

MINUTES OF THE WORKING MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION Stamford, Connecticut June 9, 2009

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on June 9, 2009 at the Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard. The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. by Ms. Nabel, President, with the following Board members present: Ms. Heftman, Mr. King, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak (arrived at 8:30 pm), Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade. Absent: Mayor Malloy. Also in attendance: Dr. Starr, Dr. Hamilton, Dr. Nicholson, Ms. Gagne, Ms. Karwan, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Barbarotta, Mr. DiBlasio, representatives from the SEA and ESEA, representative from the Advocate, and approximately 15 guests.

Salute to the flag.

MISSION STATEMENT

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

STUDENT SHOWCASE

The Westhill Chamber Singers, under the direction of Jonathan Curri, performed two musical selections. The Westhill High School Chamber Singers recently won a Gold Cup Trophy at the 20th Annual International Choral Competition in Verona, Italy.

REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS/RESOLUTIONS

Dr. Starr indicated that there will be additional resolutions under Fiscal and Labor Relations this evening that have been hand carried in and have been discussed with the Chairperson of the respective Committee and the Board President.

FISCAL

Dr. Starr reported that we do have an agreement with the City to turn over the \$250,000 surplus from the 2008-2009 Operating Budget and this agreement should stay in place as the City has included these funds as part of their revenue. Mr. Murphy indicated that we are still tracking this amount. Ms. Nabel asked that we do a better job in reminding other Boards that we have given back. The 2009-2010 Operating Budget discussion was moved to Labor Relations.

Ms. Heftman moved on to the RFP Process and thanked Mr. Murphy for all the information. Ms. Nabel inquired about an RFP for Legal Services and suggested that this be added to the agenda in July or August.

Dr. Starr reviewed the process for the Permit Fee/Building Use Fund account. Mr. Barbarotta distributed information on how the money collected is spent which is basically putting the money back into the fields and maintenance items according to Board policy. There was a discussion regarding how this account is being managed and how the funds are being used specifically with respect to capital projects. Mr. Murphy noted that most of the projects are repairs and would not fall under capital. Ms. Heftman indicated that it is important to let the City know exactly what this money is being spent on. It was agreed that Mr. Murphy will include this information on his quarterly reports to the Board of Finance. Mr. Mathews asked for a brief report at the end of the fiscal year on how current organizations are with their payments.

Dr. Starr and Mr. Barbarotta reviewed a draft report for controlling costs for paying custodians for use of the buildings by the principals. Through meetings with principals and Eileen Swerdlick a plan was developed to allocate funds according to the student population and the percentage of population with free/reduced lunch at each school. An allotment of funds will be given to the schools which the principals will control starting in September 2009 for School Building Use activities such as PTO's, bands, athletic department events, etc. Prior to this plan the Facilities Department had no control on how many custodians would be assigned to these events and decisions were being made that were not fiscally sound.

Dr. Starr reported that under Reduced Transportation Costs, with respect to the Bull's Head question, that we would still need the buses for the other tiers so it would not reduce the number of buses. Mr. Rubino asked if anyone has gone back to the bus company to see if we could cut some of the runs from some of the tiers and will they share the savings with us? Dr. Starr will have Mr. Schneider follow up with this request.

Mr. Rubino recused himself from voting on Resolution 06-23-09:111 and left the meeting room.

Resolution 06-23-09:111

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Mr. Mathews:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the 5th year of the five year contract for Building Management Services for the Stamford Public Schools with AFB Construction Management of Trumbull, Inc. for the period of July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010.

Ms. Nabel thanked AFB Construction for their contribution in terms of savings and giving back to the district for the 2009-2010 budget.

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

Mr. Rubino returned to the meeting.

Resolution 06-23-09:112

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Mr. King:

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 June 23, 2009.

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

Resolution 06-23-09:113

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Mr. Mathews:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the attached lease with HP for 150 computer tablets with a quarterly lease payment of \$25,909.46 for 4 years.

There was discussion regarding licensing, cost to purchase tablets outright, and repairs/warranty.

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

Resolution 06-23-09:114

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Mr. King:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Stamford Public Schools will not participate in the "Healthy Food Certification" program at this time.

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

Ms. Heftman asked for a motion to amend the agenda to include an additional resolution hand carried by the Superintendent.

Mr. King moved, seconded by Mr. Rubino to amend the agenda to include an additional resolution hand carried by the Superintendent.

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

Dr. Starr indicated that by using unexpended Priority School District money from not doing the Middle School Readiness Academy, money left over from the Literacy Support Specialist position, and a very small savings will enable us to purchase books for KT Murphy, Davenport Ridge, Stark, and Roxbury.

Resolution 06-23-09:114A

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Mr. Mathews:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve payment to American Reading Company for the amount up to \$148,005.00 for a one time purchase.

Ms. Nabel moved, seconded by Mr. Rubino to amend the resolution to add after the word purchase “of classroom library materials.”

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

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

CURRICULUM

Ms. Lorenti requested that we change Middle School Reform to Middle School Transformation. She thanked Dr. Starr for his wonderful presentation last Tuesday and asked if he had any comments. Dr. Starr noted that the resource guide is now on the website in English and Spanish and that several changes were made to the document.

Under the Literacy Audit Update, Dr. Starr reported that there was a meeting held earlier today with the administrative representatives from each school to look at what we are intending for next year. An enormous amount of work has been done and the decision that is most appropriate for us for next year is to focus on four schools that require the most help at this point. The selected schools are KT Murphy, Davenport Ridge, Roxbury, and Stark based not only on State accountability, but student performance.

AD HOC PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Ms. Wade reported on the status of the Student Representation Committee and indicated that the students decided that there was not enough time at the end of the year to meet again. She has reached out to AITE and Stamford High School to help identify students who may be interested in becoming part of this Committee. Over the course of the summer she will continue to try and find advisors and students to participate.

Dr. Starr mentioned that we have received all the survey results and only have the raw data. Ms. Karwan will manage the raw data and analyze it and he anticipated having a report available in July.

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak arrived at 8:30 p.m.

POLICY

Ms. Nabel reported that the Board spent a productive weekend at its retreat and thanked all Board members for attending to work on curriculum policies. She has notes from Larry Leverett of the Panasonic Foundation who was the facilitator and will forward this information via e-mail to Board members. The work on Friday was the development of the core of an equity definition and what it means to the Board of Education in Stamford and how we want to communicate that within the context of our policies and guiding principles for the district. On Saturday, the Board wrote the draft of a preamble for a Board policy on curriculum development and drafted principles that will guide the further scripting of that policy, and set a date of August 24, 2009 to come back again and work on specifics and metrics for monitoring the curriculum policy that we now have the broad outlines of on paper was accomplished. She will put the rough draft of the equity statement and the preamble on the Policy agenda in July and Dr. Starr will begin to create a draft that would be available for July. Dr. Starr thanked Dr. Nicholson for the work she has done in documenting a Curriculum Management Design.

Ms. Nabel indicated that there are some Board business agenda items that need to be reviewed which are the Board Goals for 2009-2010 and where we fit into the District Improvement Plan and how our own agenda organizing process is working.

Resolution 06-09-09:115

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

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education amend the 2008-2009 school year calendar to reflect that June 23, 2009 (an early release day) be the last day of school for students and staff.

Dr. Starr commented that tomorrow an e-mail would be going out to all Board of Education employees asking them to use June 24, 2009 as a Stamford Public Schools staff day of service. We are asking all staff to participate from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm in a school community beautifying activity to work on elementary school playgrounds and/or Mill River Path. This is strictly voluntary.

Dr. Starr indicated that one of the ways that we were able to save a teaching position is by not having students and staff at school on June 24, 2009 which saved about \$71,000. We will apply that money to a supply account or a repairs/maintenance account for 2008-2009 and then transfer in 2009-2010 that same amount that would have been in supply or repairs/maintenance to the teacher account to fund a salary.

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

Ms. Nabel requested that this resolution be placed on the June 23, 2009 for a second vote.

FACILITIES

Mr. Mathews addressed the Energy Report and indicated that he will ask Ms. Domiziano to give a report at the July 14, 2009 meeting.

Mr. Mathews reported that he and Mr. Barbarotta have discussed a reporting format for current projects. A "draft" of this report was included in the Board package last Friday. This report will allow Committee members and Board members to see ahead of time what is before us relative to ongoing projects. Any questions on projects should go through Mr. Mathews and he will share them with Mr. Barbarotta so that we have a handle on the projects. This report will also include information on energy usage. Mr. Barbarotta will continue to meet with the Engineering Department on a monthly basis to keep this report updated.

Mr. Barbarotta reported that numerous meetings have been held at Rogers to coordinate the move starting July 1, 2009. The move of the modulars from Rippowam has been coordinated and Domus and CLC will not move into the school until Rogers has completely moved out. Mr. Barbarotta referred to the Energy Report and noted that he is developing a web enabled energy management system and will be tying this in with the State program. A monthly report will be given to the Board once the program is set up. With respect to the Space Studies and Facilities Needs Assessment, this is in the final stages and a final report will be available in the next month or two; however, one school report will be available for the July meeting.

Mr. Barbarotta indicated that he is working on one more initiative related to cleaning supplies. The Facilities Department has just completed the bid for materials/supplies for cleaning the buildings which is in the \$300,000 range. This year we set the bid up with a "green" column and asked vendors to give us a price. We are working with three companies, Grainger, Rovic, and Strauss, to set up a completely green cleaning system at the new Environmental Magnet School. By 2011 we are going to be mandated to use all green products in all our schools.

LABOR RELATIONS

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak asked Ms. Gagne to give a report.

Ms. Gagne noted that under Negotiations there was nothing new to report. Dr. Starr stated that we will have to schedule a meeting for the Board to meet regarding SEA negotiations and this should be scheduled for the last week in June.

Ms. Gagne reported under Staffing that the "RIF" (reduction in force) process has been completed and were able to place all of our teachers with the exception of three teachers (music, social worker, and business.) She is hopeful that there are still resignations that may come and she will be able to call some teachers back. Ms. Gagne indicated that there was nothing to report under Grievance/Arbitration at this time.

Resolution 06-23-09:116

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 personal leave(s) for the 2009-2010 school year for the following teacher(s): Tina Carpenteri, Amy Ofiero.

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

Resolution 06-23-09:117

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak moved, seconded by Mr. Rubino:

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 KT Murphy Elementary School effective June 24, 2009.

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

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak asked for a motion to amend the agenda.

Ms. Lorenti moved, seconded by Ms. Heftman to amend the agenda to add Resolutions 06-23-09:119, 06-23-09:120, and 06-23-09:121.

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

Resolution 06-23-09:119

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 appointment of Brendan Fox, to the position of Middle School Assistant Principal effective July 1, 2009.

Dr. Starr distributed a handout which outlined his option for restoring an Assistant Principal position by not filling the Teacher on Assignment for Elementary Mathematics along with funds from staff reductions at Scofield. Dr. Starr noted an error on the resolution and indicated the number of work days should be 206 days and not 221.

With respect to the other Assistant Principal position that the Board has voted to leave vacant his decision is to leave Hart Magnet without an Assistant Principal next year. There is an elementary vacancy at Toquam and MaryAnn Mara will move from Hart to Toquam and he will use one of the positions in the Scofield reductions to fund an elementary Administrative Intern position at Hart.

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

Resolution 06-23-09:120

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 appointment of Doreen O'Leary, to the position of District Project Manager – GE College Bound Program effective July 1, 2009.

Scrivener's error – Program is now called the “GE Foundation Developing Futures Program.”

Work year to be changed to 221 days.

Ms. Lorenti inquired if GE was in agreement with this change and Dr. Starr responded that they were notified and were in agreement.

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

Ms. Heftman requested an update on the number of positions and the accounting for the 2009-2010 Operating Budget. Dr. Starr will include this information in the Board package. A resolution will be required to amend the original 2009-2010 budget resolution for the 2009-2010 to reflect all the changes.

Ms. Nabel raised a concern regarding moving the Assistant Principal from Hart since we did make a commitment to Hart to assist and aide in revitalizing the magnet program and also in the redistricting that will take place next year at Hart to make parents comfortable and give them access to the administration. Dr. Starr noted that there are no good answers and that he had asked that the Board not cut the Assistant Principal positions. It is not unusual for schools who have less than 500 students to have only one certified administrator. The Administrative Intern does help with all administrative tasks other than evaluating teachers.

Resolution 06-23-09:121

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 personal leave(s) for the 2009-2010 school year for the following teacher(s): Robyn Spinner.

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

Mr. Rubino moved, seconded by Mr. Polo to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 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