

REVISED

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Stamford, Connecticut

September 8, 2008

The Special Meeting of the Board of Education was held on September 8, 2008 at the Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard. The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Mr. Freedman, President with the following Board members present: Mr. Freedman, Mr. King, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mayor Malloy, Ms. McManus, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade. Absent: Mr. Mathews. Also in attendance: Dr. Starr, Dr. Hamilton, Ms. Swerdlick, Dr. Singer, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Karwan, Ms. Arnold, Ms. Thessin, representatives from the Advocate and Stamford Times, and approximately 30 guests.

Mr. Freedman opened the meeting with the Salute to the Flag.

Mr. Freedman noted that the items on the agenda is a Review of Redistricting Options and Discussion of New Data and he indicated that he would start with the later of the two agenda items. There was data requested by Board members and Dr. Singer distributed a document with the questions raised by Board members along with the answers. Dr. Starr reviewed this document. With respect to question #1 regarding the demolition of Merrell Avenue, Ms. Wade reported that in working with Charter Oak Communities they are planning on raising Vidal Court in 2011 and having the new development ready in 2013. They will be beginning construction on Progress Drive and they believe they will break ground this calendar year. There will be 95 units on Progress Drive and will be mixed income 60% affordable and 40% market rate. Mr. Freedman asked if that would be a one-to-one replacement for what is being taken down on Merrell Avenue, which he assumed is all low income. Ms. Wade responded that was correct. She also noted that there would be 110 units in Fairfield Court and those will be mixed income as well. She noted that we would be seeing some changes to the demographics on the West Side as a result of Charter Oak Communities development of their Hope 6 projects. Mr. Freedman inquired about the reconstruction of Merrell Avenue scheduled for completion in 2013. Ms. Wade indicated that they first need to complete Fairfield Court and Progress Drive in order for them to be able to move the residents in the one-for-one replacement requirements in order for them to be able to have enough apartments to move their Vidal Court residents to that location and to other locations.

Mr. Freedman indicated that the format of this meeting is that he is going to go around the table and ask people if they have questions or comments or if they would like to express an opinion on a particular option or the aspect of a

particular option so that we can move a little bit closer to what the Board's preferences are and then we will have the Public Hearings on Tuesday and Thursday of this week. It is hope that any data requests will be made or potential changes will come out this evening. It would be his preference that we keep it to a bare minimum on the evening that we vote.

Ms. Wade noted that she had a question about the autistic program that is being recommended to be moved into Toquam. She understands that there are 20 children that will be recommended to be moved. Dr. Starr responded that there are 37 children between the three different sites we currently have which are Westover, Roxbury, and Cloonan since we are including K-8. The 20 figure represents just the elementary students. Ms. Wade asked if that is all of the ASD students in elementary schools. Dr. Starr responded that the ones that are served in that program in Stamford we send to out of district and there are students at AITE, but there are students who may be integrated into different schools within the district, but we have set up a specialized programs at Roxbury, Westover, and Cloonan and this would consolidate this program. Dr. Singer noted that there is Pre-K at Westover which is not going to be moved. Ms. Wade asked what the purpose of this is to consolidate and what benefits we will have. Are they going to be mainstreamed? Dr. Starr responded that currently we service students in the autistic spectrum in multiple ways according to the students individualized education plan or IEP and they are mainstreamed or within the general education population for a certain period of the day. Consolidation does a couple of things.

1. Frees up space.
2. Enable us to provide more efficient services (professional development – easier if teachers are all in one space.)
3. With having the program K-8 we will be able to provide a better transition into the middle school environment because the students will be right there.
4. We do currently spend a lot of money on sending students out of district and he has always had an interest in being able to bring back children or not have to send them out. He said this with a big caution and is not promising any numbers around that, but it would lend itself to that if we are able to consolidate some services.

There are some efficiency issues and some educational issues around having all the services right there. According to their IEP's they would of course be integrated into both the Toquam and Dolan populations in the same way they are currently integrated into the Cloonan and or Roxbury/Westover populations according to the student's need. By having the program in one location it will lend itself to being able to do this a little better. Ms. Wade stated that since she is not an educator so in Toquam would having these children and since they will be mainstreamed where possible where their IEP allows it, does that create any different kinds of teaching models for the classes that are there now. If there were any more ASD children there than there are now does that change the classroom configuration for the regular classes, does it require extra training for the teachers? Dr. Starr responded that in the same way that all children with special needs should be integrated into the mainstream environment to the extent possible. It does require the general education teacher to understand how

to serve students with multiple needs. As he discussed with the Board in previous years we are not as consistent with those practices as he would like. Another reason why consolidating lends itself to being able to increase our assurances that the general education teachers are well prepared to do this by having it in one place. It is an area of need for us whether in one location or three locations and we can always get better. Ms. Wade indicated that she had a couple of ideas for reconfiguring using Option #2, but before she suggested her ideas she thought maybe people could ask their questions that are just broad based and then she could come back and make her suggestions.

Ms. Nabel asked for clarification coming out of the details of each option and into the grandfathering question and thinking about this regarding changes for this year's 8th graders. Do you assume that for students who might be redistricted from a particular middle school whose feeder pattern would be broken by redistricting changes that their elementary school would undergo – does the data assume that those students would go to the new high school or the current high school? Dr. Starr responded it would be the new high school in 2009-2010. Ms. Nabel confirmed that the current 8th graders would go to the new high school. Dr. Starr responded that was correct due to the 2300 students at Westhill and 1700 at Stamford High School.

Ms. Nabel asked another question that applies to Option #1 and #2 – in both of those options the suggestion is made that the Bilingual Program be reassigned to Northeast and that the numbers are approximately 105 students. However, the Bilingual Program is a program that parents basically choose to enroll their children into. If we move the program to Northeast and X number of parents say “well I don't know that I want my child to go up there” what do we do then? Dr. Starr responded that the students would still be reassigned and they can opt to not be in a bilingual program and can opt for ESL services or they can opt for nothing. If we can do and fund the dual language program they could opt for that as well. Parents always have the right to choose not to do a bilingual program, but the students would still be moved. Ms. Nabel asked of those 105 students how many are currently at Murphy? Dr. Singer responded it would be the 105, but not all are districted for Murphy. We are currently checking since we have students in the bilingual program, but are not districted for Murphy. Her sense is that all the students who start in the bilingual program have an address for KT Murphy, but when students move and the address changes they stay in Murphy. This will have to be determined if we would handle this in the same way. The students who start in a bilingual program and stay in the school in which they start.

Ms. Nabel asked that if they are in the KT Murphy district and choose not to be in that bilingual program are they are still redistricted to Northeast. Dr. Starr responded that is correct. Dr. Starr indicated that one of the balancing metrics is English language learner status which doesn't mean availing yourself of bilingual or ESL services, but you have the status as an English language learner.

Ms. Nabel noted that she very much liked the idea of a bilingual program. She likes the idea of instituting a Dual Language program, but she is concerned as to what that exactly means in terms of staffing and asked for an explanation.

Dr. Starr responded that we have not yet constructed comprehensive plans for these programs until the Board makes a decision. Briefly, you have someone who is fluent in English, someone who is fluent in Spanish, and someone who is fluent in both teaching together. It will require some additional staff, but would argue that Northeast, who he thinks has the worst ratio of students to staff in the district, should have some additional staff anyway. The question is selecting the appropriate ones to create the dual language model. Then there are variations. The real question the Board is going to have to confront is how big do you want it to be? Whether or not we go down the road of actually having this program is a decision that the Board would have to make. He did not think the costs would be exorbitant, but there would be a cost associated with it. Ms. Nabel asked about the availability of teachers who are qualified for teaching that type of program. Dr. Starr responded that this is a state-wide and nation-wide issue. The State is looking at some changes to certification, but he thinks there are opportunities to be created. There are an enormous number of people who are native English speakers who are also fluent in Spanish, but they may not be a certified ESL or bilingual teacher for which there is a certain kind of certification.

Ms. Nabel indicated that her preference, if there could be such a thing on this matter, lies somewhere between Options 1 and 2. She is attracted to the idea of the potential educational underpinnings for moving those KT Murphy students and likes that aspect of both of those options. There are changes that she would like to see depending on where the majority of the Board falls if that is with one or with two and there are modifications that she might suggest one way or the other. She is leaning most heavily towards Option #1 and would propose as a first pass of moving that option closer to perfection, the Toquam move which would be acquiring Westover 1 and 2, she would actually prefer what is suggested in Option 2 which is that Toquam only acquires Westover 1 and Westover 2 be redistricted to the KT Murphy district. Those children in Westover 2 (5 advantaged/25 disadvantaged) she is pretty sure can walk to Murphy. She assumed that adding those 25 into the school is going to push the balance a little bit, but it does not seem like that kind of a number would push it unmanageably. It looks like a neighborhood that could walk and she would prefer to see that as part of Option #1. Mr. Freedman ran some numbers and that would bring KT Murphy to 501 students and 54% which is off by 6% and would be about 50 students fewer than are there today. Dr. Starr indicated that 480 is optimal for KT Murphy.

Ms. Nabel continued and said for the most part we are dealing with relatively small groups of students. She thought that proposing alterations as suggested in Mr. Freedman's e-mail, there needs to be counter balances in most cases. There is one thing in Option #1 that she is not sure why it has to be counter balanced and there is one thing that is not clear about the rationale for the move of the Roxbury 2 reassignment to **Davenport**. It would be 24 students and does not seem to appreciably alter either the balance of Roxbury or **Davenport** and in the spirit of full disclosure for what it is worth she happens to live in the middle of that neighborhood, and also in the spirit of full disclosure she knows what it means to try to drive from one school to another, and also in the spirit of full disclosure her children are through school, but the logic of that move is not clear to her other than the very small percentage of students that it takes out of Roxbury and adds to Davenport thereby changing the balance of both of those

schools. It is a difficult trip to make and it seems to her that the bus ride from that area to Davenport is quite circuitous, much less direct than a bus ride from that area to Roxbury. Dr. Singer responded that we tried to get those racial balances as close to possible within the 5% and also for capacity. The 24 children added to Davenport with the capacity in Option 1 85% it will now be 84%. Dr. Starr noted we would still be within 10%. Ms. Nabel stated that it is all small groups and its all about numbers and percentages, but that one seems problematic to her. She reiterated that her choice is between Option #1 and Option #2. Option #1 would be the modification of Westover 2 going to KT Murphy.

Mr. King complimented the staff on doing a thorough job as it relates to the information provided. He added that it seems like we are heavily dependent on the portable classrooms. Some of our portable classrooms are in the double-digits in age and that could be a concern as we move forward. Dr. Starr responded that throughout this whole process we have taken into account when we calculate our space and we have every indication that if we continue to do the proper maintenance on them that we have done that not only will they continue to be appropriate areas for education, but lots of people prefer them because they have air conditioning. We have taken all of the portables into account other than the ones at Rippowam that are currently vacant and they continue to be absolutely fine space for educational purposes. Mr. King said in terms of what happened in one of our neighboring school districts where they had an issue with mold and he wants to make sure that we have a back up plan once we have made all the moves. He noted that this is the only question he has since substantial information has been provided and he feels comfortable with this information. He indicated that he is leaning towards Option #2 right now.

Mr. Rubino asked Dr. Starr if he had any further information regarding the present diversity within the classrooms at Northeast and a projection of how that would be affected once the Dual Language program is established. Dr. Starr responded apologized for not having last year's October 1 numbers, but we actually wait for the October 1 count to have that information. We do know that many of the English language learners are in a separate class as in many of our schools – not all classes in all schools reflect the overall make up of the population of that school. Dr. Starr will look at the 2007 enrollment information and get the classroom diversity numbers for the Friday package.

Mr. Rubino's next question was that in Option #4 Stillmeadow gets the Buckingham Drive, Three Lakes Drive, Corinda Court areas. How much of a difference does that make? This is also in Option #3. Dr. Singer responded that this would be 44 students, 32 advantaged and 8 disadvantaged. Also, Mr. Rubino asked that a disadvantaged district for Scofield Magnet be considered if staff could come up with a proposal which would most likely be out of the Cloonan district. Dr. Starr responded that this would be a Board policy decision and the percentage it would be and then we could determine the appropriate place. Clearly Cloonan would lend itself to that. We could create some spreadsheets to see how it would work with 10%, 20%, 30%.

Ms. Lorenti asked Dr. Starr that if theoretically if we wanted to go forward with the Dual Language program and moved everything to Northeast, do you think it is possible to have it up and ready for September 2009. Dr. Starr responded that the first consideration is the budgetary consideration and how big we would want it to be. Typically we would start small with one kindergarten class and the next year go to another kindergarten plus a first grade and roll it up that way. This is budget related. There is a willingness on the part of the school administration to do this and there is a willingness and eagerness on his part also. Ms. Lorenti indicated that she was concerned about the bus time for students. Dr. Starr noted that students will have to be moved either way. The educational program and having that kind of concentration of English language learners lends itself to a dual language program, but clearly from the direction that the Board has given you have to balance out the schools anyway and students will have to be moved anyway. Ms. Lorenti indicated that a lot of her questions had been answered and noted that she is swaying towards Option #1 and Option #2. She would like to ask the Board if we could propose to put Roxbury back in Roxbury and not take the districts out between those two options. She is supporting what Ms. Nabel had said.

Ms. McManus started with her comments about the Dual Language program. We use to have a large Bilingual Program at Northeast and then we moved it back downtown. While she does not like moving the Bilingual Program in whole that far away, what she does like about Dual Language is that it solves that problem that we have when we have bilingual in that the school is not integrated. We have disadvantaged classes and advantaged classes. The great thing about the Dual Language program is that the classes would be integrated just like our schools and classes are supposed to be. Since we would be moving K-1-2 up to Northeast she would hope that we could start with those classes. The bilingual teachers would go with them, but it is the additional teachers with those requirements that would be needed. She e-mailed everyone today with a proposal regarding Hart so she is leaning towards Option #1. Option #1 and Option #2 are close. She likes Ms. Nabel proposal to move Westover 2 to KT Murphy. They are the ones we had hoped to move into the new EMS so they would not have to be bussed again. She does not like putting more students into KT Murphy, but she does like allowing those students to walk when they are so close to the school. Since we started this last spring she has always wanted to open up Hart with more magnet seats. She does not think there is anyway we can manage putting as many magnet seats at Hart as many of the parents at Hart would like, but her proposal is to move some walkers from Hart to be walkers at Westover. They are primarily disadvantaged students. In follow up to Mr. Freedman's e-mail on Friday and the questions he asked, she thought that maybe some of the students in Roxbury 3 could walk to Hart. This would be 10 students. And then open up an additional 30 magnet seats at Hart depending upon we would actually shift. If we needed to increase the enrollment to 490 she thought we would still be well under capacity. Currently there are about 180 magnet seats and we are proposing to lower that to about 100. This would keep it at 100 – 135 and gives them a little bit more. With what we are putting behind that magnet program she thought that school deserves some additional magnet seats. She asked everyone to look at this proposal and consider it for the September 23, 2008 meeting. Actually that proposal could go for either Option #1 or Option #2.

Ms. McManus indicated that her biggest concern about this entire plan is Cloonan. We have done the right thing and let a lot of students downtown with these programs now walk to schools, but by putting all those walkers in Westover we have now overloaded Cloonan because of the feeder pattern. Mr. Rubino took her proposal and suggested that we take an attendance zone and have those students go to Scofield. That was her original thought and when she looks at the map she just hates to bus them that far especially since we have a lot of room now at Rippowam and even the other two middle schools. With the reductions that we have made now Rippowam has 700 students in these proposals where Cloonan has 769 students. Currently Rippowam has 850 students. Ms. McManus noted that she certainly does not want Rippowam to be as big as it is now, but we can't have 769 students at Cloonan with 53% disadvantaged. That is where we were with Cloonan 10 years ago and it did not work. Dolan and Turn of River are under 500. She would like to move 100 students out of Cloonan and we have to work on what neighborhoods. She looked at the map to find predominately disadvantaged bus riders who get on a bus anyway. The old KT Murphy 2 which we switched to Roxbury which means they would feed into Cloonan. These might be disadvantaged bus riders, but she does not know. The concentration is right here and they are walkers and she understands that and she hates to put walkers on the bus, but we are doing a huge disservice if we put 769 students at Cloonan with 53% disadvantaged.

Mr. Freedman stated that he assumes that Ms. McManus is talking about breaking the feeder pattern, meaning they would be districted out of Cloonan regardless of where those children would be going to elementary school in Option #1 Option #2, which is Roxbury and Stillmeadow. Ms. McManus noted that she tried to find an elementary school that they could be moved to that would take them out. Davenport is about the only one she could think of so if we think that KT Murphy 2 which in Option #1 & #2 is now Roxbury, could be Davenport and not throw off the numbers that would work because then they would go to a different middle school. Mr. Freedman stated that would throw off the numbers. She will continue to keep looking at the numbers and come up with suggestions. Mr. Rubino asked if Ms. McManus wanted to maintain the feeder pattern. Ms. McManus indicated that it is much more important to her that they go to the right elementary school and not go to an overcrowded middle school. We have a huge part of our population that is not part of the feeder pattern because they go to magnets and she is not as tied to feeder as many of the other Board members are. Mr. Rubino responded that he thought it makes it too complicated. Ms. Wade asked about taking Connecticut Avenue which is the new Westover and breaking that pattern and have them go to Scofield because they are on that side of time could they go up Long Ridge Road on a bus instead of cutting across High Ridge Road. Ms. McManus indicated that it would still be passing other middle schools along the way. She understands that is probably what everyone is going to want to do, but she still does not like it. Mr. Freedman noted that he would need to get further information from Steve Schneider in the Transportation Office. Cloonan only has one downtown bus now and that stops at Pequot and Catoona which are Stillmeadow streets, but there is no bus to the Roxbury 2 district ,which is further south, so he is not sure why the students who appear to be closer are bussed and the students to the south and further are not. Dr. Starr indicated that if there is an interest in decreasing the number of students at

Cloonan with consideration for bus rides and possibly creating a district for Scofield and also looking at Rippowam we will take a look at it. Ms. McManus indicated that the other reason about Scofield is that Dr. Singer stated that the balance in the 6th grade is much better so it would naturally get better. Dr. Singer indicated that we have 208 children now in the 6th grade at Scofield, 112 are disadvantaged which is 54% so we actually over compensated.

Ms. McManus asked that most likely in 3 years the school could be balance. Mr. Rubino noted that you can't predict what is going to happen next year since it is a magnet. Ms. McManus stated that you could magnet in the balance like we do at the other elementary magnet schools. Dr. Singer noted that at Scofield we had enough disadvantaged children to select from. In the total number of applicants it was much more heavily advantaged so when you use race it would select more of the educationally disadvantaged but when we have two categories of advantaged/disadvantaged we were able to manage the selection. The pool is not balanced, but you have enough in both categories. Ms. McManus noted that obviously if we can't choose a neighborhood to move them into another middle school then we would have to do an attendance zone for Scofield, but she really thinks we could shorten the bus ride and just move them to one of the schools in the middle of town. Mr. Rubino stated that there are busses going to Scofield now from the other side of town. Ms. McManus responded that they choose to be on a 45 minute bus ride. Dr. Singer asked by what number should we try and reduce? Ms. McManus noted that at 769 they are almost at their capacity. We don't have any other school that is close to capacity and they are at 53% disadvantaged where as all the other schools are 45%. To her there should not be more than 660 and suggested trying to move 100 students out and they probably won't be all disadvantaged but would like to move 65-75 disadvantaged. Mr. Freedman noted that he would start by looking at every possible geography in the south that is bussed and see how many children that is. Ms. McManus noted that there is 8-10% more disadvantaged students at Cloonan than any of the other middle schools. Mr. Freedman said he would start by going to the old KT Murphy 2 and parts of Roxbury 2 and Stillmeadow, whoever is bussed, and draw a line and see how many students and what the distribution of advantaged/disadvantaged and see how far that gets us.

Ms. McManus noted that in Option 1 we are moving a district west of High Ridge Road that currently goes to Northeast to Davenport and she thought that in Option #1 or Option #2 it should go all the way up and not split that area east of High Ridge Road. She wanted to put on the table what anybody thought of breaking the feeder pattern with that group because of how far north they are and have that neighborhood continue to go to middle school at Turn of River and then continue to go on to Westhill. She does not have the feeder pattern issue that many other Board members have, but then when they are in middle school they would be going down to Turn of River as they are now. While the bus ride is direct to Stamford HS (straight down Newfield and onto Strawberry Hill) she still feels it is shorter to Westhill. While she thinks we need to move that neighborhood to Davenport she would recommend that we break the feeder pattern and get feedback from some of those families and send that group to Turn of River and then on to Westhill.

Ms. Nabel asked Ms. McManus if it is for the whole Option #1 or Option #2. Ms. McManus responded that whether we do Option #1 or Option #2 we should do the entire section east of High Ridge Road going all the way up to the New York State border to Davenport.

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak went back to the Dual Language program. She asked that all of the children from KT Murphy who are ELL students would then go to Northeast and they would be served in the Dual Language program. Dr. Starr responded “no.” Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak asked if there would be a Bilingual program and a Dual Language program. Dr. Starr responded we would continue to offer the services we currently offer in terms of ESL and Bilingual at KT Murphy and then we would start with a Dual Language program that would not serve all the children in the beginning. Ultimately, who knows what it could grow into, but we would not start with everybody. Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak asked that if she was an English language learner in the KT Murphy district and does not want bilingual education for her child and just want some ESL services provided she would still go all the way to Northeast. Dr. Starr indicated that is correct. Dr. Starr stated that we are moving the students and the services which are two separate issues. Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak asked if that doesn’t mean that she is necessarily participating in the Dual Language program. Dr. Starr responded that is correct. Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak asked who would be the children participating in the Dual Language program? Dr. Starr indicated that a decision would have to be made on how to do that. This would be a potential additional choice.

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak stated that after getting Dr. Singer’s numbers about Scofield 6th grade she kind of has changed her comments here, but did think having a district for Scofield might make a lot of sense since it is only 34% disadvantaged in total this year and since we often have difficulty getting disadvantaged applications and it makes a lot of sense to give them a disadvantaged district out of Cloonan since it is more crowded than the other middle schools and more disadvantaged. She is not that comfortable with breaking the feeder pattern because it seems to make things very messy, not necessarily for the continuity of the students but just for the ease of understanding of who goes where for which school it seems like it becomes very complex. That being said she thinks that the proposal to take the children who would attend Davenport east of High Ridge Road and have them go to Turn of River and then Westhill HS makes a lot of sense because it resolves a couple of problems. It adds some children to Turn of River and Westhill and balancing that a little bit better because right now we are putting more children into Stamford HS and reducing the population significantly at Westhill HS which seems to function better with the number of students in the building. So you have changed my mind on this one. She is also not interested in Option #3 and Option #4 and in Option #1 she would agree that she would want Westover 2 to go to KT Murphy since they are right next to the current KT Murphy district and if they could walk she thought that is very logical. In Option #2 the children who live right around Stamford HS have been redistricted to KT Murphy which means they would go to Westhill HS so she would want to give them the option to walk to Stamford HS instead of bussing to Westhill. She also wanted to know if we could adjust Stamford HS numbers by controlling enrollment at AITE. Do we give preference to children from one high school over another ever? Dr. Starr responded “no.”

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak asked if this is something we could tinker with if we wanted to play with the numbers between Stamford HS and Westhill HS a little bit. It is not significant because it is not many students. Dr. Starr indicated that we can tinker with anything, but tinkering with AITE might lend itself to some difficulties.

Ms. McManus noted that the reason she does not like Option #4 is because we limit the attendance zone to Toquam and as we know we have a very difficult time attracting disadvantaged students into the magnets. She thought that without putting the attendance zones at Toquam we will have a very difficult time using the magnets as policy says which is to balance our other schools.

Ms. Wade asked for the students who are grandfathered in when they go off to middle school will that pattern be broken or are they grandfathered in all through middle school. Dr. Starr indicated that we have some options and he thought there is some elegance in not having the new middle schools go into effect until the 2009-2010 second graders would be going into sixth grade which would be in 2013 or 2014. Everything would hold with students going to a new middle school. They would go to the current school except for the kindergarteners, first, and second graders. Ms. Wade asked then we would have grandfathered children in grades 3-4-5 go onto their traditional middle school. Dr. Starr noted that the high school issue is a little different because of the need to balance out more quickly and to try and bring down some of the numbers at Westhill HS and increase at Stamford HS. Ms. Wade asked if that would add additional busses and costs if we have children going to their grandfathered middle school. Does that increase the cost or is that sort of quid pro quo that the busses will go to whatever middle school they go to and when the K-1-2 come up they will go to the new one and there is no additional cost. Dr. Starr remarked that he is hesitant to say anything definitive about the transportation numbers until it is all shaped up because they are very difficult to get a hold on.

Mayor Malloy stated that in not making the switch in the middle schools, is it just the children who are currently enrolled or how would you handle new registrants. If you move into a district where do you go for middle school? Do you go according to when the change over would be made or you go according to the day you register? Dr. Starr responded that we have not gotten that far. Mayor Malloy noted that this is an important question. Dr. Starr asked what grades are we talking about. Mayor Malloy said if they move into the district in the 3-4-5 grade would they be grandfathered? Dr. Starr said that 3-4-5 would be grandfathered and would go to the current middle school. Theoretically we would keep them and did not think we have that many new registrants but it would seem to make sense to keep them with the students that they started with. Mayor Malloy noted that otherwise this would be additional transportation costs. He further stated that in considering that line of questioning is your I-95 corridor (a mile within I-95) is your highest turnover neighborhoods on a year to year basis from school to school. The obvious implications are that most of those changes are within the I-95 corridor so it is people moving from one district to another and in some sense, although he agreed with a lot of the things that Ms. McManus said and in some sense is against that because the disproportionate number of those children are moving from school to school or neighborhood to neighborhood within that district. With KT Murphy and Rogers having the highest

turnovers, but all of the people living in the I-95 corridor are one mile in either direction. Are you most likely to change on any given year from district to district? No matter what you do you will have disruption within that corridor on a year to year basis anyway. He thought that Ms. Wade raising this issue is important.

Mr. Freedman responded that you have to keep it perspective a little bit in terms of the high school and middle school grandfathering which is that some of the changes don't change the feeder. If you redistrict from Northeast to KT Murphy, or from Stillmeadow to Roxbury or Roxbury to Stillmeadow that does not change any feeder so any grandfathering in middle school or high school is moot. There is other redistrictings such as Newfield and Newfield back to Stark. That redistricting changes just the middle school, not the high school. And then there are redistrictings that change the whole feeder pattern and it is not that many students. In option 1, KT Murphy to Roxbury just changes the middle school (about 90 students), Northeast South to Davenport (about 100 students), Northeast North to Davenport (about 50 students). Those change both feeders and Davenport to Westover changes the feeder. He did not think there would be any implications in terms of enrollment or balance in the middle schools or high schools. Middle schools except Cloonan are getting badly under enrolled and the high schools both have capacity so whether they pick up or lose 50 students he did not think it would make a difference. It is strictly a matter of cost of running additional buses. In North Stamford you have busses running up there that serve Rippowam and Stamford HS, you have busses running to North Stamford that serve Turn of River and Westhill HS. So if you have children who are grandfathered in will it trigger another bus? Probably not. Downtown it is harder to say, but the busses downtown tend to be some of the shortest routes in the district. It is strictly a matter of cost. His preference is that we grandfathered generously. So if you are in 3rd grade you stay all the way through to grade 12. He realizes that is a long, long time, but the number of students is insignificant, bordering on meaningless, and it is just a matter of cost and there very well might not be any cost but it is hard to figure out.

Ms. Wade asked to piggyback on the concern that everyone is espousing about the Dual Language program. Her concern is that we move these 105 children from a school that they are walking to and moving to a school very far north and then, because it is a new program the program has to be marketed to the English speaking so that if we have a class of 20 and 20 it needs to be marketed to the advantaged or English speaking families has an option and then in a tight budget situation we end up having moved out these families, broken the link, and now they are miles and miles away and the Dual Language program, because it is a new program, because there is an added expense, might go under the knife of the budget cut. She is proposing that in the spirit of trying to, as Ms. McManus and Mr. Freedman said at the last meeting, if you are going to make a recommendation try and balance it. To the best of her ability she would propose moving the Bilingual program from KT Murphy to Davenport. That is roughly 105 disadvantaged and then Northeast 3 would stay at Northeast rather than move to Davenport because that is 96 disadvantaged and she is wondering if that in fact that would help to solve one problem. It is slightly closer and understands that this still moves the young people out of a school that they could walk to, but it is a school that is closer. Her second suggestion – she also thinks

that Option #2 is the option that she prefers. One reason she prefers it over Option #1 is that the Davenport district does not go all the way up to the New York border. So it brings it down a little bit and that seems to make more sense although she would like to understand that if we are trying to keep neighborhoods together why we have east of High Ridge Road some of those houses not staying together and why they are broken up and some go to Northeast and some to Davenport. One of Dr. Starr's goals was to try and keep neighborhoods together. Her second amendment to Option #2 would be for Meadowpark which is 53 to 7 disadvantaged to advantaged, stay in Newfield. Northeast 2 which are 36 disadvantaged 20 advantaged moved to Hart instead of KT Murphy. That would leave KT Murphy under enrolled. This is a building that classrooms are small and it is an older building. Perhaps there could be a resource center located there. Then, move Oaklawn Avenue south to Stark from Newfield and keep KT Murphy 4 at KT Murphy.

Ms. McManus asked Ms. Wade to repeat her suggestions so they could all write it down. Working from Option 2:

1. Move Bilingual Program from KT Murphy to Davenport and Northeast 3 stays at Northeast instead of moving to Davenport.
2. Meadowpark stays in Newfield.
3. Northeast 2 moves to Hart instead of KT Murphy.
4. Oaklawn Avenue south moves to Stark from Newfield and keep KT Murphy 4 at KT Murphy.

Mr. Freedman asked with respect to #4 of Ms. Wade's suggestion that this area has not been proposed to be redistricted in any option, meaning the parents are not on notice. Ms. Wade responded that was correct. Mr. Freedman asked how many students would be affected in #4 and Ms. Wade indicated she did not. Mr. Freedman said it was about 40.

Ms. Wade noted that the reason for redistricting is to create balance between educationally advantaged and educationally disadvantaged, but the way that we are looking at these numbers now she understands is that we are lumping all disadvantaged regardless of their ethnic or cultural background in one group. If our goal is to create the diversity of Stamford should we also be able to break out what each of these schools would look like based on black, Hispanic, and other populations. Her concern is that what we will see is that schools that are balanced for educationally advantaged and educationally disadvantaged end up being largely white and Hispanic or largely white and black, and not the diversity that we are really looking to achieve. She would like to know what this would look like. Dr. Starr asked if that would be for every option. Ms. Wade indicated no and that she is supporting Option #2 and this is the option she was using as the standard. Mr. Freedman noted that the metric was changed last summer prior to Ms. Wade joining the Board in response to a Supreme Court decision. The guidance on the decision from the Department of Justice, by coincidence, happens to have been in our Friday's Board package. So the change in the metric was done quite deliberately with the thought that we would no longer be using race as a metric. What he recalls reading in the Friday Board package is that the Department of Justice would look kindly on something only if it truly used socio-economics. One of the main reasons that we changed the

metric was to avoid being swept up in the Supreme Court decision and having adverse litigation against ourselves. There was also an underlying philosophical component to it that socio-economic based balance is something that the Board had looked at several times, prior to him being on the Board, and that the Supreme Court decision was a good occasion to switch the metric. He has no interest in seeing race based numbers. We have changed the metric, we have changed the way we balance the schools in response to both legal and philosophical concerns and those numbers would not inform his decisions at all.

Mr. Rubino remarked that we are really not supposed to be looking at race. It is a suspect classification. Ms. Wade remarked is that what it actually says is that neither Seattle nor Louisville had elected to use race in the school admissions program and what it says in fact is that one can use race as one factor among many. In asking for this she is not asking in opposition to the Supreme Court but actually because the Supreme Court says specifically that it can be used but used as one factor among many. Mr. King responded that he thought that it's not to say you have to make a decision based on that but for clarity standpoint that Ms. Wade is correct. There is nothing wrong in looking at race for the information that we have because he is quite sure you are going to find some advantaged students in all the races and some disadvantaged children in all the races. What we don't know is how many are where and from an information standpoint, but the basic decision will still be driven by educationally advantaged and educationally disadvantaged based on the definition that we are all clear on. Is it possible to have this information? Dr. Starr noted that certainly if it would be the standard that we traditionally used which is Asian, White, Black, and Hispanic.

Ms. Nabel's question to Mr. King is of what use is that information other than to paint a descriptive picture. Mr. King responded that it is to paint a descriptive picture, but if that is what we want to use it for but he thought it was a valid question and if we have the information available he thought we should present it to those who want to see it. Ms. Nabel did not know if the information has been collected systematically as it was when race was the metric. Also, if at this point in discussion we want to inject this kind of data collection this should have been brought up a long time ago. Mr. King indicated that the same profile or format that you use to collect data from two years ago or a year ago is probably still available in the system. The program is there. It is not like it is going to be a lot of extra work or correct him if he is wrong. Dr. Singer noted that the data is there and we collect it since it is required by the State. Mr. Rubino noted that this gives credence to the argument that we are making this decision on race and he did not want this and did not see what use the information would be since we are making this decision on socio-economic basis. Mr. King responded that no one is taking that away and socio-economics are what the Board is making a decision based on, but that he would nevertheless like to see the information. Mayor Malloy stated that you have two members asking for a piece of information and unless we are going to set up some procedure whereby we overrule information requested by members what is the debate. Either give it to them or otherwise set up a procedure whereby you decide to overrule information requests by members, in which case they will simply file an FOI. Mr. Rubino said that he guessed the Mayor was right except he was using caution as it lends credence to the argument that race is what you are making your decision

on. Dr. Starr agreed with the Mayor in that the Board may want to establish procedures by which information is requested and certainly Mr. Rubino and Mayor Malloy both being lawyers would know better than he. He asked if you would want a legal opinion as to the types of information that are requested that may appear to influence certain decision making and if it is gathered after the fact or before the fact. The only thing he could think of that might prevent you from asking for certain kinds of information, achievement, whatever it may be, that would be the only consideration that you might have to think about. If it might make it more suspect to legal challenges if certain types of information that are not in the policy are taken into the account he was not sure. Mr. Rubino indicated that the Mayor is correct, if someone asks for it give it to them. Mayor Malloy stated that someone could go and look up the information right now and you could argue whether or not they took it into consideration. You are not amending any plans at the moment and people simply want to know what it is.

Mayor Malloy thought that everyone has raised valid points and he will wait on his general comments until we have answers to those questions otherwise raised this evening and see what the implications are. He did say as a footnote he has never cared about feeder patterns and does not support feeder patterns, but that is the rule that has been established. If you are going to have a feeder pattern rule then you should go with it or you should decide you are not going to have one and in which case you would come up with a different plan to begin with. You will have to wrestle with that one. Given the turnover in our student ranks on a year to year basis from a high of 20%, and most of that change occurring in the I-95 corridor, in all of your schools disproportionately that change in any one of your schools is from the I-95 corridor. Finally, with the exception of the cost of bussing these decisions need to be expenditure neutral. That is assuming that something should be supported because there is going to be money to add a program he thinks is foolish given the economic state of the State of Connecticut. For the City's budgeting purposes we are assuming flat if not reduced revenue from the State. He thought budgets are going to be under tremendous pressure because of what we anticipate coming out of the State as a result of what is anticipated on the State revenue side to be very substantial with a combination of revenue shortfall and rapidly rising expenditures called for in the State budget. He would not make any decisions assuming that a program is going to attract people. The final think, and he was unsure from his review of the presentation, with respect to the numbers and the treatment of students at Rippowam are you or are you not assuming a growth in the International Baccalaureate program at that school or is that assumed not to be a factor.

Dr. Starr responded that it was not a factor, but are looking to expand it to a choice program. Mayor Malloy asked if we would be continuing this as a program and Dr. Starr responded absolutely. Mayor Malloy stated that in some sense it could be used as a size management tool in the school which is otherwise larger than the others. Ms. McManus indicated that it would not be anymore with any of these. Mayor Malloy noted that he was trying to follow what Ms. McManus was saying about the Cloonan issue which he generally agreed with you on and under your various scenarios where would the bulk of those students go? Ms. McManus responded that she would have thought to Rippowam because the physical building. Mayor Malloy asked what number that would push the Rippowam population to? Ms. McManus responded that it would

be under 800. Mayor Malloy – as opposed to all of the others that would be at 600. Ms. McManus noted Cloonan would be at 660. Ms. McManus stated that if we move 75 which is what her e-mailed proposed then Cloonan would be at 690-695 and Rippowam at 779. Mayor Malloy stated that there are at least 100 students if not more difference between the size of Cloonan and Rippowam and much more substantially sized difference in the other two middle schools. Ms. McManus indicated that it pulls it out of the regular cog. Ms. McManus noted that with middle schools if we keep to the cogs and to the groupings then 600 is our magic number. She did not know what we are going to do with two schools with 700+.

Mayor Malloy left the meeting at 8:40 pm.

Ms. Nabel thought that the last time we talked about Choice as it can be taken as a result of AYP – do we have any numbers of families who have opted? Dr. Starr asked opted and enrolled or who have tried? 324 were interested and there were students who applied for School Choice and for magnet which was split about 50/50. Those students went to Toquam and Westover. Mr. Freedman indicated that we will not be able to use Toquam next year so there will only be school choice at Westover. Ms. McManus asked if this was in all grades and Dr. Singer responded it was. There were no seats at Westover in kindergarten or first grade. Mr. Freedman asked if there was a limit you could set on school choice. Dr. Starr responded we set a class size, but parents were willing to move their children in 3rd and 4th grade. Ms. Nabel went back to the most recent data request and clarify so that our timeline remains fairly clear going forward. Was the request for descriptive data in terms of race for all of the options? Ms. Wade said just Option #2. Ms. Nabel asked how long that would take to produce. Dr. Starr thought that at the end of this meeting the Board would have to prioritize what it wants us to do and we have a list of questions that have come from the community that is piling up. Ms. Nabel said that presumably that data will be available at some point in the next couple of weeks ago before we anticipate being able to vote. Dr. Starr responded yes.

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak indicated that to streamline our decision-making process and our timeline she was wondering if it was possible to take options off the table today so we don't have to answer any questions about them. Mr. Freedman indicated that he is not comfortable doing that since we have public hearings scheduled and there are differences so we have to let the public have their say. Ms. McManus asked Ms. Wade that when she recommended moving the Bilingual Program to Davenport instead of Northeast were you recommending that that school could entertain a Dual Language program or are you just talking about keeping the Bilingual Program as a separate entity. Ms. Wade responded that she was entertaining the Dual Language opportunity. She has some numbers as to how many children would be there and there are enough children in K-1-2 to create a classroom of 20. Her real concern is expenditure neutral. She works with a community where a majority of people don't have 2 cars and many don't have one car and the question of how they are going to get themselves from point a to point b, you think we have trouble now getting families to PTO meetings wait until you move them all the way up there. She understands the need, but is concerned about trying to bring them closer to the center of town and she is not sure that moving them to Davenport solves her

concern. When we were talking about closing Rogers that this is best of neither scenario that was preferable, but choose the one scenario and this seems to be a more palatable solution. Ms. McManus noted that Northeast 3 would still have to go back up to Northeast which is the same distance or even further.

Ms. Nabel asked that Ms. Wade not take to take this as disrespectful or in anyway to be a challenging comment, but just as a point of information in the past when the Bilingual Program was at Northeast and there were more bilingual classes at Northeast, the Northeast PTO actually had a bilingual component and held many of its meetings down here. It is not insurmountable and it is an absolutely valid point that it is a further distance. Ms. Wade responded that the point was well taken.

Mr. Freedman commented that Options #1 & #2 are relatively close, but he supports Option #1 and one of the reasons is because that in Option #1 the Merrell Avenue housing that is going to be torn down goes to Westover. In Option #2 it goes to Davenport and those children will exit Davenport. It is about 50 children, all disadvantaged because they live in income- restricted housing. If those children leave a neighborhood, we can't rebalance a neighborhood school in terms of either socio-economics or its population until we redistrict again. However, if we district them to a magnet school that gives us a lot more flexibility when they move and in fact the coincidence of this situation is that the replacement housing is being recreated down the street so we can just make an exception for the students in this area that if they were districted to Westover as they would be in Option #1, and then their housing was moved to the Stillmeadow district, they could still go to Westover because they are still going to be to able to walk to Westover whether they are on Merrell Avenue, Fairfield Court or Progress Drive. Also, going from Stillmeadow to Westover does not change any feeders – still Cloonan and Westhill. Option #1 gives us the flexibility to account for these students moving which Option #2 does not. With respect to the Dual Language program, he is a long time Northeast parent. There was Spanish language many years ago at Northeast. It was a much-loved program. When he campaigned for office one of the points on his palm card was to bring back Spanish language education in the elementary schools, and he is confident that the Superintendent could figure out a way to do it that would not cost very much. It would lead to much better integration in the classroom although he would point out that Northeast is not grouped by ability and so it is probably just as integrated as many of the schools that group by ability are for the better part of the day. He thinks a Dual Language program would be an amazing educational opportunity for certainly the children who are able to take advantage of it which are the children who are districted to Northeast or who are in the bilingual program at Northeast. For the sake of full disclosure – his son is in 4th grade so he will be gone from Northeast by the time any of this potentially happens. The bus ride is no longer for these students then it is for the students who are north of West Main which is now Northeast 3. It is a long bus ride either way. He also went to several PTO meetings at the Yerwood Center before he was on the Board of Education and it is unfortunate that in all four scenarios whether it is bilingual children or it is districted children we must bus Hispanic children out of KT Murphy who currently walk to school. That is an unfortunate situation. He is not one to reconsider old decisions, but in deciding two months ago to close Rogers, the Board knew it was cutting school capacity on the East

Side. The time to worry about bussing Hispanic children out of KT Murphy was when we decided to close Rogers. It is too late now. We made our bed and now we have to lie in it.

Mr. Freedman continued and stated that as far as balancing Cloonan, as he said before we have no choice but to split the feeders. He likes feeders and others don't. We are already splitting the feeder for the Meadowpark and Long Ridge students who live near Rippowam. He thinks we should split the feeder and start with walkers and would agree with Ms. McManus and would prefer to see them at Rippowam because Scofield is too far away. The school appears at least in 6th grade to be balancing itself at which he is quite surprised, but is willing to consider either of those options

Ms. Wade noted that she has heard from a couple of schools that some of the kindergarten classes are much larger than anticipated and that children are showing up not having been registered and she has also heard from some other people that they are wondering if the down turn in the economy is converting some advantaged out of their private school scenarios into public schools. She is wondering, and with the changes she enumerated on the West Side where there is going to be market place housing over there to the tune of 40% of the housing, she is wondering will the numbers be changing dramatically over the next several months. Does anyone else share this concern? Ms. McManus asked if she meant district-wide or just in that area. Ms. Wade responded that she has heard of two elementary schools, one in the south and one in the north, that have more kindergarten students per class than they anticipated. Ms. McManus noted that this happens quite often. Dr. Starr stated that over 5 years our elementary projections are within 1.1% of actuals and October 1 is the official count. We will provide some up to date enrollment information. We are looking at a couple of situations that may cause us to reallocate resources, but it is a couple of classes here and there. On average we continue to be very competitive. Regarding the children who are returning to the public schools from private schools he would like to think that folks have realized about the fabulous education we provide in the public schools; however, this is a conversation going around Fairfield County and at his monthly meeting on Friday he will hear from some other Superintendents. It may be a factor but we can't really calculate that in and we will know more on October 1. He does not know that the numbers are such that it would dramatically impact the numbers to change the assumptions. Remember also that we have done our modeling all to create 5% disadvantaged/advantaged and have achieved that in every option other than KT Murphy Options #3 and #4 which are still within 10% and the capacity numbers are all in the mid-80's to low-90's. We have the room.

Mr. Freedman noted that he looked through a lot of these options and it seems to him that we have capacity and as Ms. McManus stated this happens every year.

Ms. Freedman referred to Ms. Nabel's suggestion that we move Westover 2 to KT Murphy – he would support that as he would always support creating more walkers even if it creates a slight imbalance while still remaining with the 10% rule. Also, the school's enrollment would still be well under what it is today. He also supports Ms. McManus' proposal that we shift a small number of

students from Roxbury to Hart and then shift a larger number of children from Hart to Westover to create more walkers and to create more magnet seats at Hart. We should not move anyone who would have to be bussed across Washington Boulevard.

Dr. Starr wanted to understand the Board's expectations around process. There are public hearings on Tuesday and Thursday with a vote on September 23, 2008. We are in the process right now of creating FAQ's for the website based on the questions that have come to us from the public as well as questions that have come to us from the Board. Now there is further work to do regarding modeling some of the things you asked us to do tonight none of which are that extensive. He just wanted to be clear about what the expectation is around when you would like to have new data and some options within options so we know how to plan on our time. Ms. McManus said it would have to be Friday with just data, no maps. Cloonan is the hard part. Mr. Freedman stated that what was proposed for Westover we don't need data for that because we know what it is. For what Ms. McManus proposed we have some of the data already, but we now need to get the right number. Dr. Starr asked if the Board has additional requests after the public hearings when will those be made to him. Mr. Freedman indicated that Dr. Starr should try and get us the data by the middle of the following week. Dr. Starr suggested a process that you have until Friday, September 12th to request anything new pending public hearings and we won't recreate maps, but will have the numbers and implications by Wednesday, September 17, 2008. Ms. McManus asked if we could get it when it is ready via e-mail. Dr. Starr will create a list from the minutes and get it out to you and up on the website as we are able to make it right. Mr. Rubino asked Dr. Starr what his understanding is of what he will be giving the Board with respect to Cloonan. Dr. Starr noted that there would be some different options – some type of attendance zone for Scofield and then another option of sending some of the students to Rippowam.

Ms. McManus moved, seconded by Mr. Rubino, to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m. with the following Board members voting in favor: Mr. Freedman, Mr. King, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mayor Malloy, Ms. McManus, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

Joshua P. Starr, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Executive Officer