

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Monday, February 22, 2010 7:00 PM Eastern

Stafford Elementary School
16 Levinthal Run
Stafford Springs, CT 06076

- I. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum
- II. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes
 - II.A. Special Meeting Minutes- February 8, 2010
 - II.B. Regular Meeting Minutes- February 8, 2010
- III. Treasurer's Report
 - III.A. Board Bills
 - III.A.1. February 10, 2010- \$132,692.78
 - III.A.2. February 17, 2010- \$179,496.83
- IV. Correspondence
- V. Board Reports
- VI. Superintendent Reports
 - VI.A. Financial Report through January 2010
 - VI.B. Presentation regarding the Stafford High School Credit Re-Entry Program
 - VI.C. Update on the Retirement Incentive Plan
 - VI.D. Continued Presentation of the 2010 - 2011 Proposed School Budget
 - VI.E. Cafeteria Profit and Loss through January 2010
- VII. Public Forum
- VIII. Old Business
- IX. New Business
 - IX.A. Approval of the 2010 - 2011 School Budget
- X. Personnel Matters
 - X.A. Resignation- Certified Staff Member
- XI. Student Matters
 - XI.A. Board Consideration of the Recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools regarding the Expulsion of Student E from Stafford High School pursuant to Conn. Gen. Statute 10-233d (Executive Session Anticipated)

**Special Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Stafford Elementary School
Monday, February 8, 2010, 5:00 p.m.**

Present: Mr. Mark Fontanella, Chairperson
Mrs. Sandy Fowler, Secretary
Mrs. Lisa Bradway
Mrs. Lisa Finch
Mrs. Tracy Rummel

Absent: Mr. Steve Szymanski
Ms. Julie Stafford

Also Present: Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Robert Campbell, Assistant Principal, Stafford High School
Attorney Peter A. Janus, Counsel for the Board of Education
Mr. Francis Kennedy, Principal, Stafford High School
Dr. Daniel Lefebvre, Director of Pupil Services

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. A quorum was established.

Attorney Janus stated that Student J and Student J's parents would not be attending the hearing. Attorney Janus stated that he spoke with Student J's father via telephone at approximately 5:15 p.m., after neither the student, nor the parents were present for the hearing. Student J's father verbally confirmed that he and his son did not want to attend the hearing. Student J's father confirmed that he had received the packet of information that was hand delivered to him. Attorney Janus stated that the hearing would proceed as usual.

2. Executive Session

- a. **Board Inquiry into the Continued Enrollment and Attendance of Student J**
- b. **Board Consideration of the Recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools regarding the Expulsion of Student J from Stafford High School Pursuant to CGS 10-233d**

3. Action by the Board in Response to the Superintendent's Recommendation or Motion regarding the Expulsion of Student J

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, that the Board enter executive session to discuss material that would result in the disclosure of public records or the information contained therein as described in Connecticut General Statutes Sections 1-200(6)(E), subsection (b) of Section 1-210, specifically, personnel, student or medical and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute an invasion of privacy, and / or names

and addresses of students enrolled in public school. Only those invited by the Board may be present in the executive session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 5:31 p.m.

The Board invited the following individuals into the executive session:

Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Robert Campbell, Assistant Principal, Stafford High School
Attorney Peter A. Janus, Counsel for the Board of Education
Mr. Francis Kennedy, Principal, Stafford High School
Dr. Daniel Lefebvre, Director of Pupil Services
Mrs. Christine Marinelli, Recording Secretary

The Board took a recess to deliberate at 5:52 p.m. All invited individuals, with the exception of Attorney Janus, left the meeting room.

All invited individuals returned to the meeting room at 5:57 p.m.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, to return to regular session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 5:58 p.m.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, that based on the evidence and testimony received after a due process hearing, it is the finding of the Stafford Board of Education that culminating on or about January 28, 2010, Student J committed an expellable offense, namely that Student J was in possession of two knives on school grounds during the school day; Student J threatened two students with one of the knives on the school bus during the school day; Student J vandalized the school bus with one of the knives during the school day; Student J was in possession of and used a dangerous instrument on the school bus during the school day; and Student J violated the Board of Education's Policy 5131.1, Policy 5131.7, and Policy 5114 (a)-(l), and the disciplinary guidelines, as outlined in the Stafford High School 2009 – 2010 Student – Parent Handbook. It is the further finding of the Stafford Board of Education that such action constitutes conduct which is detrimental and an endangerment to the health, safety and welfare of other students, that such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process and that such conduct also violates a publicized policy of the Stafford Board of Education. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Fowler made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to enter executive session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 5:59 p.m.

At approximately 6:12 p.m., all individuals invited to attend executive session by the Board, with the exception of Attorney Peter Janus, left the conference room so that the Board of Education could deliberate.

All invited individuals returned to the Board of Education conference room at approximately 6:18 p.m.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to return to regular session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 6:19 p.m.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, that based on the previous decision of the Stafford Board of Education that Student J committed an expellable offense, and based upon the evidence and testimony received as to the length of any expulsion to be imposed for the offense by Student J, it is the finding of the Stafford Board of Education that Student J shall be expelled from the Stafford Public Schools, from any and all school privileges and premises, and all school-sponsored activities for disciplinary reasons, effective immediately, for a period through the end of the first semester of the 2010 – 2011 school year.

Moved further that the Administration provide Student J with an alternative educational opportunity during the expulsion period, consistent with such child's educational needs, as determined by the planning and placement team.

Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried.

4. Adjournment

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Marinelli
Recording Secretary

Mark Fontanella, Chairperson

Mrs. Sandy Fowler, Secretary

**Regular Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Stafford Elementary School
Monday, February 8, 2010**

Board Members Present: Mr. Mark Fontanella, Chairperson
Mrs. Lisa Bradway
Mrs. Lisa Finch
Mrs. Sandy Fowler, Secretary
Mrs. Tracy Rummel

Absent: Ms. Julie Stafford
Mr. Stephen Szymanski
Mr. Thomas Szymanski, Student Representative

Also Present: Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Mr. David Bartlett, Principal, Staffordville School
Mr. Robert Campbell, Assistant Principal, Stafford High School
Mrs. Meg Devlin, Financial Analyst
Dr. Marcia Elliott, Principal, West Stafford School
Mr. Damian Frassinelli, Director of Athletics and Recreation
Mr. Francis Kennedy, Principal, Stafford High School
Dr. Daniel Lefebvre, Director of Pupil Services
Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Assistant Principal, Stafford Middle School
Mr. Hank Skala, Principal, Stafford Elementary School
Mr. Kenneth Valentine, Principal, Stafford Middle School
Community Members, Parents and Students

Item I. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. A quorum was established.

Item II. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes

Special Meeting, January 20, 2010
Special Meeting, January 20, 2010
Special Meeting, January 20, 2010
Regular Meeting, January 25, 2010

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Reports for the special meetings held on January 20, 2010, and the regular meeting held on January 25, 2010, as presented.

Item III. Treasurer's Report

Board Bills and Grants:

January 27, 2010	\$ 4,985.55
January 29, 2010	\$ 20,324.73 (Grants)
February 2, 2010	\$1,289,159.26

A consensus of the Board approved the Board bills and grants, as presented.

Item IV. Correspondence

Mr. Fontanella read an e-mail that was sent by Mr. Duchon regarding the middle school's stage and select choirs playing at a hockey game.

Mrs. Rummel noted that Reverend Chamberland distributed a flyer from the First United Methodist Church to the Board members.

Item V. Board Reports

Mrs. Rummel noted that a summary of the EASTCONN Executive Board meeting was sent to Board members electronically.

Mr. Fontanella proposed moving Item XI.A.- Community Concern Regarding Racism, to the next item on the agenda. Mrs. Bradway made the motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to move Item XI.A.- Community Concern Regarding Racism, to the next item on the agenda. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried.

Item XI. Student Matters

A. Community Concern Regarding Racism

Mr. Fontanella began by stating that he has heard concerns that the administration and the Board are not aware of incidents or not dealing with incidents, which are false. He said that the district does not ignore these matters and does address them when they have the information available to investigate them. Mr. Fontanella also noted that the district has had diversity programs in the schools since the mid-1990s, which have been evolving and changing as times have changed. Mr. Fontanella then reviewed the Board policy governing conduct at public Board meetings. He also asked that if parents, students or community members had specific charges or complaints that they give them to the Board in writing for further investigation.

Mr. and Mrs. Atkins and Miss Atkins addressed the Board and expressed their concerns regarding racism in the school system and in the town, as well as concern for their daughter's safety while attending school. Many community members, staff members, parents and students spoke about the topic of racism in our schools and in our town and spoke out in support of Miss Atkins and her family. Several members of the public also offered suggestions and ideas for programs that could help address the matter of racism in the school system. Many residents stated that they were appalled that these acts of racism are happening in Stafford. Residents stated that they want to do whatever is necessary to fix this problem in our schools quickly and that parents and students must be part of the solution.

After everyone was offered an opportunity to speak, Mr. Fontanella stated that the Board and the community are all on the same page. He said that the Board does not tolerate racism, they don't foster it, and they don't deny that it is there. He called upon the parents and students to help with this issue, as this is something that begins in the home and isn't something that can be changed in school alone.

Dr. Fishman stated that the district is always looking for ways to improve. She said that Ms. Freiberg has been out from the State Department of Education several times. Dr. Fishman said that she even offered parent forums with dinner and childcare provided at Stafford Middle School and Stafford Elementary School and that very few parents attended. Of those that attended, most were parents of elementary students. Dr. Fishman then outlined the programs that have been used in Stafford since 1996.

Mr. and Mrs. Atkins and Miss Atkins, as well as most members of the audience, became upset and left the meeting room after being asked to allow the administration and the Board to speak without interruption.

Mr. Fontanella called a recess at 8:50 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 p.m.

Dr. Fishman finished the rest of her statement to the public. Mr. Kennedy also spoke. Mr. Fontanella stated that the Board would take the matters brought forward under advisement and work to develop a plan to address them.

Item VI. Superintendent's Reports

A. Head Start Report through January 2010

Dr. Fishman reviewed the Head Start report through January 31, 2010, with the Board. She stated that it shows that the district has expended / encumbered the total grant amount of \$50,233. She noted that a new grant cycle begins on February 1, 2010.

B. Cafeteria Profit and Loss through December 2009

Dr. Fishman reviewed the Cafeteria Profit and Loss Statement through December 2009, as prepared by Mrs. Mary Folker, Food Services Coordinator, and Mrs. Susan Linder, Director of Building Services, and reviewed by Mrs. Meg Devlin, Financial Analyst. She said that the month of December only showed a profit of \$1,293. However, the profit and loss statement shows an overall profit through December of \$11,381.

C. Revised Proposed 2010 – 2011 Budget for the Stafford Public Schools

Dr. Fishman informed the Board that the proposed budget for 2010 – 2011 would change from a .70% increase to a 1.93% increase, due to an additional \$234,069 added to the 500's object for special education outplacement tuition and transportation, and an additional \$66,000 added to the 100's object for the Stafford High School credit re-entry program.

Dr. Fishman said that Dr. Lefebvre would be giving a presentation on the SHS Credit Re-Entry Program to the Board at the regular meeting on Monday, February 22, 2010.

Mrs. Fowler asked that Dr. Fishman bring information / options to the Board regarding programs that could be reinstated if savings are realized with the early retirement incentive.

Mr. Fontanella stated that the Board will have to vote on the budget at the Board meeting scheduled for February 22, 2010. He said that if any Board members have questions about the budget, they should send them to Dr. Fishman as soon as possible.

Item VII. Public Forum

There were no questions or comments.

Item VIII. Old Business

There was no Old Business.

Item IX. New Business

A. Disposition of Bid- Health Insurance

Dr. Fishman said that on December 13, 2009, we went out to bid for medical, prescription, and dental insurance, through our agent of record, Ovation Benefits. Bids were opened on January 19, 2010.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Fowler, that the Board of Education award the bid to Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield for medical and prescription coverage, as presented. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Fowler, that the Board of Education award the bid to Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield for dental coverage, as presented. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried.

B. Review and Possible Approval of 2010 – 2011 School Calendar

Dr. Fishman reviewed the draft 2010 – 2011 school calendar with the Board. She noted that a committee of teachers and all of the administrators reviewed the draft school calendar, and that school would start for students on Tuesday, August 31, 2010. She also noted that the tentative last day of school for students will be Monday, June 13, 2011, without any snow days. Dr. Fishman also stated that the early release days were spread out so that they are not always on the same day, or near other common curriculum days or weekends.

Dr. Fishman proposed that the district circulate another calendar survey next year, before setting the calendar for 2011 - 2012.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Fowler, that the Board of Education approve the school calendar for 2010 – 2011, as presented. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried.

C. Review and Possible Approval of a Perkins Innovation Grant Proposal

Mr. Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, stated that recently the Connecticut State Department of Education released a Request for Proposals for Career and Technical

Education Innovative Grant proposals as part of the federal government's Carl Perkins funding program. He said that the purpose of the Innovative Grant program is to promote programs which will prepare students with the knowledge and skills to compete in the global economy, which is a concept closely aligned with the district's Strategic Plan.

Mr. Bednarz said that on behalf of Stafford High School, in coordination with Mr. Kennedy and Ms. Pasini, business teacher at Stafford High School, he is submitting a proposal for establishing an E-Commerce and Entrepreneurship (ECE) course at the high school. He said that the ECE program is web-based, should attract students that might not take ECE classes and should be easily sustainable with Perkins grant money.

Mrs. Fowler made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, that the Board of Education approve the grant proposal for a Perkins Innovation Grant, as presented, and that the Board of Education commit to using available funding sources to sustain the course in future years. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried.

Dr. Fishman thanked Mr. Bednarz for obtaining the PASS after-school grant again this year. The grant award is for \$128,000 for this year and \$150,000 for next year. She noted that Stafford is one of the few districts in Connecticut that won the PASS grant.

D. Dropout Prevention Committee

Dr. Fishman stated that she needs two Board members to participate on the Dropout Prevention Committee. Dr. Fishman said that this will entail two meetings of the full committee, with three or four additional meetings of sub-committees. Mrs. Bradway volunteered. Mr. Fontanella, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel all said that they may be able to participate. They said that they would get back to Dr. Fishman.

Item X. Personnel Matters

There were no Personnel Matters.

Item XII. Adjournment

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary

Mark Fontanella, Chairperson

Sandra Fowler, Secretary