

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Monday, March 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. Regular Meeting Minutes, March 8, 2010
 - II.B. Special Meeting Minutes, March 9, 2010
- III. Treasurer's Report
 - III.A. Board Bills
 - III.A.1. March 16, 2010- \$123,324.91
 - III.B. Board Grants
 - III.B.1. March 18, 2010- \$102,611.90
- IV. Correspondence
 - IV.A. Regional Summit Invitation
- V. Board Reports
- VI. Superintendent Reports
 - VI.A. Winter Sports Presentation
 - VI.B. Board of Education Appreciation
 - VI.C. Update on Student Transportation Services Bid
 - VI.D. Cafeteria Profit and Loss Statement through February 2010
 - VI.E. Financial Report
- VII. Public Forum
- VIII. Old Business
- IX. New Business
 - IX.A. High School Parking Fee
- X. Personnel Matters
 - X.A. Recommendation of Superintendent of Schools Concerning Teacher Non-Renewals Pursuant to CGS Section 10-151 (Executive Session Anticipated)
 - X.B. Update on CSEA Contract Negotiations (Executive Session Anticipated)
- XI. Student Matters

**Regular Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Pinney Administration Building
Monday, March 8, 2010**

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

Absent: Mr. Stephen Szymanski
Mrs. Meg Devlin, Financial Analyst

Also Present: Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. David Bartlett, Principal, Staffordville School
Mrs. Brandy Gadoury, Teacher, West Stafford School
Mr. Francis Kennedy, Principal, Stafford High School
Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Assistant Principal, Stafford Middle School
Mr. Hank Skala, Principal, Stafford Elementary School
Mr. Thomas Szymanski, Student Representative
Mr. Kenneth Valentine, Principal, Stafford Middle School

Item I. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. A quorum was established.

Item II. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting, February 22, 2010

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on February 22, 2010, as presented.

Item III. Treasurer's Report

Board Bills and Grants:

February 24, 2010	\$ 98,205.32
February 24, 2010	\$ 11,694.21 (Grants)
March 3, 2010	\$364,920.18

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

Item IV. Correspondence

Mr. Fontanella read a letter from Ms. Christine Coon, Deputy Tree Warden, regarding Arbor Day activities. He asked that Dr. Fishman update the Board with regard to upcoming Arbor Day activities.

Mr. Fontanella asked Board members if they were interested in placing an ad in the program for the Stafford High School Drama Presentation of *Beauty and the Beast*. He said that the deadline is Friday, April 16, 2010.

Item V. Board Reports

Mr. Tom Szymanski, Student Representative, reported on the following:

- ✓ The Fashion Show
- ✓ The District Concert, which is scheduled for March 30, with a snow date of March 31
- ✓ An Update on Sports at the High School
- ✓ The Blood Drive at SHS on March 25
- ✓ 8th Grade Orientation at SHS on March 31
- ✓ The band will be marching in the St. Patrick's Day parade

Item VI. Superintendent's Reports

A. Update on Scheduled In-Service Programs on Racism and Diversity at Stafford High School

Dr. Fishman began by stating that there would be two sets of events scheduled to address racism and diversity at Stafford High School. She said that one would be put together with Dave Walsh and one with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). She said that on March 23, Dave Walsh will be working with the faculty and Mr. Kennedy to develop a plan for what will be presented on March 31 (tentative), which will be an assembly on racism for all students. At least two class periods will be devoted to this assembly, which will include four guest speakers.

Dr. Fishman said that the ADL couldn't come out in March, so two different sessions will take place with the faculty. In the beginning of April, teachers will work with the ADL to prepare a second session of trainings. She also noted that on April 1, the YMCA will be having their Stand Against Racism Program, which Stafford High School plans to participate in. Students will sign individual pledges to stand up against racism, much like the prom promise.

Dr. Fishman reported that a community forum on racism led by the ADL will also take place in early April. She said that once she has the final dates, they will be posted on the district web site (www.stafford.ctschool.net). Dr. Fishman said that the community forum will be a brief overview, then small discussion groups will be formed to arrive at school, home and community next steps. She is also planning to have the ADL work with student leaders, teachers, and administrators in April, to plan for a program that will begin in September, 2010, called *Names Can Really Hurt Us*.

Dr. Fishman stated that the ADL is currently working on modules to use with schools' existing curriculum. Dr. Fishman and Mr. Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, will be meeting with representatives from the ADL to determine how the completed modules can be incorporated into Stafford's curriculum.

Dr. Fishman summarized by saying that her plan has four parts- racial tolerance and understanding, understanding all kinds of diversity, incorporating anti-racial and diversity messages into the existing curriculum, and parent / community meetings.

Mr. Kennedy said that he has been invited to another school that plans to start the *Names Can Really Hurt Us* program.

Dr. Fishman distributed a handout entitled *You, Me & Us*. This is a multicultural awareness program created by Ms. Hayes, School Psychologist, and Ms. Santos, Guidance Intern, at Stafford High School. She said that this program began this week for students that have been disciplined for violating the school's rules with regard to race and diversity. The program will take place during study hall and earn students extra credit toward a course that they are currently taking.

Mrs. Fowler expressed concern that this program may not be based on current research and that it may conflict with the other programs that the district has planned. She also wanted to know if the program had the ADL's stamp of approval. Mrs. Fowler asked for an update once ADL had looked the program over.

Mrs. Fowler asked if any training / programs would be scheduled for the middle school level. Dr. Fishman said that the program has another component for the middle school level called *Get Real*, which uses student leaders that were trained at the high school as part of the *Names Can Really Hurt Us* program. However, she said that right now, she is concentrating on getting the programs going at the high school before she considers programs at other schools.

Mrs. Bradway asked if there was already a small group of students committed to the seven weeks of the *You, Me and Us* program, and how will it be measured. Mr. Kennedy said that a group of students have just begun the program. He said that he would report back to the Board on the success of the program.

Mrs. Rummel suggested that the 8th grade parents and students be invited to get involved now, so that they can lead over the next four years. Dr. Fishman said that she would be including the 8th grade students and parents, and that the program should be offered every two or three years to keep the cycle going. Mrs. Rummel asked that the Board be informed of the time of the faculty meeting and student meetings, so that Board members can attend.

Mr. Fontanella stated that the high school had a visit from two members of the State Department of Education, but that we have not received a written report yet. He said that there have been incidents in the schools over the past couple of weeks, and that students are making more reports with enough information to discipline offending students.

Mr. Fontanella allowed the public to comment at this time.

A member of the audience said that she was pleased with the proactiveness of the district. She also said that she agrees with Mrs. Fowler that these programs should be extended to middle school and elementary school. She is thrilled that it is being opened up to community and parents. She said that the district has done a lot of work and should be commended. She asked if there was some education in the curriculum training for administrators and faculty, so that they understand what a hate crime is and how to handle it.

Mr. Kennedy responded that the administration can only enforce Board policy, but when in doubt about whether or not a crime has been committed, he contacts the police. He noted that

someone from the State Attorney's office will be speaking at the program in March and will define those crimes for all students and faculty.

Dr. Fishman also reported that the FBI came out and met with the State police and Mr. Kennedy. She said that the district will receive a written report, if warranted.

Mrs. Fowler said that she would like a list of the presenters for the school-based presentation. She said that she would also like some sort of timeline to help her keep track of what is going on, as well as having it posted on the web site.

A member of the audience thanked the district for its efforts. He said that he is concerned that all of this attention and training may make things worse and that students may become more of a target. He noted that he has seen that with his own daughter. He said that education is the key and to remember that you are dealing with children. He also offered to participate in trainings or serve on committees, if it would be helpful.

A member of the audience stated that the Stafford School District was wonderful to his wife, who came here from another country. He said that they experienced racism in another state, but moved back to Stafford where they had had such a wonderful experience. He said that the current administrators and the superintendent have been wonderful to them and their son, who is graduating this year.

B. Update on School Improvement Plans

Mr. Kennedy, Principal of Stafford High School, stated that he had every staff member read a book entitled Teaching with Heart. He said that it covers many of the aspects of trying to reach students and is based on scientific research that states that personalized instruction benefits students of all ages. He said that students will be more successful in school if they have someone that they can identify with. Mrs. Bradway stated how well Teaching with Heart is working with the staff and that the students are aware of the book.

Mrs. Fowler had a question about how the Strategic Plan, SRBI and the high school improvement plan tie together. Mr. Kennedy explained how his school improvement plan fits in with Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) and Response To Intervention (RTI).

Mr. Pelliccia, Assistant Principal at Stafford Middle School, stated that SRBI has forced the middle school to really focus on students that are not making progress in certain subject areas. He said that the middle school currently has benchmarks in the fall, winter and spring to identify students that need intervention. They also use this data to identify certain areas where all students aren't making progress. Mr. Pelliccia stated that he will send the Board more detailed information about their plan. Mr. Valentine, principal of Stafford Middle School, said that SRBI is very heavy on math, reading and writing, like the Mastery Test. He noted that it does not address those other areas that need to be looked at, such as social skills, social studies, etc.

Mr. Skala, Principal of Stafford Elementary School, said that he and his staff are making a tremendous effort to make students feel good about school. He said that students are under a lot of stress. Mr. Skala reported that his first goal is to recognize students. To accomplish this, he has implemented two new programs- The Hall of Fame and Get Caught Caring. He said

that his second goal is to increase the scores in reading, writing and math. He has developed professional learning communities, where everyone is involved and they meet every week to review student data binders.

Mr. Bartlett, Principal of Staffordville School, said that he has three goals- NAEYC Accreditation, improving student writing and incorporating more technology into classroom lessons.

Mrs. Gadoury, teacher at West Stafford School, presented on Dr. Elliott's goal. She said that her school is working on brain research, using the PATH's assessment tool and curriculum. She said that West Stafford School is also using a tier I strategy found in the book Beyond Behavior Management, which details a way of thinking that builds upon student strengths.

Mrs. Bradway asked if the PK-1 schools couldn't collaborate more. She said that their goals seem very different. Dr. Fishman stated that due to the NAEYC Accreditation, it was difficult to have a common goal this year. Dr. Fishman said that she will be looking at one strand that can be carried through all of the schools for next year's goal. She informed Board members that the administrators will give an end of the year report on this year's goals and present their goals for next year at a future Board meeting.

C. Head Start Report through February 2010

Dr. Fishman reported that through February 28, 2010, the district has expended \$4,658 of the Head Start grant, which totals \$49,931.

Item VII. Public Forum

There was a question regarding when the budget had to be sent to the Board of Finance. Mr. Fontanella and Dr. Fishman responded that the budget was sent to the Board of Finance on February 25, the first public hearing was held on March 3, that the joint meeting between the Board of Education and the Board of Finance would be held on March 17, and that the town meeting has been scheduled for May 5.

Item VIII. Old Business

There was no Old Business.

Item IX. New Business

A. Approval of 2010 Stafford High School Graduation Date

Mrs. Fowler made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, that the Board of Education approve Wednesday, June 16, 2010, as the graduation date for the Class of 2010. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried.

Item X. Personnel Matters

A. Resignation / Retirements- Certified and Administrative Staff Members

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, that the Board of Education accept the retirements / resignation of the following staff members:

Aborn, Kathy	Elementary Teacher	Stafford Elementary School	Last day of school, June 2010	Retirement.
Bartlett, David	Principal	Staffordville Elementary School	June 30, 2010	Retirement.
Comiskey, Jim	Science Teacher	Stafford High School	Last day of school, June 2010	Retirement.
Dunn, Mark	Physical Education / Health Teacher	Stafford High School	Last day of school, June 2010	Retirement.
Glover, Mary Ellen	Guidance Counselor	Stafford High School	Last day of school, June 2010	Retirement (not part of the incentive plan).
LaFlamme, Laurel	Speech and Language Pathologist	West Stafford School	Last day of school, June 2010	Retirement.
McWilliams, Anne	Elementary / Math Teacher	St. Edward School / Stafford High School	Last day of school, June 2010	Retirement.
O'Brien, Theresa	Reading Teacher	Staffordville School	Last day of school, June 2010	Personal.
Zito, Susan	Social Worker	Staffordville School	Last day of school, June 2010	Retirement.

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 place Item X.B. Teachers Eligible for Tenure / Teachers' Performance (Executive Session Anticipated), and Item XI.A. Discussion of Student Academic / Disciplinary Records (Executive Session Anticipated) into executive session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried.

The Board took a brief recess at 9:14 p.m.

Mrs. Finch 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 9:24 p.m. The Board invited Dr. Fishman and Mr. Kennedy into executive session.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, 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 12:00 a.m.

B. Teachers Eligible for Tenure / Teachers' Performance (Executive Session Anticipated)

No Board action was taken on this item.

Item XI. Student Matters

A. Discussion of Student Academic / Disciplinary Records (Executive Session Anticipated)

No Board action was taken on this item.

Item XII. Adjournment

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, to adjourn. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 12:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary

Mark Fontanella, Chairperson

Sandra Fowler, Secretary

**Special Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Pinney Administration Building
Tuesday, March 9, 2010, 7:30 a.m.**

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

Absent: Mrs. Sandy Fowler, Secretary
Mr. Steve Szymanski

Also Present: Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools
Sgt. Thomas Duncan, Connecticut State Police
Attorney Peter A. Janus, Counsel for the Board of Education
Mr. Francis Kennedy, Principal, Stafford High School
Mother of Student K

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:38 a.m. A quorum was established.

2. Executive Session

a. Board Inquiry into the Continued Enrollment and Attendance of Student K

b. Board Consideration of the Recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools regarding the Expulsion of Student K 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 K

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, 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 and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 7:39 a.m.

The Board invited the following individuals into the executive session:

Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools
Sgt. Thomas Duncan, Connecticut State Police
Attorney Peter A. Janus, Counsel for the Board of Education

Mr. Francis Kennedy, Principal, Stafford High School
Mother of Student K
Mrs. Christine Marinelli, Recording Secretary

Attorney Janus confirmed that the mother of Student K agreed to proceed without Student K being present.

The Board took a recess to deliberate at 7:57 a.m. All invited individuals, with the exception of Attorney Janus, left the meeting room.

All invited individuals returned to the meeting room at 8:00 a.m.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, to return to regular session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 8:01 a.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 February 11, 2010, Student K committed an expellable offense, namely that Student K used racially offensive terms in public; Student K defied school authorities in a repeated use of racially offensive terms in public; and Student K violated the Board of Education's 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 and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to enter executive session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 8:03 a.m.

At approximately 8:16 a.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, except Sgt. Duncan, returned to the Board of Education conference room at approximately 8:20 a.m.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to return to regular session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 8:21 a.m.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, that based on the previous decision of the Stafford Board of Education that Student K had 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 K, it is the finding of the Stafford

Board of Education that Student K 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 of twenty (20) school days from the end of the initial out of school suspension, returning on or about March 30, 2010.

Moved further that the Administration provide Student K with an alternative educational opportunity during the expulsion period.

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

4. Adjournment

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:27 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Marinelli
Recording Secretary

Mark Fontanella, Chairperson

Mrs. Sandy Fowler, Secretary