

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Monday, December 7, 2009 7:00 PM Eastern

Pinney Administration Building
16 Levinthal Run
Stafford Springs, CT 06076

I.	Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum
II.	Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes
II.A.	Regular Meeting Minutes, November 16, 2009
III.	Treasurer's Report
III.A.	Board Bills
III.A.1.	November 19, 2009- \$420,624.00
IV.	Correspondence
V.	Board Reports
VI.	Superintendent Reports
VI.A.	Head Start Report through November 2009
VI.B.	Fall Sports Presentation
VI.C.	English Language Learner (ELL) Programs
VI.D.	Cafeteria Profit and Loss Statement through October 2009
VII.	Public Forum
VIII.	Old Business
IX.	New Business
IX.A.	Possible Approval of ERASE Substance Abuse Questionnaire
IX.B.	Review and Possible Approval of Revised / New Board Policies
X.	Personnel Matters
X.A.	Appointment- Certified Staff Member
X.B.	CSEA Contract Update (Executive Session Anticipated)
X.C.	First Student Contract Update (Executive Session Anticipated)
XI.	Student Matters
XI.A.	Consideration of Superintendent of School's Recommendation for Early Readmission of Student A (09-10) from Expulsion from Stafford Middle School (Executive Session Anticipated)
XI.B.	Consideration of Superintendent of School's Recommendation for Early Readmission of Student E (08-09) from Expulsion from Stafford High School (Executive Session Anticipated)

**Regular Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Pinney Administration Building
Monday, November 16, 2009**

Board Members Present: Mr. Mark Fontanella, Chairperson
Mrs. Sandy Fowler, Secretary
Mrs. Lisa Bradway
Mrs. Lisa Finch
Ms. Julie Stafford
Mr. Stephen Szymanski

Absent: Mrs. Tracy Rummel

Also Present: Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Meg Devlin, Financial Analyst
Mr. Francis Kennedy, Principal, Stafford High School
Mr. Hank Skala, Principal, Stafford Elementary School
Mr. Thomas Szymanski, Student Representative
Mrs. Ginny Trafidlo, Teacher, Stafford Elementary School
Mr. Devon Woods, Student, Stafford High School, and family

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. A quorum was established.

ITEM I. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes

Special Meeting, October 26, 2009
Regular Meeting, October 26, 2009
Special Meeting, November 2, 2009

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Reports for the special and regular meetings held on October 26, 2009, and the special meeting held on November 2, 2009, as presented.

ITEM II. Treasurer's Report

Board Bills:

October 29, 2009	\$353,212.15
November 4, 2009	\$207,536.85
November 12, 2009	\$275,516.73

Grants:

November 9, 2009	\$ 45,096.75
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A consensus of the Board approved the Board bills and grants, as presented.

ITEM III. Correspondence

Mr. Fontanella stated that he received a letter from the Selectman's Office reminding the Board of Education that a calendar of regular meetings for 2010 must be on file at the Town Hall prior to the end of the calendar year.

Mr. Fontanella stated that the Madrigal Feaste would take place December 4 – 6, 2009. He asked that Board members let him know if they are interested in tickets.

ITEM IV. Board Reports

Mr. Thomas Szymanski, Student Representative, reported on the following topics:

- ✓ A sports update
- ✓ A music update
- ✓ An update on the dinner theaters, which were held on 11/6 and 11/7
- ✓ The Veterans' Day Parade in Hartford
- ✓ The Madrigal Feaste

Mr. Steve Szymanski reported on the progress of the building committee with regard to the playing field at Stafford Elementary School. He said that the core samples that were taken were found to have a higher percentage of fine material than allowed by the specifications. Therefore, the building committee is going to invite the architect (Kaestle Boos) and the site contractor (All Phase) to the next committee meeting in early December. He said that the field is unacceptable and needs to be fixed and that the next step is for everyone to come together and find a solution. However, they will have to wait until spring to start reconstruction. Mr. Szymanski also stated that the specifications were for a practice field, but the building committee may look at what would be necessary to bring the field up to the level of a competition field. He also reported that the high school bleacher project that was started is on schedule for completion in March 2010.

Mrs. Bradway said that she attended the Vocabulary Parade at West Stafford School on October 30 and that it was very nicely done. She also said that she attended the dinner to recognize Dr. Elliott as the National Principal of the Year on November 5.

Ms. Stafford reminded Board members that it was Reading Week at the schools.

Mr. Fontanella stated that at the last Board meeting, comments were made that brought into question his commitment to the position of Board chair. Mr. Fontanella stated that he has been on the Board for seven years and has served on countless sub-committees, such as the Technology Committee, the Strategic Planning Committee, the Wellness Committee, SEA, CSEA and SAA Negotiation Committees, and the Bus Contract Negotiation Committee. He also noted that he attended the new Board member orientation, he was the first Board member to attend the Delegate Assembly, and he attended the State budget hearing. He noted his role in obtaining the shared positions with the town (athletic director and electrician), in securing the Virtual High School program, in implementing the budget sub-committee and in initiating the Board self-evaluation process. Mr. Fontanella stated that he has been the Board chair for

three years and has only missed two meetings, one was a regular meeting and one was a committee meeting. He also stated that he has publicly represented the Board at countless events and hearings. He said that the Board is lucky to have members that can attend events and report back to the Board. Lastly, he noted that if any Board member had any suggestions that they should contact him privately, or request that it be discussed as a group.

ITEM V. Superintendent's Reports

A. Student Recognition

Dr. Fishman introduced Mr. Devon Woods, a senior at Stafford High School. Dr. Fishman announced that Mr. Woods has been named a Commended Student in the 2010 National Merit Scholarship Program, based on his score on the PSAT. Mr. Woods placed in the top 5% of the more than 1.5 million students that took the PSAT.

Mr. Fontanella presented Mr. Woods with a certificate of recognition.

B. Presentation of 2008 – 2009 Strategic School Profiles for the Stafford Public Schools, Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Fishman reviewed the 2008 – 2009 Strategic School Profiles for the Stafford Public Schools with the Board. She stated that in accordance with Connecticut State law, these profiles must be presented at the first Board meeting following their release by the State Department of Education.

Dr. Fishman highlighted several portions of the profiles, as follows:

- The number/percentage of students who are eligible for free/reduced-price meals, as compared with the DRG average, on page 1 of the district report. 25.3% of Stafford's students qualify for free / reduced priced meals, as compared to 22.6% in the DRG and 30.3% at the State level. Dr. Fishman said that this number is going up each year and has surpassed the DRG this year.
- The percentage of PreK-grade twelve students receiving special education services in Stafford as compared with DRG and State averages, on page 1 of the district report. 8.6% of Stafford's students received special education services in district, as compared to 11.0% in the DRG and 11.4% at the State level.
- The number/percentage of juniors and seniors working 16 hours or more per week, on page 1 of the district report. This number has decreased since last year, but is still well above DRG and State averages.
- The dropout rate for the class of 2008, on page 4 of the district report, which is 3.3%, as compared to 2.5% at the State level.
- Percentage of time spent with non-disabled peers for students with disabilities, K- grade 12, for whom Stafford is financially responsible, on page 7 of the district report. Dr. Fishman stated that these figures show growth since last year.
- The number/percentage of 12th graders who took advanced placement courses in 2007-2008, on page 4 of Stafford High School's report. Mrs. Fowler asked the Superintendent to follow up with Mr. Kennedy regarding the decline in AP courses.

- Percentage of students in the class of 2008 who took higher level courses or earned more credits in selected subjects than required by the State, on page 2 of Stafford High School's report.
- Percentage of students in grades 4, 6, 8, and 10 who reached the health standard on all four tests of physical fitness, on page 4 of Stafford High School, Stafford Middle School, and Stafford Elementary School reports.
- Required hours of instruction per year in selected subject areas at Stafford Middle School, on page 2 of Stafford Middle School's report.

Mrs. Fowler and Ms. Stafford had questions regarding the disciplinary offenses portion of the high school and middle school profiles. She asked that the Superintendent check on those figures.

C. Head Start Report through October 2009

Dr. Fishman reviewed the Head Start Report through October 2009 with the Board. She stated that the district has expended \$10,211 of the total grant amount of \$50,233. She noted that \$13,377 in student transportation bills have yet to come in.

D. Financial Report through October 2009

Dr. Fishman presented the Financial Report through October 2009. She stated that the report shows a deficit of \$22,563, and that the reduction in the original amount of debt that the district took into the 2009 - 2010 school year from the previous year has been reduced by freezing the budget and by using the savings from the new liability, auto and property insurance and Workers' Compensation insurance policies. She noted that the insurance savings can be seen in the balance for the group of budget lines under Other Purchased Services on the financial report that the Board members received. She also said that the district is over-expended in the Benefits lines because of the cost of unemployment benefits, and that all other over-expenditures are the result of the carry over of debt from 2008 - 2009 into 2009 - 2010.

Dr. Fishman said that she has heard from the State Department of Education that the Excess Cost formula for reimbursement could go from 100% to 77%, as the Governor struggles to remove more "red ink" from the State budget. Board members asked how much money that translated into. Mrs. Devlin said that last year the district received \$580,000 in excess cost funds at 100%. She also said that there isn't any definitive information from the State yet.

Lastly, Dr. Fishman said that Mrs. Devlin has yet to meet with the departments of Special Education / Special Services, Curriculum and Instruction, Technology and Building Services to evaluate their current budget encumbrances for possible savings.

E. Update on Electronic Board Meetings / Electronic Policy Manual

Dr. Fishman stated that the district is moving forward with the electronic Board meeting and electronic policy manual initiatives. She introduced Mrs. Marinelli, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools.

Mrs. Marinelli stated that the electronic Board policy manual, which is in the process of being created by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), should be on-line and available for use by January 1, 2010. She said that this service will allow everyone with internet access to view, search and print the district's policies, as well as use "live" links for the legal references.

Mrs. Marinelli stated that Mr. Caruso from CABE was in the district on Tuesday, November 10, 2009, to begin the training process for the electronic Board meeting software. She also said that the technology department has prepared the laptops for use during Board meetings by Board members, and that they have the wireless service for the boardroom in place. Mrs. Marinelli said that Mr. Caruso would come out to train the Board members on how to use the new system, either as part of a regular meeting, or before a regular meeting, or at a special meeting. Board members asked that the training be separate from a regular meeting. Mrs. Marinelli stated that she would try to have everything in place to run the first meeting in January electronically.

Item VI. Public Forum

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Item VII. Old Business

- A. **Review and Possible Approval of Revised / New Board Policies 1212-School Volunteers with accompanying Regulation (a)-(b) and Form; 3152 (a)-(d)-Spending Public Funds for Advocacy (new policy); 3524.1 (a)-(b)-Pesticide Application with accompanying Regulation (a)-(d) and Forms 1 and 2; 3541.21 (a)-(b)-Responsibility Regarding Determination of Need for Medical Intervention for Students Involved in a School Bus Accident (new policy) with accompanying Regulation (a)-(b); 4118.11 / 4218.11-Nondiscrimination; 4152.6 / 4252.6 (a)-(c)-Family and Medical Leave Act with accompanying Regulation (a)-(l) and Form; 5114 (a)-(l)-Removal / Suspension / Expulsion; 5124.1 (a)-(c)-District / School Report Cards; 5133-Behavior of Participants in Athletic Events (new policy); 5141.25 (a)-(d)-Accommodating Students with Special Dietary Needs (new policy) with accompanying Regulation (a)-(d) and Forms 1-5; 5145.4 (a)-(b)-Nondiscrimination; 6114.1-Fire Emergency (Drills) (new policy); 6140-Curriculum; and 6145.22-Sportsmanship (new policy)**

Dr. Fishman said that these policies represent new and revised Board policies and regulations, as reviewed and revised by a committee of administrators and the Board of Education policy sub-committee. She noted that they were presented to the Board for a first reading at the October 26, 2009, meeting.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Fowler, that the Board of Education approve Board policies **1212-School Volunteers with accompanying Regulation (a)-(b) and Form; 3152 (a)-(d)-Spending Public Funds for Advocacy (new policy); 3524.1 (a)-(b)-Pesticide Application with accompanying Regulation (a)-(d) and Forms 1 and 2; 3541.21 (a)-(b)-Responsibility Regarding Determination of Need for Medical Intervention for Students Involved in a School**

Bus Accident (new policy) with accompanying Regulation (a)-(b); 4118.11 / 4218.11- Nondiscrimination; 4152.6 / 4252.6 (a)-(c)-Family and Medical Leave Act with accompanying Regulation (a)-(l) and Form; 5114 (a)-(l)-Removal / Suspension / Expulsion; 5124.1 (a)-(c)-District / School Report Cards; 5133-Behavior of Participants in Athletic Events (new policy); 5141.25 (a)-(d)-Accommodating Students with Special Dietary Needs (new policy) with accompanying Regulation (a)-(d) and Forms 1-5; 5145.4 (a)-(b)-Nondiscrimination; 6114.1-Fire Emergency (Drills) (new policy); 6140-Curriculum; and 6145.22-Sportsmanship (new policy), as presented. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried.

Item VIII. New Business

A. Election of Board of Education Officers

Mrs. Fowler nominated Mr. Fontanella for the office of Board chair. Mrs. Finch seconded the nomination. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the nomination, which carried.

Mrs. Finch nominated Mrs. Fowler for the office of Board secretary. Ms. Stafford seconded the nomination. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the nomination, which carried.

B. Review and Approval of 2010 Calendar of Board Meetings

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Stafford, to accept the 2010 Calendar of Regular Board of Education Meetings, as presented, with modifications to the meeting locations as discussed. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Fowler asked if “Special Meetings” could be added as an agenda item so that Board members could select dates for special meetings for the Superintendent’s evaluation and the Board of Education self-evaluation.

C. Review and Approval of the Stafford Elementary School Improvement Plan

Dr. Fishman stated that based on the spring 2009 results on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) at Stafford Elementary School, the sub-group of students who are “Economically Disadvantaged” did not make “adequate yearly progress (AYP),” according to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) standards. According to State statutes, a committee comprised of the school’s administrator, teachers, parents, and community representatives met to prepare a School Improvement Plan to assist all students, and, in particular, students who are “Economically Disadvantaged,” to make AYP on subsequent CMT’s. Dr. Fishman said that this committee met several times to develop a plan, which was sent to Board members in their packets. She also noted that in addition, in compliance with State statutes, a District Review Committee comprised of the principal of Stafford Middle School, the Director of Pupil Services, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and the Superintendent met to review the School

Improvement Plan developed by the Stafford Elementary School Committee. She noted that the members of the District Review Committee have approved the School Improvement Plan.

She said that the final step, according to State statutes, is that the members of the Board of Education must approve the School Improvement Plan for Stafford Elementary School, which will then be forwarded to the State Department of Education. Dr. Fishman introduced Mr. Skala, Principal of Stafford Elementary School.

Mr. Skala highlighted the SES Improvement Plan for the Board, which he said was based on the State template. He said that this was a complex task, and he commended the members of the school-level committee. He stated that Mrs. Traidlo, a special education teacher at Stafford Elementary School and part of the school-level committee, was also present at the Board meeting to answer any questions Board members might have.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, that the Board of Education approve the School Improvement Plan for Stafford Elementary School, as presented. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Bradway made a motion, seconded by Ms. Stafford, to place **Item IX.A. - CSEA Contract Update (Executive Session Anticipated)**, into executive session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried.

The Board took a brief recess at 9:00 p.m.

Item IX. Personnel Matters

A. CSEA Contract Update (Executive Session Anticipated)

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Stafford, to enter executive session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 9:07 p.m.

Ms. Stafford made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, to return to regular session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 9:24 p.m.

No action was taken on this item.

Item X. Student Matters

There were no Student Matters.

Item XI. Adjournment

Ms. Stafford made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary

Mark Fontanella, Chairperson

Sandra Fowler, Secretary

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