

**NORTH BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
2ND BUDGET WORKSHOP
February 2, 2006**

The North Branford Board of Education met on Thursday, February 2, 2006 for their second budget workshop at Totoket Valley Library Media Center at 7:00 p.m. The following members attended:

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| Board Chairwoman: | Cheryl Smith |
| Board Vice-Chairwoman: | Bonnie Symansky |
| Board Secretary: | Marcey Onofrio |
| Board Members: | John Bozzuto, Jr. Elisabeth Caplan Ron Haskins |
| Superintendent of Schools: | Dr. Robert K. Wolfe |

I. Visitors

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| 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 |

Joe Tatta
Mark Torrente
Dolina Potter
Grace Polivka
Mike Pollio

Danielle Ducharme
Michael Votto
Cliff Potter
Bruce Williams
Dick Terrill

Marcella Ardine
Carol Evans
Lisa Albert
Carolyn Kramer
Eileen Simmons

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II. Building and Grounds

Donald Winnicki reported to the Board on building repairs and building and site improvements. He stated that much of the building repair monies have to do with items that are anticipated or what usually happens. They include things that have to be done every year: lights, bathrooms, locks, glass, ventilators, roof fan work, etc. Also covered are inspections and repairs on gym bleachers and gym dividers. Major repairs he listed are repairs on boilers at TVES (number 2 boiler) and NBHS (number 1 boiler). Don mentioned that additional funds are included for annual services and service contracts on items such as intercoms, elevators and emergency lighting.

Mr. Winnicki remarked that building and site improvements vary from year to year. He spoke on some of the minor improvements for buildings such as screens, blinds, replacing berber matting, etc. Some of the major building improvements are changing lockers, ventilator work and replacing exit doors at TVES. At STW the fascia will be replaced and NBHS has asbestos abatement, carpeting in the main office, ceiling and lighting upgrades and changing or refacing lockers. Don mentioned that the ceiling lights at NBHS could no longer be replaced, as they are not being manufactured anymore. Site work includes parking lot striping and lighting improvements, matting under swings and fencing at NBHS. Don Winnicki stated it is an aggressive list but it certainly is not everything that could be done.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that many items on the list are state mandated such as elevator inspections, playground inspections, etc. Both of these lists are only 1% of our entire budget and must be done as we wait for future renovations in our buildings. He remarked that many renovations for NBIS are kept off these lists as that school will soon be renovated and everything on these lists are not reimbursable/

Cheryl Smith questioned why on the Superintendent's list for building improvements the cost is about \$45,000 and building repairs is \$58,456 and this total is \$111,600.

Donald Winnicki stated this is the increase over the prior year.

Bonnie Symansky asked the current age of the boilers that have to be replaced.

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Donald Winnicki remarked that the boiler at TVES is from the early 1990's and he would get information on the boilers at NBHS.

Dr. Perry stated that two of the boilers at NBHS are reconditioned.

Cheryl Smith inquired if we had estimates for the work that was subcontracted out.

Donald Winnicki stated that we did for the most part (carpeting, lockers, ceiling and lighting etc.).

Elisabeth Caplan questioned what the problems were with the lockers to be replaced or refaced.

Donald Winnicki stated the lockers were very old and Dr. Perry mentioned that at NBHS they were from the early 1960's.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that he received a letter from a student at NBIS saying that when the lockers were installed at NBIS students did not have backpacks. He mentioned that the new lockers at TVES are shorter but wider and also many of the lockers being replaced in the locker room at NBHS do not have doors on them.

Donald Winnicki stated that the lockers in the locker rooms are receiving a new front and they are not replacing the whole locker. The lockers that are being replaced are two lockers side- to -side being replaced with two lockers that are up and down.

III. Capital Improvements

Dr. Wolfe remarked that the more items we incorporate into our building repair budget or capital improvement budget we will have to pay the whole freight on these items. If the improvements are incorporated into our building renovation budget we will be reimbursed by 57% but we can not let these items wait forever and some of the items have to be done at this time. He mentioned that we have to look beyond NBIS and have serious conversation with the Town Council. If some of these improvements are not being done for a decade then we must do them now such as roofs, plumbing systems, etc. If the renovations are due within four or five years then we might be able to wait and could be reimbursed. Whatever projects we do now, such as a roof, we have to wait twenty years before we could get the full rate of reimbursement and suffer no penalties.

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Donald Winnicki stated exit doors (regular fire door) and doors with keypads at NBHS, oil feed line replacement at STW and NBHS, ventilator replacement at NBHS, press box at NBHS, and roof replacement at NBHS and TVES are on the Capital List.

He mentioned that the oil lines are buried underground and we are unable to test for breaks. With the new oil lines you will be able to look for leakage.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that NBHS is not on the list for oil line replacement and we hope to get a waiver as we are pending a construction project.

Donald Winnicki remarked that the ventilator replacement is a nine -combo unit that will cover five computer rooms and 4 units in the cafeteria. Even if the high school is renovated these rooms we expect would still be computer rooms and the cafeteria would be in the same place.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that the heating system at NBHS is probably the worst in the system and was not really constructed to run that building. Many wings were added after the original building was built.

Dr. Wolfe stated that the new press box would be a prefabricated box that would be dropped in by a crane.

Ron Haskins inquired about the scoreboard.

Donald Winnicki remarked that the scoreboard was not included.

Dr. Wolfe stated we are getting information from several vendors and once this information is obtained it will be brought to the Board.

Ron Haskins inquired about hiring another custodian instead of paying overtime.

Donald Winnicki stated he would have to go through overtime records and some items such as youth basketball, snow plowing, redoing gymnasium, etc. would not save money from the overtime list.

Donald Winnicki stated he would have to get an estimate for the NBHS roof if the Board wishes to do this roof. The cafeteria roof at TVES has to be done now, as TVES is the last building in line for renovation and the roof would not make it. The cafeteria will stay where it is even after renovation and the cafeteria roof is a separate roof so it will not have to be done again during renovation.

Bonnie Symansky questioned if the roof at NBHS was leaking.

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Donald Winnicki stated there were leaks at NBHS but not critical yet. He mentioned a report done in 2004 it was suggested that this roof be replaced in 2007.

Cheryl Smith questioned if the keypads on the exit doors were installed.

Donald Winnicki stated they were installed but not yet operational. He mentioned he had a meeting set up for next week on the keypads to determine who would get codes and how we would make them operational.

John Bozzuto questioned if the DEP gets involved with the replacement of the oil feed lines. He also mentioned that a school in New Haven that was recently renovated that the oil feed lines was brought above ground and if this was an option.

Donald Winnicki stated he would check on both of these questions. He remarked that the oil tank is buried under the parking lot at STW.

Dr. Wolfe remarked that we would need guidance from the Board as to what projects we would go with.

IV. NBIS Schedule

Dr. Wolfe stated that the NBIS schedule was a three- year project in the making of a true middle school concept. He thanked the administrators and staff for their true team effort.

Alan Davis spoke on the concept of a team stating it was the same core group of teachers who are responsible for over one hundred of the same students each day. He mentioned that he thought every member of his staff was involved with this scheduling committee at one time or another.

Alan Davis remarked that there would be eight classes of forty-three minutes instead of seven classes of forty-six minutes and theatre arts would be very critical to the new schedule. He mentioned that all eighth graders would be required to take a world language.

Alan Davis stated that this new schedule would utilize a NELMS recommendation that the middle school upgrade the technology program. He remarked that some of the computer applications at NBHS would now be moved down to the middle school level. He also remarked the new schedule would allow opportunity for team and cross-team collaboration that is essential to a middle school. He

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mentioned that NBIS formed a decision making team and many members were here tonight.

Mr. Davis mentioned that this schedule would allow for a restructured Unified Arts program, an improved World Language program and the integration of band and chorus classes. It would increase course offerings of technology, library media and theatre arts.

Christine Imperato, Assistant-Principal NBIS, introduced committee members in attendance; Eileen Simmons, Carolyn Kramer, Carol Evans, Mike Votto, Bruce Williams, Grace Polivka, Mark Torrente, Joe Tatta, Roberta Mack, Danielle Ducharme and Marcella Ardine.

Christine Imperato showed slides on the programmatic improvements of the new schedule. She stated that there would be two periods of unified arts instead of one. Ms. Imperato also explained the core courses and unified arts courses and the amount of time for each.

Carol Evans remarked that physical education time would be increased and students would take PE over the course of the entire school year and not for two five- week cycles. She mentioned that if a student had PE in the fall they might not experience another seasonal sport. She remarked that it is very important to have a student take PE over the course of the year.

Danielle Ducharme mentioned that World Language will be fully integrated into the schedule. Sixth and seventh graders would take exploratory courses of French or Spanish for thirty-six straight days and in grade eight students will take a full year of Spanish I or French I as a core academic subject.

Marcella Ardine remarked that team teachers would have collaboration time to develop interdisciplinary units to study and better serve the needs of the students. She stated it is essential at the middle school if they were going to promote a team philosophy to allow teachers to work as a team. Marcella mentioned that regular education and special education teachers who co-teach would be able to better serve the need of their students. This new schedule would also make it easier for team teachers to get together to discuss their curriculum. She mentioned that all academics are essential and are all linked and when students go into the real world they will need all their skills.

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Michael Votto remarked that the middle school is updating technology benchmarks and keyboarding and computer applications will be moved down from the high school level. He stated that students would be better prepared to meet the expectations of high school writing assignments.

Carol Evans mentioned that health instructional time would be increased in all grades with a significant increase for the eighth grade.

Marcella Ardine remarked that study hall for all students would be moved to the end of the day regardless of the grade. Students will have the opportunity to ask questions about homework before going home and students will come to school better prepared, as they will not save their homework until the next day' a.m. study hall. Students will now have the opportunity to seek extra help or can be pulled out of a study hall for band or chorus. If they have a study hall at the end of the day they probably would not have as much homework to take home since many of our students are involved with extra-curricular sports. They would not have to make a choice between math class and band as they could be pulled out of study hall instead of math class for band practice.

Michael Votto stated it was great that library media classes would be brought back. He mentioned the school did this many years ago and it was really needed. He remarked that he was thrilled that World Language would become part of the academic core team and the students will benefit. He also mentioned that physical education over the course of the year would be best for the students.

Christine Imperato mentioned that all her staff supported the music program at NBIS and wanted all students who desired to take part in band and chorus to be able to without worrying about missing core classes.

Joseph Tatta stated that with the new schedule performing arts would be fully integrated into the school day. He remarked that approximately 400 of the 600 students enrolled at NBIS are in band or chorus. Students will no longer miss core academic classes one or twice a week like they currently do. Large band and chorus rehearsals can now take place during the all school study period. This schedule would allow for future growth in the music program (jazz band, woodwind ensemble, select chorus etc.).

Christine Imperato stated that the theater arts program would implement our Strategy #3, Plan #4 of the Strategic Plan and the program will be connected to initiatives in Character Education and Language Arts.

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Elisabeth Caplan questioned if students could get extra help during study hall.

Alan Davis stated that all core teachers would have a study hall and the students would have the opportunity to see teachers for extra help.

Bonnie Symansky questioned the time to collaborate for team teachers.

Alan Davis stated that during the allied arts wheels the core academic teachers would have the time to get together and collaborate.

Cheryl Smith questioned if all staff members felt this good about the new proposed schedule.

Alan Davis stated that all of his staff was on board and invited all Board of Education members to visit NBIS and attend a staff meeting.

John Bozzuto remarked that he applauded the middle school efforts for their teamwork and their passion was very obvious.

Ron Haskins stated that Alan Davis, Christine Imperato and their staff continue to impress him with their unity and he also was very pleased with the way NBIS staff conducts themselves.

Cheryl Smith agreed with Mr. Haskins and Mr. Bozzuto and stated the NBIS administrators and staff teams do a phenomenal job.

Alan Davis remarked that one advantage of working in this town is he works with people he has known most of his life and he has a tremendous staff.

Superintendent Wolfe stated he is very proud of the NBIS staff and in March 2001 he addressed a group of parents called NBPOPS who wanted a better music program for North Branford. He also addressed the NBIS staff and told them he was committed to a new or renovated middle school and a new schedule. He knew he had the right staff and the right administrators and this is the final piece. The building project is underway and we have the right administration and the right faculty and staff and these people are incredible. He encouraged the Board to adopt the new eight periods, tricycle schedule for the 2006-2007 school year.

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MOTION: Moved by Bonnie Symansky and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to approved the new eight period tricycle schedule for North Branford Intermediate School for the 2006-2007 school year.

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| CHAIRWOMAN SMITH: | AYE |
| VICE-CHAIRWOMAN SYMANSKY: | AYE |
| SECRETARY ONOFRIO: | AYE |
| JOHN BOZZUTO: | AYE |
| ELISABETH CAPLAN: | AYE |
| RON HASKINS: | AYE |

MOTION PASSED 6-0

V. NBHS Schedule

Dr. Wolfe mentioned he received a plethora of phone calls from Board of Education members since the last Board meeting with questions about the new NBHS proposed Block A/B modified schedule. He distributed the current staff and schedule numbers and the new 8 period schedule with the current staff. He also distributed actual and projected enrollment figures for NBHS. Dr. Wolfe mentioned that there are a number of classes with over 30 students, 53 sections with 26 or more students and over 50 sections with ten or under students. The current schedule causes some of these problems. He remarked that some of the courses with a low amount of students could be offered every other year and some could be dropped to better utilize our staff.

Dr. Wolfe remarked that we would do a comprehensive retraining program for NBHS staff for the A/B modified block schedule.

Cheryl Smith questioned if professional development for all NBHS staff would be doable by September 2006.

Dr. Perry remarked that many staff members have already been trained and the ones that are not will be trained in the near future.

Superintendent Wolfe stated that we would bring in resources to help staff with the modified A/B block.

Cheryl Smith questioned if there were monies to train NBHS staff.

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Superintendent Wolfe stated we had \$6,000 and some grant monies were available for use.

Marcey Onofrio remarked that she is worried about seniors getting two study halls and getting out of school at ten-thirty in the morning every day.

Dr. Perry stated this is very remote and students are responsible for so many courses to get credits to graduate.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that if schedules were looked at before they are distributed to students this would not happen as adjustments would be made. He also remarked that students do not know when courses are scheduled.

Elisabeth Caplan questioned if the software used at NBHS would spots these problems.

Dr. Perry stated the software in use at NBHS is Power School and these situations would be spotted.

Dr. Wolfe remarked that the modified A/B block schedule teams main concern was what was best for the students.

Elisabeth Caplan stated that she agrees test scores are important but as we educate our students we must prepare them for the real world. She remarked that she felt this schedule is very creative and instills self- motivation and gives students a glimpse of the future.

Ron Haskins stated he had reservations about the A/B modified block schedule especially for math but he noted we must trust the administration for their judgement and give them our support.

Cheryl Smith mentioned that block scheduling has been discussed time and time again and money was what stopped it from going through. She remarked that the block scheduling team was very creative and she congratulated Dr. Perry and the team for all their work and efforts.

Elisabeth Caplan stated that this is not a band-aid approach but a well thought out plan and she appreciated the thoroughness the team put into their efforts of researching the block schedule.

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MOTION: Moved by Elisabeth Caplan and seconded by John Bozzuto to approve the A/B modified block schedule for North Branford High School for the 2006-2007 school year.

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| CHAIRWOMAN SMITH: | AYE |
| VICE-CHAIRWOMAN SYMANSKY: | AYE |
| SECRETARY ONOFRIO: | AYE |
| JOHN BOZZUTO: | AYE |
| ELISABETH CAPLAN: | AYE |
| RON HASKINS: | AYE |

MOTION PASSED 6-0

Superintendent Wolfe thanked the Board of Education for their courage and stated that their actions here tonight would impact all students for years to come and he congratulated them.

VI. Visitors

Cliff Potter questioned the new technology for roofs and the heating system at NBHS.

Dr. Wolfe said that the state has specific requirements for roofs. Dr. Wolfe also mentioned that NBIS, NBHS and the auditorium use different types of heating but all situations would be reviewed.

Cliff Potter also asked if the Board planned on having conversation with the Town Council before submitting the budget.

Cheryl Smith stated she is working with Vinnie Candelora to develop meetings with the Town Council.

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VII. Adjournment

MOTION: Moved by Cheryl Smith and seconded by John Bozzuto to adjourn this meeting of the North Branford Board of Education at 8:45 p.m.

ALL VOTED AYE

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Ardine
Account Clerk