

Board of Education Regular Meeting  
Monday, May 20, 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. Regular Meeting- 5/6/13
- IV. Treasurer's Report
  - IV.A. Bills, 5/7/13- \$106,980.16
  - IV.B. Grants, 5/7/13- \$12,138.13
- 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. Teacher of the Year 2014
  - VII.B. Paraprofessional of the Year 2014
  - VII.C. Recognition of Stafford Public Schools' Retiring Staff Members
  - VII.D. Presentation of the 2012 - 2013 CABE Student Leadership Awards
  - VII.E. Recognition of Student Representative to the Board of Education
  - VII.F. Music and Drama Department Presentation
  - VII.G. Head Start Report through April 2013
  - VII.H. Financial Report through April 2013
- VIII. Public Forum
- IX. Old Business
  - IX.A. Review and Approval of Revisions to Board Policies- Second Reading
  - IX.B. Reconsideration of Selection of Agent of Record
- X. New Business
  - X.A. Adjustment of School Lunch Prices for 2013 - 2014
- XI. Personnel Matters
  - XI.A. Rescission of Non-Renewals
- XII. Student Matters

**Regular Meeting  
Stafford Board of Education  
Pinney Administration Building  
May 6, 2013**

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

**Also Present:** Dr. Patricia A. Collin, Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. Lisa Baxter, CFO, Town of Stafford  
Mr. Jerry Domanico, Business Manager  
Mr. Ben Gluck, Student Representative  
Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal, Stafford High 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. Gluck led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Regular Meeting, 4/29/13

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on April 29, 2013.

**Item IV. Treasurer's Report**

There was no Treasurer's Report.

**Item V. Correspondence**

There was no Correspondence.

**Item VI. Board Reports**

**A. Report from Student Representative**

Mr. Gluck reported on the following topics:

- Drama Production *Thoroughly Modern Millie* was performed on 5/3-5/5/13, and went very well. The next production will be *Singing in the Rain*.
- The Thespian Induction will be held on May 29, 2013.

- The Spring Fling Concert will be held on May 30, 2013.
- The NCCC language teachers will be attending a World Language Conference at Stafford High School on May 17, 2013.
- The marching band and the Madrigals will be marching in the Memorial Day Parade.
- Sports Update- The golf team had its best match to date.

**B. Budget Committee**

The Budget Committee members are Mr. Szymanski, Mrs. Fowler, and Ms. Morhardt. There was no update from this committee.

**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). It was announced that the Policy Committee met on Thursday, 5/2/13, at 7:30 a.m. Mrs. Fowler stated that policies will be presented for the Board's consideration later on the agenda. Tonight's presentation will serve as the first reading for all of the policies.

**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. Report on Graduation Rate- Class of 2012**

Dr. Collin provided the Board with a letter and corresponding documentation from the State Department of Education, Bureau of Data Collection Research and Evaluation, regarding the district's 2012 cohort graduation data. The *adjusted four-year cohort graduation rate* tracks an individual cohort from its initial entrance into grade 9 through to graduation with a regular high school diploma in four years or less. Dr. Collin also provided a document entitled, "Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate Documentation, November 2012", which provides background information, definitions, and the data source and methodology for calculating the rates. In addition to the 2012 cohort graduation rate data, the Board was provided with the 2011 and 2010 data.

Dr. Collin stated that of particular interest is the dramatic increase in the percentage of students graduating with a diploma. Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal of Stafford High School, stated in his memo to Dr. Collin that in just one year's time, the data reflects an overall increase in graduation rate of 13.5% (74.45% in 2011 to 87.9% in 2012) for all students and an increase of 42.84% (42.86% in 2011 to 85.7% in 2012) for students with special needs.

Dr. Collin said that it is believed that these improvements are a direct result of interventions implemented at Stafford High School under Mr. Pelliccia's leadership coupled with strategies employed beginning in the earlier grades. She also mentioned that the work of the Dropout Prevention Committee, which was instituted during Dr. Therese Fishman's tenure as former Superintendent, was also instrumental in raising the level of awareness in the district and community and in laying the groundwork for improvement.

Mr. Pelliccia stated that this is just one year's data. However, he is very excited about the data, and he expects further improvement in future years. Mr. Pelliccia stated that only one student has dropped out so far this year.

Mr. Pelliccia said that he attributes the improvement in the graduation rate to a combination of efforts, such as the following:

- The Student Assistance Team
- Change in Culture
- SRBI Interventions
- Credit Recovery
- IEA Program
- Strategic Scheduling
- Matching Appropriate Interventions and Teachers with Students

Dr. Collin added that the district's Pupil Services Director, Mrs. Amy Stevenson, has been doing an excellent job and works well with Mr. Pelliccia to identify interventions to promote student achievement.

Dr. Collin stated that a work-study policy is being considered by the administrative policy committee, which may provide another incentive for students to stay in school.

Ms. Morhardt stated that she has noticed that the tone at the high school is very different now, as compared to what she's experienced in the past while giving workshops at the school. She said that now all students are celebrated. She said that Marco and his staff have changed the tone in a positive manner.

Mrs. Fowler thanked the Dropout Prevention Committee for laying the groundwork for this change. She also congratulated Mr. Pelliccia for working so hard toward his goal this year.

Mrs. Fowler also asked which programs need to be protected in order for these changes to continue. Mr. Pelliccia responded that the high school currently has two interventionists available to work with students. He noted that one of these positions has already been eliminated from the 13-14 budget. He also stated that Freshmen House is important, but that this specific program won't impact the graduation rate for a couple of years.

Mr. Szymanski noted that there was a discrepancy in the numbers that Mr. Pelliccia reported as compared to the numbers on the State report. Dr. Collin and Mr. Pelliccia explained that the numbers were most likely adjusted at the State level after Mr. Pelliccia completed his report.

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

A member of the audience congratulated Mr. Pelliccia for a job well done.

#### **Item IX. Old Business**

There was no Old Business.

#### **Item X. New Business**

##### **A. Approval of Graduation Date- Class of 2013**

Dr. Collin stated that the Board was provided with a proposal from Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal of Stafford High School, to set the 2013 graduation date on Monday, June 24, 2013. She noted that to date, the district has had a total of nine school cancellations due to inclement weather. At its meeting on February 25, 2013, the

Board agreed to convert the April 1<sup>st</sup> professional development day to a student day and move the professional development day to the end of the school year in the event of a school cancellation on or before March 22<sup>nd</sup>. The intent of this plan was to maintain Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup> as the last day for students. School was subsequently cancelled on Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, due to inclement weather. As a result, Monday, June 24<sup>th</sup> became the 180<sup>th</sup> school day for students.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, that the Board of Education approve Monday, June 24, 2013, as the Class of 2013's graduation date. Mrs. Finch, Ms. Morhardt, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Fowler stated that since the Board has a meeting that night, the meeting should be cancelled.

#### **B. Appointment of Asbestos Designee**

Dr. Collin reported that State and Federal regulations in regard to asbestos in the schools require each district to have a designated person who is trained in asbestos management. This person may be an employee or a consultant. The asbestos designee generally oversees and coordinates activities for continuing development and implementation of the asbestos operation and maintenance programs. He/she also assists in the development of long range plans and in the interpretation of regulations. The asbestos designee also conducts periodic surveillance and assessment of the condition of all ACBM, provides needed awareness training for custodial and maintenance staff, and prepares reports as needed for submission to the State and/or Federal government.

Dr. Collin stated that based on the needs in the district, she recommended that Dr. Mark F. Granville, Asbestos Consultant, be re-appointed as our Asbestos Designee. She said that Mr. Mark Seddon, Supervisor of Building Services, recently met with Dr. Granville, who is familiar with the Stafford School District and has successfully served in this capacity since January 1997. Dr. Granville is licensed by the State of Connecticut, Department of Public Health, as an Asbestos Consultant-Project Monitor, Asbestos Consultant-Project Designer, and Asbestos Consultant-Inspection and Management Planner. The fee for this service remains at \$500. Dr. Collin said that since Dr. Granville's current licenses expire at the end of May, the appointment and payment should be conditional upon the provision of valid licensure.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Morhardt, that the Board of Education appoint Dr. Mark Granville as Asbestos Designee for the Stafford School District for the 2013-2014 school year, contingent on the provision of valid licensure. 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 Revisions to Board Policies**

Dr. Collin stated that the following policies, as enumerated below, were discussed and reviewed by the Administrative Policy Committee (APC) on April 12<sup>th</sup>. They were then forwarded to the Board Policy Committee (BPC), comprised of Mrs. Sandra Fowler (Chairperson), Ms. Beth Ann Morhardt, and Mrs. Lisa Finch, for review. The Committee met on May 2, 2013. Ms. Morhardt was not in attendance at this meeting.

The Committees reviewed the current policies and made recommendations, as warranted:

- **Policy #1600 Community Relations: Otherwise Lawful Possession of Firearms on School Property.** Both the APC and BPC recommend maintaining the current policy rather than define "firearms" in the text as they feel the statement "firearms as defined in Section 53a-3" is sufficient. This is not a required policy.

- **Policy #5141.6 Students-Crisis Response: Crisis Management Plan (Emergencies & Disaster Preparedness Plan).** While CABE provided a recommended replacement for our current policy, it is recommended that we maintain our current policy and appendix entitled, “Checklist NIMS Implementation Activities for Schools and Institutions of Higher Education” (which has not been revised). The status of the legal references has not changed, and this is not a required policy.
- **Policy #5131.7 Students: Weapons and Dangerous Instruments.** The APC recommended to the BPC adoption of existing policy with CABE’s suggested modifications, deleting the “optional language”. This is a required policy.
- **Policy #5142 Students: Student Safety.** It is recommended that the Board adopt the revisions as presented by CABE with additional suggestions for revisions from the APC. This is not a required policy.
- **Policy #6114.1 Instruction: Fire Emergency (Drills).** It is recommended that the Board adopt the existing policy with revisions from CABE. This is not a required policy.
- **Policy #6114.7 Instruction: Safe Schools.** CABE provided a policy for our consideration. While this is not a required policy and the district does not have such a policy, it is recommended that the Board maintain inclusion in our policy manual of the Appendix entitled, “Helpful Hints for School Emergency Management.”
- **Policy #4121 Personnel-Certified: Per Diem Substitute Teachers.** It is recommended that the Board adopt the revision, as presented.
- **Policy #6146 Instruction-Graduation Requirements.** It is recommended that the Board adopt the revision, as presented.

Dr. Collin stated that because many of the policies address school safety, one policy has budgetary implications (per diem substitute policy) and another will result in a change in practice as it relates to awarding credit for graduation, it is recommended that this meeting serve as the first reading for all eight policies. Dr. Collin also explained her rationale for changing **Policy #4121 Personnel-Certified: Per Diem Substitute Teachers.**

This item will be placed on the agenda of the next regularly-scheduled meeting.

#### **D. Selection of Insurance Agent of Record**

Dr. Collin stated that at the end of February, the Town began a bid solicitation process for an insurance agent. As a result, it received an email from Penny-Hanley & Howley Co., Inc. (our current Agent of Record) and formal bids, which are attached, from First Niagara, and USI. In April, a group comprised of the following constituents met with each bidder: Lisa Baxter, Chief Financial Officer; Richard Shuck, First Selectman; Beth DaDalt, Assistant to the First Selectman; Kevin Leslie, Superintendent of WPCA; Jerry Domanico, Business Manager for Stafford Public Schools; and Dr. Collin, Superintendent of Schools.

Dr. Collin said that as Mr. Domanico indicated via his memorandum, inclusive in their fees (which are based on the standard commission paid by the insurance carrier) First Niagara and USI will provide proactive claims management and claims assistance, consultation services (including active participation in safety committees), training services, risk assessment, and loss control services, the last of which directly relates to an inquiry of the Board of Finance. Currently, Penny-Hanley & Howley only provide claims management and claims assistance. Penny-Hanley & Howley representatives indicated that while they do not provide loss control services, they would provide us with a consultant at an additional cost.

Dr. Collin said that the group agreed that the current level of services that the members are receiving is not sufficient to adequately meet the collective needs and that, based on their RFPs, selection of either of the other two bidders would result in improved services, allowing the Town and Board of Education to save money over

time. The Boards (Selectmen, Education and WPCA) are being asked to select an agent of record at this time. Based on the discussions and Mr. Domanico's recommendation, Dr. Collin suggested that the Board select First Niagara Risk Management as its agent of record.

Mr. Domanico and Ms. Baxter were in attendance at the meeting to respond to questions.

Mrs. Fowler asked if PHH was given the opportunity to offer the loss control services and if there is any benefit to having a town business as the agent of record. Mr. Domanico responded that the group met with PHH first and specifically asked about the loss control services, to which PHH responded that there would be a cost associated with the services. He said that he is used to being in contact with the insurance agent on a monthly basis. However, this isn't the case with PHH. He stated that the level of services that should be provided just isn't there. Mr. Domanico said that the loss control is the most important piece and both other companies are willing to provide it at no cost.

Mrs. Finch asked if there had been delays with the insurance companies paying the claims. Ms. Baxter responded that there were delays, most of the time the delays were due to the fact that the claims were not worded properly.

Mrs. Finch and Ms. Morhardt stated that the district should go with the agent that will provide the best service for the district.

Mr. Szymanski asked if all three Boards were in agreement with this recommendation. Mr. Domanico stated that it was the consensus of the group to select First Niagara. Ms. Baxter stated that it was suggested that the agent of record be selected in this manner, since the selection affects all three Boards.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Ms. Morhardt, that the Board of Education approve of the selection of First Niagara Risk Management as its agent of record. Mrs. Finch, Ms. Morhardt, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Szymanski and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

#### **Item XI. Personnel Matters**

There were no Personnel Matters.

#### **Item XII. Student Matters**

There were no Student Matters.

#### **Item XIII. Adjournment**

Ms. Morhardt made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, 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 8:00 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary**

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**Sandra Fowler, Chairperson**

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**Tracy Rummel, Secretary**

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