

Board of Education Regular Meeting  
Monday, March 12, 2012 7:00 PM Eastern

Pinney Administration Building  
16 Levinthal Run  
Stafford Springs, CT 06076

- I. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes
  - III.A. Regular Meeting, 2/27/12
- IV. Treasurer's Report
  - IV.A. Bills, 2/28/12- \$1,075,491.62
  - IV.B. Grants, 2/28/12- \$3,049.37
- V. Correspondence
- VI. Board Reports
  - VI.A. Student Representative's Report
  - VI.B. Budget Committee
  - VI.C. Curriculum Committee
  - VI.D. Policy Committee
  - VI.E. Negotiation Committee
- VII. Superintendent Reports
  - VII.A. Presentation of the 2010 - 2011 Strategic School Profiles for Stafford Public Schools
  - VII.B. Cafeteria Profit and Loss through January 2012
  - VII.C. Head Start Report through January 2012
- VIII. Old Business
  - VIII.A. Review and Possible Approval of New Board Policy
- IX. New Business
  - IX.A. Review and Possible Approval of Proposal from Stafford High School for a Foreign Trip to Spain and France in June 2013
- X. Public Forum
- XI. Personnel Matters
  - XI.A. Approval of Leave of Absence- Certified Staff Member
  - XI.B. Resignations- Certified Staff Members
  - XI.C. Mid-Year Evaluation of Superintendent of Schools (Executive Session Anticipated)
- XII. Student Matters

**Regular Meeting  
Stafford Board of Education  
Stafford Elementary School  
February 27, 2012**

**Board Members Present:** Mrs. Sandy Fowler, Chairperson  
Mrs. Lisa Finch  
Ms. Beth Ann Morhardt  
Mrs. Tracy Rummel, Secretary  
Ms. Sonya Shegogue  
Mr. Stephen Szymanski  
Mrs. Kathy Walsh

**Also Present:** Dr. Patricia A. Collin, Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Mr. Greg Buonome, Assistant Principal, Stafford Middle School  
Mr. Robert Campbell, Assistant Principal, Stafford High School  
Mr. Evan Cummins, Student Representative  
Mrs. Meg Devlin, Business Manager  
Mr. Dean Fortin, IT Network Coordinator  
Mr. Damian Frassinelli, Director of Athletics and Recreation  
Ms. Shelley Michaud, Principal, West Stafford School  
Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal, Stafford High School  
Dr. Maureen Ryan, Principal, Staffordville School  
Mr. Hank Skala, Principal, Stafford Elementary 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 7:02 p.m. A quorum was established.

**Item II. Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Cummins led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Regular Meeting, February 6, 2012

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on February 6, 2012, as presented.

**Item IV. Treasurer's Report**

Bills, 2/14/12- \$487,798.11  
Grants, 2/14/12- \$3,347.09  
Grants, 2/17/12- \$780.02

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

## **Item V. Correspondence**

There was no Correspondence.

## **Item VI. Board Reports**

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

Mr. Cummins summarized the report that he prepared for the Board. The following topics were included in the report:

- Sports Update
- Music and Drama Update
- General Information

Mrs. Fowler requested that an electronic copy of Mr. Cummins's report be sent to the Board members.

### **B. Budget Committee**

Mr. Szymanski stated that the Budget Committee met on Thursday, February 16, 2012. (The budget committee members are Mr. Szymanski, Chairperson, Mrs. Fowler and Ms. Morhardt.) Mr. Szymanski reported that the committee reviewed a list of possible reductions to the budget, which the administration provided at the committee's request. Mr. Szymanski stated that these reductions were categorized as Tier 1 (some impact on programs, but minimal overall) and Tier 2 (larger impact on educational objectives). He said that the committee developed a list of reductions that were relatively acceptable; however, this was not a unanimous decision. He noted that this matter would be discussed further under "New Business", when the budget was discussed for approval.

### **C. Curriculum Committee**

The Curriculum Committee members are Mrs. Rummel, Mrs. Walsh and Ms. Shegogue. This committee met for the first time on Friday, 2/17/12, at 7:40 a.m., and has another meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 29, at 7:30 a.m. At the first meeting, Mr. Bednarz gave an overview of what types of things the Curriculum Committee can consider.

### **D. Policy Committee**

The Policy Committee members are Mrs. Fowler, Chairperson, Mrs. Finch, Ms. Morhardt and Mrs. Rummel (alternate). Mrs. Fowler reported that the committee met on Thursday, 2/9/12, at 7:30 a.m. She said that some of the committee's work would be presented to the full Board later on the agenda.

### **E. Negotiation Committee**

The Negotiation Committee members are Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Morhardt and Mrs. Walsh. This committee has met three times since late January, and there are more meetings scheduled before the end of March.

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

### **A. Presentation- Freshmen House at Stafford High School**

Dr. Collin said that as requested by the Board, Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal, Stafford High School, has provided a statistical analysis of data relative to the success of the Freshmen House, to which he credits Mr. Campbell, Assistant Principal, and his team leaders.

Mr. Pelliccia reported that the Freshmen House has been working phenomenally. He said that he credits Mr. Campbell, Ms. Laramie, Ms. Martin, Ms. Macrina, Ms. Piscetello and Mr. Shearer with the program's success, stating that the team has been working very hard to make sure that the program is successful. He said that half way through the year, the data that was provided to the Board members supports that the program is working.

At Mrs. Fowler's request, Mr. Pelliccia gave a brief overview of the program. Each of the team leaders also spoke briefly about the program. They highlighted the following new initiatives:

- Team approach to conferences
- Homework Club
- Skills Lab (organizational skills, study habits, goal setting, note taking, etc.), which is required for all freshmen

Mrs. Fowler asked about the concern that some Board members had regarding freshmen not having space in their schedules for electives. Ms. Macrina stated that periods 6 and 7 are devoted to electives and that most students have been able to incorporate them into their schedules.

### **B. Update on the Revised Mid-Year Exam Schedule at Stafford High School**

Dr. Collin stated that at the regularly scheduled meeting on January 9, 2012, the Board asked high school administration to provide an update on the revised mid-year exam schedule after exams were over.

Dr. Collin reported that the proposal to change the schedule for mid-year exams at Stafford High School was based on Mr. Pelliccia's thoughtful consideration of the impact of the inclement weather in August and October on instruction, coupled with the district's emphasis on maximizing opportunities for instruction. She noted that in the past, during the week of mid-term exams, students typically reported to school for the purpose of taking exams, after which they were dismissed for the remainder of the school day. With the revised schedule, which was implemented January 24, 2012, through February 3, 2012, students remained in school for the entire day. The revised schedule also allowed for one exam per day, lessening student fatigue.

Mr. Pelliccia informed the Board that he hopes that he will not have to use this schedule again next year to make up instructional time. He said that students and teachers didn't love the new schedule, but they made it work. Mr. Pelliccia said that next year, he'd like to return to the model that was used in past.

**C. Presentation- IEA, Tutoring Program(s) and Credit Recovery**

Dr. Collin introduced Mrs. Amy Stevenson, Director of Pupil Services, and Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal of Stafford High School, who were present at the meeting to report to the Board regarding the success of the Intensive Education Academy (IEA), tutoring programs, and the credit recovery option. These options meet the needs of students who were not meeting with success in the traditional high school program, students who have been expelled, students who require homebound tutoring services, and students who need to “regain momentum toward graduation.”

Mrs. Stevenson gave an overview of the IEA program. She introduced Ms. Davenport, who is the teacher currently working with the program. Mrs. Stevenson reported that the program is running very successfully this school year, with very few behavioral referrals. She said that the Odysseyware software is keeping the students engaged. She highlighted the following:

- For the 2011-2012 school year, approximately 50 students have utilized Odysseyware.
- The cost of the 15 licenses was \$8,000.00, which is a cost of \$160.00 per student.
- There have been 14 students in the IEA program full time. Five of these students will graduate in June of 2012.
- There have been less than five disciplinary issues all year with the students in the IEA.
- All IEA students are currently passing all classes.
- At this time the IEA students have received a combined total of 39 credits.
- Feedback from parents, staff and students has been extremely positive.

Mrs. Stevenson reported that the tutoring program has also been working very well this school year. She said that the public library and the middle school have been very accommodating and that this year, the program is stronger and costs the district less money. She highlighted the following:

- At this time there are 7 students receiving tutoring.
- The district is currently paying \$690.00 per week for the tutoring. If the district was using the model from the past years, the district would be paying \$2,625.00 per week, which represents a savings of \$1,935.00 per week.
- Because there are many students that need tutoring, and we do not yet have use of the portable, we have to split the sites in two different locations. If we had the use of the portable, we would be able to use one location and would be able to save an additional \$190.00 (based only on tutoring costs).

Mr. Pelliccia reported that the credit recovery program also utilizes the Odysseyware software, which can be used during the school day or after school. Mr. Pelliccia gave a brief overview of the program and explained how the program fits in with the school’s Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI) initiatives. He said that to date, 29 students are participating in the program, 52 credits have been recovered, 17 students have been promoted to the next grade level and 9 students are back on track to graduate with their class.

**D. Recommendation of the Preschool Steering Committee**

Dr. Collin stated that at its regularly scheduled meeting on October 24, 2011, the Board of Education directed her to form a steering committee for the purpose of determining if a fee should be charged for preschool and if so, how such a fee should be determined. She said that as a result of that directive, a committee was formed and was comprised of the representatives from the following stakeholder groups: Head Start parents and staff, PK parents and staff, K parents and staff, Family Resource Center staff, Department of Children & Families, Board of Education, Board of Finance, Board of Selectman, PTO, Stafford Early Education Council (SEEC), Principals and Pupil Services staff.

She said that the committee met on January 12 and, again, on February 9, 2012, in the Community Room of the Stafford Public Library. Dr. Collin reported that as a result of the committee's work, the following recommendation is being made to the Board of Education at this time:

It is the position of the Preschool Steering Committee that the Stafford Board of Education continues to provide a free universal preschool program, for all students age 3 and 4, for the following reasons:

1. We want to provide equal educational opportunities and prevent the achievement gap from widening. Charging tuition may result in a decrease in enrollment due to families' inability to afford the fee.
2. Charging a tuition will not make up for the shortfall in the budget.
3. It will not be cost-effective in the long run to eliminate our preschool programs; doing so will not be a strategic move.
4. Charging tuition now would result in a decrease in enrollment, which may consequently result in an increase of students who are not performing at grade level and may require supplementary services, which would cost the district.

In addition, the Committee felt strongly about the following points:

- Charging tuition compromises our philosophy about the value of early childhood education. Stafford is currently a model early childhood program provider for the State.
- The provision of kindergarten readiness skills is essential to the success of our children.
- Legislation at both State and federal levels are moving towards universal preschool for all children.
- Our focus needs to continue to be on student achievement; long-term success is our goal.

Ms. Morhardt said that she is very happy with the recommendation.

Mr. Szymanski asked about the status of the full-day kindergarten mandate and if that mandate would affect the ability of the district to offer pre-kindergarten at all. Dr. Collin stated that they are not any closer to approving that mandate at this time.

Dr. Collin thanked the committee members for their work.

## **Item IX. Old Business**

There was no Old Business.

## **Item X. New Business**

### **A. Review of New and Approval of Revised Board Policies**

Dr. Collin stated that while the current policies were initially discussed, reviewed and recommended by the Administrative Policy Committee (APC) and subsequently by the Board Policy Sub-committee (BPS), comprised of Mrs. Lisa Finch, Ms. Beth Ann Morhardt, and Mrs. Tracy Rummel, Alternate, the attached policies are either a result of legislative changes and updates as presented by CABE or new policies, as indicated below.

- 6172.6 Instruction-Distance Education: Virtual Online Courses (New)
- 5110/5111 K-12 Student Attendance (Existing policy with required modification based upon new legislation as recommended by CABE)
- 1212 Community Relations: School Volunteers (Revised policy as recommended by APC to align with 4112.5/4212.5 Personnel-Certified/Non-Certified: Security Check/Fingerprinting)

She noted that this meeting shall serve as the first reading of the new policy- 6172.6 Instruction-Distance Education: Virtual Online Courses.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Ms. Morhardt, that the Board approve of the following revised policies: Policy #5110/5111 K-12 Student Attendance and Policy #1212 Community Relations: School Volunteers, as presented. Mrs. Finch, Ms. Morhardt, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

### **B. Update on 2011 – 2012 School Calendar**

Dr. Collin stated that at its regularly scheduled meeting on December 5, 2011, the Board of Education approved a revised 2011-2012 school year calendar due to the numerous school cancellations which resulted from Hurricane Irene in August and Storm Alfred at the end of October. Ultimately, the Board re-instituted February 21<sup>st</sup> and March 30<sup>th</sup>, formerly Common Curriculum Days, as instructional days for students. In addition, the Common Curriculum Day, which was originally scheduled for June 12<sup>th</sup> was moved to November 7, 2011. These changes in Common Curriculum Days were a result of the cooperation of the Stafford Education Association (S.E.A.). With the remaining six (6) make-up days at the end of the school year, the newly-revised calendar reflects Monday, June 18<sup>th</sup> as the last day of school (half day) for students and Tuesday, June 19<sup>th</sup> as a Common Curriculum Day.

At the December 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, Board of Education members made it clear they were not taking any days from April vacation at that time, but that it was still an option for future consideration, and they decided to revisit the current school year calendar at the January 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Because there had been no additional school cancellations due to inclement weather, the calendar was not discussed at the subsequent meeting.

Dr. Collin reported that as of February 22, 2012, we have had two 2-hour delayed openings (January 12 and 17, 2012). Discussions with the Department of Public Works, St. Edward's School, M & J Bus, Inc. and Stafford Public Schools' staffs indicate there was minimal

congestion on and ample time to treat roadways, minimal disruption to the regularly scheduled school day with no disruption to school bus arrival times, and typical attendance counts on these two mornings, with the exception of preschool and kindergarten sessions.

She said that since the current calendar still allows for nine (9) days prior to June 30, 2012, which may be used to make up days that may be missed due to inclement weather, she would recommend that the Board leave April vacation, as it is currently scheduled (April 16<sup>th</sup> through April 20<sup>th</sup>). Making a decision at this time will allow families and staff to make plans for vacation in April.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, that the Board of Education use days at the end of June for makeup should there be any cancellations due to inclement weather, leaving April 16<sup>th</sup> through April 20<sup>th</sup> as scheduled for the purpose of vacation. Mrs. Finch, Ms. Morhardt, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

### C. **Review and Possible Approval of the 2012 – 2013 School Calendar**

Dr. Collin presented the proposed 2012 – 2013 school calendar, which she said is a result of input from administrators and teachers and reflects 180 instructional days for students. She said that St. Edward's School staff has also been consulted, as have union representatives from the CSEA.

Dr. Collin reviewed the calendar, which she noted has a new format this year. She said that the calendar proposes a start date for students of Thursday, August 30, 2012, giving us an end date of June 12, 2013, barring any school cancellations. She noted that Stafford had been averaging about four snow days per year, with the exception of the last two years. If 2012-2013 is a typical year, we still would have a last day of school on Tuesday, June 18, 2013. The schedule reflects two early release days on November 21<sup>st</sup> (the day before the Thanksgiving holiday) and on the last day of school for students.

Dr. Collin stated that the proposed school calendar also provides for two days of New Teacher Orientation and seven contracted Professional Development (PD) Days (formerly referred to as Common Curriculum Days), but does NOT include early release days for the purpose of professional development activities. She said that she has engaged in initial discussions with the CSEA to explore other alternatives for the provision of professional development opportunities, specifically for paraprofessionals, to include but not be limited to adherence to federal regulations.

Ms. Morhardt made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, that the Board of Education approve the school calendar for 2012 -2013, as presented. Mrs. Finch, Ms. Morhardt, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

**D. Review and Possible Approval of Proposed 2012 – 2013 Itemized Estimate of the Cost of Maintenance (Budget) for the Stafford Public School District**

Dr. Collin reported that at the Board of Education meeting on January 23, 2012, she presented a proposed itemized estimate of the cost of maintenance for Stafford Public Schools totaling \$26,501,658 for the 2012-2013 school year, which represents an increase of \$1,670,745 or 6.7% over the approved budget for 2011-2012. She noted that in addition to Capital Improvement Projects, this increase includes monies formerly supplemented through the Education Job Funds Grant.

She explained that the members of the Board of Education have had an opportunity to review the proposed budget, with further presentations on health insurance by Mr. Dauphinee and Ms. Bailey, Ovation Benefits; Mr. Damian Frassinelli, Director of Athletics and Recreation; Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; and Mr. Rob Butler, III, Supervisor of Building Services; being given at the Board of Education meeting on February 6, 2012.

In addition, the Board Budget Committee, comprised of Mr. Steve Szymanski, Chairperson, Mrs. Sandy Fowler, and Ms. Beth Ann Morhardt, met on February 16, 2012, to further discuss the budget in preparation for making a recommendation to the Board.

Mr. Szymanski stated that in the memo dated February 24, 2012, Board members were provided with a list of budget reductions that were agreed to by the Budget Committee, totaling \$171,000. He noted that the decision of the committee was not unanimous. The list of reductions is, as follows:

• Retirements (Possibly four)	\$80,000
• New 1.0 FTE Maintenance Staff eliminated	\$46,000
• IT Consultation (Decrease in Hours)	\$8,000
• Mentors/Peer Advisors	\$2,000
• SHS Gym Floor Refinishing (Revised estimates)	\$10,000
• Pinney Painting	\$12,000
• SMS Parking Lot Lights (Revised estimates)	\$7,000
• Instructional Supplies	\$4,000
• Textbooks (Negotiations with publishers)	<u>\$2,000</u>
	<b>\$171,000</b>

After receiving additional information from the administration, the Board also agreed to include the following reductions:

• Science/Health Teacher (Reduction to 0.67 FTE Science)	\$23,955
• Textbooks (Postponing replacement)	\$18,000
• SHS Video Lab Savings	\$5,000
• Music Teacher (Reduction from 1.0 to 0.8 FTE)	\$11,500
• Art Teacher (Reduction from 1.0 to 0.8 FTE)	\$13,000
• E-rate savings- SV wiring project	<u>\$5,717</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$248,172</b>

Ms. Morhardt stated that she supports the budget as it was presented by the administration and that she does not feel that any cuts should be made at this time.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, that the Board of Education approve an Itemized Estimate of the Cost of Maintenance (Budget) for the Stafford Public School District for 2012 – 2013, which includes the reductions listed above, in the amount of \$26,253,486, a 5.7% increase over last year's budget. Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion. Ms. Morhardt voted against the motion. The motion carried by majority vote.

### **Item VIII. Public Forum**

A member of the audience commented that the public should have been allowed to speak before the Board voted on the budget. He asked why these cuts were being made now, when everyone knows that the Board of Finance is going to cut the budget further. He asked how many years the Board of Education has been funded at a 0% increase. He also suggested that the district include a chart showing the percentage increase trends over the past several years.

A member of the audience had a question regarding the minimum budget requirement.

A member of the audience asked if the Board's Budget Committee would continue to meet in anticipation of further cuts from the Board of Finance.

A member of the audience stated that the reduction in art will affect the students because the program at the high school will have inconsistent teaching.

A member of the audience commented on the shooting in Ohio, which was possibly caused by bullying. She said that she wants to be sure that the high school is addressing the issue of bullying.

A member of the audience stated that the children's art program will not be as good next year.

A member of the audience stated that one of the music teachers is already providing part of the program on her own time. To think that she'll continue to do that when her position is cut is unrealistic.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Ms. Morhardt, to place **Item XI.B.- Mid-Year Evaluation of Superintendent of Schools (Executive Session Anticipated)**, into executive session. Mrs. Finch, Ms. Morhardt, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

## **Item XI. Personnel Matters**

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

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Ms. Morhardt, that the Board of Education accept the resignations of the following staff members as indicated:

NAME	POSITION	SCHOOL	EFFECTIVE DATE	REASON
Sandra Bogan	Special Education Teacher	Stafford Middle School	End of school year, June 2012	Retirement
Janet Oloff	Special Education Teacher	West Stafford School	End of school year, June 2012	Retirement
Elizabeth R. Page	Elementary Teacher	Staffordville School	June 30, 2012	Retirement
Donna Perry	Speech and Language Pathologist	West Stafford School	June 30, 2012	Personal
Cathy Rider	Music Teacher, Elementary	Stafford Elementary School	February 24, 2012	Personal

Mrs. Finch, Ms. Morhardt, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

There was a recess at 8:56 p.m.

### **B. Mid-Year Evaluation of Superintendent of Schools (Executive Session Anticipated)**

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to enter executive session. Mrs. Finch, Ms. Morhardt, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 9:25 p.m.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Morhardt, to return to regular session. Mrs. Finch, Ms. Morhardt, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 9:58 p.m.

No action was taken on this item. This item will be placed on the next regularly scheduled Board meeting agenda.

## **Item XIII. Student Matters**

There were no Student Matters.

**Item XIV. Adjournment**

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, to adjourn. Mrs. Finch, Ms. Morhardt, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary**

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**Sandra Fowler, Chairperson**

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**Tracy Rummel, Secretary**