

NORTH BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
April 6, 2006

The Thursday, April 6, 2006 North Branford Board of Education meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Totoket Valley Elementary School Conference room. The following members attended:

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

MOTION: Moved by Ron Haskins and seconded by Bonnie Symansky 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 to discuss legal and personnel matters and negotiations.

ALL VOTED AYE

MOTION: Moved by John Bozzuto, Jr. and seconded by Elisabeth Caplan to reconvene to Public Session at 6:50 p.m.

ALL VOTED AYE

I. Visitors

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

Aubrey Cann	Donna Cann	Steve Jones
Sue Jones	Steve Jones, Sr.	Ashley DiStasio
Valerie DiStasio	Kathleen Rodd	Cameron Pherson
Dale Pherson	Mike Pollio	Deborah Welton

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John Prinz	Joe Staffa	Marcia Staffa
Lisa Albert	Daniel Bevins	Kathleen Bevins
Sarah Bevins	David McMahon	Cliff Potter
Todd Stoeffler	Bruce Williams	Joanne Wentworth
Vincent Candelora, Board Liaison		

There were no visitor comments at this time.

The student representative was not present at this meeting.

MOTION: Moved by Bonnie Symansky and seconded by Elisabeth Caplan to add that the consent agenda include article 20, a request for a leave.

CHAIRWOMAN SMITH:	AYE
VICE-CHAIR SYMANSKY:	AYE
SECRETARY ONOFRIO:	AYE
JOHN BOZZUTO, JR.:	AYE
ELISABETH CAPLAN:	AYE
RON HASKINS:	AYE

MOTION PASSED 6-0

II. Consent Agenda

a. Minutes

Minutes of the March 16, 2006 Board of Education meeting.

b. Resignations

The Superintendent has received a retirement resignation from Mrs. Joyce Hanchette, grade 4 teacher at Totoket Valley Elementary School, effective the end of the 2005/2006 school year after 21 years of dedicated service to the North Branford Public Schools.

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The Superintendent has received a resignation notification from Ms. Karen LeVasseur, grade 5 teacher at Totoket Valley Elementary School, effective at the end of the 2005/2006 school year.

c. Appointments – None at this time.

d. Leaves –

Special Education teacher, Ursula Pendziwater, has requested six weeks leave under Article 20 of the contract between the North Branford Federation of Teachers and the North Branford Board of Education. The Board has sole discretion in granting such requests. In the past the Board has granted such requests. Six weeks is the amount of time that a teacher would receive under parenthood leave.

The Superintendent is recommending that this item be approved.

e. Field Trips – None at this time.

MOTION: Moved by Bonnie Symansky and seconded by Elisabeth Caplan to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted and amended.

CHAIRWOMAN SMITH:	AYE
VICE-CHAIR SYMANSKY:	AYE
SECRETARY ONOFRIO:	AYE
JOHN BOZZUTO, JR.:	AYE
ELISABETH CAPLAN:	AYE
RON HASKINS:	AYE

MOTION PASSED 6-0

III. Superintendent's Report

a. Recognition

Six North Branford Students Receive Honors At Annual SCASA Awards Luncheon

The South Central Area Superintendent Association honored 58 students on March 17 at their Annual Student Recognition Luncheon held at 500 Blake Street. Over 225 people were in attendance with guest speakers Kristen Cusato, NEWS 8 Weekend Anchor and Dr. David Larson, Executive Director of CAPSS. Superintendent Bob Wolfe, Co-Chair of SCASA coordinated the event. Students were selected for their overall academic achievement, extra-curricular involvement and community service. Each district was allowed to name six students, with the exiting grade at each level having two representatives.

The Board of Education recognized the following students who represented North Branford:

<u>TVES - Grade 5</u>	Ashley DiStasio	Cameron Pherson
<u>NBIS – Grade 8</u>	Sarah Bevins	Joseph Staffa
<u>NBHS – Grade 12</u>	Aubrey Cann	Stephen Jones

Nancy Brittingham, Alan Davis, Dr. David Perry and Board Chairwoman Cheryl Smith presented plaques to the students from each school.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that he was very proud of all these students and noted that Aubrey Cann has been accepted at Brown University.

CABE

John Prince, a representative from the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) presented awards to the North Branford Board of Education. North Branford received the CABE Award of Excellence for Educational Communications for the *Annual Report of the Superintendent 2004/2005*

North Branford also received Honorable Mention awards for the *North Branford Public Schools – Summer Brochure “Greatest Arts on Earth”* as well as *North Branford Public Schools – Pocket Calendar 2005/2006*

Superintendent Wolfe mentioned that over the past four years, the school system has received 18 communications awards. He extended special thanks to all students, faculty and administration who contributed to each of the communications projects.

Mr. Prince distributed information about the upcoming Clifford Beers Clinic's 4th annual Builders of Hope Breakfast featuring Ruby Bridges.

b. Communications - None at this time.

c. NBHS Principal Search

The NBHS Principal Search Committee met on April 4th and 5th and conducted interviews with the semifinalist pool of candidates. The Superintendent reported on the results of the interviews and writing samples and provided a projected timeline for the next steps.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that the Search Committee included four teachers, 4 administrators, 2 parents, 1 student and 1 Board of Education member.

He stated that two candidates were chosen as finalists and the Superintendent of Schools, the Curriculum Director and the Director of Business/ and Personnel would now interview them during the week of April 24, 2006. Based on this interview there will be a follow-up focus meeting at the high school and an on-site visit of the chosen candidate. Finally the Superintendent of Schools will recommend this candidate to the Board of Education.

d. Summer of 2006

The Summer of 2006 – “*What do you collect?*” brochure was released for distribution in both North Branford and North Haven on March 1st. As of March 29th, 840 program registrations have been received. Approximately 2/3 of the registrations are from North Branford and 1/3 from North Haven.

Dr. Wolfe stated some of the more popular programs this year are badminton, laser tag, floor hockey and flag football.

e. Graduation Date

In accordance with State Statute the North Branford Board of Education may establish a firm graduation date after April 1st of the school year. In as much as the school system has experienced three snow days and one day added to the calendar after the holiday break, this moves graduation to Wednesday, June 21st, 2006.

MOTION: Moved by Ron Haskins and seconded by Elisabeth Caplan to establish the 2006 North Branford High School graduation for Wednesday, June 21, 2006.

CHAIRWOMAN SMITH:	AYE
VICE-CHAIR SYMANSKY:	AYE
SECRETARY ONOFRIO:	AYE
JOHN BOZZUTO, JR.:	AYE
ELISABETH CAPLAN:	AYE
RON HASKINS:	AYE

MOTION PASSED 6-0

f. PowerSchool - Parent Access

PowerSchool is a WEB based student information system and has been the district's student database since the summer of 2005. PowerSchool allows parents, with authorization, to access information about their child from a computer with Internet access. Information accessible includes, attendance, grades and assignments. Dr. David Perry, Principal of NBHS, and Mr. Tim Hartigan, Director of Technology, conducted a presentation on the use of parental access.

Dr. Perry remarked that the process started over three years ago and stated many parents are using the website with very few problems. He mentioned that thanks were due to Timothy Hartigan, Bruce Williams, Kathy Maler and Barbara Girard who put in a remarkable amount of work to get this website up and running. He stated that Power School is a huge program that is a tremendous help to parents. Parents have a pass protected file and they can view their student's progress from anywhere in the world.

Tim Hartigan stated that Bruce Williams, Kathy Maler and Barbara Girard put in thousands of hours implementing this program. He presented a sample view of a fictitious student's progress to the Board of Education. Mr. Hartigan mentioned that parents could view their child's attendance record, courses, grades, etc.

Dr. Perry remarked that teachers could put in remarks that parents can access instead of sending home progress reports. He mentioned that this saves money on postage.

Dr. Wolfe questioned how many parents were using this program.

Dr. Perry stated the majority of his parents use the program to access information on their child or children.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that the next move would be to install this program at the middle school.

Bonnie Symansky questioned what prevents a student from hacking into his or her own record and changing the grades or information.

Mr. Hartigan stated that this is a read only program for students and parents.

Bonnie Symansky remarked that this is an impressive program and questioned who trained the teachers to use the program.

Dr. Perry stated there are a team of teachers at NBHS who trained other teachers.

Cheryl Smith mentioned that from a parent's prospective Power School is a marvelous and excellent tool for parents.

Superintendent Wolfe remarked that he applauds the technology team and the teachers and administrators stating they made the right decision.

g. Information and Technology Literacy Competency

The Connecticut State Department of Education and the North Branford Public Schools Strategic Plan and Curriculum Management Cycle have mandated the integration of technology applications as a teaching and learning tool in all grade levels. The 6-8 technology team has completed their work on developing a process for monitoring student progress on the technology competencies and the district's ability to integrate them throughout the curriculum. Joan Follo, Director of Curriculum, was present to answer any questions regarding the 6-8 technology integration process and extended her thanks to the following educators for their contributions to this project:

Michael Votto, Marcella Ardine, Patricia DePalma, Bruce Williams, and Julie Perry.

Joan Follo stated that through the use of Grade Level Skill Expectation Checklists, grade level teacher teams are able to collaboratively determine which technology competency skills will be integrated into which disciplines. Teacher teams can adopt an

interdisciplinary task to monitor student progress or integrate technology into content performance tasks. Regardless of the monitoring method selected, teacher teams will collaboratively review student progress in January and May of each school year. Each skill will be mastered before students reach grade nine.

h. Professional Development

Certified staff members were involved in a full-day of professional development activities. The activities spanned a wide range of building-based and system initiatives K-12. A variety of activities in the high school were related to planned professional development in order to implement the new modified A/B schedule. Joan Follo, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, was available to highlight the successful day's activities.

Joan Follo mentioned that many workshops received an excellent rating such as Core Assessment with Pam Brucker, CSDOE with Charlene Nicholas for math and the NEOA workshop. She mentioned that many of our teachers went outside the district for workshops. Joan also mentioned the CT Writing Project was at the middle school and the high school. Many departments at NBHS attended workshops on block scheduling.

IV. Committee Reports

a. Negotiations

Cheryl Smith stated the committee had their first meeting with representatives from the North Branford Federation of Teachers this evening and everyone felt pretty good about the meeting and they feel like there is a beginning. They will meet next month before the Board meeting.

b. Budget

Dr. Wolfe stated the Town Council will be holding a workshop for Town Departments on Monday, April 10, 2006 and the Board's budget is being presented on Tuesday, April 11, 2006 scheduled to begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers. Another meeting is scheduled for April 12, 2006 if it is needed.

Elisabeth Caplan remarked that Cheryl Smith did an excellent job presenting the Board of Education budget to the Town Council. She mentioned that many of the Board's fixed cost are in-line with the Town's fixed cost.

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Dr. Wolfe mentioned that Cheryl Smith's presentation as well as Karl Kilduff's, Town Manager, presentation were clear, explicit and very well done.

c. Building and Grounds

No meeting to report on at this time.

d. Curriculum

Elisabeth Caplan stated visual literacy was discussed at tonight's Curriculum meeting. She mentioned that our school district has been working with an incredible educator, Karen Silva for the last couple of years. She stated that many that subjects at JHS and STW such as reading and writing about art are being interconnected as an atmosphere of visual literacy is created. She also mentioned that the Columbia Writing Project is also being reinforced at JHS and STW. She stated we have many types of learners, kids who are visual and kids who can write. She feels this type of teaching will help us to reach all learners.

e. Pension

No meeting to report on at this time.

f. Policy

No meeting at this time to report on.

g. ACES

Cheryl Smith mentioned that Craig Edmons is the new Chief Executive Officer of ACES.

h. Strategic Planning

No meeting to report on at this time.

i. Building Committee

No meeting to report on at this time.

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j. Calendar Committee

Marcey Onofrio stated that everyone who served on the last calendar committee is willing to serve again on the committee.

k. Transportation/Bus Safety Committee

No meeting to report on at this time.

l. Communication

Bonnie Symansky stated that a Technology article is being developed.

V. New Business

No new business to report on at this time.

VI. Visitors and Press

No comments.

**THE NEXT REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR
MAY 18, 2006 AT TOTOKET VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.**

VII. Adjournment

MOTION: Moved by Bonnie Symansky and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to adjourn this meeting of the North Branford Board of Education at 7:50 p.m.

ALL VOTED AYE

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Ardine
Account Clerk