

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Monday, February 25, 2013 7:00 PM Eastern

Stafford Elementary School
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.	Special Meeting- 2/4/13
IV.	Treasurer's Report
IV.A.	Grants, 1/31/13- \$5,022.17
IV.B.	Bills, 2/5/13- \$1,164,617.35
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.	Discussion of the Proposed 2013 - 2014 Itemized Estimate of the Cost of Maintenance (Budget) for the Stafford Public School District
VII.B.	Status of Self-Funded Health Insurance and Dental Programs
VII.C.	Head Start Report through January 2013
VII.D.	Financial Report through January 2013
VII.E.	Cafeteria Profit and Loss through January 2013
VIII.	Public Forum
IX.	Old Business
X.	New Business
X.A.	Review and Possible Approval of Draft 2013 - 2014 School Calendar
X.B.	Review and Possible Approval of Retirement Incentive Program
X.C.	Status of 2012 - 2013 School Calendar and Review and Possible Approval of Process for Addressing Future School Cancellations
X.D.	Approval of 2013 - 2014 Itemized Estimate of the Cost of Maintenance (Budget) for the Stafford Public School District
XI.	Personnel Matters
XI.A.	Approval of Leave of Absence- Certified Staff Member
XI.B.	Appointment of Supervisor of Building Services
XII.	Student Matters

**Special Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Staffordville School
February 4, 2013**

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

Board Members Absent: Ms. Beth Ann Morhardt

Also Present: Dr. Patricia A. Collin, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Mr. Devin Cowperthwaite, Building Services Technician
Mr. Jerry Domanico, Business Manager
Mrs. Peggy Falcetta, Principal, Staffordville School
Mr. Damian Frassinelli, Director of Athletics and Recreation
Mr. Dean Fortin, Network Coordinator
Mr. Benjamin Gluck, Student Representative (Incoming)
Ms. Shelley Michaud, Principal, West Stafford School
Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal, Stafford High 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 7:04 p.m. A quorum was established.

Item II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Student Representative led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item III. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting, 1/7/13

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on January 7, 2013.

Item IV. Treasurer's Report

Bills, 1/9/13- \$831,585.96
Grants, 1/9/13- \$3,132.67
Bills, 1/23/13- \$163,095.44
Grants, 1/23/13- \$2,400.16
Bills, 1/24/13- \$480.00

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

Item V. Correspondence

There was no Correspondence.

Item VI. Board Reports

A. Report from Student Representative

Mr. Gluck reported on the following topics:

- Sports Update
- Zac Rollins scored 1,000 points so far during his high school career
- Mid-term Update; Students very happy with the schedule this year
- Staff vs. Students Volleyball Game Thursday Night, 2/7/13
- Music and Drama Update

B. Budget Committee

The Budget Committee members are Mr. Szymanski, Mrs. Fowler, and Ms. Morhardt. Mr. Szymanski stated that the next Budget Committee is scheduled for Thursday, 2/7/13, at 7 p.m., at the Pinney Administration Building. He said that the Budget Committee members would like direction from the full Board tonight, as well as public input, regarding the proposed budget, which will be discussed at the committee meeting on Thursday evening.

C. Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee members are Mrs. Rummel, Mrs. Walsh and Ms. Shegogue. There was no update from this committee.

D. Policy Committee

The Policy Committee members are Mrs. Fowler, Chairperson, Mrs. Finch, Ms. Morhardt and Mrs. Rummel (alternate). There was no update from this committee.

E. Negotiation Committee

The CSEA Negotiation Committee members are Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Morhardt and Mrs. Walsh. Currently, none of the contracts are being negotiated.

Item VII. Superintendent's Reports

A. Financial Report through December 2012

Dr. Collin presented the financial report of funds budgeted and encumbered/expended from July 1, 2012, through December 31, 2012, as prepared by Mr. Jerry Domanico, Business Manager. The total 2012-2013 Itemized Estimate of the Cost of Maintenance for Stafford Public Schools is \$26,104,054.

She referred the Board to the report and table provided in the electronic Board packet, which indicated that the period to date encumbrances/expenditures total \$25,171,141, leaving a balance of \$932,913 or a total of 3.57% of the total budget to be encumbered/expended by June 30, 2013. She also noted that the balance reflects

projected excess cost reimbursement, estimated at 70%, which was netted out of the budget and projected salary payments through the end of the school year.

Lastly, Dr. Collin reported that Mr. Domanico provided the Board with a report of grant expenditures, which includes State, federal and local awards. The expectation is that the district covers expenses for which it is then reimbursed. She said that the district's School Readiness, Family Resource Center, and After School Program grants were reduced by approximately 5%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

There were no questions.

B. Cafeteria Profit and Loss Statements- November and December 2012

Dr. Collin presented the Cafeteria Profit and Loss reports from July through November 2012 and from July through December 2012, as prepared by Mr. Jerry Domanico, Business Manager. The loss of \$15,467 for December was affected by three factors: There were only 15 school days in the month, and payment from Stafford High School's Madrigal Feaste (food and labor) and the Healthy Food Certification reimbursement (\$12,170) were not received until January.

She noted that Mr. Domanico has been reviewing all aspects of the program and meeting with Mrs. LaPane, Supervisor of Food Services, on a regular basis in order to explore areas where we may improve efficiencies and to increase revenue. The latter has been reviewing foods purchased by the schools and implementing changes to increase their nutritional value while ensuring that they meet State and federal guidelines. For example, in lieu of hot dogs, turkey franks will be available at West Stafford School and a Panini station with soup will be available at Stafford High School in February.

Dr. Collin also informed the Board that there are plans to seek input from students (via Student Council) and to implement a food service survey, the data from which will inform our program. Mr. Domanico has received sample surveys from several districts; he is currently working on a draft to be made available via SurveyMonkey next month.

There were no questions from the Board members. Mrs. Fowler thanked Mr. Domanico and Mrs. LaPane for following up with other districts and for creating the survey.

C. Head Start Report through December 2012

Dr. Collin presented the Basic Head Start grant report through December 31, 2012, as prepared by Mr. Jerry Domanico, Business Manager. The Basic Head Start Fund 160 is for the time period of July 1, 2012, through January 31, 2013, expenditures from which began with the opening of school for the 2012-2013 school year. The total amount of this fund is \$51,128, of which \$52,027.14 has been expended to date. At the end of the month, Mr. Domanico will review the status of the expenditures and make transfers, as warranted and permitted, to ensure that the district has not overspent these funds.

Dr. Collin reported that unlike the Basic Head Start grant, the Early Head Start Fund 182, totaling \$68,993, is for the time period February 1, 2012, through January 31, 2013. The district recently received the contract extension from November through January, reflecting an additional \$11,417. Records reflect total expenditures of \$52,379.18 and a balance of \$16,613.82, which must be expended or encumbered by January 31, 2013. Ms. Michaud, Principal West Stafford School, and Mr. Domanico have met to discuss the status of the Early and Basic Head Start grants. At this time, the district is awaiting notification of the two final grant awards from EASTCONN.

In compliance with the Head Start agreement, the program expense reports are being presented to the Board of Education at this time. In addition, the reports are periodically presented to the Head Start Parent Policy Committee, which also reviews the minutes of BOE minutes in order to stay abreast of the Board's actions. The Board was provided with Early and Basic Head Start Non Federal Share Reports, which included expenses assumed by the school district.

D. Discussion of the Proposed 2013 – 2014 Itemized Estimate of the Cost of Maintenance (Budget) for the Stafford Public School District

Dr. Collin stated that at the Board of Education meeting on January 7, 2013, a proposed itemized estimate of the cost of maintenance for the Stafford Public Schools for 2013-2014 was presented. Subsequently, the Board Budget Committee met on January 17, 2013. In anticipation of the latter, Board members forwarded specific questions to her. A collective list of the questions and responses was provided for Board members and has also been posted on the district website.

Dr. Collin said that during the aforementioned Budget Committee meeting, additional questions and requests for information were generated. Board members were provided with the responses to those questions in the electronic Board packet. Dr. Collin stated that the responses would also be posted on the district's web site (www.stafford.k12.ct.us).

Dr. Collin stated that it would be most helpful to her and her administrative team if Board members reflected on and communicated what was important to them. Additionally, she asked if the Board would provide to her the highest percentage increase with which they would be comfortable.

After considerable discussion, the Board members agreed that implementing full-day kindergarten and reinstating the assistant principal at Stafford Elementary School were priorities for 2013 – 2014. Additionally, the Board agreed that they would like to see the overall increase at less than 6%.

Dr. Collin stated that she would work with the administrators to prepare information for the budget committee meeting, scheduled for Thursday, February 7, 2013, at 7 p.m., at the Pinney Administration Building.

E. Update on Best Use of Facilities Study for Stafford Public Schools

Dr. Collin reported that following a conference call with NESDEC on Wednesday, January 23, 2013, it was determined that the Best Use of Facilities Study focus group meetings would be held on Thursday, February 21, 2013. She noted that there will be two focus group sessions. The first session will be for the Employee Group and will run from 3:30 - 5 p.m., and the second session will be for the Community Group and run from 6:30 - 8 p.m., at Stafford Middle School's Library Media Center.

She said that she anticipates that the Employee Group will consist of the following representatives: a teacher from each grade level and each special (including technology and library media), an administrator from each level, central office administration (Pupil Services, Curriculum & Instruction and Business), and non-certified / non-affiliated staff from each classification (including Family Resource Center, maintenance and school nurses).

She anticipates that the Community Group will consist of the following representatives: 2 or 3 Board of Education members, 1 or 2 Board of Finance members, a member of the Stafford Public Library Board of

Directors, a parent from each grade level, the First Selectman, the Director of Athletics and Recreation, and Sergeant Duncan (as school safety representative).

Dr. Collin said that the following questions will be asked of the focus groups:

- As the Stafford School District moves forward over the next 5 years, what do you feel are the key elements/components that will need to be in place in order for the District to continue to provide a high quality educational program?
- What are the major challenges that you believe the District will face as it strives to attain that goal(s)?

The information gathered during the focus group meetings will be incorporated into the options presented by NESDEC in their report to the Board of Education, tentatively scheduled for Monday, March 11, 2013.

Administrators will be asked to contact parents who would be interested in participating in this part of the process. Board members, administrators, certified, and non-certified/non-affiliated staff interested in participating will be asked to contact Mrs. Marinelli at the Board Office.

Item VIII. Public Forum

The following questions were asked / comments were made by members of the audience regarding the school budget:

- Is full-day kindergarten mandated at this time? **No. However, out of 180 CT districts, magnet and charter schools, 143 currently have full-day kindergarten, with many of the remaining districts adding it for next school year.** If so, will any part of the program be funded? **Not that we are aware of. There is currently no funding provided for full-day kindergarten.**
- Does the district plan to charge a fee for pre-kindergarten? **Not at this time. However, it is a possibility.**
- Will the pre-kindergarten program be maintained for 4 year olds as a transition to full-day kindergarten? **Dr. Collin stated that it is too early to determine that at this time.**
- How much will full-day kindergarten cost? **Dr. Collin stated that in the current budget proposal, full-day kindergarten will cost \$241,633, with some reduction in pre-kindergarten slots.**
- The BOE budget represents a two mil increase in a town where the mill rate is already very high.
- The \$26,000 budgeted for wireless technology is very high. The cost should be half that amount.
- Why wasn't the middle school floor done last year? Where did the money go?
- Why is the district spending so much money on athletics?
- Has the district considered phasing in full-day kindergarten? **Dr. Collin responded that she feels that this would create an achievement gap within that cohort of students. It would also create an issue when determining which students would participate in the pilot program.**
- Even if the district reduces the budget to less than 6%, it will still be very high. The district must get residents involved and find more effective ways to communicate the budget information. **Mrs. Fowler asked that suggestions be forwarded to her or Dr. Collin.**
- The community wants to be involved in the budget process and doesn't want the Board to make any snap decisions.
- Can the district provide back-up documents for the budget on the web site? **Dr. Collin stated that she would work on adding additional budget documentation to the web site.**
- Why isn't the town doing more to expand the tax base? Residents' taxes shouldn't be the only source of revenue for the town.

Item IX. Old Business

A. Review and Possible Approval of New Board Policies

Dr. Collin stated that on November 9, 2012, the following policies were initially discussed and reviewed by the Administrative Policy Committee (APC), which is comprised of Mr. Michael Bednarz, Mr. Gregory Buonome, Mrs. Peggy Falcetta, Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Mrs. Amy Stevenson, and me. Subsequently, on December 19, 2012, the same policies were also reviewed by the Board Policy Committee (BPC), comprised of Mrs. Sandra Fowler (Chairperson), Ms. Beth Ann Morhardt, and Mrs. Lisa Finch.

On January 7, 2013, the following policies were presented to the Board of Education for its review and comment. This meeting served as the first reading.

- **Policy #5141 Students: Student Health Services** (NEW: Currently no existing policy; Reviewed by Dr. William Waldman, Medical Advisor, prior to submission to the BPC.)
- **Policy #4111 Personnel-Certified: Recruitment and Selection** (NEW: Authorizes the Superintendent to employ all personnel below the rank of Assistant Principal, the former of whom shall report in writing to the Board the name, position and salary of each new employee at its next regular session.)

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, that the Board of Education approve, at this time, the following policies as presented: **Policy #5141 Students: Student Health Services and Policy #4111 Personnel-Certified: Recruitment and Selection.** Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Item X. New Business

A. Review and Possible Approval of Participation in the Connecticut School Health Survey (CSHS)

Dr. Collin stated that in accordance with BOE Policy 6162.51, Instruction: Surveys of Students (Student Privacy), *Surveys conducted for other agencies, organizations or individuals must have the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and the approval of the Board of education as to content and purpose. The results of such approved surveys must be shared with the Board of Education.*

She noted that in a letter from the State of Connecticut Departments of Education and Public Health, Stafford Public Schools was randomly selected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to participate in a survey. Participation will not be school wide, rather a few randomly selected classes will be selected to take the survey, which requires 35-40 minutes to complete.

The purpose of the survey is to collect representative information about health behaviors, which may contribute to the leading causes of premature death, illness and disability. Protective factors and resiliency data are also being collected for the purpose of addressing health policies and educational programs. The survey consists of two components: Youth Tobacco Component (YTC), which is administered to student in grades 6-12, and the Youth Behavior Component (YBC), which is administered to students in grades 9-12.

Dr. Collin provided the following documents for the Board's review:

- Letter dated January 15, 2013, from Stefan Pryor, Commissioner of Education, and Jewel Mullen, Commissioner of Public Health
- CSHS Participation Form

- 2013 Connecticut School Health Survey: Key Points
- Connecticut School Health Survey 2011 Results: Fact Sheet
- Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS) 2013 Questionnaire
- 2013 Connecticut School Health Survey: Youth Behavior Component-Student Questionnaire

Mrs. Rummel asked if students would be able to opt out of the survey. Dr. Collin said that students would be allowed to opt out.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Shegogue, that the Board of Education approve of the Stafford Public School District's participation in the 2013 Connecticut School Health Survey, as presented. Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

B. Review and Possible Approval of Stafford Middle School's Participation in Math Software Trial

Dr. Collin stated that in accordance with BOE Policy 6162.51, Instruction: Surveys of Students (Student Privacy), *Surveys conducted for other agencies, organizations or individuals must have the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and the approval of the Board of education as to content and purpose. The results of such approved surveys must be shared with the Board of Education.*

She noted that on January 21, 2013, the district became aware of the opportunity to participate in a trial of MathBrainius, a collaborative project with the NEAG School of Education. Proposed by Mgenuity Corporation to the United States Department of Education for funding by its Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR), participation in the trial would not interfere with normal school activities. According to Dr. Medl, who has been awarded Phase I and II grants from the USDE for the development of another software program called, "Readorium", the trial will include a total of 10-15 students from grades six, seven and eight.

Since the software is designed to run on tablets, iPads will be provided for the trial. Teachers, who will be provided with specific instruction regarding this usability study prior to implementation, will be compensated through the grant. As a result of our participation, teachers would have free access to the final software product once it is fully developed.

In addition to the information provided on the flyer (which was provided via the electronic Board packet), Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, contacted Dr. Attila Medl, Mgenuity Research, with questions, which are presented below along with the researcher's responses.

1. How many students are needed?

For Phase I of the research, a small group (10-15 students) would be sufficient. The best setup may be five students from grade 6, five students from grade 7, and five students from grade 8. The group should include male and female students (close to 50-50%) and several struggling students. The scope of the prototype will be limited, but strictly mapped to Common Core State Standards for the appropriate grade. For example, for the sixth grade students, we would focus on understanding ratio concepts (6.RP), division of fractions by fractions (6.NS) and geometric surface, area and volume (6.G).

2. Which grades would participate?

Grades 6th through 8th

3. Will the same students be involved in each phase?

The Phase I in-school test will occur in the October-November 2013 timeframe. The Phase II test will take place one year later. Therefore, with the exception of the 8th grade participants, the students can be the same, but it is not a requirement.

4. How many days are involved? Total number of hours?
In Phase I we will likely need only two weeks of testing (10 days). The students would use the software for 30-minute sessions on iPads each day, five hours total per student. After that, we may want to organize a group meeting to get more feedback. These estimates could change as we develop the research design, but we do not anticipate that any changes would be substantial.
5. Who else is signed on for CT middle schools?
Willington has expressed a strong interest. We are also talking to Robert Frost Middle School in Fairfax, Virginia, in addition to a few others.
6. How many teachers are needed?
A total of three teachers would be invited to participate, one from each grade level.
7. What extra work is involved for teachers?
Our goal is to closely observe the students as they use the software. The software will collect data (timing, concept comprehension, speed of work, and many others). Teachers will be provided the details of our research design and instruction on how to observe students and collect additional data that the software cannot log (e.g. students' facial expressions, level of frustration, the "Ahaa" moments, etc.).
8. What would be the role of the building administrator? Time?
We could do it any way the district decides. We could build the trial into the normal school day, or conduct the sessions after school. Since these will be short 30-minute sessions, and the duration of the test is only two weeks, parents may agree to extend their children's day. We want to minimize the interference with your normal school day.
9. How will confidentiality be assured for participating students?
Personally identifiable information will not be collected. We'll use codes (e.g. login names) to identify individual students.
10. Do you provide a letter to parents/guardians?
Yes, we will provide a detailed informative letter for parents/guardians. This letter will include a confidentiality clause, a link to a concept video, and a description of how children will benefit from MathBrainius once it is fully developed.
11. What are the obligations of the district for each phase?
The only obligation is to make students and teachers available for the test. We can lend several iPads for the test if the school doesn't have them yet.
12. Do we have to commit to more than the fall phase?
No. This proposal is strictly for the 6-month Phase I research. Approximately 10 proposals get funded for Phase I out of 250 or so submitted. After completing the Phase I study, those 10 will need to submit entirely new proposals for the two-year-long Phase II. Usually, five get funded for Phase II.
13. What is NEAG's role?
UConn will serve as a subcontractor for the grant. Two prominent NEAG professors will be my co-investigators: Dr. Megan Staples (Associate Professor of Mathematics Education) and Dr. Christopher Rhoads (Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Psychology)
14. How does this project support Common Core State Standards for Mathematics?
Entirely. MathBrainius content is mapped directly to CCSS domains.
15. How will Stafford benefit from participation in the trial?
Teachers will get compensated for their time; the district may suggest an acceptable rate. Each participating student will receive either an Amazon or Barnes & Noble gift certificate or books. The highest performing students may even receive a Kindle. As a confidence booster, each student will receive a certificate of completion signed by another co-investigator on the grant, Professor Endre Szemerédi, 2012 recipient of the Abel Prize in Mathematics (<http://www.abelprize.no/>). We can also issue joint news releases with the district and publicize how Stafford has pioneered this new technology and participated in educational research funded by the United States Department of Education.

Dr. Christopher Rhoads, Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut, was in attendance at the meeting to respond to any questions of the Board. Mrs. Fowler asked if any other area districts are participating. Dr. Rhoads said that Somers Public Schools has just agreed to participate.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, that the Board of Education approve of the Stafford Public School District's participation as a test site for MathBrainus, a novel software and authorize Dr. Patricia Collin, Superintendent of Schools, to submit such letter of support in writing to the U.S. Department of Education. Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Item XI. Personnel Matters

A. Authorization of the Superintendent of Schools to Give Written Notice of Non-Renewal

Dr. Collin informed the Board that the contract of employment of a teacher who has not yet achieved tenure status may be terminated through a non-renewal process. Moreover, the Teacher Tenure Act provides that the contract of a teacher will be renewed from year to year, unless the teacher receives written notification that his or her contract will not be renewed for the next school year. According to Public Act 11-136, effective July 1, 2011, districts must provide written notification of non-renewal to non-tenured teachers it chooses not to renew by May 1 (previously April 1).

With this legislation in mind, and due to continued budget concerns, she requested that she be given the authorization to notify in writing before May 1 any non-tenured teachers whose contract will not be renewed for the next school year.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Shegogue, that the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent of Schools to notify in writing before May 1 any non-tenured teachers whose contract will not be renewed for the next school year. Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

B. Appointment- Certified Staff Member

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, that the following candidate for a teaching position be appointed as follows:

NAME	CERTIFICATION AREA	SCHOOL/ ASSIGNMENT	REPLACING/ NEW	SALARY	EFFECTIVE DATE
Barr, Sarah	Speech and Language Pathologist* * Ms. Barr's certificate was issued by the State on 1/22/13, but was back- dated to August 22, 2012.	West Stafford School / Speech and Language Pathologist	Perry, D.	\$58,285 (MA, Step 9)	8/23/12

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

Item XII. Student Matters

There were no Student Matters.

Item XIII. Adjournment

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Ms. Shegogue, to adjourn. Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary

Sandra Fowler, Chairperson

Tracy Rummel, Secretary