

MINUTES OF THE WORKING MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION Stamford, Connecticut February 10, 2009

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on February 10, 2009 at the Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard. The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Ms. Nabel, President, with the following Board members present: Ms. Heftman, Mr. King, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak (7:20 pm), Ms. Lorenti, Mayor Malloy (8:45 pm), Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade. Also in attendance: Dr. Starr, Dr. Hamilton, Mr. Dunn (8:50 pm), Ms. Swerdlick, Dr. Nicholson, Ms. Karwan, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Thessin, Ms. Arnold (7:45 pm), representatives from the Advocate and Stamford Times, and approximately 30 guests.

Salute to the flag.

MISSION STATEMENT

Mr. Mathews presented the mission statement of the Board of Education.

Ms. Nabel noted the format of this meeting is a “working” meeting agenda as discussed and agreed to at the Board retreat. Resolutions will be voted on by the full Board at the second meeting of the month which is on the fourth Tuesday of the month. She thanked all the members of the public present this evening.

REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS/RESOLUTIONS

CURRICULUM

Ms. Lorenti asked Dr. Starr if there would be discussion on the Literacy Audit.

Dr. Starr reported that there was a Literacy Audit conducted this past fall/winter by Phi Delta Kappa International. They gave us the results which lay out steps we need to take from the Board room to the classroom. The only new money we have requested in the budget is for elementary literacy.

Dr. Nicholson reviewed the three recommendations from the audit from which will be put together in a three year action plan to address the recommendations. The first recommendation involves development of a policy framework to ensure consistent curriculum delivery across the district. There are the 2nd and 3rd recommendations deal with the development of the curriculum, making certain that there is alignment between curriculum about the instructional strategies, about the professional development, and the assessment. The third piece is about professional development that has to support it all.

Dr. Nicholson further stated that between reacting and responding to the audit and making the plan we still have to get through the work between now and then. We can't wait any longer. The extra money is going to go for three things:

1. Starting the Curriculum Development process;
2. Professional Development for Best Practices; and
3. Some schools have to get level books.

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak arrived at 7:20 pm.

Dr. Nicholson concluded that we have a three year plan coming, but that while we wait for something new we can't leave those students and say do what you have been doing. It is pretty drastic and we do have to pay attention to this. We can't let some of the schools that we have right now go on without giving them the kind of support either through professional development and level libraries. The cost to begin a level library you need about \$85,000 per school for K-5 and that is the beginning. We can't do that, but we can start with some of the schools that have the empty shelves.

Ms. Lorenti noted that in the audit they talk about the policy recommendations and she asked if there is a timeline for the Board. Dr. Starr responded that he had spoken with Ms. Nabel about starting this work in March. The audit identified some of the policies that need to be considered and we have to gather sample policies that we can model after and then start the policy work.

Mr. Polo asked if these policies considerations would be across the board or just for literacy? Ms. Lorenti acknowledged that it would be for all areas and Dr. Starr indicated that it is more about curriculum management systems which should be for all curriculum areas.

Ms. Heftman asked if the School Improvement Plans received are an indication of how the monitoring is going to happen? Dr. Starr responded that the monitoring process is the number one question. How we appropriately monitor and provide support to help principals monitor the implementation of new practices in their schools – that is a real concern for us. If you look at what other districts have done they have a lot more staff that does this work and we have to figure out the right balance between some support that we can provide to us and the expectations for the principals. What principals have been doing on their own

and working with Dr. Hamilton, Ms. Thessin, and others is to try out some internal monitoring practices such as walk throughs that they can do on their own and we have to meld that with what we can be doing centrally. That is the next level of work for us and we be directly tied to some of the policy work that will need to be done.

Ms. Heftman asked if Dr. Starr had a ball park dollar figure? Dr. Starr responded that EveryDay Math cost about \$1.2M a year and that is for start up, not maintenance. What will we have to pick up when GE doesn't support us in the same way? Assume about \$1.2M per year for start up. We can't do every school at once and we can't do professional development for every teacher in every grade at once. Ms. Wade asked for confirmation that the first thing to be done is the identification of those school libraries in most need and the \$85,000 or 1,500 titles per grade will be purchased over the summer. Dr. Nicholson noted that she made some distinction between beginning to respond to the audit and to develop curriculum and to address some of the monitoring assessments that are really wanted, but in the meantime we have some catch up to do with needy buildings with respect to classroom libraries or level books. She is not suggesting that we go K-5, but start with maybe K-3 and make sure that 3 to 5 of the schools who are really needy get those books this year. At the same time the professional development for the good practices regardless of where we go in the future. Some schools are already pretty competent in all of this and other schools need more help. Also the curriculum writing will start. In order to do this kind of massive work that we are talking about we will have to train people on how to do curriculum work of this magnitude if we have the money. We have some money remaining in our current budget.

Ms. Wade asked if this would need to be aligned with the School and District Improvement Plans, and aligned against the middle and high school curriculum that has been developed as well as K-12 model. Dr. Nicholson noted that the audit had us focus on was that we needed internal consistency as well as higher cognitive demand in our curriculum and we needed to make certain that it aligned the curriculum, the instruction, and the assessment.

Ms. Heftman noted that she appreciated the comment Dr. Starr made about the fact that as we are developing the 3-5 plan that we have children coming through that need to be educated as we develop this plan. It reinforces her belief as a parent that we all know that the most important thing you can do with your child is to read with them and to them from a very early age. The 7 years she spent as an Educational Assistant doing a one on one reading program called **Sale** which was very effective and she hopes that within the context of this conversation and knowing that the teachers are going to be having professional development and will be conscientious and wanting to do the right thing for all children, but she hopes we can rethink the way we use Educational Assistants and try and get back to that model or something like that because it really worked. Dr. Starr responded that part of the way that the work is designed is that we start with the practice and what the change is that you want to see and what resources are available. Then look at what the people are doing whether it

is the educational assistant, the classroom teacher, or the principal, etc. You start with what you want the students to be able to do and what is the practice to get them there and align everything around that and the educational assistants are part of that mix.

Mr. Polo inquired about the Board's policies that when you talk about Board policies and that we have to be more specific and define it better, he asked if Phi Delta Kappa do they have best practices, examples or a boiler plate we can start from that will address some of these items. Dr. Starr responded that this where Panasonic and Connecticut Center for School Change will do some work with us.

Dr. Starr noted that a copy of the School Improvement Plans were included in Friday's Board package. This has been a continuous improvement cycle for us starting a few years ago to improve our school improvement planning process and we have done this and Board members who have been on a few years are aware of this. This year, under Ms. Thessin's leadership, we ramped it up another level. The principals and their teams responded very well to a different kind of process that is not an event, but are trying to turn it into a continuous improvement cycle process with the appropriate monitoring and feedback and this is new work for us.

Ms. Arnold arrived at 7:45 pm.

Ms. Thessin noted that one of the primary goals this year with the school improvement process was to build it into what you might call a living document. In the past we tried to meet the State expectations and then the document gets in some ways put on a shelf. What we are trying to do is build in not only a continuous reflection to it, but also some monitoring pieces to encourage schools to continue to revise and improve. She distributed a flow chart and reviewed the process that was taken this year. We asked schools to reflect on their SIP from last year in terms of what things did they meet, what things did they think they needed more work on and needed to continue, and what strategies in the SIP did they think they needed to add or revise significantly this year. Data teams were formed to really own the SIP process and then we moved forward to drafting SIP's for this year. Ms. Thessin indicated that after drafts of the SIP's were done, half day support sessions were offered to all the schools. A number of schools came in for help and once they submitted their drafts we provided some extensive feedback to them. Once the feedback was offered the schools did the final revisions and submitted in December. From there the SIP's were reviewed by Dr. Starr and our team here and then approved or some schools were asked to make some final edits in some cases. The documents you received went through a number of different cycles/feedback loops. She also distributed a document entitled "February Monitoring" and that is meant to be the next step in the SIP process this year. We are asking schools to really think about are we really making process on our strategies, do we need to revise, are there changes or others things we need to put in place to ensure that we can make progress, and in February and May we are asking them to reflect in writing and submit on

progress that they are making. This is something new that we are implementing this year. We have also begun Data Team process at the district level so the steps are going to feed into the depth into the steps as we move forward. We are hoping by the end of this year through the SIP process, district drafting of the District Improvement Plan that schools by May or June will be able to start thinking about what their SIP's look like for next year so it will be something that is continually going on as opposed to waiting until the fall and initiating a new process again it will be a seamless continuation.

There was a brief question and answer regarding Data Teams, Best Practices, how goals are arrived at and reached, and accountability.

Resolution 02-24-09:74

Ms. Lorenti moved, seconded by Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the School Improvement Plans for the schools identified as In Need of Improvement (Davenport, Hart, K.T. Murphy, Newfield, Northeast, Rogers, Roxbury, Springdale, Stark, Stillmeadow, Cloonan, Dolan, Rippowam, Turn of River, Stamford High, and Westhill).

The resolution was passed with the following Committee members voting in favor: Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, and Ms. Wade.

FACILITIES

Mr. Mathews noted that Mr. Dunn and Mr. Barbarotta were not present. He asked Dr. Starr to make a statement regarding the Facilities Audit. Dr. Starr noted that with respect to the Facilities Audit, a kick off meeting was held last week. They are currently scheduling the two schools where they will be doing a space analysis (Northeast and Rogers) and everything is proceeding according to the plan. In terms of the Walking Access for Rogers there is no update. We have received verification from every district that we have asked to partner with us that they will partner with us. The State has still not approved the plan. He has a call into Mr. Magnotta today and if he does not get an answer by tomorrow he will call the Commissioner on Thursday.

Mr. Polo noted that Mr. Rubino had requested the AITE Energy report and asked if it was ever received. Dr. Starr indicated that if it goes on the agenda next time we will be happy to provide that information.

Mr. Polo asked about an update from the Planning Board on the Capital Budget. Dr. Starr responded that Mr. Dunn is at the Planning Board meeting this

evening and if this placed on the agenda he will be happy to report on it. Mr. Polo also inquired about the additional funds for Boyle Stadium. Ms. Nabel responded that would be in the Planning Board vote on the Capital Budget.

Mr. Mathews asked for a motion to table the resolutions inasmuch that Mr. Dunn and Mr. Barbarotta were not present. Dr. Starr responded that these are standard resolutions that we have to approve when we receive close out statements from the State. If you move them and then there is additional information required between now and the next meeting we can provide that information.

Resolution 02-24-09:75

Mr. Mathews moved, seconded by Mr. King:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve completion of School Construction State Project #135-0203 A/CV Rippowam Center Renovation.

The resolution was passed with the following Committee members voting in favor: Mr. King, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, and Mr. Polo.

Resolution 02-24-09:76

Mr. Mathews moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve completion of School Construction State Project #135-0219 VA/N Westhill High School Vo-Ag Center.

The resolution was passed with the following Committee members voting in favor: Mr. King, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, and Mr. Polo.

Ms. Nabel noted that for discussion and follow up at the March 10, 2009 meeting we will ask for back up on AITE Energy Consumption and a report on the Capital Budget vote.

FISCAL

Ms. Heftman asked Dr. Starr for an update on the 2008-2009 Operating Budget. He reported that we are coming in on track with a \$250,000 surplus and it looks like this figure is holding.

Ms. Heftman had some questions regarding the December Financial Statement. The sub-line which is tracking fairly high – that has nothing to do with

the teachers who are waiting for certification. Mr. Murphy responded that it does. Mr. Murphy noted that line 111 we budget 4 teachers every year and this year we budgeted for 5. Ms. Heftman also inquired about the clerical overtime and who falls into the category of a clerical position that would work overtime and why. Mr. Murphy responded that it is mostly central office. He noted that there are also a number of adjustments to this line that have not been yet for people who worked have done work and it should be picked up in other areas of the budget. Dr. Starr indicated that big expenditures in clerical overtime was due to the implementation of the new City of Stamford Ceridian system which required a lot of overtime. The other is that we reduced the number of clerical staff at central office and have more of a pool so there is a need for a little more overtime because we don't have as many clerical staff that we use to.

Ms. Heftman asked for an update on the 2009-2010 Operating Budget. Dr. Starr noted that there was a handout of Estimated Expenses at each Board Member's desk that he would be reviewing this evening. Upon receiving new information he was able to bring down his request from 4.5% to 3.75%.

1. The City of Stamford brought down their cross charge by \$1.4M.
2. Locked in bus fuel which saved us \$50,000.
3. Nancy Domiziano has reduced the projection for oil/heat by \$100,000.

Based on the letter of retirement from an Assistant Superintendent he is choosing to keep that position vacant. There are two Assistant Superintendent positions that are subject to people leaving and one COO position which are three cabinet positions to be filled. He is choosing to leave one vacant and use that money to put back into the Interscholastic Athletic funding. This would restore about half of the original cut of \$300,000 and we will go back to the Athletic Directors and principals to see how they would like to restore just as we asked them on how they would like to distribute the cut. His budget priorities are professional development, interscholastic athletics, and literacy for restoration. We anticipate that when Federal stimulus comes through that money will be available for professional development for literacy and operating monies will not be. In order to restore something into interscholastic athletics he is proposing that he keep an assistant superintendent position vacant.

Dr. Starr indicated that this year we had budgeted for his bonus and cabinet members who are eligible for a bonus and this money has been removed from the proposed budget. We had anticipated an increase of IDEA funding, which is a little bit of a risk, but we think we will be alright if the stimulus package holds we will get an increase. Therefore the 10 positions that were originally accounted for will be put back in. The redistricting bus gets restored. The Media Assistant position that we had not budgeted at Rippowam is an addition. OPED is a shifting number and the City's Director of Administration has asked us to adjust based on new accounting procedures that they are implementing. We said we should follow the same accounting procedures that we have always followed. There is a little bit of a back and forth and we have talked about

consulting actuaries and he thinks this number may be subject to fluctuations depending on different interpretations. To be on the safe side the number of \$416,000 will cover us if the Board of Representatives does not vote to extend the phase in time.

We are going to use a little bit more of the E-Rate money to support operating expenses and from our Benefits analyst we believe we can bring that number down by \$125,000.

Dr. Starr noted that all of this is how he was able to get his 2009-2010 Operating Budget request down to 3.75%. Dr. Starr asked the Board to amend the 2009-2010 Operating Budget assuming that they accept these changes which includes the same number of staff.

Board members expressed concern regarding the continuation of the Office of Family & Community Engagement, special education costs, review of busing costs and alternative ways to save money for busing. It was agreed that Dr. Starr and Mr. Schneider will go back and look at the transportation costs for the next budget year.

Mayor Malloy arrived at 8:45 pm.

There were also questions from Board members on the spreadsheet of positions and it was noted that corrections needed to be made. Mr. Mathews requested a copy of the contract and job description for the Safety Officer position.

Mr. Dunn arrived at 8:50 pm.

Dr. Starr reviewed the costs to institute a program in Stamford for health impaired students. It would save us \$2M a year in the best case and the worse case being \$1.5M which would include teacher salaries, rental of space, etc. This would be bringing back 48 of the 82 health impaired students. Mr. Mathews thought this program should be explored in the very near future due to the ballooning costs associated with special education. Dr. Starr noted that the potential savings are quite attractive, however, it would be educationally unsound and in some ways unethical to pursue something that we do not have the capacity to do when we are not currently serving the more than 1,600 students well enough as evidenced by our student achievement results. Nor quite frankly have we shown a capacity to manage our operation now up to standards. Starting a new program of this magnitude, not sure if it could be up and running in September, it would require another stream of work that we don't have anyone on staff to do, it would take us in a direction that we are not prepared to take and there is no guarantee that the families would agree to having their children come back because as you know every individual education plan is discussed and decided with the family. We would have to have a program up and running with significant investment of funds for materials, room configuration, professional development, curriculum development, etc. before we even realized the potential

savings from the reduced tuition. Mr. Mathews thought that it would be incumbent upon us to study this and to do something over the course of next year so we can look at a model to incorporate. Mr. Rubino recommended putting this item on the Curriculum agenda.

There was also discussion on the costs for the Domus Foundation program and the investment the Stamford Public Schools is making.

Mr. Rubino asked about a couple of Technology Educational Assistants which we still have a few versus Media Educational Assistants (23). Dr. Starr responded that each instructional media center is staffed with an Instructional Media Specialist and an Educational Assistant. You have to have full coverage during the day. Mr. Rubino asked if there was a way to consolidate. Dr. Starr indicated that positions were not cut from this budget. When you start talking about consolidation you start decrease and quality of service, contractual issues, etc. Ms. Heftman asked for confirmation that the Technology Educational Assistant positions had been removed and Mr. Murphy confirmed that was correct.

Mayor Malloy stated that one of things he would point out about Domus funding and he knows everyone has visited Trailblazers or Stamford Academy, one of things he does when he prepares the City budget and look at our strategic relationships with outside providers of which we have a number is generally speaking is to assume of those outside agencies with whom we have strategic relationships that they have the same pressing budgetary difficulties that we are having when we prepare our budget.

Ms. Nabel asked Mayor Malloy for a copy of the original agreement between the Stamford Public Schools and Trailblazers and/or Domus as we would all be really informed if we could look at this document.

Mr. Rubino raised the question about consolidating summer school sites. Dr. Nicholson noted that the sites have been reduced from 5 to 4. The only costs savings would be the electricity and custodial costs

Mr. Mathews requested information on the number of people in central staff who have travel allowances. Dr. Starr will provide. Mr. Mathews also inquired if anyone other than the Superintendent had a vehicle. Dr. Starr indicated that the only other person is the Transportation Director.

Ms. Nabel noted that what the Superintendent has put on the table in terms of a revised number and percentage this evening brings us to what is essentially below what we need to keep going.

Ms. Heftman thought it was worth saying that if we get a large cut going forward there is no other place to go but staff. Getting to this 3.7% was a Herculean effort and applauded the Superintendent and his staff for all of their work and knows it was not easy.

Mr. Rubino left the meeting.

Ms. Heftman asked for a motion to table Resolution 02-12-09:81.

Mr. King moved, seconded by Ms. Nabel to table Resolution 02-12-09:81.

The motion was passed with the following Committee members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Mr. King, Mr. Mathews, and Ms. Nabel. Absent: Mr. Rubino.

Resolution 02-12-09:81

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accept the 2009-2010 Operating Budget as outlined in the budget documents in the amount of \$228,606,204 (4.57%) and 1958.4 positions.

Resolution 02-12-09:82

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Mr. Mathews:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accept the 2009-2010 Grant Budget in the amount of \$20,531,082 and 154.6 positions as outlined in the 2009-2010 Superintendent's Budget request allowing the Superintendent to apply for, accept funding, and administer all the itemized grants on the attached list.

The resolution was passed with the following Committee members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Mr. King, Mr. Mathews, and Ms. Nabel. Absent: Mr. Rubino.

Mr. Rubino returned to the meeting.

Ms. Heftman asked for a motion to table Resolution 02-12-09:83.

Mr. King moved, seconded by Mr. Mathews to table Resolution 02-12-09:83.

The motion was passed with the following Committee members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Mr. King, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, and Mr. Rubino.

Resolution 02-12-09:83

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accept the 2010-2011 Operating Budget in the amount of \$240,393,192 (5.16%) and the 2011-2012 Operating Budget in the amount of \$252,647,963 (5.10%)

Ms. Nabel acknowledged the Superintendent and their staff for voluntarily foregoing any bonus they may have been awarded for next year.

LABOR RELATIONS

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak asked Dr. Starr to give the report in Ms. Gagne's absence.

Dr. Starr reported that we are in the process of doing our searching for the two cabinet vacancies which is Chief Operating Officer and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction. There will be two principal retirements (one at the elementary level and one at the high school level) and there will be about 27 teachers retiring. He indicated that the target date for candidates for the administrative positions to be presented to the Board would be the 2nd Board meeting in the month of April.

We were contacted by the Security Workers union. They have a negotiator selected and after they meet they will contact us to negotiate that contract. There was nothing to report under Staffing or Grievance/Arbitration. With respect to the SAU the management arbitrator has been selected and he believes the arbitration starts the end of February and hopes for a written decision by mid-April.

Mr. King asked if the Board members were notified of retirees. Dr. Starr indicated that information would be put in the Board package.

Resolution 02-24-09:77

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the filling of 1 Special Education Assistant at Springdale effective February 25, 2009.

The resolution was passed with the following Committee members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Ms. Nabel, and Mr. Rubino.

Resolution 02-24-09:78

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak moved, seconded by Ms. Nabel:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of

Schools, that the Board of Education approve an extended childcare leave for the 2009-2010 school year for the following teachers: Sarah Martino and Cara Gregorio Reilly.

The resolution was passed with the following Committee members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Ms. Nabel, and Mr. Rubino.

Resolution 02-24-09:79

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak moved, seconded by Ms. Nabel:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education hereby appoints Milton Thomas as the Independent Hearing Officer to preside over formal hearings governing school accommodations and student disciplinary matters conducted in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Sections 10-186 and 10-233, respectively, which hearings shall also be conducted pursuant to the accompanying policies and regulations promulgated by the Stamford Public Schools. As the appointed Independent Hearing Officer for such matters, the duties of said Hearing Officer shall include presiding over formal hearings for student expulsions and school accommodations, including residency and transportation hearings. Said appointment shall be effectively immediately and shall continue through the June 30, 2010.

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak asked that the last line read "Said appointment shall be effective immediately and shall continue through June 30, 2010."

Mr. Mathews noted that we have Policy 5131 in place regarding disciplinary matters and hearings originate with the school district. However, we do not have any policy regarding Hearing Officer responsibilities for Transportation. How will we accommodate those responsibilities in a policy and also allow parents to know that there is a policy whereby they can have a hearing on transportation issues. Dr. Starr noted that we do have counsel and typical due process rights that people have around appeals. There has been one transportation hearing in 8 years. If the Board would like to have a policy regarding transportation hearings the Board can certainly do that. The way the process works the situations are resolved in the Transportation Office. The overwhelming majority of our situations are resolved to people's satisfaction. If it is not a call typically comes to me or Mr. Dunn. Mr. Dunn spent Saturday morning driving around Stamford taking pictures of different things that have come up. Out of 10,000 riders he receives maybe 10 calls a year on major transportation issues. We always inform people verbally of their rights to pursue a hearing if they so desire. He agreed with the implication of Mr. Mathews' statement that we need something more formal written up that states this is the process. This has not been an issue for us since there has been one transportation hearing in 8 years. Mr. Mathews stated that he hopes we are referring to the same hearing that Mr. King, Ms. Lorenti, and myself served as

hearing officers and we decided in favor of the parents. He stated that there definitely should be a policy.

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak asked if we could add Transportation Policy on our Policy agenda. Ms. Nabel responded that she would add this item.

The resolution was passed with the following Committee members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Ms. Nabel, and Mr. Rubino.

POLICY

Ms. Nabel reported that the only item from the last meeting is the calendar resolution. The changes that were discussed for the projected 2009-2010 calendar have been made and are on the version that's in our agenda. Since we are a Committee of the Whole, obviously there is no Committee per say to vote on this, and so we should table this to the end of the month unless anyone has any other questions or suggestions.

Ms. Lorenti asked about January 2010 we have Monday off for Martin Luther King and then we have Staff Development. With hearing what happened this year with mid-terms at the high school will that cause a problem for Staff Development on that day? Dr. Starr stated that we do not believe so at this time. Ms. Heftman went back to the half day on December 23 and the report received back from other school districts were that some do have a half day and some don't, but she would love to see it be a regular school day. Any half day we can get back is good. Ms. Nabel noted that Ms. Heftman could bring this forward as an amendment on the February 24, 2009. Ms. Arnold indicated that Ms. Gagne had looked into contracts and reported that we do have some staff members, not teachers, but other employees for whom that is a half day. Ms. Heftman would like to know the language of those contracts and which contracts they are.

Ms. Nabel asked for a motion to table Resolution 02-24-09:80.

Ms. Lorenti moved, seconded by Ms. Wade to table resolution 02-24-09:80.

Resolution 02-24-09:80

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the proposed 2009-2010 school year calendar.

The motion was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Mr. King, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Ms. Wade reported that she, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo met with Dr. Starr and broke out the discussion topics into two groups – short term issues and long term strategies. The short term issues are legislation, budget, PDK and Cambridge Assessment, middle school realignment, and SEA negotiations. Long term strategies are Stamford Public Schools 2012, Policy Input and Communication, and the Strategic Plan, and District Improvement Plan.

She noted that there is a Legislative Breakfast on February 12th at the Chamber of Commerce followed by a meeting in the 5N Conference Room at 10:00 am. Ms. Nabel asked for a show of hands for those who would be attending the 10:00 am meeting, because if we do have enough members the meeting will need to be posted.

Ms. Wade indicated that one of the things that Dr. Starr and the Committee thought would be a good idea to take the list of the Board of Representatives and the Board of Finance and assign Board members to certain other Board members for the purposes of when the time comes to have a conversation with them specifically around the stimulus package, but more precisely around anything else that might come up where we think a personal conversation or any explanatory conversation might be worthwhile that we would have some names assigned to us. Ms. Nabel noted that the list of calls that will be made would be aided by talking points from the Superintendent's office. Ms. Wade noted that it was important that we be on task, on target, and on point with our conversations.

Mr. Rubino moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 p.m. with the following Board members voting in favor: Mr. King, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

Dr. Joshua P. Starr
Superintendent of Schools
Executive Office