

**NORTH BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
**September 15, 2005**

The North Branford Board of Education met on Thursday, September 15, 2005 at 6:18 p.m. in the North Branford High School Cafeteria. The following members attended:

Board Chairman:	Ron Haskins
Board Vice-Chairman:	Cheryl Smith
Board Secretary:	Amy Sochocki-Norton
Board Members:	Lawrence Casey
	Marie Diamond
	Lisa Gagliardi (left at 6:35 p.m. and returned at 6:50 p.m.)

Superintendent of Schools: Dr. Robert K. Wolfe

**MOTION:** Moved by Lawrence Casey and seconded by Lisa Gagliardi 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 PASSED 6-0**

**MOTION:** Moved by Lawrence Casey and seconded by Cheryl Smith to reconvene to public session at 7:05 p.m.

**ALL VOTED AYE**  
**MOTION PASSED 6-0**

**I. Visitors**

Director of Business/Personnel:	Donald Winnicki
Director of Instruction/Curriculum:	Joan Follo
Director of Special Services:	Suzanne Wright
Principals:	Dr. David Perry, NBHS
	Alan Davis, NBIS
	Nancy Brittingham, TVES
	Robin Brown-Criscuolo, JHS
	Dr. Karen Johnson, STW

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Elizabeth Siena  
Craig Creller  
Patti Darragh  
Heidi Kehlenbach  
Dianne Vumback  
Desiree MacDonald  
Emilio Marotta  
Jennifer Daddio  
Susan Pisani  
Marilyn Mesner  
Tracey Maculaitis  
Marg Palmieri  
Rose Giardina  
Ashley C. Joiner  
Mary Ellen Barrett  
Pat Cardoza  
Don Fucci  
Brian Bodner  
Tony Girardi  
P. Fappiano  
Don Maggiore  
John Florio  
Janet Cumming  
Lori Bogue  
Anita Pantalena  
Grace Marriott  
Kathy Bozzuto  
Denise Puzycki  
Tamre Mockus  
Richard Simons  
Lisa Douglas  
Pam Kohler  
Tyfanie Witkowsky  
Deborah Welton  
Jill O'Neil  
Sandra Querfeld  
M. Torrente  
Marcia Stoffa  
Al Perry

Ron Siena  
Sandra Creller  
Michele DiMaggio  
Janice Vergati  
Lisa Albert  
Chris Marotta  
Kelly Brenner  
William Wharton  
Laura Petrella  
Thomas Mesner  
Karen Austin  
Claudia Faughnan  
Rose Angeloni  
Mary Bigelow  
Michelle Cook  
Ruth W. Rose  
Barbara Travisano  
Art Hausman  
Bernie Gagliardi, Sr.  
J. Wisniewski  
K. Mezerewski  
Tom Singer  
Claudio Riccitelli  
Paul Proto, Sr.  
Lynn Clark  
Tom Comcowich  
Dorothy Ferrucci  
Cindy Conforte  
David McMahon  
Linda Humphrey  
Alberta DeLucia  
Hamilton Bates  
Nancy Keinz  
Wendy Jones  
Sharon Burke  
Grace Polivka  
D. Stone  
Joanne Wentworth

Vincent Candelora  
Tracy Creller  
Michele Onofrio  
Deborah Albino  
Nikki Shea  
Diane Marotta  
Elisa Pitoniak  
Jane Wharton  
Janice DeAngelo  
Cathleen Rogers  
Elizabeth Caplan  
Cathy Acquarulo  
Ann Marshall  
Delcy Newell  
Kate Fleming  
Anita Ward  
Rosemary Addario  
John Lappie  
B. Gagliardi, Jr.  
Andrew Esposito, III.  
C. Riccitelli  
Marcey Onofrio  
Angela Selmquist  
Trista Chime  
Cynthia Johnson  
R. N.  
Marian O'Shea  
Christine Imperato  
Judy Bannon  
Dee McKeown  
Mary Lovelace  
Marilyn Modzelewski  
Bonnie Appi  
MaryEllen Dilella  
Anne Prodoti  
Dolina Potter  
Marianne Smith  
Penny Seaman

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Chairman Ron Haskins mentioned that 5 out of 6 Board members did not receive an invitation to the meeting at the high school.

Ron Haskins stated that tonight's meeting was a Board meeting and not a hearing and he wanted to allow the public to speak but it would be for the first fifteen minutes of the meeting only. All visitors would have a chance to speak at the end of the meeting.

William Connon, Board legal council, remarked that tonight's meeting was not a hearing but a Board meeting. He mentioned that he was here tonight to advise the Board with respect to the procedure that is followed on a motion to renew a Superintendent's contract. He remarked that it is a simple procedure that is outlined in the contract you have with your Superintendent of Schools. It is the same procedure that is followed by virtually every school district in Connecticut. The contract requires the Board to have developed an evaluation format for use every year that the Superintendent is employed.

It requires the Board to abide by that format in evaluating your Superintendent of Schools according to eight or nine specific points of analysis.

The decision that the Board makes tonight is a business decision concerning the contract. Mr. Connon remarked that if anyone here this evening thinks that this meeting is a just cause hearing where there has to be some proof for or against an individual then they are mistaken. This is not such a hearing and there is a provision in the contract for a hearing like that and the procedure and is governed by contractual requirements regarding notice, representation and a variety of other things typically associated with a hearing. The Board of Education can act tonight based upon all information gathered up to this stage and it is his understanding that the Board has extended the time frame for making this decision by approximately two and one-half months. Under the contract this would have been a decision reached no later than June 30, 2005. The Board has had additional two and one-half months to gather information to hear community concerns, to observe and to evaluate. At this stage it is the Board's decision to determine the length and amount of additional information you wish to hear tonight. Any time constraint the Chairman and the Board puts on that is within their reasonable discretion based upon the length of tonight's agenda and other business the Board must transact this evening.

Mr. Connon asked if the Chair or Board needed any further questions pertaining to tonight's meeting that he could help with.

A member of the audience questioned why legal council was needed at tonight's Board meeting as he worked thirty – two years for another Board of Education they never had legal council at Board meetings and whose decision it was to obtain legal council

Ron Haskins stated this was his decision.

Mr. Maggorie asked if he could poll the other Board members to see if they had a part in this decision

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Mr. Connon remarked that he had directed his question to the Chair and Board members and not the audience.

Lisa Gagliardi asked for a better explanation of a paragraph in the Superintendent's contract. It clearly states that termination of the contract that parties may by mutual consent terminate the contract at any time. The Superintendent shall be entitled to terminate the contract upon written notice of not less than ninety days and the Board may terminate the contract of employment prior to its expiration for one of the four following reasons. She stated reason number three was for moral misconduct including conduct unbecoming of a Superintendent of Schools. Since we have last begun discussion of the contract there have been things that have come up and she needs to know, based on this paragraph, what her rights are and if she can contest tonight's decision based on what has recently come to the public's view.

Attorney Connon remarked that this paragraph was what the Board Chair had concerns about and probably why he was asked to be here this evening. He stated the paragraph Lisa Gagliardi questioned dealt with termination of a Superintendent of Schools. He noted all the teachers in the audience tonight, stating this termination clause in the contract is virtually the same as the clause contained in the Teacher Tenure Act. It is a series of procedural steps that have to be abided by in order to protect someone who is under contract. It is a "just cause" proceeding that is a hearing where witnesses are called, attorneys representing the alleged and the person who is concerned with the allegations can defend themselves. There are cross-examinations, direct examinations and everything you would expect to find in a hearing takes place in a termination for cause proceeding. There is a notice requirement to proceed such a hearing and none of the factors that Board member Gagliardi has referred to pertain to tonight's hearing. Tonight's hearing is related to that portion of the contract which is found under the extension of the Superintendent decisions. It is a renewal that is very simple and not based on whether an employee in question has done anything considered a wrongful act. It is strictly a decision based on the evaluations whether or not the Board of Education wishes to renew the contract. A vote not to renew does not impugn the integrity of an individual, is not a comment about the individual or any allegation that might be raised and is just a vote not to renew the contract. A vote to renew the contract is an endorsement of the existing favorable relationship based upon a series of favorable evaluations by the Board. Mr. Connon stated the document is a public document and anyone could view the document.

Lisa Gagliardi questioned if the action on the contract whether to renew, to extend or not renew is one issue by itself and even if the contract is renewed or extended there is still the option at any time throughout the contract to follow through with termination proceedings of the contract at any point and time.

Attorney Connon stated this was true.

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Don Maggiore asked again if he could poll all Board members to see if they were consulted to have legal council here tonight.

Ron Haskins stated it was his decision and up to his discretion and he was not getting into a debate or discussion on this matter.

Mr. Maggiore stated all Board members should have say in this matter. He questioned what it was costing for legal council tonight.

Craig Creller stated he would not be intimidated by the presence of the Board's attorney tonight and remarked that attempts to ramrod the renewal of Dr. Wolfe's contract was a grave mistake. He mentioned that he came here tonight proud to represent the North Branford Federation of Teachers. He was here not as an individual or an employee of the town but in his official capacity as vice-president and a grievance officer of the NBFT. He stated that he came to this meeting with a heavy heart for what he must do and say does not come naturally to teachers especially those who go to work with a smile on their face doing something they love, willing and able to help children. He stated that if we were going to make social and academic progress for our children in North Branford. He stated that our Strategic Plan talks about change and the change we need is that this Superintendent must go. He remarked that the NBFT humbly asked the Board not to renew Dr. Wolfe's contract and to ask for his resignation. He stated that over the year's most of the teachers have been Dr. Wolfe's biggest fans and they admired his vision, his savvy and his tireless energy. Mr. Creller stated that Dr. Wolfe has broken faith with everyone by turning this energy to political self- destruction. In just a few short years he has gone from being an energetic visionary to a monkey on everyone's back. He stifles all free thought and resistance. He is a proverbial albatross around the collective neck of the North Branford Public Schools. He is an embarrassment who has shamed us with his unethical behavior and his continuing poor decision-making. Mr. Creller called attention to the recent police investigations. He mentioned that Superintendent Wolfe was impossible to work for and impossible to work with. He stated that we are losing excellent teachers at an alarming rate and no one wants to work for a bully. Mr. Creller stated that many teachers approached him and stated that their decision to return to North Branford will depend on tonight's decision if the Board renews the Superintendent's contract. He mentioned grievances of Sharon Misiti, Mary DelloStritto and Robin Brown. Mr. Creller questioned Board member's to see who read the recent police report.

Ron Haskins, Cheryl Smith and Lisa Gagliardi stated that they had.

Craig Creller requested that all members of the Board obtain a copy of the police report and read it.

Mr. Creller also remarked on the intimidation of STW teachers and the vote of no confidence for Dr. Karen Johnson.

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Craig Creller stated that the NBFT had no contact with Dr. Wolfe over the summer and the union was snubbed on opening day when Dr. Wolfe did not have the NBFT President address the staff.

He stated that Donald Winnicki and Superintendent Wolfe stormed the building last spring hoping to break up their union meeting but they met across the street in the firehouse.

He asked the Board to do their job and not resign the Superintendent's contract.

Penny Seaman remarked that she was a former Board of Education member but was there mainly as a parent of three average children. She mentioned that her children had committed talented and gifted teachers but they also had room for improvement, as no one is perfect. She hoped we could put differences aside and concentrate on what is really important, all twenty-seven hundred of our students. She mentioned that when she listens to the gripes and complaints of the teachers and it is hard for her to speak as she really respects these teachers but they do have a forum to air their grievances. They can go to their union and go through the grievance process. She remarked that she is not saying that management has never made a mistake but to focus on what is really important. How can our teachers have no confidence in an administration that has brought us for the first time a strategic plan, better physical facilities and a summer program? She mentioned that she was sorry that there were teachers here who are not happy but she wants the administrators to run the school system. She was a part of the school Board that hired an administrator who would make some difficult choices. One who would get us on a curriculum cycle, who would force teachers to be better than they already were. She is afraid that if we get rid of this Superintendent she is concerned we will get someone who panders to today's issue and that is not what we want for our district. She asked everyone to look at the achievements of our district and forget the interest of every small group and think about our 2700 students. Mrs. Seaman remarked that she has worked closely with Dr. Wolfe and he is the very best thing that has happened to our district.

Ron Haskins stated the fifteen minutes for visitor's comments were up and there would be time for more comments at the end of the meeting.

Lisa Gagliardi questioned Attorney Connon as to the legal rights of who could speak at this time since they might take action on the Superintendent's contract tonight.

Attorney Connon stated it was the Chair's and the Board's right to limit time for speaking, as they didn't have to let anyone speak.

Lisa Gagliardi questioned when would the Board hear the communities concerns.

Attorney Connon stated that it should have been done months ago.

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Lisa Gagliardi questioned where the Board's attorney was months ago to tell them this information.

Many visitors complained and asked to speak now and not at the end.

Amy Norton stated that it was the Chairman's decision to direct how the meeting is run.

**MOTION:** Lisa Gagliardi moved that the Board of Education add to their agenda a motion to table the vote on the Superintendent's contract until the next Board meeting.

No one seconded the motion  
Motion failed

## **II. Student Representatives**

Ron Haskins introduced our new student representatives Mike Scalia and Danielle Gaudio who are the President and Vice-President of the National Honor Society at NBHS. The student representatives reported on the following items:

**Relief Fund for Hurricane Katrina** - NBHS students have been fund raising for this relief fund outside the NBHS cafeteria every day .

**Student Council** – Election of officers will be held shortly and they will be holding a Red Cross blood drive on October 5, 2005.

**FBLA** – Election of officers were held on September 15, 2005.

**Senior Picnic** – Dr. Perry will be hosting the annual Senior Picnic on September 29, 2005 which is the first step in the planning of this year's graduation.

### **Sports:**

Cross-Country – First year with official boys and girls teams and best numbers the teams have ever since established. Coached by John A'damo and Shelby Pierson.

Girl's Soccer – Forty-girl team coached by Rick Gerimia

Boy's Soccer – Won their first victory 2-0 – Coach Cliff Yerkes  
Upcoming home game September 20, 2005

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Field Hockey – Fifty girls strong - first game 4-0  
Upcoming home game – September 23 2005

Volley Ball - Upcoming home games September 19, 21,23

Football - First home gam Friday, September 23, 2005

### III. Unaffiliated Contracts

**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Lawrence Casey to extend the contract of Donald Winnicki, Director of Personnel and Business, by one additional year, through June 30, 2008.

<b>Chairman Haskins -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Vice-Chairman Smith -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Secretary Norton -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lawrence Casey -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Marie Diamond -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lisa Gagliardi -</b>	<b>AYE</b>

**MOTION PASSED 6-0**

**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Lawrence Casey to establish the salary of Dr. Robert K. Wolfe, Superintendent of Schools, for the 2005/2006 school year at \$124,422.00 or 4.9% and to extend his existing contract for a period of two years, through June 30, 2008.

<b>Chairman Haskins -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Vice-Chairman Smith -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Secretary Norton -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lawrence Casey -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Marie Diamond -</b>	<b>Abstained</b>
<b>Lisa Gagliardi -</b>	<b>Nay</b>

**MOTION PASSED 4-1-1**

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Lisa Gagliardi stated this was a deplorable motion and just last month when she suggested a 4% salary increase the Board voted it down now they are giving Dr. Wolfe a 4.9% salary increase. She remarked that she asked for the Superintendent's contract be on the October Agenda at the August meeting and it was not mentioned in the August minutes. Lisa also remarked that Cheryl Smith stated in the minutes that the Superintendent's contract would be postponed until October and at the July meeting Cheryl Smith stated the vote of no confidence would be investigated and that has not been done.

Ron Haskins remarked that we have a Strategic Plan that is in place and everyone knew it would be a tough four years. Many people thought it would be too tough to be implemented but it is in place and working. This plan has taken our school district out of twenty years of decline. Our students were still using history books that didn't even acknowledge the decline of the Soviet Union. Our curriculum is set up so that students at STW and JHS are using the same textbooks and when these students get to TVES they will have all learned the same curriculum. Teachers won't have to guess anymore.

Lisa Gagliardi remarked that nobody is disputing Dr. Wolfe's visions and plans.

Ron Haskins stated that he didn't think that one hundred and ninety teachers had enough contact with Dr. Wolfe to vote to non renew his contract.

Lisa Gagliardi stated she had three pages of teacher's concerns.

Cheryl Smith remarked that we have a 100% graduation rate and high CAPT scores.

Lisa Gagliardi stated we have 98% graduation rate and low CMT scores especially in math.

Lisa Gagliardi stated that she believes we have a Superintendent who has not followed through on belief number eight, parameter number 2 and 7 and strategies 2 and 5. We have not looked into the issues of no confidence, the unethical conduct of the Superintendent, the revising of a state document and the leave of an administrator for four months because of stress.

Cheryl Smith remarked that she has heard from people who have stated I just don't like the guy. Cheryl stated you don't have to like the guy he is doing his job.

Ron stated our children are scoring higher than they ever have.

Lisa Gagliardi stated this was not because of the Superintendent but because of the teachers in the district and the Principal at NBHS.

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Amy Norton stated she wanted to make some comments before she cast her vote and since she doesn't roll her eyes and moan and groan when others are speaking and she would appreciate the same courtesy. She remarked that she appreciates Lisa Gagliardi's stand but all the Board works with the Superintendent and they are not able to share many things with the public that they are privy to. She noted that she does not make decisions on the Board based on popularity, politics (she's been criticized for this) or feeling bullied and she doesn't plan to start now.

Lisa Gagliardi stated she should be privy to this information as a Board member and she is not.

Ron Haskins stated Lisa is privy to all information but she chooses to ignore it.

Amy Norton stated legally they are not allowed to share privileged information with the public and she is not going to jeopardize any cases against the Board or herself. She stated she would not listen to rumors because as rumors fly they snowball. She mentioned that sometimes we only hear the negative but there are a lot of positive things going on in the district. She implored people not to contribute to the snowballing of rumors. She thanked the people who attended tonight's meeting stating she might not agree with them or vote the way they want her to but she hears them.

Lisa Gagliardi stated we would need to proceed with the termination portion of the contract.

### **III. Recognition**

#### **Giraffe Heroes Award Presentation**

At the Opening Convocation the Superintendent announced a new award, the Giraffe Heroes Award. This award is presented on an on-going basis to faculty and staff members who "stick their neck out" by accomplishing high-quality, meaningful community service. The first award is presented to Suzanne Wright. Suzanne has distinguished herself by her involvement in a wide-range of community activities, both of a professional and personal nature. She continues to give blood every 56 days as well as extending her family by caring for a foster child. Suzanne Wright exemplifies the true meaning of the Giraffe Heroes Award.

Dr. Wolfe and the entire Board congratulated Suzanne Wright.

**IV. Approval of Previous Minutes**

**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Amy Norton to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2005 Board of Education meeting with three corrections.

**Page 10** – If you don't allow them to bring forward their recommendations. Not (if you don't support their decisions)

**Page 10** – 2005-2006 school year. Not (2005-2004)

**Left out:**

Cheryl Smith stated she was a member of this committee and she was not prepared to vote on the Superintendent's contract at this time.

**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Amy Norton to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2005 Board of Education meeting as amended.

<b>Chairman Haskins -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Vice-Chairman Smith-</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Secretary Norton -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lawrence Casey -</b>	<b>Abstained</b>
<b>Marie Diamond -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lisa Gagliardi -</b>	<b>AYE</b>

**MOTION PASSES 5-0-1**

**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Lisa Gagliardi to approve the minutes of the September 6, 2005 Special Meeting of the Board of Education with no corrections.

<b>Chairman Haskins -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Vice-Chairman Norton -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Secretary Norton -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lawrence Casey-</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Marie Diamond -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lisa Gagliardi -</b>	<b>AYE</b>

**MOTION PASSES 6-0**

Lisa Gagliardi asked Cheryl Smith if this was a correct statement made at the August Board meeting by her. "Cheryl Smith remarked that the Board should ask for union representation, board representation and the Superintendent to meet and discuss issues on the no confidence matter".

Cheryl Smith stated that they did talk about pulling a meeting together and wasn't sure if those were the exact words she used.

## **V. Communications**

**Letter from:** State of CT – Office of Policy & Management  
Robert L. Genuario, Secretary

**Re:** Approval of the request to extend the Arts grant for the North Branford Public Schools from June 30 to December 31, 2005.

Dr. Wolfe stated this grant would be used at NBHS in the arts for the 2005-2006 school Year.

**Letter from:** Rotary Club of North Branford  
Vincent J. Candelora, Esq. – Centennial President 04/05, Centennial Chair

Letter from Mr. Candelora thanking the Board of Education and Dr. Wolfe for honoring him with the Friends of Education Award.

### **Press Release**

**from:** Connecticut Dept. of Education – Dr. Betty J. Sternberg,  
Commissioner

**Re:** Connecticut's 2005 Grads Continue Strong Performance on SAT

**Letter from:** State of CT – Dept. of Education  
Sharon M. S. Fuller – Education Consultant – BEST Program, Special Ed.

**Re:** Thank you letter to Dr. Karen Johnson for time given as BEST portfolio scorer during this past summer.

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Dr. Wolfe distributed to all Board members the following items:

- Strategic Plan brochure
- SAGE brochure
- School Calendar (cover and pictures by North Branford students)
- Athletic schedule
- Updated workbook for Strategic Plan (50 plus 1) The one being added at NBHS regarding distance learning.
- Annual Report
- Pocket Calendar ( at request of Lisa Gagliardi)
- Facility Use Charges (at request of Lisa Gagliardi) Donald Winnicki updated this Information.

**VI. Superintendent's Report**

**A. Resignations**

Ms. Lauren Hollister, speech language pathologist at Stanley T. Williams and Jerome Harrison Elementary Schools, has submitted her resignation effective August 9, 2005.

**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Lawrence Casey to accept the resignation of Ms. Lauren Hollister, speech language pathologist at Stanley T. Williams and Jerome Harrison Elementary Schools, effective August 9, 2005.

**ALL VOTED AYE  
MOTION PASSES 6-0**

Mrs. Desiree MacDonald, grade 3 teacher at Totoket Valley Elementary School, has submitted her resignation effective immediately.

**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Lawrence Casey to accept the resignation of Mrs. Desiree MacDonald, grade 3 teacher at Totoket Valley Elementary School, effective immediately.

**ALL VOTED AYE**

## **MOTION PASSES 6-0**

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Lisa Gagliardi remarked that she was saddened to see us lose a wonderful and gifted educator and in her opinion Ms. MacDonald was a victim of this Board's lack of leadership and haste. She mentioned that this end result should have and could have been averted and she hopes a lesson has been learned by the Board that will avoid future proceedings of this nature from resulting in the same unfortunate way. She wished Ms. MacDonald well

Mrs. Jaime Strunjo, special education teacher at Jerome Harrison Elementary School, has submitted her resignation effective immediately.

**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Lawrence Casey to accept the resignation of Mrs. Jaime Strunjo, special education teacher at Jerome Harrison Elementary School, effective immediately.

**ALL VOTED AYE  
MOTION PASSES 6-0**

The Superintendent has received a resignation from Mr. Paul Schaffer, technical education teacher at North Branford Intermediate School. Mr. Schaffer will remain in the school system for up to 30 days as NBIS administration begins the process of screening, interviewing and hiring of a new technical education teacher.

**MOTION:** Move by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Lawrence Casey to accept the resignation of Mr. Paul Schaffer, technical education teacher at North Branford Intermediate School, with regrets.

**ALL VOTED AYE  
MOTION PASSES 6-0**

The Superintendent has received a letter from Dr. David Perry, Principal of North Branford High School, stating that he will be retiring from public school service at the end of the 2005-2006 school year. Dr. Perry has been Principal of North Branford High School since 1996. Dr. Wolfe personally thanked Dr. Perry for his efforts on behalf of our high school population and for his continued high academic standards. Dr. Perry informed Dr. Wolfe that he would be pursuing a new career in higher education and Dr. Wolfe wished him the very best in this endeavor

**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Lawrence Casey to accept the retirement resignation of Dr. David Perry, Principal of North Branford High School, effective June 30, 2006 with regrets.

**ALL VOTED AYE**

## MOTION PASSES 6-0

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Lisa Gagliardi stated she is truly saddened to lose such a wonderful administrator.

Lawrence Casey remarked that in all the years he worked with Dr. David Perry he is a quintessential gentleman to say the least and Dr. Perry truly is a renaissance man and wished him the very best.

Dr. Wolfe and all Board members wished him the best of luck.

### **B. Appointments**

The Superintendent has received recommendations from NBHS for 2005/2006 Department Chairs, Advisors and Coaches. Special thanks are extended to administration and the athletic director for their efforts in filling these positions. The Superintendent is pleased with the new personnel that will be guiding these activities. All of the positions are stipends in accordance with the contract between the North Branford Board of Education and the North Branford Federation of Teachers. As such all appointments are renewed annually. (attached)

**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Lawrence Casey to accept the attached lists of Department Chairs, Advisory and Coaches as submitted.

<b>Chairman Haskins -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Vice- Chairman Smith -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Secretary Norton -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lawrence Casey -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Marie Diamond -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lisa Gagliardi -</b>	<b>AYE</b>

## MOTION PASSES 6-0

Under the authority granted to the Superintendent by the Board of Education for summer hiring the following positions were filled in August

Robert Ford	NBHS	English	University of Maryland
Stephanie Byrd	NBHS	English	Quinnipiac University
Sharon DeGennaro	NBHS	.8 Social Studies	University of San Diego
Peter Johnson	JHS/TVES	.6 Physical Ed.	Keene State University

Dr. Wolfe welcomed the new appointees to the North Branford Public Schools.

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Amy Norton thanked the five football volunteers who give up their time and energy.

Superintendent Wolfe was pleased to announce to the Board that he was recommending the hiring of Jeremy Rice for the grade three vacancy at Totoket Valley Elementary School. Jeremy is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and has his Master degree.

**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Lawrence Casey to hire Jeremy Rice to fill the vacancy at Totoket Valley, third grade. He will be placed on Master's Step 2 according to the contract between the North Branford Board of Education and the North Branford Federation of Teachers.

<b>Chairman Haskins -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Vice-Chairman Smith -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Secretary Norton -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lawrence Casey -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Marie Diamond -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lisa Gagliardi -</b>	<b>AYE</b>

**MOTION PASSES 6-0**

**C. Leaves – None at this time.**

**D. Around the Schools**

**JHS**

9/16	Character Day
9/20 & 21	Back to School Nights
9/28	Room Parents Tea
10/3-21	PTO Fall Fundraiser
10/4	School Advisory Committee Meeting
10/7	Picture Day
10/11	PTO Meeting
10/12-14	Scholastic Book Fair

**STW**

9/29 School pictures  
9/30 Fall Fundraiser begins  
10/14 Fall Activity Night

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### **TVES**

9/15-16 "Extras" Help for Katrina Survivors-students will donate money for their "extra" snack at lunch.  
9/22 Back-to-School Night, 7:00 - 9:00 PM  
10/4-6 PTO Scholastic Book Fair  
10/11 Grade 5 Parent Math Night  
10/18 Grade 4 Parent Math Night

### **NBIS**

10/3 All school-Student Council Book Fair  
10/4 All school-Progress reports  
10/7 Gr 7 & 8-PTO dance

### **NBHS**

9/29 Senior Student/Principal Picnic, NBHS Courtyard  
Senior Parent Night 7 PM  
10/4 Construction Career Field Trip, Mountainside  
10/7 Progress Reports  
10/8 SAT'S  
10/12 PSAT'S 8-11 AM – NBHS Café  
10/19 College Fair Field Trip – UNH  
10/21 Homecoming game 7 PM  
10/22 Homecoming Dance 7:30

Lisa Gagliardi requested that since Teen Leadership meetings are open meetings can those dates be included in the Around-the Schools as well in the event a Board member would like to attend.

Dr. Wolfe stated he would be happy to provide this data.

### **E. Enrollment**

Attached for Board review was enrollment data as of Wednesday, September 7, 2005. The comparison that the Board has is against the official October 1 enrollment of 2004. The enrollment data shows a drop of 26 students at Jerome Harrison School and an increase of 23 students at Totoket Valley Elementary School. The incoming grade 5 at TVES is 19 students greater than the exiting grade 5. The high school enrollment is 14 students greater than last year. The overall comparison is identical to last year.

Superintendent Wolfe stated the October 1, 2005 enrollment figures would be the official enrollment figures.

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Dr. Wolfe mentioned that as the bubble continues to move through the school system this would mean reassignments in the future.

Superintendent Wolfe remarked that we could be accepting students from the results of Hurricane Katrina and the first family is about to move into North Branford. The CIAC has stated that these students would be eligible to participate in all fall sports.

Lisa Gagliardi remarked that she had asked on August 31, 2005 for a listing of class sizes at NBHS. She understood that as of that date there were four Spanish classes or 32 and 33 students in each. The fifth class was dissolved to accommodate the extra sixth period issue which was to avert a grievance. We have a mandatory senior health class with more than 30 students enrolled, a mandatory senior C.I. class with 34 students enrolled, Spanish 3 class with 34 enrolled, two algebra, level two, B classes with 33 and 30 students enrolled and an algebra 3/trig class with 31 students enrolled. Lisa stated we have been putting NBHS and NBIS in the last few years on hold with enrollment figures. She feels we hid enrollment at NBHS under the umbrella of block scheduling, scheduling changes, among other things and we could not address additional staff until this was in place. With the middle school there was space constraint and with the building new or renovating NBIS we would resolve these issues. Mrs. Gagliardi remarked that she thinks the Board needs to look into these large class sizes especially at the high school. She mentioned that it is amazing that Dr. Perry and his staff has managed one of the smoothest implementations of curriculum and higher resulting test scores with what they have to work with. Lisa stated that the Curriculum Management Cycle and the Strategic Plan are only as good as those implementing it. She has asked in the past for individual class sizes at NBHS and still has not received them. She once again asked for a breakdown of individual class sizes of every class at NBHS.

Dr. Wolfe disagreed that we are short-changing NBHS relative to other levels. He does agree that our administration, chairs and guidance at the high school have done a phenomenal job in scheduling. Out of 440 courses at NBHS only 8 have more than 30 students enrolled. (Spanish, social science, English, health and Sociology) This is a very small percentage and this doesn't make it right but it does put it in perspective. The majority of courses at NBHS have 16 to 23 students enrolled.

Dr. Wolfe explained that there is a possibility, not one that he would recommend, that the Board set limits as to how many students could be enrolled in courses. The problem with this is that with 700 students there are approximately 50 to 60 singleton courses. If a student wishes to take physics and also wants to take French IV and this student needs another course which is a singleton then this student would be forced into a section of something else which is a large number. There is no opportunity to move a student around if they need these singleton courses. He stated that he realizes there is a need for extra staffing at NBHS. This year the Board put resources into the elementary and middle schools. Superintendent Wolfe remarked that it is his wish and hope that we will

expand upon art education, where there is only one educator for 700 students, at NBHS. With only one art educator many students get locked out of these classes as is true in the culinary courses. He remarked that this Board and community have been incredibly

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responsible in continuing with our plan to increase the staffing ratios. He will provide for the Board a complete breakout at the next Board meeting.

Lisa Gagliardi remarked that she was requesting this breakout.

Superintendent Wolfe stated he would be happy to provide it.

#### **F. CAPT Scores**

The Superintendent was pleased to report on the Connecticut Academic Performance Test results. The most recent CAPT was taken by 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in the spring of 2005 and reported just this month. The results are extremely positive and the results show continued growth in all four subtests. Last year North Branford was the only school community that was in the top ten for improvement for all four subtests. This year North Branford was one of two communities in the top ten of all four subtests and number one in overall growth in the state. The results of the CAPT also means that North Branford has achieved its goal of being in the top percentiles in our ERG. North Branford was second in mathematics, first in science, second in reading and third in writing in ERG D. Growth in our reading scores went up 45.6%. Science scores increased 29.4% and writing increased 34.7%. Mathematics increased 23.4%.

Growth since the year 2001 was equally dramatic. For example, science scores increased over this period from 35.7% to 81.3%. The Superintendent feels that focused instruction in conjunction with quality professional development are key factors. The Superintendent extends his congratulations and thanks first to the high school's faculty and staff and to the K-10 faculty and staff who share in this accomplishment.

Joan Follo remarked that our scores were number 1 in science in our ERG and in reading we were number 2, writing we were number 3 and in math we were number 4 and maintained it was because of our teachers, chairpersons and principals.

Joan Follo thanked the department chairs for all their work in the curriculum and share in this accomplishment:

Tamre Mockus	Science
Mark Fabrizi	English
Rose Addario	Writing
Tracy Wootton	Math

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Amy Norton stated that in her eight years on the Board of Education these were the best scores ever. She remarked that this is due to the hard work of our teachers, administrators, parents and students.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned another indicator of success has to do with the advanced placement courses and the number of students taking them and passing them and he will provide a breakout of the number of students taking these courses at the next Board meeting.

Lisa Gagliardi mentioned that she would like to see a correlation of content between the new SAT's and the CAPT tests. She questioned if instructional time spent on preparation for the CAPT helps our students with the SAT since colleges and universities rely heavily on SAT scores.

**G. No Child Left Behind – Lawsuit**

The State of Connecticut has filed a lawsuit against the Federal Government regarding the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. The major argument is that NCLB is an unfunded mandate that will cost the State of Connecticut and local school districts between \$200-\$240 million to comply. This comes at a time when the Federal government is also underfunding IDEA in Connecticut by \$365 million. As of August 18<sup>th</sup>, 41 school districts have passed motions passing the State's effort in this lawsuit.

A copy of the Connecticut Association of Public Schools Superintendents Position Paper was attached for Board review as well as a list of those school districts that have approved motions supporting the action of the State. The following motion is provided should the Board desire to add its name to the list of school districts in Connecticut's lawsuit.

**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Lawrence Casey that the North Branford Board of Education supports the State of Connecticut's NCLB Lawsuit against the United States Department of Education.

<b>Chairman Haskins -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Vice-Chairman Smith -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Secretary Norton -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lawrence Casey -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Marie Diamond -</b>	<b>AYE</b>

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Ron Haskins questioned if the state give us many unfunded mandates.

Dr. Wolfe stated there were numerous unfunded mandates. Friday, September 16, 2005 the state has mandated that all schools will develop a program and implement education for Constitution Day. Teachers must take time from their classroom and curriculum to implement this program.

#### **H. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Results**

Each year the State of Connecticut provides final AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) results for elementary, middle and high schools. This is in conjunction with report requirements of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. Results are based on Connecticut Mastery Tests in the elementary and middle schools and the CAPT at the high school. Data is reported out on a district school and subgroup basis. Copies of the reports for the district and all schools were attached for Board review.

Dr. Wolfe remarked that there was one subset in one school that did not meet the AYP. Any school that has a concentration of more then forty special education students or forty ESL students then they have to be reported as a particular subset. At TVES ,over the last couple of years, we have added Life Skills students and an elementary Bridges program plus our regular special education programs. We have over forty students and it is this group that did not meet the same numbers as the rest of the school.

#### **I. New Teacher Orientation**

On Thursday August 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, a two-day New Teacher Orientation was held for our new staff members. The agenda featured an overview of the Strategic Plan and the Fish philosophy as well as mini-workshops in the BEST program, special education, the Professional Growth Educator Evaluation Program, the Curriculum Management Cycle, Technology, as well as information related to Personnel and Business.

Each new staff member was paired with a school buddy who took him or her on a tour of their assigned school. New staff members met with their building principal and began to establish their classrooms.

Special thanks was extended to the entire administrative team and to the many faculty members who gave of their time and energy to be a 'buddy' to the new employees.

Plans are under development to hold six in-service presentations for new staff members throughout the 2005-2006 school year. Topics will range from classroom management to preparation for the BEST portfolio. New teachers will also be assigned a BEST mentor

who will guide and support the new staff member through the beginning phases of teaching and learning.

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Dr. Wolfe thanked Joan Follo for all her time and energy given to this program.

## **J. Opening Day Ceremonies**

The Opening Convocation was held on Monday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2005. The convocation featured opening remarks by Ron Haskins, Chairman of the Board and a montage of the 04/05 school year developed by Barbara Girard, a patriotic medley by John Congo and a number of distinguished awards, including Teacher of the Year, Stephanie DeFrance. The theme of the Convocation was safe, meaningful community service which is tied to Strategic Action Plans, 2.7, 2.8, and 2.9. Guest speaker, John Graham, President of the Giraffe Heroes Project, talked about meaningful community service and how his organization has awarded approximately 1000 Giraffe Heroes Awards and publicized them in a wide range of media. The Convocation was preceded by a breakfast prepared by Food Service Supervisor, Ed Slubowski, and his staff.

Lisa Gagliardi questioned why the President of the teachers' union (NBFT) was not asked to speak at the opening day ceremony and address the newcomers as has been past practice.

Superintendent Wolfe remarked that there was no communications (phone calls, e-mails etc.) between union personnel and his office over the whole summer break. He mentioned that several e-mails were sent with no replies. Dr. Wolfe stated that there needs to be increased communications between his office and the teachers' union. He received a reply one week ago about a meeting he requested but as yet a date has not been set. Dr. Wolfe remarked that the only way issues will be resolved is if both sides sit down at the table.

Lisa Gagliardi stated an invitation should have been sent to the union president about speaking at the convocation.

Dr. Wolfe stated that in the past the invitation to join the convocation has always been a joint venture between the teachers' union and administration and this is a team effort.

Lisa Gagliardi stated that she contacted past union presidents and they stated that they were contacted directly by the Superintendent and told they would be put on the agenda. If nothing else the new union president should have been introduced to the new faculty.

Superintendent Wolfe stated that the new union president had every opportunity to contact me and make an appointment and answer his e-mails. Dr. Wolfe's last e-mail to

the union president still has not been answered. He stated he would be happy to call the union president and schedule a future meeting.

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Lisa Gagliardi questioned if a Board member could be present when the Superintendent meets with the union president.

Craig Creller replied anyone at anytime and stated he nor the union president received any e-mails from the Superintendent and it was an outrageous lie to say that Dr. Wolfe tried to communicate with them in over three months.

Lisa Gagliardi strongly suggested that since she won't be on the Board of Education as of December 1, 2005 that another Board member make it their business to be at these meetings as there is obviously an issue between the teachers' union and the Superintendent.

Dr. Wolfe stated if we wanted to talk about lies one would be the union telling the press that all six Board members were invited to their meeting when they only invited one member of the Board.

Mrs. Gagliardi stated she could show the Superintendent the forward of that particular e-mail.

#### **K. Mathematics Initiative**

The school system with the commencement of the 2005/2006 school year initiated a math improvement plan. This plan is based on the work completed last year and the development of action plans K-8. The plan was comprehensive in nature and included new materials, new professional development activities, and new teaching strategies. While professional development will be provided at all grade levels, new materials were introduced across the district in grades 3-5. One sample kit of materials was purchased for each grade level K-2 with plans to outfit every K-2 classroom in the 2006/2007 school year. Professional development for the elementary grades commenced during the professional development days prior to the opening of school.

Joan Follo, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and building administration were present to answer any additional questions.

Joan Follo stated that a consultant has been hired for the K-2 level who has started working with the teachers. Everyone seems very enthusiastic about the program called Everyday Math. At the 3-5 level all teachers will be using the same program rather than having their choice of a traditional program. The state department of education recommends this program and many of the CMT initiatives are included in this program.

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**L. Special Education Parent Group**

The Superintendent is pleased to announce the formation of a special education parents group. The purpose of this group is to connect special education parents with special education faculty, staff and administration for the purposes of increased communication and dissemination of information. The group will be under the direction of Suzanne Wright, Director of Special Education, and Dr. Kris Lindsay, Coordinator of Special Education. Suzanne Wright was available this evening regarding the formation of this group.

Suzanne stated she is currently obtaining the first speaker for the group that will be called Special Education News & Discussion Group. Their first meeting will be this fall and a newsletter is being developed for parents called Updates in Special Education. This newsletter will be mailed to every parent of a special education student.

**M. Gifted & Talented Parent Group**

POETS (Parents of Exceptional and Talented Students)

A group will be formed this year for parents of students identified as gifted and talented. The purpose of the group is to inform parents of best practice and research in accommodating the needs of exceptional students within the public school setting. Parents will also have the opportunity to share their experiences about raising a gifted and talented child and will be able to support one another through the process. Joan Follo, Director of Curriculum and Instruction will facilitate POETS. The first meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday September 29, 2005 in the TVES Library.

Amy Norton questioned if it was right to assume both these groups will offer support to these parents as she knows this is what parents have asked for.

Joan Follo stated this was true.

Lisa Gagliardi stated she was very pleased to see our school system create a venue for these parents.

Cheryl Smith stated she had received a letter from a parent inquiring about one of these programs. (gifted and talented)

Joan Follo stated this parent has been contacted.

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**N. NEASC**

Dr. David Perry has informed the Superintendent that he has received a letter that the Commission on Public Secondary Schools at its June 26-27<sup>th</sup> meeting voted to accept the five-year Progress Report of North Branford High School and to continue the school's accreditation. The Commission also identified a number of positive aspects of the school which were outlined in the attached exhibit.

The Superintendent extended his sincere thank you to the high school administration, faculty and staff.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned there would be changes in teacher accreditation that would effect our high school.

**VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**1. Negotiations**

Superintendent Wolfe stated the negotiations committee would meet in executive session next week to discuss three bargaining unit groups.

**2. Budget**

Dr. Wolfe shared with the Board his concerns over the cost of natural gas at JHS and the auditorium. He remarked that we locked in heating oil prices at \$1.85 and our diesel fuel in June 2005.

Lisa Gagliardi questioned Don Winnicki about the 300 account breakdowns.

Mr. Winnicki stated the 322 In-Service was for professional services, 323 Psychological Services was for outside purchased services and 330 Other Professional Services was for a variety of things, technology services, legal fees, referees, contract renewal, and other special education services. (occupational services, physical therapy services, speech therapy services, etc.)

Lisa Gagliardi inquired about the increase total from last year to this year in the 300

account and also asked for a total of our legal fees' bill for the 2004-2005 school year.

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### **3. Building and Grounds**

Ron Haskins reported that the roof was on the concession stand, painting is in progress, the electrical is finished and they are a little behind schedule but hopefully will be ready for Homecoming Day

### **4. Curriculum**

Lisa Gagliardi stated the CAPT and the CMT scores, and the new math initiatives were discussed.

### **5. Pension**

No report at this time.

### **6. Policy**

Cheryl Smith stated the next Policy meeting would be held on Wednesday , September 21, 2005 at 7:30 a.m.

Lisa Gagliardi inquired if Board members would receive an update of all approved policies. (section 7)

Dr. Wolfe stated they would be distributed in the near future.

### **7. ACES**

Cheryl Smith stated she had a copy of their annual report and newsletter to share with the Board members. She mentioned the parents picketing outside the ACES building at her last meeting as ACES is phasing out their Infant and Toddler Program. She is hopeful a Daycare Program will be developed. A student at the Wintergreen School nominated a teacher as Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year and that school will receive a ten thousand -dollar check for school supplies. ACES has applied for a grant through United Way for a Family Resource Center. ACES will purchase 352 State Street for 1.4 million dollars. Cheryl Saloom, Executive Director, announced her retirement effective January 2006. Cheryl Smith stated this will be a lost to ACES and the community.

## **8. Strategic Planning**

No report at this time.

## **9. Building Committee**

Dr. Wolfe stated the Building Committee is about to head into high gear regarding the middle school. The first step, approved by the Town Council, was to develop a Request for Qualifications. (RFQ) The committee must meet and review qualifications and select an architect.

## **10. Calendar Committee**

No report at this time.

## **11. Transportation / Bus Safety Committee**

No report at this time.

## **VIII. Unfinished Business**

**MOTION:** Moved by Lisa Gagliardi to amend the agenda to put the investigation of the Mrs. Brown matter under unfinished business.

No second

**MOTION FAILS**

## **IX. Visitors and Press**

Emilio Marotta remarked that he is addressing North Branford residents and as citizens and taxpayers we should be able to get truthful information from the Board of Education He stated that there is something fishy going on. He thanked all parents, teachers and Lisa Gagliardi for their support over the last three months saying it has made us humble and proud. He remarked that Dr. Wolfe, with all due respect, keeps missing the point. He asked why are all these people speaking about concerns that still remain? He remarked that the composition of the faculty has changed over the last year. How can certain teachers be the cause of all these issues if these issues still remain. Something smells fishy. It can't be a specific faculty member because the problematic teacher is no

longer here. It is the leadership. The fish smell doesn't get any better and won't be gone

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by the next Board meeting. If we could get rid of the fishy smell we could get rid of the flies that seem to be annoying everyone here this evening. It saddens us to see the many great educators who have left the North Branford School System and we asked the members of the Board of Education why? You should not have renewed Dr. Wolfe's contract before we lose any additional teachers. It is very sad bit of information that Dr. Perry is leaving us and he will be missed. Let the teachers get back to what they do best, teaching our children. In light of the recent public regarding the Superintendent you can't help but wonder how much money is being spent on legal fees to defend and police the Superintendent of Schools. As a taxpayer I am tired of having my tax dollars spent unnecessarily as this money should have been spent on textbooks and teachers. You should not have renewed Dr Wolfe's contract. His indecisiveness, inability to lead, no-confidence vote and police investigation should have made the Board ask for Dr. Wolfe's resignation. All but one member of this Board has let us down and this Board is trying to squelch the voices of the teachers and parents. Mr. Marotta asked for Dr Wolfe's resignation.

Jen Daddio remarked that she was disheartened with what was going on here tonight. She mentioned she worked with Dr. Wolfe when Robin Brown was on leave She stated that it took the Board months to find funds to hire teachers but it took them less then an hour to decide to give Dr. Wolfe a raise. She remarked that her son is at JHS and tomorrow is Character Day but there is still a cloud over us. She mentioned we teach our children character but we have a Superintendent who shows no character. She mentioned that in the business world any executive would have been fired with the recent police report of Dr. Wolfe. She read from the Code of Ethics as recommended by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education. Board members will recognize that authority rests only with the whole board assembled in meeting. The Board will represent the entire school community and will uphold and enforce all laws. Board members will strive to ensure that the community is fully and accurately informed about our schools and will try to interpret community aspirations. She remarked that she goes to work everyday and gets questions why her school is always in the papers. She asked Board members to remember that they all chose to work for us as taxpayers of this community and with the children's future at stake ,thank God none of you teach our children. She mentioned that a true leader would be Mrs. Robin Brown.

Lisa Albert remarked that she submitted a letter to the Board of Education with 7 questions to be answered. She stated that questions 1 and 2 were answered but not to her satisfaction. The Board answered questions she did not ask and didn't answer the other five questions. She remarked that someone in town received the very same letter as she did and felt she deserved more than a form letter. She stated that she asked about the no-confidence vote at STW and what the procedures would be. The answer

she received stated the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Board attended a staff meeting at STW in June where the Superintendent addressed the staff on the

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no-confidence vote and morale issues. The Board of Education requested and reviewed a plan of action from the Superintendent on this issue. If you ask any teacher at STW they will tell you that this was not a satisfactory answer and no one from the Board of Education talked to the teachers separately and it was basically a lecture give by Dr Wolfe and the message was shape up or ship out. In regards to the no confidence in the Superintendent of Schools no communications was extended to the teachers or the teachers' union and the Board voted on the Superintendent's contract without communicating with anyone. She stated that she gets calls from other Boards of Education and this town is a joke and this Board is a train-wreck. She went on to say that this Board was a disgrace.

Lisa Comcowich remarked that she received the other form letter. She stated that any statements she made to the Board of Education did not reflect on Lisa Gagliardi as she did her job in trying to get to the truth of the matter and do her job. On September 1, she wrote a letter to the Town Council because they were getting nowhere with the Board of Education. She mentioned that she and her husband wrote this letter but the Board chose to reply to only her and it caused her great distress. She remarked that she is disgusted with Mrs. Norton for referring to what she has brought to the board as concrete information as rumors. What she has experienced in this school system for the last four years to be referred to as rumor, shame on you.

Amy Norton stated she was not speaking to Mrs. Comcowich directly.

Mrs. Comcowich remarked that at the July Board meeting a Board member publicly declared that it was the Board's job to protect the Superintendent. She asked who protects the citizens of North Branford remarking that this Board was a disgrace. She remarked that Attorney Connon stated that the Board had months to hear from the community but she begged to differ. The Board picked and chose what the Superintendent told them to listen to and they are truly a disgrace.

Dom Maggiore questioned when the school locked in the fuel price as he hasn't seen anything in the paper on bids for fuel.

Don Winnicki stated he does the bids through the Capital Region on Governments and this is a consortium that involves over fifty municipalities.

Mr. Maggiore questioned if the fuel was locked in the month of June as that is when it should have been done and if Petro Fuel was one of the bidders.

Donald Winnicki stated in June and he didn't recall if Petro Fuel was a bidder. Don remarked that the bid was also done through Mike Betz, purchasing agent for the Town.

Dom Maggiore questioned if we put such items as fuel, school supplies, etc. out to bid as

he doesn't see anything in the papers.

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Donald Winnicki stated we bid for paper and school supplies through a state contractor.

Dom Maggiore stated that under the Freedom of Information Act he would request a copy of all our vendors and what they are paid. He mentioned he has been to Central Office twice and the Superintendent was not there. He requested Don Winnicki gather this information for him for the last three years.

Paul Proto , chairman of Republican Town Committee and Board of Police Commissioners, stated he was speaking tonight as a parent, taxpayer and voter. He mentioned that he felt the Board had already made up their mind about Dr. Wolfe's contract before the meeting. That is why the chair only allowed fifteen minutes of comments and more at the end of the meeting. The decision was already made in the back room. He remarked that he could tell by Lisa Gagliardi's face, before the public meeting, that the decision had already been reached. He mentioned that he paid seven dollars for a copy of the police report and read it, talked to many community members and discovered there are people who want to see Dr. Wolfe ejected and those who want to save him at all cost. He stated that the Board members have the power to do as they like but they must remember these are the people who put you in office and these are the same people who will take you out. Mr. Proto felt the Board should have given the Superintendent one year to prove himself and not just hand him more money and a two-year contract. He mentioned that our school system has 0 tolerance but your Superintendent has a class B misdemeanor and now he will be the ultimate hypocrite and hand out punishment on students,. There is not a child who will listen to him for they will feel, hey you did it why should I listen to you. He mentioned he is disappointed with the people on the Board of Education that he called friends.

A parent questioned why the Superintendent's contract was not on tonight's agenda.

Lisa Gagliardi stated it is normally under negotiations with an actual motion but the Board chose to ignore this tonight.

The parent stated more people would have been here tonight if they knew the Superintendent's contract was being voted on.

Lisa Gagliardi remarked that she is on the negotiation's sub-committee and she didn't know but it wouldn't have mattered anyway.

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The parent requested who was in charge of the agenda as it was in the newspapers that this contract would not be voted on until the October meeting

Amy Norton stated the Board Chairman was responsible for what was on the agenda.

Ron Haskins stated it was on the agenda under Negotiations – discussion and action regarding unaffiliated contracts.

The same parent questioned if the school system could purchase five more microphones as nobody could hear clearly. She stated she would donate them if the school couldn't afford them.

Tom Comcowich stated with the exception of Lisa Gagliardi this Board has been an embarrassment to him, the town and our children. He questioned how no-confidence votes could be considered rumors, these numbers are real. Did you investigate, talk to anyone? We hear about it why don't you? He also questioned using Royal Printing stating we could teach the students a trade at NBHS if they choose not to attend college. He ended with remarking that he was embarrassed with what happened tonight and it is truly a disgrace.

Karen Austin remarked that she had hoped there was a way these issues could have been resolved as she has worked with many wonderful teachers and she doesn't want them to leave North Branford. She stated that the no-confidence vote in Karen Johnson is why she came tonight as she doesn't listen to rumors. She urged the Board to listen to our teacher's grievances and try to resolve these issues. She remarked if the Board didn't listen then the alternative would be private schools or moving and she really didn't want to leave North Branford.

Lisa Albert stated she had one last request before Lisa Gagliardi leaves the Board of Education and that is for Lisa to give the parents what they need to start the termination process against Dr. Wolfe.

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**MOTION:** Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by Lisa Gagliardi to adjourn this meeting of the North Branford Board of Education at 10:05 p.m.

<b>Chairman Haskins -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Vice Chairman Smith -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Secretary Norton -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lawrence Casey -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Marie Diamond -</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Lisa Gagliardi -</b>	<b>Nay</b>

**MOTION PASSES 5-1**

**THE NEXT REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR  
OCTOBER 20, 2005 AT NORTH BRANFORD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL AT 7:00 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Ardine  
Account Clerk

