

NORTH BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
February 17, 2011

The North Branford Board of Education met on Thursday, February 17, 2011 in the Board Meeting Room at Stanley T. Williams School at 6:30 p.m. The following members attended:

Board Chair:	Marcey Onofrio
Board Vice-Chair:	Shannon Miscio
Board Secretary:	David McMahan
Board Members:	Christopher Manna Deborah Prunier

Superintendent of Schools: Scott Schoonmaker

MOTION: Moved by Marcey Onofrio and seconded by Shannon Miscio to adjourn to executive session as per Section 1-225 of the Connecticut General Statutes as permitted by Section 1-200 (6)(a,b & c) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

ALL VOTED AYE

MOTION: Moved by Marie Diamond and seconded by Deborah Prunier to reconvene to the Library Media Center for public session at 6:52 p.m.

ALL VOTED AYE

I. Visitors

Director of Business and Personnel:	Donald Winnicki
Director of Instruction & Curriculum:	Sara Querfeld
Director of Special Services:	Suzanne Wright
Supervisor of Operations:	William Choti
Principals:	Alan Davis, NBIS Dr. Kris Lindsay, TVES Shawn Parkhurst, JHS

Carter Welch	Christine Imperato	Rose Angeloni
Jacquelyn Ferraro	Theresa Fransden	

II. Student Representative

Jacquelyn Ferraro reported on the following events at NBHS.

Academic

Sophomores are currently completing the final stages of preparation for the CAPT testing that occurs throughout the month of March. Freshmen will participate in CAPT practice activities during these days. They will also attend two assemblies during CAPT testing; one focusing upon

internet safety and one dealing with bullying prevention. The CAPT window for testing is 3/2-3/29.

Athletics

Mrs. Ginger Katz of the Courage to Speak Foundation addressed all of our winter and spring season student-athletes and their parents regarding substance abuse prevention on Monday February 7th. Mrs. Katz is known nationally for her work in this area. Throughout the month of February, the NBHS girl's basketball team is raising monies for the Kay Yow Breast Cancer Fund. The team wore their pink jerseys to show their support during the month. The girl's soccer banquet took place on Feb 13th at Woodwinds in Branford.

Social/Clubs/ Civic

The English department's British Literature field trip to Ireland and England departed today and will return on 2/25. The group will tour sites such as St. Patrick's Cathedral, Trinity College, Dublin's Writer Museum, Buckingham Palace and the National Gallery.

Today was "sunglasses day" at NBH, where students donated money to Matt's Mission Fund to wear sunglasses in class. Plans for the annual road race are currently underway.

The winter-themed semiformal took place this past Friday, the 11th in the high school café, sponsored by Ms. Byrd and the student council. The art club helped by making snowflake decorations.

The Project Graduation Band Jam occurred on Friday, Jan 28th in the café. Parents of seniors organized the event with students volunteering to perform. The proceeds go to the all-night event for seniors on graduation night.

Congratulations to Dr. Welch, who recently completed the final stages of his dissertation at the School of Education at the University of Connecticut.

III. Consent Agenda

a. Minutes

Minutes of the December 16, 2010 - North Branford Board of Education – Special Meeting

Minutes of the January 20, 2011 - North Branford Board of Education – Regular Meeting

Minutes of the February 3, 2011 - Special Meeting

b. Resignations - None at this time.

c. Appointments - None at this time.

- d. Leaves - None at this time.
- e. Donations - None at this time.
- f. Field Trips

The Superintendent has received a field trip request from Patricia DePalma, grade 8 class advisor. This is an annual trip for the NBIS eighth grade class. The trip is scheduled for Tuesday, May 17, 2011 to Boston, Massachusetts. Details are attached for Board review.

Deborah Prunier asked if the cost of the field trip is covered by the students, to which Alan Davis, NBIS Principal responded "yes".

MOTION: Moved by Marie Diamond and seconded by David McMahon to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted.

CHAIRWOMAN ONOFRIO: AYE
VICE-CHAIR MISCIO: AYE
SECRETARY MCMAHON: AYE
MARIE DIAMOND: AYE
CHRISTOPHER MANNA: AYE
DEBORAH PRUNIER: AYE
MOTION CARRIED 6-0

IV. Superintendent's Report

- a. Recognition - Superintendent Schoonmaker recognized and thanked the volunteers who organized a pasta dinner fundraiser for a staff member who had suffered a hardship. The Superintendent stated the event raised \$1,500-2,000 and speaks volumes about our community and our schools. Superintendent Schoonmaker also recognized Carter Welch on his completion of his dissertation.
- b. Communications

The Superintendent shares with the Board a letter from Chief of Police, Matthew L. Canelli.

Superintendent Schoonmaker stated the schools raised over \$3,000 towards the purchase of the Canine. He stated he was proud of the students' efforts and that the dog should be in Town in the spring.

The Superintendent shares with the Board a letter from Alex Johnston of ConnCan regarding North Branford High School.

Superintendent Schoonmaker stated North Branford High School ranked 4th in improvement. He stated he looked forward to continued growth.

c. BOE Briefs

Board of Education Briefs for February 2011.

d. Healthy Food Certification

Public Act 06-63, *An Act Concerning Healthy Food and Beverages in Schools*, requires that all Connecticut Public School Districts eligible to participate in the Healthy Food Certification take action to certify whether all food items sold to students separately from reimbursable meals *will* or *will not* meet the Connecticut State Department of Education's Connecticut Nutrition Standards. After review and discussion the North Branford Public Schools has decided not to meet the standard and receive the 10 cent per meal reimbursement. Certification as to the school district's intention for the coming school year must be made and submitted to the State Department of Education no later than Thursday, July 1st, for the coming school year.

Superintendent Schoonmaker stated we have a wonderful food service in alignment with State standards. Don Winnicki stated the program is so restrictive that the Board has never chosen to participate.

MOTION: Moved by Deborah Prunier and seconded by David McMahon, Pursuant to Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes the North Branford Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the North Branford Public Schools and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education *will not* meet said standards during the period of July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012.

**CHAIRWOMAN ONOFRIO: AYE
VICE-CHAIR MISCIO: AYE
SECRETARY MCMAHON: AYE
MARIE DIAMOND: AYE
CHRISTOPHER MANNA: AYE
DEBORAH PRUNIER: AYE
MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

e. North Branford Education Foundation Update

Members of the Education Foundation are presently involved in preparing for their second Shining Star Award Dinner honoring Rose Angeloni, Robert Hull, Lars Selander, Chris Webster and Bob Wolfe for their outstanding dedication and extraordinary service to the North Branford Public Schools and the community. The dinner will be held on Friday April 14, 2011 (*new date*) at Woodwind's. The cost of this event is \$40 per person and tickets can be purchased at each school office.

f. Summer Camp 2011

The North Branford Public Schools Summer Camp Program will be entitled "*Movin & Groovin*". The summer will feature all our camp favorites including *Candy Camp*, *Bubblemania*, *Wet 'n Wild*, *Fishing*, *sports* and more. We have added many new and exciting

additions such as *Recess Favorites*, *Outdoor Strategy Games*, *Camp Stomp* and much, much more!

Mrs. Lauren Barry, grade 1 teacher at Jerome Harrison Elementary School, has been appointed to the position of Camp Director. Lauren has been associated with the camp program since its inception in 2002.

Camp brochures will be distributed throughout the district sometime in March. This year we are very excited to feature student artwork from both North Branford Intermediate School and North Branford High School throughout the program.

Camp is open to all students entering grades 1 through 8 in the fall of 2011. The Family Resource Center Preschool Program will also run all summer for children ages 3-5 including children who may be entering kindergarten in the fall.

Superintendent Schoonmaker stated the summer camp program is a wonderful program with an instructional component in the morning with an extended day option. He noted he was thrilled to have Lauren Barry running the camp, as she has been involved since its inception. Additionally, all artwork appearing in the brochure will come from our middle and high school students.

g. State of Our Schools Report

The North Branford Public Schools is in the process of completing the “2011 State of Our Schools” report. This report will be available to the public online in the near future. This report is a method of conveying the direction of the school system to the community. It will highlight programs, technology initiatives, goals, as well as state test score data within the district. It is an avenue for providing information to the public so that they can become informed partners in the education of the children of North Branford. The reports were distributed to Board Members at the meeting. Mrs. Sara Querfeld, Director of Curriculum and Instruction gave a brief highlight of this year’s report.

Marie Diamond stated the brochure was very impressive and the community should be proud of the school system.

Superintendent Schoonmaker noted the brochure is “hot off the press” still in draft form. He stated it was produced in-house the last two years. He plans to distribute a flyer in the Totoket Times with instructions on how the community can access the brochure through a link on the District website. He also stated copies of the report would be available at Town Hall and the Town libraries.

h. Superintendent’s Budget Request

At the February meeting, the Board must finalize its 2011-2012 budget request. As a result of the February 3rd Special Meeting (budget workshop), the Superintendent’s budget request has been modified. There have also been changes to the budget request due to a decrease in healthcare cost for the 2011/2012 school year and the increased estimate for the roof replacement at NBHS. The Superintendent provided the Board with updated budget figures at the meeting. Don Winnicki stated the health insurance figures have decreased from 10.33% to 3.2% due to the experience rate, however there are no guarantees the same will occur in subsequent years. He

also stated all roof sections of the high school had to be re-estimated as there were some errors in the square footage figures. The increase is offset by the decrease in health insurance costs and the Education Jobs Bill. Don Winnicki confirmed the Board may use the Education Jobs Bill funds to save jobs as well as to create new jobs.

Superintendent Schoonmaker stated the roof at NBHS is most urgent. There has been damage to the floor and events have had to be canceled due to the water.

Marcy Onforio stated it is embarrassing when parents are attending events to have the barrels catching the water from roof leaks. She also stated she was hoping for Federal funds, if any are available. Don Winnicki stated he has a packet prepared for the mayor.

Don Winnicki stated the final percentage increase in the budget is .41%.

MOTION: Moved by Deborah Prunier and seconded by Marie Diamond to approve an operating budget request of \$30,011,041 for school year 2011/2012.

**CHAIRWOMAN ONOFRIO: AYE
VICE-CHAIR MISCIO: AYE
SECRETARY MCMAHON: AYE
MARIE DIAMOND: AYE
CHRISTOPHER MANNA: AYE
DEBORAH PRUNIER: AYE
MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

MOTION: Moved by Deborah Prunier and seconded by Marie Diamond to approve a capital budget request of \$592,000 for school year 2011/2012.

**CHAIRWOMAN ONOFRIO: AYE
VICE-CHAIR MISCIO: AYE
SECRETARY MCMAHON: AYE
MARIE DIAMOND: AYE
CHRISTOPHER MANNA: AYE
DEBORAH PRUNIER: AYE
MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

MOTION: Moved by Deborah Prunier and seconded by Marie Diamond to approve appropriation of the \$474,614 Education Jobs Fund grant to the 2011/2012 school year.

**CHAIRWOMAN ONOFRIO: AYE
VICE-CHAIR MISCIO: AYE
SECRETARY MCMAHON: AYE
MARIE DIAMOND: AYE
CHRISTOPHER MANNA: AYE
DEBORAH PRUNIER: AYE
MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

i. Strategic Planning Update

The North Branford School District, under the guidance of Superintendent Scott Schoonmaker and the New England School Development Council, NESDEC, is in the process of crafting a new Strategic School Plan for the 2011-2016 school years. This plan will serve as the cornerstone for decision making during the next few years. The strategic planning committee has drafted new Mission and Vision Statements, agreed upon Core Beliefs and have decided to focus on three Strategic Goals.

Groups of administrators have been working on a draft of the framework for the Action Steps for the three Strategic Goals, and will complete their work by the middle of March. Next steps include gathering feedback and input from staff, students, and the community. This input will help shape the final specific objectives and strategies for the Action Plan as well as determining their respective priorities in the five-year implementation schedule.

Subject coordinators will meet with the Director of Curriculum during the month of February to prepare for a half-day workshop with the Strategic Planning Consultants from NESDEC on March 24th. All staff will have the opportunity to attend an after school presentation/workshop on the Strategic Plan on Wednesday, April 13th. In addition, stakeholders in the community, including parents, senior citizens, town officials and other interested residents will have the opportunity to give input to the plan.

The newly drafted Vision, Mission, Core Beliefs and over-arching Strategic Goals are listed below.

Vision Statement:

The North Branford Public Schools will be schools of excellence characterized by continuously improving student achievement; staff and programming focused on student success; and an exceptional learning environment.

Mission Statement:

It is the mission of the North Branford Public Schools, in partnership with the community, to foster a strong learning community focused on academic excellence and a positive school climate which prepares each student to be responsible 21st Century citizens of the world.

Core Beliefs:

We believe that:

- Education is a shared responsibility among students, teachers, staff, parents, and the community.
- All students can learn.
- All students have abilities and talents that are worthy of being recognized and developed.
- Students and staff have the right to a safe, respectful, and challenging academic environment conducive to learning.

Strategic Goals:

- Goal 1: To ensure student achievement occurs at high levels in order to meet or exceed grade level expectations and prepare students to achieve 21st Century skills.
- Goal 2: To establish a positive school climate where all members of the school community will demonstrate good character, safety, respect, and healthy life styles.
- Goal 3: To improve school facilities to support academic achievement in a safe learning environment.

Superintendent Schoonmaker stated the District is working with NESDEC on updating the strategic plan. He stated the District has stayed focused on the 3 specific goals and has redefined the vision and mission statement. He is pleased with the work to date from the administrative team and recognized them for their hard work.

Mrs. Querfeld stated the curriculum subcommittee discussed when the Board would meet with NESDEC. It was decided that they would meet on April 13th from 6-7pm and the public would meet at 7pm.

V. Committee Reports

Motion: Moved by Shannon Miscio and seconded by David McMahon to add Communications and PPB to committee reports as items h and i respectively.

**CHAIRWOMAN ONOFRIO: AYE
VICE-CHAIR MISCIO: AYE
SECRETARY MCMAHON: AYE
MARIE DIAMOND: AYE
CHRISTOPHER MANNA: AYE
DEBORAH PRUNIER: AYE
MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

The Board of Education will review and take possible action on committee reports.

- a. Negotiations - nothing at this time.
- b. Budget - Marcey Onofrio stated the last meeting was cancelled due to the special meeting for the budget. Superintendent Schoonmaker stated the District spent significant time and money clearing snow from the school roofs. The District had budgeted \$6,000, however the actual figure was \$41,173. He stated while that sounds astronomical, surrounding towns have reported spending in excess of \$100,000. Don Winnicki stated he is sending copies of the expenses to Town Hall for FEMA, if assistance becomes available. Shannon Miscio stated this had to get done.

c. Curriculum – Marie Diamond reported they met this evening with Sara Querfeld, who showed them the benchmark notebooks. Marie Diamond stated she was impressed with the notebook and the program of studies for the high school. They had a work session regarding high school reform and Sara will draft a letter for the next Board meeting. Superintendent Schoonmaker stated walkthroughs have been completed for NBHS and JHS.

d. Pension – Don Winnicki stated he attended a meeting and a couple of actions were taken, including a café worker at TVES. He stated nothing significant occurred and noted that the pension has benefited from the upswing in The Market. There were no changes in the allocation of funds.

e. Policy

The Superintendent and Director of Personnel and Business, Don Winnicki, met with two law firms to discuss options for a complete policy review and revision. The North Branford Public Schools Policy Manual has been a work in progress since 2001 and the committee has determined that the Board may require the services of a law firm for the purpose of on-going evaluation and modification to meet the requirements of local and State regulations. The Superintendent reported to the Board the results of the two meeting and made a recommendation for moving forward.

Christopher Manna stated they will have names and proposals from each of the law firms for next meeting.

f. ACES - Marie Diamond stated ACES has begun paperless meetings. They also voted on the school budgets, each one individually. She also stated ACES is in teacher negotiations and moving toward arbitration. She stated while there was some discussion regarding moving the CMT dates, the State's position is they cannot move the date as it would not allow enough time for correction and distribution of scores.

g. Operations

The Superintendent provided an update to the Board on the status of all school buildings with regards to snow removal and the results of structural inspections throughout the district.

h. Communications:

Shannon Miscio stated the communications link on the District website is now active and they received 2 community questions. The first was in regards to the April break being modified rather than the February break due to the amount of snow days.

Marcey Onofrio stated the calendar is handed out at the beginning of each school year and it clearly states the Board's intent in the case of excess snow days. Once the calendar is voted on, it becomes contractual and many factors, such as unions and additional weather related closings during the February break come into play.

Shannon Miscio stated the second comment was that Channel 19 is now up and running and noted that it is done by the high school students.

i. Permanent Project Building:

Christopher Manna stated the FRC building at Jerome Harrison is making progress, despite the weather. David McMahon mentioned the hot water heater had been installed and the electrical is roughly 95% complete. He believes they are waiting on an inspection and then the interior work will begin. Scott Schoonmaker stated the color scheme matches the existing building and the new structure has a pitched roof.

VI. New Business

Related only to items removed from the Consent Agenda.

VII. Visitors and Press

Theresa Fransden asked why the District has a week off in February and not just a long weekend.

Marcey Onforio answered that the calendar committee, comprised of one board member, 3 teacher reps and Don Winnicki, discuss 5-6 different scenarios and decide on which is the most favorable and present the calendar to the Board for approval. The committee takes many factors into account, such as holiday breaks, teacher preference and custodial factors.

VIII. The next regular Board of Education meeting is scheduled for
WEDNESDAY, March 16, 2011 at Stanley T. Williams Elementary School.

IX. Adjournment

Motion: Moved by David McMahon and seconded by Shannon Miscio to adjourn this meeting of the North Branford Board of Education at 7:57pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Neubig
Acting Board Secretary