

NORTH BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
October 18, 2007

The North Branford Board of Education meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of Totoket Valley Elementary School on Thursday, October 18, 2007. The following members attended:

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

MOTION: Moved by Elisabeth Caplan and seconded by Bonnie Symansky to adjourn to executive session at 6:08 p.m. as per Section 1-225 of the Connecticut General Statutes as permitted by Section 1-200 (6) (a,b & c) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

ALL VOTED AYE

MOTION: Moved by Elisabeth Caplan and seconded by Ron Haskins to reconvene to public session at 6:55 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
Alan Davis, NBIS
Nancy Brittingham, TVES
Dr. Karen Johnson, STW
Shawn Parkhurst, JHS

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Samantha Flanagan | William Choti | Christine Imperato |
| Nathan Bowers | Todd Stoeffler | Dolina Potter |
| Marcia Staffa | Craig Edmondson | Ann Dombroski |
| Gary Shettle | David McMahon | Cliff Potter |
| Kathy Gargiulo | | |
| Rachael King, New Haven Register | | |

II. Student Representative

Samantha Flanagan and Kathy Gargiulo reported on the following events:

Academics

PSAT'S October 20th
ACT's October 27th
SAT's November 3

Sixteen of NBHS best musicians participated in the Shoreline Music Concert with other Shoreline schools that was held at Coginchaug High School.

Social

Senior Night for fall sports is being held this week at NBHS. All parents of senior athletes attend and seniors are recognized. The following teams will be recognized on:

Field Hockey: October 16th
Boy's Soccer: October 22nd
Girl's Soccer: October 23rd
Volleyball: October 24th
Football: November 2nd
Cheerleaders: November 2nd

Homecoming Game will be held on Friday October 19^h and the Homecoming Dance will be held on Saturday October 20th.

A pep rally will be held on Friday October 20th at 9 a.m. and many activities by various school clubs will be held that night such as the banner parade. (weather permitting)

The Honor Society will host a Haunted House on Friday October 26th.

III. Consent Agenda

MOTION: Moved by Ron Haskins and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to remove three field trips (Bodies Exhibit, Hispanic and European Cultures, and the Grand Canyon) from the Consent Agenda.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

October 18, 2007

a. Minutes

Minutes of the September 20, 2007 Board of Education meeting.

b. Resignations – None at this time.

c. Appointments – None at this time.

d. Leaves

Mrs. Lisa Stopka, kindergarten teacher at Jerome Harrison School, is requesting unpaid leave under Article 20 of the contract between the North Branford Board of Education and the North Branford Federation of Teachers. Said leave will be without pay from November 21st through December 17th, 2007.

e. Field Trips

The Superintendent has received a field trip request from Mrs. Meghann Redman, science teacher at NBHS. The proposed trip is to the “Bodies Exhibit” in New York City. The students will depart North Branford High School at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, November 27th and return at 5 p.m. the same day. Students will view exhibits of real human specimens. Attached is additional information regarding this exhibit.

The Superintendent has received a field trip request from Mrs. Jennifer Marenga, world language teacher at NBHS. The proposed trip is to New York City where students will experience authentic food and learn about Hispanic and European cultures. Students will leave NBHS at 6 a.m. and return at 9 p.m. on either Wednesday, May 21st, or Wednesday, May 28th, 2008.

The Superintendent has received a field trip request from Mrs. Cindy Genzano, English teacher at NBHS. The proposed trip is to United Nations in New York City where students will meet with a representative of the Botswanian Mission, tour the United Nations in preparation for participation in the 2008 Model United Nations. Students will leave NBHS at 7:45 a.m. and return at 8 p.m. on Thursday, November 1, 2007.

October 18, 2007

The Superintendent has received a field trip request from Deena DeLucia and the grade three team at TVES. The proposed trip is to Magic Wings in South Deerfield, Massachusetts. Students will link butterfly science kit experience. Students will leave STW at 8:50 and return at 3 p.m. on Friday, November 30th, 2007.

The Superintendent has received a field trip request from Mr. Nathan Bowers, science teacher at NBIS. The proposed trip is to Grand Canyon National Park from June 21 through June 25, 2008. The purpose of the trip is to expose middle level students to the wonders of geology, anthropology and evolution. The proposed cost of the trip is \$1,547 per person. Details for this proposed trip are attached.

f. Donations – None at this time.

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

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

IV. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Wolfe introduced the new Supervisor of Operations, William Choti. Dr. Wolfe stated that Mr. Choti comes to us with a wealth of experience and would start his position on November 5, 2007.

William Choti remarked that it was exciting to become a member of the Board of Education team. He stated that the North Branford Board of Education has built a reputation of high standards and they show their commitment every day to the students of North Branford. He mentioned he is looking forward to working with all staff members of the North Branford School System and other town officials to ensure a clean and healthy environment for learning. He stated that education is the largest investment that most towns make and he will put forth his very best efforts in his new position.

a. Recognition - none at this time.

b. Communications

Dr. Wolfe remarked that he and the Board of Education received a letter from CABE, Connecticut Association of Boards of Education informing us that our school district has won the CABE Award of Excellence for Communications.

School Calendar – 1st place

Annual Report - 1st place

Summer Camps Brochure - 1st place

Dr. Wolfe thanked all the artists who contributed to our school calendar, Joan Follo and the administrative team for the Annual report and Lisa Coughlin, Terri Rienzo and Anna DeMatteo for the Summer Camp Brochure. Dr. Wolfe stated that these awards are the 21st, 22nd and 23rd awards received in a six-year period.

Superintendent Wolfe distributed a note from a staff member, Special Education Newsletter and a letter from Robert Ward with thanks for presenting him with the “Friends of Education” award

Circular Letter: C-6 New Requirement to Publicly Bid Contracts for School Construction Architectural or Construction Management Services.

Dr. Wolfe remarked that this would affect future projects but not the NBIS project.

c. ACES Executive Director

Executive Director of ACES, Dr. Craig Edmondson, shared with members of the Board of Education an overview of our RESC (Regional Educational Service Center). ACES currently provides direct services to over 2400 students. They provide primary services to school systems in the Greater New Haven area as well as having direct management responsibilities to a number of magnet schools. North Branford currently has students enrolled in the Educational Center for the Arts and CAMS and utilizes special education services for other students. ACES provides professional development activities and technology support to our system. For the past two years, Chair Cheryl Smith, has represented the North Branford Board of Education on the Governing Board.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that he has spent 33 hours with ACES staff over the last three days for Strategic Planning. He introduced Craig Edmondson, Executive Director, Ann Dombroski, Assistant Executive Director of Curriculum and Programs and Gary Shettle, Assistant Executive Director of Finance and Operations.

Dr. Edmondson gave a presentation on ACES services and programs for 25 school districts. He mentioned that ACES is considered a public school as well as a business operating on a 65 million dollar budget with only \$350,000 coming from the State of Connecticut. Most of the budget is obtained from fee for services, grants and tuitions.

He mentioned that there are 25 members from 25 districts on the ACES governing board and he thanked Cheryl Smith for always being at the meetings and for her support.

Dr. Dombroski presented various school programs and their specific needs for a wide range of learners. She mentioned that the CAMS school in Northford is a magnet school for students with an opportunity to start over.

Mr. Shettle spoke on programs ACES developed in regular public schools if their services are requested. He spoke on services to children in hospitals and juvenile centers.

Cheryl Smith stated she was very impressed with all the services ACES provides and remarked that they did an excellent job.

d. Enrollment

A snapshot of enrollment from October 1 was attached for Board review. The major reason for the difference between enrollment projections and actual enrollment is due to the number of new kindergarten students enrolled. Based on the lower kindergarten enrollment, the additional .5 kindergarten teacher and two kindergarten aides were not hired.

Bonnie Symansky stated that the numbers in 5th grade are a concern to her and questioned what could be done to lower these numbers.

Dr. Wolfe stated our major problem is space. We would have to take from other programs, art, music, etc. to hire additional staff. He remarked that instructional aides could be utilized. He stated we would have the same concerns with next year's sixth graders.

Bonnie Symansky remarked that adding additional aides would be putting another body in an already crowded room. She questioned what the cut-off number of numbers per room was.

Dr. Wolfe stated that these numbers were in the teachers' contract.

Cheryl Smith stated that we have moved teachers with the larger grades as they move through the system.

Dr. Wolfe stated many of these problems would be addressed in the 08-09 budget.

e. Curriculum Guides

Last month, the Board was provided a copy of the Child Development portion of the Family and Consumer Science Curriculum Guide for grades 9-12. Joan Follo, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, was present to respond to any questions the Board had. At this time the superintendent is requesting the approval of this curriculum guide.

MOTION: Moved by Bonnie Symansky and seconded by Elisabeth Caplan to approve the 9-12 Child Development portion of the Family and Consumer Science Curriculum Guide as submitted.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

The Child Development curriculum will be added to the Food Service curriculum to complete the Family/Consumer Economics Curriculum Guide. Joan Follo and Dr. Wolfe gave thanks to Lynn Lanzoni, for her dedication over the last two years in the development and completion of this standards based curriculum guide.

Joan Follo stated that Lynn Lanzoni made a wonderful presentation to the Curriculum sub-committee. She stated that Ms Lanzoni received 283 requests for her program this year but could only accommodate 50 students.

Elisabeth Caplan stated she was very impressed with the completeness of what Ms Lanzoni is doing with the program. She remarked that she hopes we can help her out next year with more staff as she is teaching life building skills.

f. Museum Schools

The Superintendent and Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Joan Follo, provided the Board with very exciting news. A new relationship between the school system and the Yale Center for British Arts. The North Branford Public Schools – primary schools Jerome Harrison and Stanley T. Williams – will soon be named the first Museum Schools – a partnership to increase the visual literacy of students. The partnership will include funding for advanced interaction between elementary students and the museum, additional trips to the museum, visiting artists in the schools, the potential of Yale interns and greater access to the museum for Stanley T. Williams and Jerome Harrison parents.

A kick-off reception will be held on Monday, November 12th, at 5:30 p.m. at the museum.

Dr. Wolfe remarked that he saluted Joan Follo, Dr. Karen Johnson, Shawn Parkhurst, staff members of JHS and STW and Elisabeth Caplan. He stated that Elisabeth Caplan was a vital participant in the program.

Joan Follo also thanked Patti Darragh for her passion with the program.

g. Girls Hockey Program

The Superintendent has received a request for the formation of a Girls Hockey Club in conjunction with one being formed in North Haven. Additional information was provided for Board review.

Marcey Onofrio stated that this request should be put off until a representative of the Hockey Club could attend a Board meeting.

h. 2007/2008 Proposed Budget Calendar

The Superintendent provided a copy of the 2007/2008 Proposed Budget Calendar.

MOTION: Moved by Elisabeth Caplan and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to approve the 2007/2008 Budget Calendar as submitted.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

i. Community Round-Up

The 18th Annual Community Round Up is scheduled for Saturday, October 27th. This day is critical for the stocking of the two food closets in the North Branford Community. The success of this event is in large part due to the number of North Branford students and faculty who contribute their time and energy towards this event. I encourage everyone to check their calendars to see if they can give of their time.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that Joe Tenczar would be videotaping this event. He stated that this event is a sight to behold. This year it will be held in the gymnasium. NBIS and NBHS students collect food items and STW, JHS and TVES collect personal care items. Alan Davis and his staff are very instrumental in the running of this program.

Cheryl Smith asked what time the event is held.

Alan Davis stated from 8:45 a.m. until 11:15 a.m.

V. Committee Reports

a. Negotiations

Ron Haskins stated that the negotiations committee met last week with the NBFT and ground rules were established for the upcoming negotiations.

b. Budget

The Superintendent enclosed a copy of the October 1 financial statement for Board review.

Dr. Wolfe mentioned that a large amount is being spent at this time for pumping STW's sewer but he hopes the cost will eventually be included in the STW Sewer Project.

Bonnie Symansky questioned the amount for the Pupil Services line item.

Donald Winnicki remarked that this is where we encumber our outside services for speech. We were unable to fill a Speech position and we are buying services.

Ron Haskins questioned how often the sewer at STW is pumped.

Donald Winnicki stated no longer than every two days.

Dr. Wolfe remarked that it could cost between fifty to seventy-five thousand dollars depending on when the solution is finally implemented.

c. Buildings & Grounds

Superintendent Wolfe distributed a report from Criscuolo Engineering just prior to the Board meeting regarding the options available regarding the septic system of Stanley T. Williams School.

He remarked that Criscuolo identified three possible solutions:

Repair the existing septic system.

Put in a new leeching field and stay with a septic system.

Connect to the closest spot to the Town sewer system.

Dr. Wolfe remarked that the Town Council met on Tuesday evening and they feel the best way to go would be with the sewer route and also connect TVES to the sewer system while a sewer line is being installed for STW. The Town Council approved to

send this project out for bonding. After this is approved then the project can go out to bid.

d. Curriculum – No report at this time.

e. Pension – No report at this time.

f. Policy

Elisabeth Caplan stated that the grading policy was discussed at the Policy Sub-Committee meeting. She mentioned that Michele Saulis attended this meeting and the committee appreciated all the administrative work that was accomplished by Michele. This policy was submitted for first reading. Elisabeth Caplan remarked that if any Board member has questions about the policy they could call her.

Attached for Board review were policies for second reading and approval:

Policy #P2130 – Professional Development (Revised)

MOTION: Moved by Ron Haskins and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to approve Policy #P2130 – Professional Development (Revised) as submitted.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

Policy #P4130 - Relations with Law Enforcement Agencies

Bonnie Symansky remarked that this policy doesn't mention danger posed to the child or to themselves. She thought this should be added to the policy.

MOTION: Moved by Ron Haskins and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to approve Policy #P4130 – Relations with Law Enforcement Agencies as amended.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

g. ACES

Cheryl Smith reported that a guest speaker from CAFE attended the last ACES Governing Board meeting. An on-line Policy and Procedures for resources to Policy Committee was discussed. Also an on-line system called Pay-Schools, where you could pay anything to the school system on-line, was discussed. (lunches, dues, etc.)

Bonnie Symansky questioned if this service would work with our on-line system.

Cheryl Smith stated it would work with any system, as it is a web-based program.

Paperless Board of Education meetings was also discussed.

h. Strategic Planning

Dr. Wolfe stated that Site-Based planning in on going and all schools are working on their initiatives.

i. Building Committee

Superintendent Wolfe mentioned that we are waiting for approval from the State on the portables and we should receive notification by the end of this month. He also noted that by the end of this month the state should finish the final review of construction documents. As soon as we receive approval we can go out to bid.

October 18, 2007

Dr. Wolfe noted that the state required us to compare the cost of a new building and the cost of renovation to make sure there was a savings. He remarked that new would cost fifty-four million and renovations would cost 37.4 million so there is a huge savings.

j. Calendar Committee

Don Winnicki, Director of Personnel and Business, provided the Board with an update of the revisions to the proposed 2008/2009 school calendar.

Cheryl Smith remarked that the 08-09 school calendar should be sent back to the Calendar Committee for reviewing and changes if needed.

Dr. Wolfe remarked that this calendar should be set at the November meeting.

k. Transportation/Bus Safety Committee- no report at this time.

l. Communication

Bonnie Symansky questioned why the Board of Education meeting was being presented on Channel 20 instead of Channel 19.

Joe Tenczar stated that he only has 3 decks and more equipment is needed to use Channel 19 because of the amount of time that is needed for each tape. He remarked that Channel 20 compresses the tapes to one tape.

Bonnie Symansky stated that there was a worry if more programs are not shown on Channel 19 that the North Branford Cable would lose the channel.

Joe Tenczar stated that it doesn't matter what channel the meetings are on as long as they are being shown.

Cheryl Smith noted that Joe Tenczar should be invited to the next Communication Subcommittee meeting.

Joe Tenczar stated that the graduation tape is being shown a lot because it was an

Eight-shoot tape and they are very proud of it and the video has received many compliments from community members.

VI. New Business

“Bodies Exhibit” Field Trip

Marcey Onofrio questioned the ratio of chaperones to students on the “Bodies Exhibit” field trip and questioned if the students are on their own at any time.

Michele Saulis stated the students were chaperoned at all times and the museum itself has very high security. Students would be in a room with the exhibit and an adult is in the room at all times. There is also an adult at the exit door.

Michele stated that on the Cultural trip students would be in stores by themselves and she couldn't guarantee that they would always be with a chaperone as they would be going from store to store to interact with shop owners.

MOTION: Moved by Marcey Onofrio and seconded by Bonnie Symansky to approve the field trip request to the “Bodies Exhibit” in New York City on November 27, 2007.

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

October 18, 2007

Hispanic and European Culture Field Trip

This field trip was tabled until more information is received.

Grand Canyon National Park

Cheryl Smith stated her concern is that 7th grade students are too young and the cost is very expensive.

Ron Haskins noted that the time frame for the trip is after school lets out for the year and he and Bonnie Symansky questioned the follow up.

Alan Davis stated that eighth graders would have first choice and then seventh graders. He remarked that Cheshire has been running this program very successfully for the last five years.

Nathan Bowers stated that when Cheshire first started the trip there were 15 students, then 25 students, 50 students and finally 60 students

Cheryl Smith questioned if Mr. Bowers has had any contact with parents and what their feedback was.

Nathan Bowers stated he has not contacted parents because he did not have Board approval.

Cheryl Smith questioned what kind of follow-up would be implemented.

Mr. Bowers stated the students would have an understanding of how the Earth changes and he would get all positive and negative results in the next school year.

October 18, 2007

Marcey Onofrio questioned if Mr. Bowers was comfortable with the ratio of chaperones.

Nathan stated that it would be ten students to one chaperone. He mentioned that the tour guide would also be a chaperone.

Cheryl Smith questioned if any teachers were interested in the trip.

Mr. Bowers stated Mr. Burke and Miss Granfield, both science teachers.

Cheryl Smith asked Alan Davis his feelings on the trip.

Alan Davis stated he was very skeptical at first but the more he investigated he realizes this would be a good opportunity for our students. He stated he applauded the teacher's enthusiasm and parents could also attend this field trip.

Bonnie Symansky questioned if a school nurse would be on this trip

Nathan Bower stated that the company sponsoring the trip is responsible for all that happens there through their own insurance. He would be responsible for any medicines the students needed for preexisting medical issues.

Mr. Bowers stated the group also has an opportunity to do fund raisers to afford the trip.

Dr. Wolfe questioned if all applicants would be screened.

Mr. Bowers stated all NBIS rules would apply. If a student loses privileges at NBIS at any time they would not be allowed on the trip.

MOTION: Moved by Marcey Onofrio and seconded by Bonnie Symansky to approve the Grand Canyon National Park field trip request on June 21st through June 25, 2008.

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| CHAIRWOMAN SMITH: | AYE |
| VICE-CHAIR SYMANSKY: | NAY |
| SECRETARY ONOFRIO: | AYE |

ELISABETH CAPLAN: AYE
RON HASKINS: NAY

MOTION PASSED 3-2

VII. Visitors and Press

Cliff Potter questioned why the Board of Education kept putting off the 08-09 school calendar. He remarked that he needs to know tonight when the April vacation is so he can make sure he takes the same vacation time as when his wife is on vacation. He stated that his company is waiting for him to submit his vacation so they can move on to the next person. He also mentioned that he didn't care what channel the Board of Education was shown on as long as it was on. Mr. Potter stated that all field trip requests should have a representative at Board meetings.

Cheryl Smith stated that the Calendar Committee has not had a chance to meet to finalize the calendar

Marcey Onofrio remarked that we should think about moving the April vacation for that year.

Ron Haskins questioned if the Board could give Mr. Potter some kind of idea when the April vacation would be.

Marcey Onofrio stated the Calendar Committee was not at this meeting.

Dr. Wolfe stated that the Calendar Committee are advisors to the Board but the Board has the final say.

Dr. Wolfe stated he recommends moving the April vacation to April 13 through April 17, 2009. He also recommended an early dismissal for December 23, 2009.

October 18, 2007

Marcey Onofrio stated the Board should just do the April vacation tonight and send the rest of the calendar back to the Calendar Committee.

MOTION: Moved by Elisabeth Caplan and seconded by Ron Haskins to set the April vacation for the 2008-2009 school year to April 10, Good Friday through April 17, 2009

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0

VIII. The next regular Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 14, 2007.

XIV. Adjourn

MOTION: Moved by Marcey Onofrio and seconded by Elisabeth Caplan to adjourn this meeting of the North Branford Board of Education at 8:47 p.m.

ALL VOTED AYE

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Ardine
Account Clerk