

Board of Education Regular Meeting  
Monday, May 23, 2011 7:00 PM Eastern

Stafford Middle School Auditorium  
16 Levinthal Run  
Stafford Springs, CT 06076

I.	Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum
II.	Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes
II.A.	Minutes- Regular Meeting, 5/9/11
III.	Treasurer's Report
III.A.	Board Bills- 5/11/11, \$13,587.02
III.B.	Grants- 5/11/11, \$4,599.32
IV.	Correspondence
V.	Board Reports
VI.	Superintendent Reports
VI.A.	Teacher of the Year 2012 (10 mins.)
VI.B.	Non-Certified Staff Member of the Year 2010 - 2011 (5 minutes)
VI.C.	Recognition of Stafford Public Schools' Retiring Staff Members (10 minutes)
VI.D.	Presentation of 2010 - 2011 CABE Student Leadership Awards (10 minutes)
VI.E.	Recognition of Student Representative to the Board of Education (5 minutes)
VI.F.	Wellness Committee Update (5 minutes)
VI.G.	Update on Food Service Program Review (5 minutes)
VI.H.	Cafeteria Profit and Loss Statement for April 2011 (15 minutes)
VII.	Public Forum
VIII.	Old Business
IX.	New Business
IX.A.	Review and Approval of Cuts to the 2011-2012 Board of Education Budget as Mandated by the Board of Finance (20 minutes)
IX.B.	Approval of DCS Energy PV Systems (15 minutes)
IX.C.	Review and Possible Approval of CSDE Healthy Food Certification Statement for July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2012 (5 minutes)
IX.D.	Appointment of Asbestos Designee for 2011 - 2012 (5 minutes)
IX.E.	Review and Possible Approval of Textbook Proposal for E-Commerce and Entrepreneurship Course at Stafford High School (15 minutes)
X.	Personnel Matters
X.A.	Discussion of CSEA Grievance (Executive Session Anticipated)
X.B.	Update on Superintendent of Schools Search Process (Executive Session Anticipated)
XI.	Student Matters

**Regular Meeting  
Stafford Board of Education  
Pinney Administration Building  
May 9, 2011**

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

**Absent:** Mrs. Lisa Bradway  
Mrs. Tracy Rummel  
Mr. Stephen Szymanski

**Also Present:** Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools  
Mrs. Beth Beaudoin, Teacher, West Stafford School  
Mrs. Meg Devlin, Business Manager  
Dr. Marcia Elliott, Principal, West Stafford School  
Miss Vivian Ojeda, Student Representative

**Item I. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum**

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. A quorum was established.

**Item II. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes**

Regular Meeting, April 11, 2011  
Special Meeting, April 14, 2011

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on April 11, 2011, and special meeting held on April 14, 2011, as presented.

**Item III. Treasurer's Report**

Bills- 4/13/11, \$98,460.58  
Grants- 4/13/11, \$5,455.09  
Bills- 4/27/11, \$311,474.60  
Grants- 4/27/11, \$5,968.53  
Bills- 5/4/11, \$79,226.94  
Grants- 5/4/11, \$8,469.30

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

## **Item IV. Correspondence**

### **A. Parent Letters**

Mr. Fontanella quickly reviewed three parent letters / e-mails that were sent to the Board regarding reinstating the pre-kindergarten program. He noted that the pre-kindergarten program would be discussed later on the agenda.

## **Item V. Board Reports**

### **A. Report from Student Representative**

Miss Ojeda sent the Student Activity Report to the Board ahead of time, and it was included in their electronic Board packets. MADD will be making a presentation this week to high school juniors. Miss Ojeda distributed a few sports photos.

## **Item VI. Superintendent's Reports**

### **A. Financial Report through April 30, 2011**

Dr. Fishman presented the financial report through April 30, 2011, as prepared by Mrs. Meg Devlin, Business Manager. It shows that the 2010-2011 budget is over-expended by \$78,195. She said that the deficit is due to \$300,000 in unanticipated costs that the district had to take on for snow removal from our school roofs. Dr. Fishman stated that there may be some FEMA monies available to help off-set the snow removal costs, but she can't be sure at this time. She said that she and Mrs. Devlin continue to monitor purchase orders, only permitting expenditures on critical items. Dr. Fishman said that these numbers would be far higher if the budget had not been frozen.

Dr. Fishman noted that the benefits account is over-expended. She said that this is due to unemployment costs. Property services represent the largest amount of over-expenditure, due to snow removal costs. Supplies are over-expended because of the increased cost of electricity, since the district is no longer receiving the benefit of the ISO grant.

Mrs. Finch had a question regarding unemployment costs. Dr. Fishman and Mrs. Devlin explained that the district does not pay in to unemployment, so when someone is laid off and collects, the district must pay for those unemployment benefits dollar-for-dollar.

### **B. Head Start Report through April 2011**

Dr. Fishman presented the Head Start report through April 30, 2011, as prepared by Mrs. Meg Devlin, Business Manager. She noted that at this point in time, \$17,555 of the Basic Head Start grant total of \$51,129 has been expended or encumbered. The Basic Head Start grant period is from February 1, 2011, through June 30, 2011.

Dr. Fishman reported that the Early Head Start grant, which runs through September 29, 2011, shows that \$40,950 has been expended or encumbered through April 30, 2011. Since the grant total is \$68,500, there is a remaining balance of \$27,550.

**C. Cafeteria Profit and Loss Statement through March 2011**

Dr. Fishman presented the Cafeteria Profit and Loss report through March 2011, as prepared by Mrs. Mary Folker, Food Service Coordinator, and reviewed by Mrs. Susan Linder, Director of Building Services, and Mrs. Meg Devlin, Business Manager. It shows a year-to-date profit of \$2,361. For the same reporting period for last year, the program showed a profit of \$18,978.

Dr. Fishman noted that while there were costly equipment repairs in December 2010, there are also fewer students buying lunches, particularly at Stafford Middle School, where students and adults are being surveyed for possible reasons. Students will be surveyed using focus groups, and a paper survey will be used for adults.

Dr. Fishman said that rising labor and insurance costs are also higher than the recommended guidelines for meals per labor hour. Dr. Fishman said that she, Mrs. Linder and Mrs. Devlin will be reviewing staffing at the end of the school year to see if adjustments can be made. Insurance costs have also increased, as the number of employees taking insurance has risen steadily.

Dr. Fishman said that the district has not raised prices for lunch and breakfast in three years due to the economy. A report will be presented to the Board in June regarding the new federal "equity in meal pricing" guidelines, which will help determine new meal prices next year.

**D. Gift of Projection Systems from 3M**

Dr. Fishman said that the district received a gift of twenty-five projectors from 3M Corporation. Through an application, Mr. Bednarz was able to secure these projectors whose total value is approximately \$40,000.

In accordance with Board of Education policy 3280-*Gifts, Grants, and Bequests*, these projectors will be shared among all district schools. Dr. Fishman said that the projectors are not compatible with the Mimio system of interactive whiteboard technology; they can however, be used in classrooms and at meetings for videos and presentations such as PowerPoint.

Dr. Fishman said that she would write a thank you letter to the 3M Corporation on behalf of the Board.

**E. Update on Self-Funding of Medical Insurance**

Dr. Fishman stated that the district has been notified by Mr. Edward Muska, Chairman of the Stafford Board of Finance, that there will be one account maintained by the Town to fund medical insurance and dental insurance for both the employees of the Board of Education and Town employees. She said that Mr. Muska provided a letter, which was shared with the Board via the electronic Board packet that states that the moneys will be paid into an internal service fund for this purpose only. Additionally, although there were concerns, Dr. Fishman said that she has been assured that the Board of Education will continue to receive monthly printouts of all transactions on the part of its employees for reconciliation, just as we do now.

Several of the Board members had concerns about maintaining one account for this purpose. Mrs. Devlin stated that she would carefully monitor the account and her office would be cutting

the checks to pay for the Board's portion of the insurance payments. Dr. Fishman stated that the only other option is not to participate, which would increase our insurance costs in the 2011 – 2012 budget.

The Board requested that this insurance fund be reviewed next year so that a decision could be made regarding a possible change for 2012 - 2013.

**F. 2011 – 2012 Pre-Kindergarten**

Dr. Fishman stated that at the special Board of Education meeting on April 14, 2011, Board members were faced with making over \$500,000 in cuts to the proposed 2011-2012 budget in order to meet Board of Finance directives. She said that one of the cuts was in the amount of \$60,000 to be made up through charging a sliding scale fee for pre-kindergarten. She said that the district has received letters and e-mails from parents regarding this issue, and it has been suggested by several parents of preschoolers or soon-to-be preschoolers that this decision has not given enough time to parents to budget for this payment.

Dr. Fishman said that in the meantime, grant funds through child care fees for the Family Resource Center and a small one-time Early Childhood grant that the district was recently awarded are available that would allow us to continue with the past practice of not charging for pre-kindergarten for 2011-2012. She said that typically, the FRC grant funds would be reinvested in the pre-kindergarten program for materials and equipment. However, reallocation of these funds for one year will provide an opportunity to research how a sliding scale fee for pre-kindergarten could be set up equitably and propose such a fee in the fall of 2011 for the 2012-2013 school year, should the Board of Education need to use this fee to make up possible budget cuts in the spring. She said that this would afford parents of preschoolers the opportunity to know what the sliding fee scale would be and what they could be expected to pay early on should this need to be put in place for the 2012-2013 school year. It would also afford the opportunity for Board members to review the data, ask further questions, and receive clarification outside of "budget crunch" time.

Mr. Fontanella opened the meeting up to public comment regarding this matter. Several parents spoke about their concerns about charging for the program with such short notice to parents and the affect that would have on the program and the children's preparedness for kindergarten. The parents also thanked the Board and the administration for taking the time to develop this plan for next year.

This item was added to the agenda under New Business as an action item.

**Item VII. Public Forum**

A member of the audience asked if funds have been appropriated for next winter if we have another winter with a large amount of snow. Dr. Fishman said that there isn't any money available for that purpose. Mrs. Devlin stated that the district would be more proactive next winter (i.e. grid patterns shoveled off the roof, keeping drains clear).

A member of the audience asked if there would be any union issues with the reduction of the school year for 11-12. Dr. Fishman said that there wouldn't be any issues, as the teachers and

ten-month employees would be compensated for the appropriate number of days, in accordance with their union contract.

### **Item VIII. Old Business**

- A. **Review and Possible Approval of New and Revised Board Policies 1110.1-Communications with the Public; 3541.22 (a)-(c)-Bus Operator's Responsibility; 4115-Evaluation; 4152.6 (a)-(l)-Family and Medical Leave Act and accompanying forms 1 and 2; 5000-Concepts and Roles in Student Policies; 5117-Attendance Areas; 5117.1-Out-of-District Attendance Areas; 5118.1 (a)-(c)-Homeless Students and accompanying Regulation (a)-(c); 5121-Examination/Grading/Rating; 5123 (a)-(c)-Promotion/Acceleration/Retention and accompanying Regulation (a)-(f); 5131.3-Student Driving and Parking; 5131.5-Vandalism or Damage of School Property; 5131.82 (a)-(b)-Restrictions on Publications and Written or Electronic Material; 5131.91 (a)-(e)-Hazing; 5131.913 (a)-(b)-Cyberbullying; 5132-Dress and Grooming; 5135-Eligibility to Participate in Extracurricular Activities; 6152-Grouping Policy; 6172.8 (a)-(d)-School-Wide Pre-Referral Approaches and Interventions; 9326 (a)-(c)-Minutes**

Dr. Fishman stated that this is the second full Board review of these policies. She said that all of these policies have been reviewed /revised by both the administrator sub-committee on Board policy and the Board of Education sub-committee on Board policy. She asked if Board members had any questions.

Ms. Morhardt made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Fowler, that the Board of Education adopt the revisions of present Board policies and new Board policies, as presented. Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Finch and Ms. Morhardt voted for the motion, which carried.

### **Item IX. New Business**

- A. **Review and Approval of Revisions to 2011 – 2012 School Calendar Due to Elimination of Two School Days (Decrease from 182 to 180)**

Dr. Fishman stated that at a special meeting of the Board of Education on April 14, 2011, Board members voted on cuts to the budget as required by the Board of Finance. One of the cuts that was made was to reduce the school year for students from 182 days to the State minimum requirement of 180 days. The teacher year, which is contractual, would remain at 187 days. She said that since the school calendar for 2011-2012 had already been approved by the Board of Education on January 10, 2011, this calendar must now be amended to reflect the change in student days.

A copy of a recommended draft calendar, together with the calendar that had been approved on January 10, 2011, was provided to the Board in the electronic Board packet. Dr. Fishman said that the new student start date has been moved ahead by one day to Wednesday, August 31, 2011. The student end date has been moved back one day to June 8, 2012. Two additional Common Curriculum days for teachers have been added to the end of the school year, June 11 and June 12. Dr. Fishman also noted that the draft calendar has been reviewed by administrators and the leadership of the Stafford Education Association.

Mrs. Fowler made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, that the Board of Education approve the revised school calendar for 2011-2012, as presented. Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Finch and Ms. Morhardt voted for the motion, which carried.

## **B. Review and Approval of School Readiness Grant**

Dr. Fishman said that the School Readiness Grant application for July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2013 must be approved by the Board of Education. She said that the proposed grant is for \$107,000, and that Stafford has been successful in obtaining this competitive grant since 1997.

The main components of this year's grant application are:

- The School Readiness Program provides full day/full year programming for 13 pre-kindergarten students on a sliding fee scale. The children are integrated in the pre-kindergarten programs at West Stafford School in the AM sessions and then attend the School Readiness/Family Resource Center Childcare Program in the afternoons up to 6:00 PM. Childcare is provided during school vacations and during the summer months from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM.
- The School Readiness Council, which is the Stafford Early Education Council (SEEC), oversees the grant program.
- The principal of West Stafford School serves as the liaison between SEEC and the CT Department of Education, which administers the grant.

Dr. Elliott, principal of West Stafford School, was present at the meeting to answer questions. She said that due to her retirement, the new school readiness council co-chairs would be Dr. Maureen Ryan, principal of Staffordville School, and Mrs. Dawn Campbell.

Mrs. Fowler made a motion, seconded by Ms. Morhardt, that the Board of Education approve the School Readiness Grant application for the 2011 - 2013 school years. Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Finch and Ms. Morhardt voted for the motion, which carried.

## **C. 2011 – 2012 Pre-Kindergarten**

Mrs. Fowler made a motion, seconded by Ms. Morhardt, that the Board of Education approve the use of child care fees for the Family Resource Center and a small one-time Early Childhood grant that the district was recently awarded to fund the \$60,000 that was cut from the pre-kindergarten program for 2011 – 2012. Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Finch and Ms. Morhardt voted for the motion, which carried.

## **Item X. Personnel Matters**

### **A. Resignations- Certified Staff Members**

Mrs. Fowler made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, that the Board of Education accept the resignations of the staff members named below.

NAME	POSITION	SCHOOL	EFFECTIVE DATE	REASON
John P. Gracey	Physical Education Teacher	Stafford Middle School	End of School Year, June 2011	Retirement
Colleen Heuitson	Physical Education Teacher	Stafford High School	End of School Year, June 2011	Retirement

Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Finch and Ms. Morhardt voted for the motion, which carried.

**Item XI. Student Matters**

There were no Student Matters.

**Item XII. Adjournment**

Ms. Morhardt made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, to adjourn. Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler and Ms. Morhardt voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary**

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**Mark Fontanella, Chairperson**

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**Sandra Fowler, Secretary**