr. Griffin. He stated that his event showed what a positive relationship Dr. Griffin has with the Board. He thanked Dr. Griffin for her 19 years of service with Madison.

Ms. Lynch stated Dr. Griffin is a person who looks for excellence and performance and works diligently to reach consensus.

Atty. Sellers commented that people who work outside the public sector do not understand how hard people work. She stated that Dr. Griffin has always worked for every child in the district and always tried to do the right thing.

MOTION: by Dean, seconded by Frey to add item 12a. To approve the retirement of Dr. Griffin from her employment as Superintendent of Schools, effective June 30, 2007 pursuant to the Board VERIP Plan, to the agenda.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Lynch, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

12a. Action Item: To approve the retirement of Dr. Griffin from her employment as Superintendent of Schools, effective June 30, 2007 pursuant to the Board VERIP Plan.

MOTION: by Dean, seconded by Rossini to approve the retirement, with regret, of Dr. Griffin from her employment as Superintendent of Schools, effective June 30, 2007 pursuant to the Board VERIP Plan, to the agenda.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: Lynch

MOTION CARRIED: 8-1

Ms. Coffey read the following statement:

To the Citizens of Madison;

April 3, 2007 - It is with deep regret that we accept the retirement of Dr. H. Kaye Griffin as Superintendent of the Madison Public Schools. Tonight, we wish to remember and applaud her leadership of the district over the past 13 years of change and transition.

Student Enrollment and Facilities: From 1994 to 2006, total student enrollment in the district rose by 35 percent from 2,834 students to 3,844. But it was in 1996 that the rising student enrollment began to overcrowd existing school facilities. The district had to add modular classrooms at two schools and created a modular classroom school at Town Campus to accommodate rising student enrollment in the short-term.

Then in February 2001, the town approved funding to build a new high school at the Green Hill Road campus. When it opened in August 2003, seventh and eighth graders moved into the former high school, renamed the Polson Middle School; a year later, the fifth and sixth grades moved from Jeffrey School into a newly-renovated Brown Middle School.

Strong leadership was required to direct the many program upgrades and adjustments precipitated by grade grouping changes, staff shifts, and facility moves, and to guide and support staff and students during these transitions.

Student Achievement and Spending: Despite these years of upheaval, student achievement – still improved. On the tenth-grade Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), a cumulative measure of student learning, the district in the past few years has ranked among the top 10-15 highest scoring school districts in the state. Yet Madison's stellar record of achievement, according to State Department of Education statistics, is achieved at a cost per pupil that is lower than 163 other Connecticut towns.

Curriculum: Since 1994, district curriculum changes have improved the programming available for students. World languages are now taught every day in seventh and eighth grade instead of every other day; students in sixth grade are now taught Spanish all year instead of for just six weeks and fifth grade students, who until two years ago had no language instruction, now receive it. More eighth grade students now take Algebra as the district implements an initiative to prepare more students to take advanced math and science courses at the high school. New courses have been added at the high school including Chinese. And Middle School students now can choose a Theater Arts track option in addition to band, chorus and orchestra tracks.

Special Education: In the past five years, Dr. Griffin has also spearheaded an initiative to provide in the Madison public schools the appropriate programming and services to serve students with extraordinary special needs. The added special education staff and services benefits these students while also protecting taxpayers from the uncontrollable and unpredictable costs of out-of-district placements that average up to \$75,000 per year each. The creation of the ACES Town Campus Learning Center three years ago has been critical to the success of the initiative to return students to the district for their education. Five years ago about 40 students were placed at expensive out-of-district schools; today, the number is closer to 20 students.

Technology: Computers are now available in each classroom and are connected to the Internet to support student research. Teachers have been trained to use the technology to support instruction. And through the district website, the administration communicates up-to-date information to facilitate 24-hour access by parents, staff, and town residents.

Administration: Dr. Griffin has championed the innovative concept of sharing district administrative positions with the town government to avoid duplicating those functions in each organization. Town/School shared positions now include: the Director of Fiscal Services, the Director of Human Resources, the Director of Administrative Services, the Director of Facilities and the town Webmaster. Both the town and schools have benefited by having access to exceptionally talented staff at the lowest total cost.

Athletic Facilities and Programming: Since 1994, the Athletic Department has moved from a part-time Program Coordinator for Athletics to a full-time certified Athletic Director who has two dedicated secretaries to assist him. Added in 2005 was the position of Program Coordinator for Middle School Interscholastic and Intramural Athletics.

In 2002, the ice hockey program was upgraded from club to varsity. In 2003, the indoor track program was upgraded from club to varsity. In 2005, a new freshman baseball team was added. In 2006, two new coaching positions were added: an Assistant Head Coach for Lacrosse and an Assistant Head Coach for Football. Intramural programs at the middle school now have more than 150 student participants each year.

Athletic facilities have been added and upgraded. In 2003, the Green Hill Road campus gained a new metric-length track and, inside the track oval, a new wider artificial turf field for lacrosse, soccer and football. The Janssen natural turf field was re-graded and irrigated. This spring, the campus adds a new 3000 square foot Tiger Fitness Center and two new softball fields – one of which will have artificial turf to allow intensive use.

Conclusion: As a district of demonstrated achievements – and with one of the lowest costs per pupil in the state – Madison has become the envy of school districts across the state. These

successes have been achieved under the strong and firm leadership of Dr. H. Kaye Griffin, our Superintendent.

As the Board of Education starts our search for a new Superintendent, we will look for candidates with the skills and experience to build on Dr. Griffin's record of success.

Signed: The Madison Board of Education

MOTION: by Dean, seconded by Coffey to add item 12b. To appoint Dr. Griffin as Interim Superintendent of Schools pursuant to C.G.S. 10-157(b) effective July 1, 2007 under mutually agreeable terms consistent with State Teacher Retirement Board 45% rule, to the agenda.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Lynch, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

12b. Action Item: To appoint Dr. Griffin as Interim Superintendent of Schools pursuant to C.G.S. 10-157(b) effective July 1, 2007 under mutually agreeable terms consistent with State Teacher Retirement Board 45% rule.

MOTION: by Dean, seconded by Youngerman to appoint Dr. Griffin as Interim Superintendent of Schools pursuant to C.G.S. 10-157(b) effective July 1, 2007 under mutually agreeable terms consistent with State Teacher Retirement Board 45% rule.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Lynch, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

MOTION: by Dean, seconded by Gowanlock to add item 12c. To adopt the letter of Becky Coffey, just read into the record, as the position of the entire Board and to direct Chairman Hale to cause this letter to be published in the local newspaper, to the agenda.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Lynch, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

12c. Action Item: To adopt the letter of Becky Coffey, just read into the record, as the position of the entire Board and to direct Chairman Hale to cause this letter to be published in the local newspaper.

MOTION: by Dean, seconded by Sellers to adopt the letter of Becky Coffey, just read into the record, as the position of the entire Board and to direct Chairman Hale to cause this letter to be published in the local newspaper, to the agenda.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Lynch, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

13. Future Agenda Items

None.

14. Adjournment

MOTION: by Coffey, seconded by Dean to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

AYES: Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Lynch, Rossini, Sellers, Youngerman.

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

Submitted for approval at the 4.24.07 BOE meeting.
hgd