

NORTH BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
March 19, 2009

The North Branford Board of Education met at 6:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of Totoket Valley Elementary School on *Thursday, March 19, 2009*. The following members attended:

Board Chairwoman:	Deborah Prunier
Board Vice Chair:	Marcey Onofrio
Board Secretary:	Nancy Lappie
Board Members:	Bonnie Symansky
	John Bozzuto
	Dr. Christopher Manna

Superintendent of Schools: Scott Schoonmaker

MOTION: Moved by John Bozzuto 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, personnel matters and negotiations.

ALL VOTED AYE

MOTION: Moved by Marcey Onofrio and seconded by Nancy Lappie to reconvene to the Library Media Center for Public Session at 6:45 p.m.

ALL VOTED AYE

I. Salute to the Flag

II. Visitors

Director of Business/Personnel:	Donald Winnicki
Director of Technology:	Timothy Hartigan
Director of Operations:	William Choti
Director of Curriculum/Instruction:	Joan Follo
Director of Special Services:	Suzanne Wright
Principals:	Alan Davis, NBIS
	Dr. Kris Lindsay, TVES
	Doug Hammel, STW
	Shawn Parkhurst, JHS

Joe Tenczar	Todd Stoeffler
Kenney Johnson	Bradley Johnson
Robert Moran	Cliff Potter
Dolina Potter	Marcia Staffa
David McMahon	Mary Bigelow

Mary Bigelow of the Cable Advisory Committee of South Central Connecticut gave an overview of the function of the Advisory Committee, which encompasses seven towns, including North Branford. She stated that one function of the committee is to know when there are changes and complaints and to operate as intermediary between Comcast and customers. If they can't be resolved by the Advisory Committee they are referred to Comcast.

She stated that it is called P.E.G. (Public Education and Government), which is allowed to have three representatives from North Branford. She is the only representative on the committee from North Branford. She explained that there is a need for one more person to represent the Town and one for the Education component. There has not been a representative for the education part since Anita Ward. While twelve meetings are scheduled, typically a representative would attend approximately ten meetings per year and exchange information. She invited members of the board to consider volunteering for this position.

Deborah Prunier commented that Ms. Bigelow was free to put the request into writing and submit it to the Superintendent for distribution throughout the schools.

III. Student Representative

Student Representative, Deseray Peterson, gave the following report:

School Functions:

The winter semi-formal dance was held on Friday, February 27th. It was well attended by mostly underclassmen, although, she stated that she attended as it was her last high school dance before the prom. Students were well-behaved, handsomely dressed and enjoyed dancing and singing to their favorite music. They did well overall and made a lot of money.

The annual High School musical production, "Seussical" will be at the auditorium on April 2, 3 and 4 at 7:00PM. Tickets are \$10.00 for adults and \$8.00 for senior citizens and children under 12 years of age.

Community Service:

The annual senior citizens' day will be March 25th at NBHS. This event is hosted by the National Honor Society and includes a meal provided by the Food Service Students and entertainment by the Jazz band.

The Student Council is sponsoring a Red Cross Blood drive, tomorrow, March 20th for students and anyone over the age of 17.

Assemblies:

On Wednesday, March 4th, the freshmen attended a presentation of "The Yellow Dress" presented by Deana's Educational Theater, Inc. It focused on dating violence, sexual coercion and bystander intervention. The cost of this production was paid for by a grant.

The freshmen also attended a presentation on Global Warming by former television meteorologist, Art Horn.

On March 25th and April 1st approximately thirty teachers and approximately forty students will be attending a training program led by the Anti-Defamation League, entitled "Names Can Really Hurt Us". Their work will culminate in a school program on April 22nd in the Auditorium.

Sports:

The winter sports season went very well. The boys' basketball team recently ended their season in the second round of the state tournament. They had an overall winning record of 18-5 and won their league championship. The girls' basketball team had an overall record of 10-10. They played an awesome season and qualified in the state tournament. Although the hockey team did not have a winning record, they still ended the season with three wins. The swim team won four meets and had a great overall season. They are improving every year. The indoor track team did very well. Many people qualified for shorelines as well as states and placed in the top spots in long distance throwing and pole vaulting. The fencing team did a great job this year and although their team was small, they continue to improve, winning many of their competitions. Lastly the cheerleading team not only contributed at football and basketball games, but also competed in various tournaments. Recently, they placed fifth in the state out of twenty-three teams. The spring season will begin this Monday on March 23rd.

March Madness: A Basketball tournament is being held to raise money for Project Graduation. Various students, teachers and even our Superintendent participated, however, the students seem to be giving them a good run for their money and taking over the tournament. They did an awesome job.

MOTION: Moved by Marcey Onofrio and seconded by Nancy Lappie to amend the minutes in the Consent Agenda .

CHAIRWOMAN PRUNIER	AYE
VICE-CHAIR ONOFRIO	AYE
SECRETARY LAPPIE	AYE
JOHN BOZZUTO, JR	AYE
CHRIS MANNA	AYE
BONNIE SYMANSKY	AYE

Motion carried: 6-0

Marcey Onofrio stated that the Minutes of February 12, 2009 Budget workshop needed to be amended.

Bonnie Symansky stated that page 3 should be changed to read "The Board agreed to tentative meetings on Wednesday, February 25 or Thursday February 26 at 6:00 pm."

She also asked that the minutes of the February 24, 2009 Special Meeting be corrected. She said that Page 2 of the minutes, referring to the removal of the World Language Program, should not include the phrase, "They told me it would be difficult", but should be amended to read, "I thought it will be difficult."

Marcey Onofrio requested an addition to the Minutes of the February 24, 2009 Special Meeting. She asked that an amendment be made to Page 4, in the section referring to "letter of transmittal to the Town Council to include a one-time contribution of \$100,000 of FRC money to the current BOE budget request". She asked that the minutes make reference to the \$100,000 reducing the request from 2.78 to 2.43.

IV. Consent Agenda

a. Minutes

Minutes of the February 12, 2009 Second Budget Workshop

Minutes of the February 12, 2009 Board of Education Meeting

Minutes of the February 24, 2009 Special Meeting

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

The Diamond Club of North Branford has notified the Superintendent of their intention to donate \$5,000. These funds would be earmarked for repairs to the North Branford High School baseball field.

- f. Field Trips - None at this time.

MOTION: Moved by Marcy Onofrio and seconded by Nancy Lappie to accept the Consent Agenda as amended.

CHAIRWOMAN PRUNIER	AYE
VICE-CHAIR ONOFRIO	AYE
SECRETARY LAPPIE	AYE
JOHN BOZZUTO, JR	AYE
CHRIS MANNA	AYE
BONNIE SYMANSKY	AYE

Motion carried 6-0

V. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Schoonmaker clarified that he had not yet played in the March Madness tournament at the high school, but he was scheduled to play later in the evening.

a. Recognition

Superintendent Schoonmaker introduced special guests, Bradley Johnson and Bobby Moran, of Boy Scout Troop 463 in Northford. They were in attendance because they are currently working on a merit badge for Citizenship in the Community. Superintendent Schoonmaker explained that this is one of twelve badges necessary for the rank of Eagle Scout. He also stated that they are members of the seventh grade class at NBIS, and wanted to commend them and recognize them for the amount of time, energy and effort that it takes to attain the rank of Eagle Scout. He invited them to introduce their Scoutmaster. Bradley Johnson introduced his dad, Kenny Johnson to the Board.

b. Communications

Board of Education Briefs from each school were attached for Board review.

Superintendent Schoonmaker invited members of the Board to ask any questions of the Building Administrators. He also commented that although Michele Saulis was not present, one of the bullets that she mentioned was the visit of Art Horn, former television meteorologist. She told him that the freshman class was quite interested.

Several Board members commented that they appreciated having the briefs available.

Bonnie Symansky stated that she was glad to see that the Grade1 students from Stanley T. Williams took advantage of the presentation at Long Wharf Theater.

Doug Hammel remarked that everyone had a great time.

Bonnie Symansky commented favorably on a past trip to a puppetry production.

The Superintendent provided the Board with a copy of a letter from the State Board of Education.

Superintendent Schoonmaker explained that Michele Saulis has been selected to serve on the Secondary School Reform Committee to evaluate Capstone projects as part of the graduation reform effort that is happening in the State of CT at this time. He said she will be bringing us some of the cutting edge information as we look to bring our graduation requirements in line with what we feel is going to happen in the next three to five years of high school reform. He said we certainly have an advantage with Ms. Saulis on this committee.

Bonnie Symansky stated that she had not heard of the Capstone Experience Committee and asked Superintendent Schoonmaker to explain.

Superintendent Schoonmaker explained that it referred to an exhibition in the second half of the senior year, where high school seniors will have to demonstrate certain competencies, i.e. written form, use of technology and use of formal presentation that

will be judged by school members. It would have a rubric attached to it that would be a part of the graduation requirement.

Bonnie Symansky asked if this would be limited to selected members.

Superintendent Schoonmaker replied that it would apply to all seniors. He further stated that he has seen this program in the past and feels it is truly beneficial and has the effect of motivating seniors in the second half of the school year. He reiterated that we are thrilled to have Ms. Saulis serve on this committee.

c. NBHS Drama Production

Tickets are now available for the NBHS Drama Club's Production of "**Seussical the Musical.**" The performances will be held at the Auditorium on Thursday, April 2nd, Friday, April 3rd and Saturday, April 4th. All performances will be at 7 p.m. Ticket prices are \$8 for children under 12 years of age - \$8 for senior citizens and \$10 for adults. Ticket sales at the Auditorium Box Office from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on the following dates:

3/10	3/24
3/13	3/27
3/17	3/30
3/20	3/31
4/1	

Superintendent Schoonmaker encouraged Board members to come to the Drama production as it involves countless hours and so many students. He stated that it is a wonderful activity and the students love the support.

d. North Branford Education Foundation –mini-grants

The North Branford Education Foundation has recently made available the second round of mini-grant applications. The Education Foundation is a volunteer organization dedicated to securing funds to enhance and extend learning opportunities for students that are beyond the conventional resources of our school system. The goal of the organization is to raise funds from individuals, businesses and civic groups in the community and from alumni to promote the excellence of North Branford Public Schools. The Foundation is independent of the Board of Education and not designed to replace tax dollars or to affect the schools budgeting process. The Foundation will distribute funds raised to enhance educational initiatives and provide mini-grants to district educators who apply to pilot a new activity, enhance a part of the existing curriculum, or strengthen the teaching-learning process in the classroom.

Superintendent Schoonmaker advised the Board that the North Branford Education Foundation will be hold an evening event on March 26th at Amatos, for business owners to come and find out more about what the Foundation does and then introduced Joan Follo to explain more about the mini-grants.

Joan Follo explained that the main purpose for the Education Foundation being on the agenda this evening is to explain that mini-grants are now available and that the

applications are online. The teachers have access to them and they come along with tips on how to fill out the application and what the Foundation is looking for in the mini grant applications. She stated that the grant information needs to connect with curriculum and what has been identified as important. Ms. Follo referred to Marie Diamond's presentation to the sub-committee informing them of future projects, i.e. electronic board for the outside of the high school and middle school, a wellness center at the high school. She explained that for right now the focus is on the mini-grants.

Bonnie Symansky added that she attended an event with author, Patricia Reilley Giff at TVES. She also stated that at a Foundation function, Marie Diamond gave everyone to wear a pin saying, "Together we make a difference". Ms Symansky remarked that we all need to work together.

Nancy Lappie informed the Board that there were other fund-raising events planned.

Joan Follo mentioned a family pasta night, where everyone can come to see the new cafeteria at NBIS. She also indicated that Marie Diamond said that the Foundation was open to having a Board of Ed member.

Superintendent Schoonmaker thanked Joan for all the time and energy she puts into the Foundation, for her work on the grant application and for her own time she puts in behind the scenes. He also explained that the grants ranged from \$250 to \$1500.

e. CMT/CAPT Testing

The Connecticut General Statutes mandate a statewide assessment be administered to all public school students in grades 3 through 8 Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and grade 10 Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT). Students are assessed in reading, writing and math in grades 3 – 8 (CMT) and grade 10 (CAPT). Students are also assessed in science in grades 5 and 8 (CMT) and grade 10 (CAPT). The testing window for both assessments is March 2-27, 2009. This window includes two weeks of formal testing and two weeks of make-up testing for those students who were absent.

Superintendent Schoonmaker remarked there was a great deal of time and energy putting together the schedule for testing and that the students did quite well considering all of construction projects going on. He stated that the adoption of the Storytown literacy program has boosted the confidence of the faculty members because of alignment with CMT. The teachers and administrators feel strongly about the direction we are taking with our students, and they are excited to implement the writing portion of the program.

f. SCASA Student Award Luncheon

On March 20, six North Branford students will be honored by the South Central Area Superintendents' Association. This award/recognition program is to provide a regional forum for students to have their service and achievements acknowledged by superintendents. Over 300 individuals are expected to attend representing 16 towns. This year the students representing North Branford are:

Frederick Van Augur TVES

Kristi Wharton	TVES
Mark Severino	NBIS
Ashley Distasio	NBIS
Joseph Folz	NBHS
Ariana Acquarulo	NBHS

This year marks the second year that two scholarships are being awarded to individuals who plan on majoring in education. The scholarships are given in memory of Dr. Alida Begina former Superintendent of Hamden and Martin DeFelice, Jr. former Superintendent of Schools in East Haven. Scholarship recipients are announced at the lunch.

Superintendent Schoonmaker pointed out that those in attendance would be honoring our students for their efforts not only in the classroom, but their service and achievements outside the classroom as well.

g. Technology Plan

The Superintendent has provided the Board of Education with a copy of the North Branford Public Schools Educational Technology Plan (2009/2012). This plan has been submitted to our RESC, ACES, for review.

Superintendent Schoonmaker introduced Timothy Hartigan, Director of Technology to explain and answer any questions regarding the Technology plan.

Mr. Hartigan thanked the committee for their time and involvement to update the plan that will expire in June. He also thanked Joan Follo for her efforts as well. Mr. Hartigan informed the Board that he received an email earlier in the day from ACES to inform him that they had accepted the plan. He stated that barring any changes the Board might make, we are ready to go. He further explained that, ACES, rather than reviewing the plan line by line, has approved a format and made certain all the pertinent sections were addressed. He explained because the Plan is a three year rolling plan, the Board is free to make changes, should they so desire. He added that it is somewhat like a living document. Changes can be submitted to the State and be incorporated into the document. He informed the Board that he put a tentative approval date to coincide with the April BOE meeting. He remarked that if they should approve it now, it could be given to the Superintendent for his signature.

Deborah Prunier remarked that she would like to have a portion of the email received from ACES entered into the public record. "Your 2009-2012 Technology plan has been reviewed and is being recommended for approval. You will be able to pick up your signed copy on March 26th at the Technology Council meeting at ACES, Signed, Dee Colson, ACES." She also asked Tim Hartigan if having the plan in place would enable the District to apply for Technology grants.

Tim Hartigan explained that when the district applies for grant money, the plan is consulted. If what the district is applying for does not appear in the plan, the grant won't be approved. He further stated that the rolling three year plan allows the district to make the adjustments as needed.

Deborah Prunier thanked those involved for the comprehensive plan.

MOTION: Moved by Bonnie Symansky and seconded by John Bozzuto to approve the Technology Plan.

CHAIRWOMAN PRUNIER	AYE
VICE-CHAIR ONOFRIO	AYE
SECRETARY LAPPIE	AYE
JOHN BOZZUTO, JR	AYE
CHRIS MANNA	AYE
BONNIE SYMANSKY	AYE

Motion carried 6-0

Superintendent Schoonmaker stated that he would like to echo thanks given to the entire committee for their teamwork and hours of effort to provide the technology plan.

h. Board of Education's 2009/2010 Budget Request

The Board of Education's 2009/2010 Budget Request was submitted to the Town Manager and Town Council on Friday, February 27th, 2009. The Town held a Public Hearing in the Auditorium on Tuesday, March 17, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. and presentations were made on both the Town and Board of Education budgets.

Superintendent Schoonmaker asked Don Winnicki to answer any question that the board had regarding the budget proposal. He thanked everyone who worked so diligently since January.

Deborah Prunier thanked Superintendent Schoonmaker for his diligence as well for keeping abreast of fuel costs and keeping track of reductions.

John Bozzuto commented on estimated consumption of fuel this season at 16,000 gallons. He questioned the reduced consumption of fuel oil this season.

Don Winnicki stated that he reduced the amount because NBIS is a bit of an unknown right now. There was a balance between the natural gas, the new heating plan for NBIS, and the oil. Between them he projected that less fuel would be used than originally requested.

Chris Manna asked if the number originally submitted was 3.66.

Don Winnicki answered that that was correct.

Chris Manna asked if we were able to reduce that cost by forty percent.

Don Winnicki stated that it was reduced to about 2.05

Nancy Lappie asked what the next step was in the budget process.

Don Winnicki answered that the preliminary information we have is that there will be a meeting on Monday, April 6. It would be the Town Council's first budget workshop. He further stated that it was his understanding that there would be a brief public session

immediately before the meeting. On Tuesday, April 7, there will be a Town Council meeting and a budget workshop, which purports to deal with the Board budget and Capital budget. Wednesday, April 8th is a reserve night. He also stated that the referendum will be on the first Tuesday night.

i. Professional Development Day

Certified staff members will participate in a full day of professional development activities on Friday, March 27, 2009. Activities include district, school and curriculum initiatives K-12 ranging from SmartBoard training, Destiny training, iWork Applications, Podcasting, use of student data to inform instruction, intervention, and IEP development as well as curriculum work. The art department will experience a special treat with a presentation given by our own Alice Chittenden, K-2 art teacher, who recently returned from a visit to China. Outside presenters will include:

Sonya Kunkel from CREC for our Special Education Department on the use/analysis of data

Patrick Flynn from ACES for NBHS for PLC work and use of student data

Howard Gunther from ACES for NBIS & NBHS SmartBoard Training

Meryl Mendon from ACES for STW SmartBoard Training

Ellen Cohn for NBIS for Response to Intervention

Mary Beth Molloy for NBIS Destiny Training

Superintendent Schoonmaker referred to the attached schedules for professional development day throughout the district, and introduced Suzanne Wright who briefly mentioned the Special Education Department's agenda for the day.

Joseph Bozzuto inquired about Destiny Training.

Joan Follo explained briefly that it is used by Library Specialists to manage data and that classroom teachers are being offered the training so that they can put together bibliographies, i.e.

Superintendent Schoonmaker recognized Joan Follo for putting together the agenda for professional development, working with administrators of each building.

Joan showed the Board the invitation to the China Presentation which was put together by Alice Chittenden of the Art Department.

j. Non-Renewals

In accordance with State Statute, non-renewals of non-tenured certified staff members must be accomplished before the end of March. The Superintendent reports that there are no non-renewals planned as of this date with the exception of four long-term substitutes and one one-year only contracts, which will expire at the end of the 2009 school year. He added that the notices will go out during the week of 3/23.

VI. Committee Reports

The Board of Education will review and may take action on committee reports and recommendations.

a. Negotiations

Don Winnicki stated that he has been working with the Custodial and Cafeteria teams for quite some time and have tentative agreements with both. He said there has been a mediation session with the Cafeteria workers and mediator, Mike Ricci from the Dept. of Labor. He stated that issues were reduced to a couple of substantive changes in both contracts. He asked if the Board wanted a report on every thing they did.

Marcey Onofrio stated that she didn't think the Board needed to know everything, but asked him what the next step was.

Don Winnicki answered that it would be for the Board to authorize the District to the acceptance of the contracts. He further stated that the other option would be to go back to the table, perhaps arbitration, because they were quite far into the process.

MOTION: Moved by Marcey Onofrio and Seconded by Nancy Lappie to accept the recommended package for 2008-2011 Cafeteria Workers' Contract.

John Bozzuto stated that he needed time to absorb the package.

Chris Manna stated that he would like to some time to go through it.

Marcy Onofrio withdrew the motion to accept the recommended package for 2008-2011 Cafeteria Workers' Contract, followed by Nancy Lappie withdrawing her second.

b. Budget

A copy of the March 1 financial statement was provided for Board review.

c. Operations

Chris Manna stated that the committee met Tuesday and asked if it was correct that there would be an audit from United Illuminating Company.

Don Winnicki stated that we wanted an energy audit from three people who work with United Illuminating Company. He further stated that he wanted to see if the district could take advantage of incentives that they are currently offering.

Chris Manna questioned Don Winnicki about the district's interest in a Clark Boost mechanical floor stripper whether we have purchased, tested and if the intent was to purchase one, and the benefits of having one.

Don Winnicki answered that we have not purchased it yet, but that we have tested it and it is the district's intent to purchase one. Don Winnicki commented that the tests were very positive. He said that it reduces the slip and fall injuries.

Chris Manna commented that these can be very costly injuries.

d. Curriculum

Nancy Lappie commented that Curriculum was well covered at this meeting.

e. Pension

John Bozzuto stated that the Pension Committee hasn't met.

f. Policy

John Bozzuto stated that the committee met yesterday and has begun the groundwork for updating the district policy on expulsions.

The Superintendent provided the Board with the following policy for second reading and approval as modified:

Policy #P9170 Board Meetings – Meeting Procedures –
Broadcasting & Taping of Meetings

Bonnie Symansky remarked that the board would like a motion on the table for the bylaws, for Board meetings, Meeting procedures, Broadcasting and Taping of Meetings as this was the second reading. It has to do with Radio and TV stations seeking clearance before coming in to videotape or document a meeting.

Deborah Prunier remarked that Policy #P9170 states that the only two people who can approve that clearance would be the Superintendent and the Board Chair

MOTION: Moved by Bonnie Symansky and seconded by Chris Marra to approve Policy #P9170 – Board Meetings – Meeting Procedures – Broadcasting & Taping of Meetings as submitted.

CHAIRWOMAN PRUNIER	AYE
VICE-CHAIR ONOFRIO	AYE
SECRETARY LAPPIE	AYE
JOHN BOZZUTO, JR	AYE
CHRIS MANNA	AYE
BONNIE SYMANSKY	AYE

Motion carried 6-0

g. ACES

Nancy Lappie stated that the committee met last Thursday in Hamden and approved budget for the three Magnet Schools. She also informed the Board that they might see some advertising on Channel 8 relating to the Magnet Schools. She said that they spent time discussing the budget. and that there is still concern in Hartford regarding funding for the Magnet Schools and the Open Choice program.

Superintendent Schoonmaker added that there has been nothing new to add regarding funding.

Bonnie Symansky asked if they discussed the funding of CAMS.

Nancy Lappie stated that they approved the budget and nothing was said to the effect that it was in danger of closing. She added that the school had open seats and that it is the only alternative Magnet school in the state for disenfranchised students. She added that they are trying to promote CAMS as a Magnet school and trying to associate it with the other two Magnet schools, Thomas Edison and Wintergreen. She said it is a different type of a Magnet school.

h. Strategic Planning-Nothing at this time

i. Building Committee

Deborah Prunier reported that the outcome is that the cafeteria at NBIS is scheduled to open before the April vacation, and that the Music room is scheduled to open after the vacation.

Alan Davis commented that the brickwork is in progress on the outside of the building and is starting to take form. It looks very impressive. He reported that a great deal of work is being done on the inside of the cafeteria as well.

Bonnie Symansky asked what the anticipated completion date was at the end of April.

Alan Davis replied that the addition is scheduled for completion at the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year. And that the final phase is the renovation of existing 7th and 8th grade wings.

Deborah Prunier stated that the project manager has been very good about providing the committee with information. He is moving along at a great pace.

j. Calendar Committee - Nothing at this time

k. Transportation/Bus Safety Committee - Nothing at this time

l. Communication - Nothing at this time

VII. New Business - None

VIII. Visitors and Press- No comments

XIV The next regular Board of Education meeting is scheduled for April 23, 2009 at Totoket Valley Elementary School.

X Adjournment

MOTION:

Deborah Prunier moved and seconded by Marcey Onofrio to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

ALL VOTED AYE

Respectfully Submitted

**Michelle Parisee
Secretary**