

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Monday, February 28, 2011 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- 2/7/2011
III.	Treasurer's Report
III.A.	Bills, 2/9/11- \$53,676.35
III.B.	Grants, 2/9/11- \$4,480.34
III.C.	Bills, 2/16/11- \$275,283.53
III.D.	Grants, 2/16/11- \$12,891.28
III.E.	Bills, 2/23/11- \$142,392.33
III.F.	Grants, 2/23/11- \$858.66
IV.	Correspondence
IV.A.	Report from Student Representative
V.	Board Reports
VI.	Superintendent Reports
VII.	Public Forum
VIII.	Old Business
IX.	New Business
IX.A.	Approval of Proposal to Change to a Self-funded Health Insurance Program (30 mins.)
IX.B.	Approval of 2011 - 2012 Board of Education Budget (30 mins.)
IX.C.	Approval of Proposal for Solar Arrays (15 mins.)
IX.D.	Obsolete Equipment- Computers (5 mins.)
X.	Personnel Matters
X.A.	Appointment- Certified Staff Member (5 mins.)
X.B.	Resignations- Certified Staff Members (5 mins.)
X.C.	Personnel Matter- Superintendent of Schools Search Process (Executive Session Anticipated)
XI.	Student Matters

**Regular Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Pinney Administration Building
February 7, 2011**

Board Members Present: Mr. Mark Fontanella, Chairperson
Mrs. Sandy Fowler, Secretary
Mrs. Lisa Finch
Ms. Beth Ann Morhardt
Mrs. Tracy Rummel

Absent: Mrs. Lisa Bradway
Mr. Stephen Szymanski

Also Present: Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Mrs. Meg Devlin, Business Manager
Dr. Marcia Elliott, Principal, West Stafford School
Mr. Dean Fortin, Computer Technician
Mr. Damian Frassinelli, Director of Athletics and Recreation
Mr. Jim Kavanagh, Network Coordinator
Mr. Francis Kennedy, Principal, Stafford High School
Dr. Maureen Ryan, Principal, Staffordville School
Mrs. Amy Stevenson, Director of Pupil Services
Mr. Kenneth Valentine, Principal, Stafford Middle School

Item I. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. A quorum was established.

Item II. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting, January 24, 2011

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on January 24, 2011, as presented.

Item III. Treasurer's Report

Grants- 1/20/11, \$20,853.58
Bills- 1/25/11, \$1,051,138.03
Grants- 1/28/11, \$3,729.94
Grants- 1/31/11, \$583.75
Bills- 2/3/11, \$315,415.51

A consensus of the Board approved the Board Bills and Grants, as presented.

Item IV. Correspondence

There was no Correspondence.

Item V. Board Reports

A. Report from Student Representative

Miss Ojeda was absent due to a conflict with the track schedule. She sent the Student Activity Report to the Board ahead of time, and it was included in their Board packets.

Item VI. Superintendent's Reports

A. Head Start Report through January 2011

Dr. Fishman presented the Head Start Report through January 2011, as prepared by Mrs. Meg Devlin, Business Manager. She reported that through January 31, 2011, the district has expended the total amount of the Basic Head Start Fund, in the amount of \$51,578. This Basic Head Start Grant runs from July 1, 2010, through January 31, 2011. She noted that a second Basic Head Start Grant period begins on February 1, 2011, and will end on June 30, 2011.

Dr. Fishman stated that the Early Head Start grant in the amount of \$68,500 runs from September 30, 2010, through September 29, 2011, and that Mrs. Devlin had reported that through January 2011, the district has expended \$27,900 of this grant.

B. Cafeteria Profit and Loss through December 2010

Dr. Fishman presented the Cafeteria Profit and Loss report through December 2010, as prepared by Mrs. Mary Folker, Food Services Coordinator, and Mrs. Susan Linder, Director of Building Services, and reviewed by Mrs. Meg Devlin, Business Manager. She said that the report shows a balance of \$66.

Dr. Fishman stated that the district had been expecting a healthy foods certification reimbursement from the State in December 2010. In January 2011, the program did receive a reimbursement of \$12,789, which is 80% of the expected revenue from the healthy foods certification reimbursement. The cafeteria profit and loss report through January 2011 will reflect this reimbursement. In addition, in December 2010, there were several equipment repairs amounting to \$2,100 that had to be made, which affected the bottom line.

C. Progress Report- Intensive Education Academy Program

Dr. Fishman stated that in December of 2008, the Intensive Education Academy program began as a pilot for freshmen and sophomores who were having difficulty with the program structure at the high school.

From December 2008 through June 2009, during the pilot phase of the program, the administration experimented with changes in the program to find out what worked best for the students in this program.

Mrs. Stevenson, Director of Pupil Services, stated that the program has been aligned to run during the same hours as the high school. She said that this change has worked out very well and has helped with the bussing schedule. Mrs. Stevenson also stated that she has required staff, students and parents / guardians to sign a contract so that everyone understands the expectations of the program.

Mrs. Stevenson reported that there are three students set to graduate in 2011, with a majority of students earning five credits or more this year. She also noted that this year all of the original twelve students, except three have stayed with the program, and she expects them to return next year. The per pupil cost for the program is currently \$7,600 (with 12 students), but will increase to \$9,100 per pupil when the student population is decreased to 10, which is the maximum number of students Mrs. Stevenson would like to have enrolled in the program.

Dr. Fishman stated that currently there is money in the 11-12 budget to cover the cost of the program, but only if it is housed in the portable classroom. She said that if the program must return to the Old Town Hall, then the costs will be considerably higher, and the budget will have to be adjusted.

Mrs. Rummel stated that she is very happy with the parent meeting / contract component of the program.

Ms. Morhardt had a question regarding the curriculum. Mrs. Stevenson stated that the curriculum and exams are the same as what is currently being used at the high school; the teachers in the program just use a different delivery system.

Mrs. Fowler expressed concern that this program may not be the most cost-effective way to address the needs of the largest number of students. She said that she would like to see data that shows that this program has improved the district's dropout rate.

D. Continuation of the Presentation of the Proposed 2011 – 2012 Budget for the Stafford Public Schools (Ovation Benefits, Technology Budget and Athletics Budget)

Dr. Fishman continued her presentation of the proposed 2011 – 2012 Budget for the Stafford Public Schools, as prepared by the administration. The budget is posted in its entirety on the district's web site at www.stafford.k12.ct.us. At this meeting, the technology and athletics budgets were discussed in more detail. Additionally, a representative from Ovation Benefits attended the meeting to present the benefits of self-funded insurance.

Mr. Frassinelli, Director of Athletics and Recreation, presented the details of his athletics budget. He stated that the increase in his budget is simply to replenish the \$10,000 that was cut last year. The Athletics budget highlights are as follows:

- Return the middle school basketball program, which was cut from the budget last year
- Reinstate the assistant wrestling coach position

- Contractual salary increases

Mr. Frassinelli also noted that the Athletic Boosters would continue to provide the uniforms needed next year. He thanked the booster club for their continued support. He also noted that the transportation fee is working well.

Mr. Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, briefly reviewed the technology budget.

Mr. Ron Theriault, Vice President of Ovation Benefits, presented the benefits of self-funding the Board of Education and Town's health insurance. He distributed a handout to the Board, which detailed the loss ratio for the last five years, as well as projected savings for next year if self-funded. He said that the town and school's track record has given us the opportunity to move to a self-funded plan.

Mr. Theriault stated that the benefits of a self-funded health insurance plan are that there isn't a premium tax and that the administrative costs are lower. However, he said that you do need at least 250 people to move to a self-funded plan. With a fully-insured plan, there are no fluctuations from month-to-month, but it is typically more expensive. Mr. Theriault believes that the town and the district could save a substantial amount of money in the first year of the self-funded program, which he recommends be used to build up the reserves for the program.

Mr. Fontanella stated that the budget document is a 2.33% increase over last year's budget. He said that there is one more meeting before the budget is due to the Board of Finance. The consensus of the Board was to send the budget document to the Board of Finance as it was presented, but that since two Board members were absent, the Board decided to hold off on making a decision until the regular meeting on February 28, 2011. They noted that this delay will also give them additional time to review the budget document before voting.

Mr. Fontanella requested that Dr. Fishman begin creating a list of possible cuts, which could be used when and if necessary.

Item VII. Public Forum

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Item VIII. Old Business

There was no Old Business.

Item IX. New Business

A. Proposed Adjustments to the 2010 – 2011 School Calendar

Dr. Fishman reported that with the ten snow days that are already reflected on the school calendar and the storm pattern that seems to be entrenched, she would like to begin to plan how the remaining potential school days will be used. She said that state law prescribes at least 180 school days for students and that the school year must end by June 30. Originally, the last day of school for students was scheduled on Monday, June 13. With ten school days

being added to June 13, the last day of school would be Monday, June 27, leaving three more days in order to close on June 30.

Dr. Fishman said that state law also prohibits using Saturday or Sunday to make up snow days, as well as the extending of a certain number of school days to make up this lost time. Thus, there is very little “wobble room” left. She proposed that Tuesday, February 22, which is now a vacation day, be changed to a school day for teachers and students. She also proposed that the Common Curriculum Day scheduled for May 31 be moved to the end of the school year for teachers and that May 31 become a school day for teachers and students. These two changes in the 2010-2011 school calendar would make the last day of school, as of this date, fall on Thursday, June 23.

Dr. Fishman proposed that going forward from here, should the district continue to have weather-related days out of school, another day would be added to the end of the school year for the next day we have to be out of school, then take a day from April vacation (starting with Monday, April 18) for the next day after that, repeating in an alternating pattern until all four days of April vacation are used up. Finally, if need be, we could cap the students’ school year at 180 days, with teachers continuing to work until 187 days are reached.

After considerable discussion, the Board and administration agreed to make February 18, 2011, a student day rather than a Common Curriculum Day. This day would be moved to the end of the school year as well.

Mrs. Fowler made a motion, seconded by Ms. Morhardt, that the Board of Education approve the revised 2010-2011 school calendar, making February 18, 22 and May 31 student days, with the teacher days being moved to the end of the school year. Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Morhardt and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried.

The Board said that they would consider the plans for additional snow days, should it become necessary

Item X. Personnel Matters

Mrs. Fowler made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to place **Item X.A.- Superintendent Search (Executive Session Anticipated)**, into executive session. Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Morhardt and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried.

The Board took a brief recess at 9:20 p.m. The meeting was called to order at 9:31p.m. Dr. Fishman and Mrs. Marinelli were invited to attend executive session.

Ms. Morhardt made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, to return to regular session. Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Morhardt and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 10:10 p.m.

A. Superintendent Search Process (Executive Session Anticipated)

No action was taken on this item.

Item XI. Student Matters

There were no Student Matters.

Item XII. Adjournment

Mrs. Fowler made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to adjourn. Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Ms. Morhardt and Mrs. Rummel voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary

Mark Fontanella, Chairperson

Sandra Fowler, Secretary