

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION Stamford, Connecticut January 27, 2009

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on January 27, 2009 at the Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Ms. Nabel, President, with the following Board members present: Ms. Heftman, Mr. King, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade. Absent: Mayor Malloy. Also in attendance: Dr. Starr, Dr. Hamilton, Mr. Dunn, Dr. Nicholson, Ms. Swerdlick, Ms. Gagne, Ms. Karwan, Ms. Jennings, Ms. Arnold, Mr. Schneider, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Darling, Ms. Mara, Mr. Gentile, and Mr. Tramontozzi along with approximately 80 guests and representatives from the Stamford Advocate, Stamford Times, and News 12.

Salute to the flag.

MISSION STATEMENT

Ms. Heftman presented the mission statement of the Board of Education.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

Ms. Wade moved, seconded by Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, to accept the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting – January 13, 2009 – pp. 143 - 154.

Ms. Wade made a scrivener's change on page 146. The wording was changed to "drain" from "train."

The minutes were accepted 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.

STUDENT AND STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

One Turn of River Middle School student and eight Stamford High School students were recognized for receiving honors from the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards that was held at the University of Hartford.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Starr announced that Tour Your Schools Day will be held on Friday, January 30, 2009 with a snow date of Friday, February 6, 2009. There will also be a Public Hearing on the 2009-2010 Operating Budget which will be held at Cloonan Middle School on Thursday, February 25, 2009 at 7:00 pm in the auditorium. Child care and interpreters will be provided.

Dr. Starr indicated that there would be three presentations this evening. The first will be a presentation by Ms. Darling of Hart Magnet Elementary School with respect to their Revitalization Plan, the second will be the Literacy Audit results, and the third will be an update on Middle School Reform.

Ms. Darling reviewed the Hart Revitalization Plan which enhances the science and technology theme. The plan includes a new website, student-produced pod casts, and inquiry-based lessons. Ms. Darling noted that applications have increased from last year. She also indicated that that have created an R SPACEE: NASA program which is led by AITE.

Ms. Nabel thanked Ms. Darling and her staff and indicated that all Board members would like to have the opportunity to read through the package that was distributed and would follow up with any questions through Ms. Lorenti and the Curriculum Committee. Dr. Starr thanked Ms. Darling and her staff for putting in a lot of hard work into doing exactly what was asked. This builds on the many strengths that have always existed at Hart and adds pod cast.

Dr. Starr noted that the next presentation would be from Sue Shidaker, Lead Auditor, from Phi Delta Kappa International and her staff who performed a Literacy Audit which was paid for by the GE Grant. As background, Dr. Starr indicated that SPS needed to know how to improve our literacy instruction at the elementary level. There had been an hour long presentation of the audit results for teachers, building leaders, and central office staff earlier. The Executive Summary of the Literacy Audit will be posted on the web site tomorrow. Ms. Shidaker and her team have looked from the Board room to the classroom at what the different factors are in the Stamford Public Schools that need to be addressed in order to ensure that each and every one of our students is receiving an excellent literacy instruction.

Ms. Nabel asked Dr. Starr to explain why the Board supported and recommended doing a Literacy Audit. Dr. Starr noted that the student achievement in literacy at the elementary level has been flat for a few years. There is not one uniform curriculum, management system, or vision for literacy instruction in the Stamford Public Schools. An audit helps identify those things that you might not be aware of or might be aware of, the need to see it through a different lens, and puts it within a context of painting a picture of the entire system and then giving some recommendations for how we can actually move

forward to improve our literacy instruction. The audit process simply lays out those things that must be immediately addressed, those things that are strengths, and those things that we need to do to help improve our instruction. This gives us a clear indicator of where we need to start doing some work over the next few years.

Ms. Shidaker stated that what she opted to do for tonight's meeting is to focus on the key elements that relate directly to the Board's work. She has also agreed to be on call for questions and will be providing samples of things that might be useful to the Board.

Ms. Shidaker reported that the audit is a discrepancy report which means they describe what the gap is between current conditions and what the conditions would be if you met the various audit criteria. Our job is to help you get the information on things you really need to focus on. Basically this report is a diagnostic report and focuses on key problems that were identified and we have provided recommended action steps. There were three things that were critical in this process. We review documents, interview people, and site visits to classrooms. For Stamford they came up with 8 findings and 3 comprehensive packages of recommendation. Ms. Shidaker reported that the Board components are found under Criterion I and basically says that a school system should provide some control for the educational program and some direction for how its curriculum and instruction will be managed. The Board is the legal guide and the district is the legal system. We looked at the Board policies, job descriptions, strategic plans, school improvement plans, and what are the messages there to guide the system. We looked at curriculum documents/guides and this would be any document that the school system provides to a teacher that is an indication of the expected curriculum that all students will have access to. The key finding that relates to the Board is that the Board policies lacked clear direction for expectation for curriculum management, expectation for design, delivery, and assessment of the curriculum. In the mission statement you have clearly said you have expectations for what Stamford Public Schools will be able to do for each student. However, it is the how and the guidance in your expectations and what it would look like that we found missing. Likewise, we did not find a Curriculum Management plan which would be a document that would say here is how curriculum designed, put together, delivered, what roles people play, and those types of components. There is a draft of a plan that is based on some information that has been provided by the Department of Education, but it is not available yet so can't be evaluated. However, we did find in the Strategic Plan, in some of the School Improvement Plans, and the Technology Plan, various statements that say here is what we expect, here is what we want to see, here is where we are going to provide some focus and many of those elements did in fact relate to the literacy program. We also looked at job descriptions and found that there were some descriptions of responsibilities that were confusing because they either conflicted or said they would do certain things, but there was no place in any documentation that provided the information needed for the person to carry it all

out. The areas of need are the Board policies, administrative regulations and procedures, and job descriptions.

In the report you will find in almost every finding that we look first to Board policy to see what the Board expects. There are a lot of policies that were either not there or need to be reviewed and revised. The first recommendation really focuses on the policies and the planning. Work on the curriculum does not have to wait because we know that policy work is done in segments throughout the year, but we have clarified which ones need to be reviewed and revised. We would like to encourage you to get a clear Curriculum Management plan that shows how the designed curriculum, the taught curriculum, and the various ways of assessing student learning come together to improve student achievement.

The critical needs for the steps that have to be taken to make a big difference and change are reducing the silo operation of curriculum (see section Program Fragmentation) and having a district-wide system of curriculum design and delivery. The formulation of data teams at the schools has already taken place. She suggested looking at the end in mind and be sure you are clear about the outcomes you want to see for your students at the end of grade 12, look at the curriculum, and start moving down to where the foundation starts so you can then start at kindergarten and read upward in your written curriculum and see articulation from level to level and you can almost predict what is coming next. In reading the summary of recent initiatives all six are related to the recommended actions.

Ms. Shidaker indicated that there is a lot of work ahead, but typically the Board accepts the report and then the Superintendent, administrators, the leadership teams, the curriculum staff, principals, and teachers are all going to work over a period of time to do what they determine are the priority actions based on what we have done here.

Dr. Starr thanked Ms. Shidaker, Ms. Jennings, and staff for coordinating the work around this. This audit gives us some clarity of the work we have to do over the next 3-5 years. The next step will be to bring together the right mix of teachers, principals, and administrators to figure where to start first and then start the work.

Ms. Nabel asked that Ms. Lorenti coordinate with Dr. Nicholson, Ms. Shidaker, and Dr. Starr regarding when those periodic progress should happen and how the Board will receive them.

Dr. Starr stated that we have been discussing Middle School Reform for at least a year and we wanted to provide the Board with an update as to where we are with the initiative.

Dr. Hamilton gave the presentation on Middle School Reform and reported that we have been looking at data more and more in trying to make decisions and to look at actions that could be taken. She reviewed the CMT results for

Grades 3-8 for math and reading in the spring of 2007-2008 and the percentage of students at or above goal. She also discussed the Middle School Think Tank which met monthly over the course of a year which involved teachers, parents, students, and principals. There were several areas that were focused on in the recommendation to address – curriculum, instruction, and assessment, organizational structure, and the need for professional development. In the plan the curriculum, instruction, and assessment asks that we will challenge, engage, and support every student so each one will be ready for college bound high school course work by 9th grade. That will include Connected Math, standards based Language Arts curriculum that will increase the volume, quantity and range of reading and writing for all the middle school students. We will also have a standards based science curriculum, district-wide common assessments in math and science, and interventions in place to support student achievement. In the plan we look at organizational structure that will provide for flexible grouping that recognizes the strength and needs of all students. We are working on identifying placement strategies that recognize student strengths in specific disciplines. Also there will be an advisory period to continue to support the social/emotional needs of students. One of the most important components is professional development and what we plan to do is focus on curriculum or the content area, instructional strategies, and also recognizing the unique nature of the pre-adolescent. We will start with efficacy in February and curriculum and instruction professional development for early release days and district professional development days.

Dr. Hamilton also noted the Middle School Advisory Council which will review, advise, and communicate to their various constituencies. For the work that will be in progress this group should represent and will be created to represent all of the stakeholders in the schools and the community at large.

The next steps of the plan – in February Dr. Starr is going to have a Community Conversation and again in May. There are plans on how we are going to communicate this transition to our building principals who have been involved in the MS Think Tank and also during the school year and in conversations. They will be communicating with staff and parents about what exactly all of the details of this plan will be. We looked at and explored different areas and actually contacted the State Board of Education about high school credit bearing courses in the middle school. We found out that there are several districts throughout the State of Connecticut that actually offer credit in algebra in middle school for students who complete standards based algebra course which would be the same as you would take in 9th grade. There are several districts that also offer high school credit in world language. According the State Board of Education this would be an individual local Board decision in offering credit bearing courses in middle school. We are also pursuing the A² Project which is the middle school version of the POD grant that is in the high schools. Part of This grant has been applied for and will be used at the schools that are feeder schools to Westhill HS (Cloonan, Rippowam, and Turn of River). The schools will receive additional support for after school programs, given opportunities to team with the high school around what skills are necessary for students to be

successful in AP courses in high school. A2 will also support an after school program in Chinese.

In conclusion the recommendations for the Middle School Reform plan helps to challenge and engage all students, flexible grouping to meet the individual needs of students, and the professional development necessary to support teachers to improve practice and reach every child.

Dr. Starr corrected an error on the slide presentation and indicated that the Community Conversation meeting date is February 25th and not February 24th. He thanked Dr. Hamilton and the many people who worked on the Think Tank. Next year is the time to ramp it up a little bit, look at placement criteria, look at flexible grouping, and find additional outside resources. He thanked GE for supporting our efforts in middle school.

Ms. Nabel asked Ms. Lorenti to work with Dr. Hamilton to obtain updated reports from the Middle School Advisory Committee (MSAC).

BOARD REPORT

Ms. Nabel reported that the Board held its retreat this past weekend on Friday afternoon and most of the day on Saturday. She thanked GE for donating space in its offices on Friday and Korn\Ferry International for donating a room on Saturday.

The subject of our retreat was broadly categorized as Board Development. Friday's discussion covered how the Board views its obligations in developing policy to support its notion of student achievement and advancing student achievement very much like the Literacy Audit brought out how can we develop policies that better support curriculum district-wide and curriculum management. On Saturday, members discussed how the Board can support the Superintendent's Strategic Plan, how that Strategic Plan will become more and more narrowly focused over the next couple of years, and how we must tailor our budget priorities to supporting the initiatives in the Strategic Plan. Board members also discussed metrics for monitoring progress in student achievement, how to measure successful school programs, and we did make some progress in that area primarily by agreeing to come back in April and discuss some more.

Finally we discussed how to make our agenda more workable for the Board, more transparent to the public, and how to organize our meetings so that the discussions that we are having and the work we are doing is also more obvious and the flow is easier for everyone to follow. There will be BOE meetings on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month. We hope to make the meeting on the first Tuesday of every month a working meeting organized along sequential Committee meeting formats so that new actions and new items can be discussed and questioned and then followed up and voted on at the second meeting of every month.

Ms. Lorenti thanked Ms. Nabel for arranging the Board Retreat and acknowledged all Ms. Nabel's hard work. She also thanked GE and KornFerry for the use of the rooms.

TIME FOR THE PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

Eleven guests signed up to speak to the Board. One speaker addressed a bus stop issue and ten addressed the redistricting grandfathering policy.

REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS/RESOLUTIONS

CURRICULUM

Ms. Lorenti asked if anyone had any questions regarding the Literacy Audit. Ms. Nabel stated that this might be a little fast since we only received the summary over the weekend. The presentation was great, but she would like to look through the binder. Since it is two weeks until our next meeting she asked Ms. Lorenti's Committee members and Board members in general to e-mail Ms. Lorenti whatever they would like to have followed up on and share that with Dr. Starr and Dr. Nicholson. Then we can organize a follow up on the Literacy Audit. Ms. Lorenti noted that this would be fine.

Ms. Lorenti asked if anybody had a questions or follow-up with respect to the Middle School Reform presentation. Ms. Nabel wanted to confirm that the Board would receive a run down of who is on the Middle School Advisory Council and what the schedule of meetings will be. She also asked that besides the public meeting on February 25th what kinds of public interaction will be possible after that. Dr. Starr indicated that the meetings have not been scheduled yet for the Middle School Advisory Council, but as we did with the Think Tank the Board will receive the agendas, minutes, and any documentation. A web page will also be set up. Ms. Heftman asked if there would be any policy implications that go around the Middle School Reform. Dr. Starr responded that the most immediate one would be looking at the credit issue for high school credit and there may be some other policy issues as discussed earlier.

Ms. Lorenti thanked Dr. Hamilton for all her work on the Middle School Reform. If any Committee or Board members have any questions, please let her know. She also acknowledged Mrs. Darling and her staff for a wonderful job on the Hart Magnet Revitalization Plan.

FACILITIES

Mr. Mathews called upon Mr. Dunn and Mr. Gentile and Mr. Tramontozzi from the Engineering Department for a brief status update on the Facilities Audit.

Mr. Dunn reported that EMG has been selected to conduct the Facilities Audit for a cost of about \$250,000. This was approved favorably by the Board of Representative's Education Committee and, hopefully, it will be approved by their full Board on Monday, February 2, 2009. A meeting has been scheduled next week with EMG assuming a positive approval from the Board of Representatives.

Mr. Dunn also reported that there was a meeting last week with Mr. Casolo and Mr. Freimuth with Clairol representatives to look at the walking access and alternatives.

Mr. Tramontozzi reported that the Engineering Department has received written confirmation that the State will let the City of Stamford use the walking access located on the north side. The Engineering Dept. will install a fence along the highway side of the entrance way. This would be operational by September. There will be a "zero" dollar lease as long as we put the fence up. The State will always have the right to take the property back. The lease will go to the City of Stamford's attorney.

Mr. Dunn reported that there is a resolution under Fiscal this evening asking that we increase the requested capital amount by \$550,000 primarily because the Boyle Stadium project has increased from \$1.2M to \$1.750M. The \$1.2M was primarily the field replacement. The additional project is to redo the track and put drainage channels around the track. Mr. Tramontozzi stated that originally the job was thought to be two separate projects; however, once we got into the design and started to understand the drainage of the field and surrounding neighborhood it became apparent that the two projects had to be done together. If we came in to do the track later we would damage the field to make drainage improvements and this is why we have made the recommendation to do both projects at once. Mr. Dunn stated that assuming the resolution is passed this evening we will take it and present it to the Planning Board tomorrow and ask that these additional funds be added to our request. They have already made their recommendation and reduced our project request from \$9.1M to \$5.2M which resulted in a \$3.9M reduction. Mr. Dunn will review the projects that were reduced with Mr. Barbarotta and then come back to the Board with an updated report. Ms. Lorenti requested a timeline for the start and end of Boyle Stadium project.

Ms. Nabel clarified that we will vote on the Capital Budget resolution under Fiscal. The reason the resolution is worded the way it is was due to an oversight by the Fiscal Committee of last year's Board who had approved the original Capital Budget request, but that approval was never voted on by the full Board.

FISCAL

Ms. Heftman updated all on the meetings that the Fiscal Committee has had regarding the budget review. The Fiscal Committee, consisting of Mr. Rubino, Mr. King, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, and herself met on January 15, 2009,

January 20, 2009, and January 22, 2009. Two more meetings are scheduled for January 29, 2009 and February 3, 2009 where we will continue to look at the budget and review the budget with staff.

Mr. Dunn reported on the 2008-2009 Operating budget and stated that he has nearly completed closing of the December results. In the November results we forecasted a slight surplus of about \$100,000. He is pleased to tell everyone that in looking at December's results that forecast will hold and may be able to bump that amount up a bit to about \$250,000 surplus which is predicated on our success in freezing positions, the 3% reduction in non-labor spending that Dr. Starr implemented in early December, some favorable medical trends, and leveling off of the out-of-district special education tuition.

Ms. Heftman noted that the first three resolutions were discussed and approved by the Fiscal Committee at their January 20, 2009 meeting. The fourth resolution regarding the Capital Budget since it was a prior Fiscal Committee has not been discussed nor approved by the current Fiscal Committee.

Resolution 01-27-09:69

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Mr. King:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the above purchases of over \$100,000.

The resolution 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, and Mr. Rubino. Abstained: Ms. Wade.

Resolution 01-27-09:70

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Mr. Mathews:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accept Black Diamond Capital Management's donation of used office furniture to Stark School, currently valued at \$58,969.

Mr. Rubino moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti to amend the resolution as follows: remove the word "currently valued at" and replace them "with a pending valuation of \$58,969."

The amendment 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.

Ms. Nabel stated that the amended resolution will read:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accept Black Diamond Capital Management's donation of used office furniture to Stark School, with a pending valuation of \$58,969.

Ms. Wade moved, seconded by Ms. Rubino to approve the amended resolution.

The amended resolution 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.

Resolution 01-27-09:71

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accept the 2008-09 budget transfers per the document dated January 27, 2009.

The resolution 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.

Resolution 01-27-09:72

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Ms. Wade:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve Eleven Million, Eight Hundred and Eleven Thousand Dollars (\$11,811,000.00) for the Capital Budget request for 2009-2010. This amount includes an addition of \$550,000 to the original capital budget submitted to the Planning Board on November 18, 2008 pursuant to a revision to the Boyle Stadium project, as outlined in Option 4 in a memo from City Engineering Department dated January 21, 2009.

The resolution 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.

Ms. Nabel asked if there is a policy, regulation or procedure under which children who are not able to pay for their lunch are accommodated on a regular basis in their schools. Mr. Murphy responded that he will obtain the information and provide it to the Board.

LABOR RELATIONS

Ms. Gagne reported under Negotiations that the Security Guards have not contacted the district yet to begin negotiations. There was nothing to report on under Staffing. Under Grievances she has scheduled a Level III hearing for Monday, February 2, 2009 at 3:30 pm. With respect to the SAU 2 year contract, this was presented to the Board of Representatives Personnel Committee last night and was given a negative response. It will go to the full Board of Representatives for a vote on February 2, 2009. Ms. Gagne indicated that she had provided information in the Board package regarding the Transportation Hearing posting. She added that it is her belief that the candidate of choice identified for outreach has expressed an interest in this role. Ms. Gagne also indicated that Internal Revenue code this role has to be treated and paid as a consultant and the position will not be processed through the Human Capital Development, which processes employees. She stated she had touched base with Ms. Swerdlick who indicated she and Mr. Meyer will be communicating directly with the candidate.

Mr. Mathews asked that if the posting closed on November 14, 2008 why did it take more than 2 months to reject the 6 applications. It was her understanding and her only experience in the district that administrators have been able to access the online application system and set up their own appointments. As she understood this was how it was being handled and this was just a hiccup in the system. Mr. Mathews noted that in the meantime how many hearings have we had and what was the nature of those hearings. Ms. Gagne responded she did not have that information and would be happy to get this information and put it in the Board package. Mr. Mathews also asked that if there have been hearings, who has been performing the hearings on an interim basis. Mr. Mathews also asked who has been the designated interim hearing officer? Ms. Gagne stated that she looked back in the minutes and the Board appointed a representative, Milton Thomas, for 90 days. Mr. Mathews responded that he thought that the 90 days started in September when the Board initiated the conversation and that the 90 days expired and that Attorney Thomas was not interested in applying for the position. He would like to know when the vote was taken. Dr. Starr noted that the district is not out of compliance with hearings; Mr. Meyer has been performing some hearings and Attorney Thomas has been doing other hearings. We have discussed this issue with our counsel to make sure that everything we have been doing meets standards set forth in the law. Counsel has assured us that we have not been in any kind of violation in terms of our procedures and assuring the appropriate due process rights with students.

Mr. Mathews quoted from the policy that no member of the Board of Education or any employee of such Board of Education shall serve as a hearing officer. He noted that Discipline Hearings are separate. He is talking about expulsions, student accommodation, and transportation, which was the language that was suggested by Ms. Nabel. He wants to make sure that there is a Hearing Officer at \$350.00 per hour who is going to hear the appeals. His last

question is how does the public know that there is an appeal process in place, particularly to question safety issues? Dr. Starr noted that he would provide a list of the hearings that have taken place back to October 1, 2008, the nature of the hearings, and who has handled the hearings. Also the date that the Board took action should be included. Dr. Starr noted that with respect to the appeal process for transportation that we have had one transportation appeal in 8 years and the process is in the Policy Manual which is posted on line and people are informed by the Transportation Department. Traditionally, what happens is that if the issue is not resolved by the Transportation Department it would go to Mr. Dunn and Mr. Dunn would inform that person that they do have the right to appeal (verbally), and if can not be resolved by Mr. Dunn it would then go to the Superintendent and he would inform someone that as per Board policy they have the right to appeal for a Transportation Hearing if they so choose.

Ms. Lorenti asked if the educational assistants were hired and placed for the new students coming in. Ms. Gagne responded that the educational assistants were hired and placed.

POLICY

Ms. Nabel reported that there is no policy status to update and moved on to discussion of the 2009-2010 school calendar.

Public Affairs Officer Sarah Arnold reported regarding April vacation and start time for the school year.

Mr. Polo reported that he had some feedback from parents, teachers, and administrators to be careful with this year's calendar, but then if we wanted to get inventive or start trying some things out along with our idea of going 2 years in advance to start working with the calendar of 2010-2011 to do some of these changes. Mr. Rubino asked Ms. Arnold if there had been any discussion of the perspective of two job families where both parents work and the hardship/inconvenience that these two vacations cause because they have to worry about day care. Ms. Arnold responded that was one of the reasons, but folks did not favor eliminating the April vacation and she thinks it is something that they look forward to.

Ms. Nabel, to Mr. Polo's point, she has heard more from people who run pre-school programs, day care programs, summer camps, etc. who are getting a little impatient to know about 2009-2010 calendar. She stated that if we are going to make any big changes to our calendar whether by eliminating April vacation and putting in a long weekend and then making school only a little bit earlier, that bears further research that 's more then Ms. Arnold has the time to do informally and it might be a good place for our Public Engagement people to work with Ms. Arnold and Dr. Starr either through a blog on the website or a survey that goes home with students, but her inclination would be to recommend that we look at the 2009-2010 calendar in its traditional format and get ready to

vote on that and at the same time formalize the questions that we want to ask regarding 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 and think about any changes for a two year block because one year of change is not going to really give us any kind of results that we want to use going forward.

Ms. Nabel inquired about December 23rd which in a normal month would be the staff development Wednesday, and we always talk about trying to provide continuous weeks of instruction, would that be a big problem to make December 23rd a professional development day. Ms. Arnold and Dr. Starr both responded that it would. Ms. Arnold indicated that the other option for the staff development day would be to move it to December 16th. It could also be moved to February 10th or February 24th. Ms. Nabel asked Ms. Arnold to prepare a resolution for the February 24, 2009 for the approval of the 2009-2010 school calendar with the one change of moving the professional development day from December 16, 2009 to February 24, 2010. Ms. Heftman asked about the half day on December 23rd and why is it a half day. Ms. Arnold responded that it has always been that way and other districts do the same. Ms. Nabel noted that there is some thinking that December 24th is a holiday in and of itself. Ms. Nabel did ask for an answer to this question and if it is a contractual obligation, how long it has been a practice, and what other districts do. Ms. Nabel asked Ms. Arnold to do another draft of the 2009-2010 moving the December 16th professional day and give us an answer to the contractual obligation question regarding early release days before a holiday. Unless there is more reservation about voting on the 2009-2010 calendar we should be able to go ahead and prepare that resolution. At the same time when we get to Public Engagement we can think about how and what questions we want to ask going forward.

Ms. Nabel moved on to the review of the September 23, 2008 Grandfathering resolution. Dr. Starr reported that the costs of grandfathering all students. The way the current plan is presented in Option 3 with grandfathering grades 3, 4, and 5 we will be fully redistricted by 2012 which will be the cost of one new bus if we change Stark's bell time and move them to a second tier. This was based on the analysis that Mark Walsh prepared for us. This will require six buses during that transition time. As discussed at a Fiscal Committee meeting, transportation in Stamford is the output of our current policies as it relates to the 10% rule as well as magnet and our transportation policies around radius and such and is based on geography and not the number of students; although if you have fewer students you would have fewer places they go to. So let's assume that there is a spread. Essentially the new buses that are required during the transition phase, if everyone is grandfathered it will add two years to the transition phase and we would not be fully redistricted until 2014. We would estimate that six buses would be required for each of those years for us to transition the students in. The annual cost would be the same as it is for next year and through 2011-2012 and it would extend for two additional years past that. The other option is that if nobody is grandfathered than it would just be one new bus next year because we would essentially be fully redistricted assuming that we change the Stark bell time from Tier 3 to Tier 2. It would cost us the

same as it would cost us currently and it would extend it for an additional two years.

Ms. Heftman asked that if it does not have an impact because there would be buses going to those stops anyway but was not clear on how the sibling policy wouldn't affect – if you are redistricting students, but some students are at the old school and some are at the new school then how does that not affect the siblings would be in the school for the next five years. Dr. Starr responded that the Board approved the two year sibling policy and this would extend it. You would then have to decide on a new sibling policy because we had to draw the line at some point. Dr. Singer estimated about 20 siblings would be moved. Mr. Schneider reported that under the new plan rather than half loading our buses there would be two grades instead of three. However, you would still need a vehicle in that area.

Ms. Heftman noted that the only thing that really accomplishes any financial savings is to not grandfather anyone which is not on the table.

Ms. Nabel moved on to the resolution and noted that this was discussed at the Board Retreat on Saturday.

Resolution 01-27-09:73

Mr. Mathews moved, seconded by Ms. Heftman:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accept the attached Board Regular meeting dates for January through December 2009.

Ms. Nabel asked that the following scrivener changes be made: the word "Regular" be removed and that the word "dates" be changed to "notices."

The resolution 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 Committee members had been selected at the Board Retreat and will include Mr. King, Ms. Lorenti, and Mr. Polo. A meeting has been scheduled with Dr. Starr for next week. The agenda will be set by Dr. Starr and one of the first things we will be looking at is literacy. Dr. Starr noted that the agenda should be set together. Ms. Wade asked for any ideas about how we should go about engaging the public around the discussion of a different kind of school calendar. However, we should meet with Dr. Starr first on the school calendar and talk about the implications of changes to the calendar so we understand what it is that we are trying to accomplish and then how it is that we discuss it with the community.

SPEF/School Readiness Council

Ms. Lorenti reported on SPEF and reminded everyone that they will be receiving an invitation for March 9, 2009 at Morton's for a fundraiser to honor Robert Corcoran who is President of the GE Foundation.

She did not have anything to report under School Readiness other than the CLC Gala which will be on March 28, 2009.

Dr. Starr noted that he was scheduled to discuss the 2009-2010 with SPEF.

CABE/CES

Ms. Heftman attended a CABE meeting in Trumbull for Area 6 which was also attended by superintendents, of Board members, and area legislators. Districts are looking for the State to relieve some of the mandates. Everyone is working their legislators to try and get what they need for their communities or not get cut more than they can stand. Dr. Starr stated that with respect to the Priority School District money, his feeling is that they are not going to touch ECS because it is so complicated, but they might reduce Priority School District money which is between \$2.7M and \$2.9M and would be devastating for us. It is important that legislators hear from constituents and others about the importance of that money. Dr. Starr noted that he has distributed information to parents on Priority School District money and this will be added to the website also.

STAMFORD PARTNERSHIP/ STAMFORD ACHIEVES

Ms. Wade reported on Stamford Partnership and indicated that over 100 people attended the art exhibit. She extended the invitation again to attend on Saturday, January 31, 2009 at 1:00 pm at UConn Gallery a student recognition hour and each student will receive a certificate of accomplishment.

Ms. Lorenti reminded all that Mr. King, Ms. Heftman, and herself will be attending the session in Hartford regarding the lawsuit with the Connecticut Coalition on Friday in Hartford.

Ms. Lorenti moved, seconded by Ms. Heftman to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 p.m. 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.

Dr. Joshua P. Starr
Superintendent of Schools
Executive Office