

NORTH BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
February 15, 2007

The North Branford Board of Education meeting was called to order on Thursday, February 15, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. at the Totoket Valley Elementary School. The following members attended:

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

MOTION: Moved by John Bozzuto and seconded by Elisabeth Caplan to adjourn to Executive session as per Section 1-225 of the Connecticut General Statute as permitted by Section 1-200 (6) (a, b&c) of the Connecticut General Statutes at 6:30 p.m. to discuss negotiations, contracts and personnel.

ALL VOTED AYE

MOTION: Moved by Elisabeth Caplan and seconded by John Bozzuto to reconvene to Public session in the Library Media Center at 7:00 p.m.

ALL VOTED AYE

I. Visitors

Director of Business/Personnel:	Donald Winnicki
Director of Curriculum/Instruction:	Joan Follo
Director of Special Services:	Suzanne Wright
Principals:	Michele Saulis, NBHS Nancy Brittingham, TVES Dr. Karen Johnson, STW

David McMahon
K. Helff
Kathy McNelis

Roger Munck
Marcia Staffa

Todd Stoeffler
Cindy Sorrentino

Roger Munck remarked that Dr. Wolfe works for the North Branford Board of Education and the citizens of North Branford. He mentioned that the 7% increase in Dr. Wolfe's salary was ridiculous. He requested that the school system shouldn't replace so many items but should repair them. Mr. Munck also requested that teachers should pay towards their medical insurance.

Mr. Munck questioned if the Supervisor of Building and Grounds, who lives in Stafford Springs, receives mileage to travel to work. He questioned why someone who lives in North Branford wasn't hired for this job. Mr. Munck stated that many citizens in North Branford live on a fixed income and their money is running out while the Board keeps spending and the citizens are deluged with taxes. Roger Munck remarked that all salaries should be frozen and the school system is top heavy with administrators. Mr. Munck stated that the Board of Education is out-of-hand and a Town Council member should be seated at the table during Board of Education meetings to help make decisions. Mr. Munck stated that Dr. Wolfe and the Board of Education should be held accountable for monies they received last year before they get more.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that no staff member receives mileage compensation for travel to and from work.

Cheryl Smith remarked that teachers do pay towards their medical insurance and the premium is going up again this year. Mrs. Smith thanked Roger Munck for all his comments.

II. Student Representative

There was no student representation at this meeting.

III. Consent Agenda

a. Minutes

Minutes of the January 18, 2007 North Branford Board of Education meeting.

Minutes of the January 23, 2007 Special Meeting

Minutes of the February 1, 2007 Special Meeting

- b. Resignations - None at this time.
- c. Appointments - None at this time.
- d. Leaves - None at this time.
- e. Donations - None at this time.

f. Field Trip

The Superintendent is recommending the approval of a field trip request from Mrs. Jennifer Marenga, World Language Dept. Chair at NBHS. The trip is scheduled for May 23, 2007 to New York City. The class will be touring New York's Little Italy and Chinatown.

MOTION: Moved by Ron Haskins and seconded by Bonnie Symansky to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted.

Marcey Onofrio had one change from the January 18, 2007 Board of Education meeting:

Page 12 – Last Paragraph – instead of committee has signed off on it should read parents have signed off on.

MOTION: Moved by Ron Haskins and seconded by Bonnie Symansky to approve the Consent Agenda as amended.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0-1

IV. Superintendent's Report

a. Recognition - None at this time.

b. Communications

The Superintendent received a letter from Peter M. Prowda, Ph.D. Education Consultant from the State Department of Education. The letter detailed enrollment projections through the year 2016.

The Superintendent received a news release from George A. Coleman, Interim Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Education. This release reported the success in the Advance Placement program for Connecticut.

Dr. Wolfe distributed copies of the Totoket Valley Elementary School Enrichment Program and the cover of the upcoming summer program.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that Nicole Gilhuly was a winner in the 2007 Fire Prevention Calendar Contest. Nicole is currently a sixth grader at North Branford Intermediate School. She will be honored at a future Board meeting.

c. Board of Education's Budget Request

The Board of Education has held two Budget Workshops on the Superintendent's 2007/2008-budget request. The original request was for a 6.18% increase over the 2006/2007 budget. The budget subcommittee met this past week to review both the Operating Budget request and the Capital request. Updated information was provided to the subcommittee in the areas of health benefits, energy costs, and personnel changes.

The budget subcommittee made recommendations to the Board of Education. In addition, it was anticipated that additional information would become available by the time the Board met.

The Board of Education must submit its budget request to the Town Council no later than February 28, 2007. Once the Operating and Capital Budget requests are determined by the Board, motions will be in order.

John Bozzuto stated that the Budget subcommittee cut \$84,900.00 from the Superintendent's capital budget request. He mentioned that the Press Box, Score Board and pole-vault mats were removed from the capital budget. Mr. Bozzuto stated that Vincent Candelora, state representative, was investigating state funding for these items.

Elisabeth Caplan mentioned a 2% total increase in health insurance.

Donald Winnicki remarked that energy submitted at .239 per 1000-kilowatt hour was reduced to .175 per kilowatt-hour thanks to our Town Manager, Karl Kilduff's hard work. Mr. Winnicki stated that there would be savings of \$155,000.

Bonnie Symansky questioned if we were staying with UI.

Donald Winnicki stated we would be going with an alternative vendor but UI is still a part of it for distribution.

Cheryl Smith stated that the numbers in Special Education are going down and the subcommittee recommended a .5 special education position cut for savings of \$20,000.

Ron Haskins questioned the base line figure of 4.04%

Donald Winnicki stated the base line would be around that figure.

Cheryl Smith questioned the current share in health care benefits for teachers.

Donald Winnicki stated it would be 15% next year.

MOTION: Moved by John Bozzuto and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to reduce the Superintendent's budget request as specified in the Budget Subcommittee spreadsheet by \$269,143.00 or 1.03%. This produces an operating budget request of \$27,384,838.00 or an increase of 5.15%.

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

MOTION PASSED 6-0

MOTION: Moved by John Bozzuto and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to approve a Capital budget request of \$258,263.00 by reducing the Superintendent's Budget request by \$84,900. (NBHS grounds improvement).

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

MOTION PASSED 6-0

d. Open Choice

The Superintendent provided the Board an update on its commitment to Open Choice. Open Choice is a major component of our ability to provide diversity within our schools. State law requires this. The Superintendent provided a chart that detailed the 26 seats by grade level. Twenty-three of the 26 seats will be filled by returning students as part of our commitment that once a student begins in Open Choice, they are allowed to continue. This will leave three vacancies for the 2007/2008 school year. The Superintendent recommends continuation of the commitment as in the past – 26 seats.

John Bozzuto questioned if we were required by state law to follow this plan.

Dr. Wolfe stated we are required by state law to have a plan for diversity.

Bonnie Symansky questioned if we get money from the state for these students.

Dr. Wolfe stated we get a small amount of money for these students and we do not pay the transportation for these students. He mentioned that many North Branford students attend schools in other open choice schools.

MOTION: Moved by Elisabeth Caplan and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to approve the Board of Education endorsing Open Choice for the 2007/2008 school year with its continuation of 26 seats

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

MOTION PASSED 6-0

e. Audit Report

The audit report has been completed for the 2005/2006 school year. This report was shared with the Budget Subcommittee of the Board of Education at its February meeting and is scheduled to be released to the Town Council in the coming days. Director of Personnel and Business, Don Winnicki, highlighted aspects of this report.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that there were minor issues that were identified on the Town side and the Board side. He remarked that after meeting with the Town Manager,

February 15, 2007

Karl Kilduff, and the Town's Financial Advisor, Anthony Esposito, it was agreed that fixed assets of \$1,000 or more would be carried in the Town's Ledger.

Donald Winnicki stated that he is reviewing all recommendations for different accounts, student activity, grants, adult education, food service and he will review them with the people who are responsible for them. Mr. Winnicki stated a small school system does not have enough staff to accomplish all recommendations and in the future we might have to add another staff member to accomplish all of their recommendations.

Cheryl Smith asked if Donald Winnicki would update the Board on all recommendations in the near future.

Donald Winnicki stated that he would.

f. Kindergarten Enrollment

Kindergarten registration was held on February 7th. The Superintendent provided the Board of Education with information on kindergarten registration and updated kindergarten enrollment. Early projections may have an impact on staffing at the kindergarten level for 2007/2008.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that it is likely that by the time we open in September our kindergarten numbers could be higher as we know from past experiences we usually take in more students than the ones that register in February. He recommended that we hold off on hiring a .5 kindergarten teacher until our numbers are more stable. At this time we have registered 137 students of the 141 students in the state report. Sixty-nine students registered at STW and sixty-eight students registered at JHS and Dr. Wolfe feels we will exceed the state's projection of 141. Both principals have informed Dr. Wolfe that there are twenty-five more packets that are unaccounted for.

V. Committee Reports

a. Negotiations

No report at this time.

b. Budget

A copy of the February 1, 2007 financial statement was enclosed for Board review.

c. Buildings & Grounds

No report at this time.

d. Curriculum

Elisabeth Caplan reported that the Curriculum Committee held a very informative meeting and the Compacting of Curriculum in Kindergarten was discussed. Elisabeth Caplan remarked that better use of a kindergarten day, math standards, social studies, science, combining subjects with the art specialist, Little Scientist program and other issues were discussed.

e. Pension

Elisabeth Caplan stated the scheduled Pension meeting was cancelled and would be held next week.

f. Policy

The Board is provided a copy of the following policies for first reading:

Policy #P4110 – Advertising and Promotion

Policy #P4120 – Smoke Free Environment

The Board is provided a copy of the following policies for second reading and approval:

Policy #P1510 – Use of Breath Testing Devices

Policy #P4020 – Videotaping, Photographing and Filming of Staff/Students (Revised)

Policy #P4080 – Political Activities of School Employees

Policy #P4090 – Public/Parental Complaints

MOTION: Moved by Elisabeth Caplan and seconded by Ron Haskins to approve Policy #P1510 – Use of Breath Testing Devices as submitted.

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

MOTION PASSED 6-0

MOTION: Moved by Elisabeth Caplan and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to approve Policy #P4020 – Videotaping of Staff/Students (Revised) as submitted.

Marcey Onofrio requested that the word photocopying be changed to photographing on the fourth line.

Mrs. Symansky questioned if we are assured that we will have a policy that addresses Web images since it is not covered in this policy.

Cheryl Smith stated that the Policy for Web images would be kept separate from this Policy # P4020.

MOTION: Moved by Elisabeth Caplan and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to approve Policy #P4020-Videotaping of Staff/Students as amended.

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

MOTION PASSED 6-0

MOTION: Moved by Ron Haskins and seconded by Elisabeth Caplan to approve Policy #4080 – Political Activities of School Employees as submitted.

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

MOTION PASSED 6-0

MOTION: Moved by Ron Haskins and seconded by Elisabeth Caplan to approve Policy #4090 – Public/Parental Complaints as submitted.

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

MOTION PASSED 6-0

g. ACES

Cheryl Smith stated that at the last ACES meeting several items were discussed, Governor Rell's budget, budget process review, Wintergreen School, transition into new health insurance, Madison withdrawing from TEMS, fiber optic upgrades and full- day kindergarten versus half-day kindergarten.

h. Strategic Planning

Dr. Wolfe provided the Board of Education a chart detailing the site-based planning which has commenced in addition to the district-wide goals that have been taken from specific Action Plans and Steps.

I. Building Committee

Dr. Wolfe stated a complete set of plans has been received for NBIS and there will be a meeting in March with the State's Review Committee.

j. Calendar Committee

No report at this time.

k. Transportation/Bus Safety Committee

The Board of Education reviewed and discussed the proposed extension of the current transportation contract. This rollover extension would eliminate year five of the current contract and make 2007/2008 the first year of a new five-year agreement. Cost savings in year one are estimated at \$51,000.

MOTION: Moved by Ron Haskins and seconded by Elisabeth Caplan to enter into a (5) five-year contract with DATTCO Bus Company from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2012 with a savings of \$51,000.

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

MOTION PASSED 6-0

Elisabeth Caplan thanked Donald Winnicki for his thoroughness with the DATTCO contract and all his help in getting the new contract settled.

l. Communication

Bonnie Symansky stated there were problems with the educational channel due to the type tapes we were using. When the tape was transferred to the hard drive the system would crash the system. In working with the cable access group we will be changing the way we tape our meetings.

VI. New Business

No new business at this time.

VII. Visitors and Press

Roger Munck questioned if the Supervisor of Building and Grounds was at work during the snow storm and if he receives travel time. He also questioned how the monthly finance page was reported as he felt it was very hard to read. Mr. Munck also questioned non-certified staff.

February 15, 2007

Dr. Wolfe remarked that the Supervisor of Building and Grounds was at work during the snowstorm and he does not receive travel time or mileage from home to work.

Elisabeth Caplan stated that the monthly finance page was updates to the Board of Education like a monthly snap-shop.

Donald Winnicki stated non-certified personnel were not certified and certified personnel were teachers and principals.

Roger Munck questioned if we really needed a Superintendent of Schools.

Cheryl Smith stated that we did as it was a state law and Board members are not qualified to run the school system.

Mr. Munck questioned why the Board of Education accepted a 5.15 % increase.

Cheryl Smith stated the Board of Education held many, many budget meetings and she felt this was a fair increase.

**VIII. The next regular Board of Education meeting is scheduled for
March 15, 2007 at Totoket Valley Elementary School.**

IX. Adjournment

MOTION: Moved by Elisabeth Caplan and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to adjourn this meeting of the North Branford Board of Education at 8:10 p.m.

ALL VOTED AYE

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Ardine
Account Clerk

