

**Regular Meeting  
Stafford Board of Education  
Pinney Administration Building  
Monday, October 6, 2008**

**Board Members Present:** Mr. Mark Fontanella, Chairperson  
Mrs. Sandy Fowler, Secretary  
Mrs. Lisa Bradway  
Mrs. Lisa Finch  
Mrs. Tracy Rummel  
Ms. Julie Stafford

**Also Present:** Dr. Therese G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools  
Mrs. Diana Bartus, Teacher, West Stafford School  
Mrs. Beth Beaudoin, Teacher, West Stafford School  
Miss Katie Bradway, Student Representative  
Mrs. Meg Devlin, Financial Analyst  
Dr. Marcia Elliott, Principal, West Stafford School  
Mrs. Patricia Kritzman, Teacher, Stafford Middle School  
Mrs. Claire Niederwerfer, Teacher, West Stafford School  
Mrs. Barbara Picard, Teacher, West Stafford School

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. A quorum was established.

**ITEM I. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes**

Regular Meeting, September 22, 2008

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on September 22, 2008, as presented.

**ITEM II. Treasurer's Report**

**A. Report on Bills**

Bills:

September 24, 2008	\$826,338.99
October 1, 2008	\$373,326.86

Grants:

Federal	September 26, 2008	\$ 1,439.89
State	September 26, 2008	\$ 387.75

A consensus of the Board approved the board bills and grants as presented.

**ITEM III. Correspondence**

Mr. Fontanella read a letter from Ms. Mary Forbes, Chairperson of the Stafford Economic Development Commission (SEDC). The letter was an invitation to the Board of Education to take a tour of TTM Technologies on Monday, October 20, 2008, beginning at 6:30 p.m., at the 228 Upper Road facility. Mr. Fontanella stated

that the RSVP date was October 11, 2008. He also noted that Mr. Burkey, another member of the commission, called him to follow up and apologized for the conflict with the Board of Education meeting scheduled for the same evening. Mrs. Finch said that she may be able to attend the tour as a representative of the Board. The Board members asked that Mrs. Finch give a report regarding the details of the tour at the following Board meeting.

Ms. Stafford noted that she will not be at the next Board meeting due to a conflict with her schedule.

Dr. Fishman said that during this time of Strategic Planning, it is important that the district reach out to community employers to gain their input regarding how the schools can better prepare students for working at their facilities.

Mr. Fontanella stated that on Thursday, November 13, 2008, which is the day before the CABA / CAPSS Convention, CABA would be holding a Delegate Assembly. He said that the Board of Education can send a representative to the Assembly, who will be allowed to voice concerns and vote on issues. Mrs. Bradway said that she may be able to attend. She will confirm with Dr. Fishman. Mr. Fontanella stated that if Mrs. Bradway attends the Assembly, the Board will discuss the resolutions up for discussion at the assembly at the October 20 regular meeting and vote on them.

#### **ITEM IV. Board Reports**

Mr. Fontanella updated the Board regarding the letter that was sent to the Board of Finance asking that they consider re-investing money that the district received through a capital grant from the Department of Public Utility Control for customer-side distributed generation at Stafford High School and Stafford Elementary School, back into the West Stafford School by replacing the inefficient 1950's era boilers. He stated that the replacement of the boilers would ultimately save the town money by reducing the school's operating costs. Mr. Fontanella noted that this item has been placed on the agenda of the October 15, 2008, Board of Finance meeting, which begins at 7 p.m., at the town hall.

Miss Bradway, Student Representative, reported on the following topics:

- Parent / teacher conferences were held last Thursday.
- SATs were administered last Saturday.
- A home field hockey game would be held on Tuesday, October 7, at 6 p.m., a home soccer game at 4 p.m., and a Partners in Education (PIE) meeting at 7 p.m., all at Stafford High School.
- The PIE tag sale will be held on Saturday, October 18, 2008, at Stafford High School, rain or shine.
- This coming Thursday (10/9) is a shortened day and Friday (10/10) is a common curriculum day (no school).
- Next week is spirit week. There will be a powder puff game next Wednesday, a talent show next Thursday, a pep rally and football game next Friday, and the homecoming dance next Saturday.

## **ITEM V. Superintendent's Reports**

### **A. Status of NAEYC Accreditation at West Stafford School, Dr. Marcia Elliott, Principal, West Stafford School**

Dr. Fishman stated that she was happy to learn that the pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and childcare programs at West Stafford School were recently accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). She stated that this accreditation is for five years. Dr. Fishman introduced Dr. Marcia Elliott, principal of West Stafford School.

Dr. Elliott introduced Mrs. Claire Niederwerfer, Mrs. Diana Bartus, Mrs. Beth Beaudoin, and Mrs. Barbara Picard, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers at West Stafford School. Portfolios prepared by these teachers, as well as by Mrs. Darien Lovley-Wert, Senior Childcare Provider, were distributed to the Board for their review. Dr. Elliott also distributed a copy of the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards.

Dr. Elliott noted that this accreditation process was made more difficult due to the fast-track status that they were on, the move into a new school last year with many new staff members, NAEYC's new process for accreditation, and the self-study process, which began in one school (Borough Elementary) and finished in another (West Stafford). She stated that she was very proud of the fact that through the accreditation process, the program at West Stafford School received a 100, or a 100+, on six out of the ten standards. She clarified that the program obtained a 100+ if it exceeded the standard by implementing emerging criteria.

Dr. Elliott thanked the many staff members that helped with the accreditation process, as well as the Board members that were involved.

Mrs. Fowler added that Stafford's program will be used as a model for the State. She also noted that although the portfolios that the Board was reviewing that evening were extensive, they were just a part of the process. The program also had to meet over 400 other criteria.

Mr. Fontanella thanked and congratulated Dr. Elliott and her staff for the phenomenal job that they did.

Dr. Fishman stated that Staffordville School is just beginning the process for accreditation. However, they are not under the same time constraint that West Stafford School was. They will take this year and next to finish the process.

### **B. Update on Oil and Diesel Prices**

Dr. Fishman reported that on September 16, 2008, she was able to lock in heating oil for the price of \$3.1662 per gallon. In order to receive this price, the total number of gallons had to be locked in at that time. She noted that due to the

volatility of the market, that was the only day that oil was opened up to the district to lock in. Mrs. Devlin, Financial Analyst, noted that a lock in price was still not being offered as of that business day. Dr. Fishman stated that at this price the district is over budget by \$24,000, but that number could have been much higher. She noted that she is hoping to lock in diesel in the near future. She said that she will give another update at the next Board meeting if she is able to lock in a price for diesel.

### **C. Review of Grant Allocation Report**

Dr. Fishman distributed a copy of a chart to the Board, which detailed the history of federal grant funding over the past five years. She noted that these are entitlement grants, not competitive grants. Funding levels are set in accordance with the priorities of the federal government. The chart showed a loss of about \$65,000 in funding since 2003 – 2004.

Mrs. Fowler asked if the same number of children were being served this year under Title I, as in the past. Dr. Fishman stated that she did not have that figure available. However, she noted that the district's Title I funding is based more on the number of free and reduced lunches served, than on the number of students receiving Title I services. She said that tentatively our free lunch number is up by about 20 students, while our reduced lunch number is up by about 7 or 8 students. Final numbers will be available in November 2008. Board members asked what system is in place to ensure that we receive all of the free / reduced lunch applications back. Dr. Fishman said that she would find out and report back to the Board.

### **Item VI. Public Forum**

A member of the audience asked if we know how many gallons of diesel fuel per bus is used. Mrs. Devlin responded that the district receives a monthly report from First Student, the district's bus contractor, that details usage for each bus.

A member of the audience announced that October is Green Communities Safe Routes to School month and that it should be encouraged here in Stafford.

Mrs. Bradway made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to move Item VII.A.- **Interview Candidates for Board of Education Vacancy (Executive Session Anticipated)** into executive session at the end of the meeting. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel and Ms. Stafford voted for the motion, which carried.

### **Item VIII. New Business**

#### **A. Review and Possible Approval of High School and Middle School Fundraisers**

Dr. Fishman noted that there are more fundraisers this year than in the past. She stated that this is necessary to help raise funds for areas that were cut in the budget.

Mrs. Bradway asked if the principals check on the overlap of fundraisers. Mr. Fontanella also inquired if anyone checked into whether or not the food that is being proposed to be sold as a fundraiser will infringe on the booster clubs' profits. It was also noted that some groups are doing fundraisers that have traditionally been done by other groups in the past. Board members asked if all of the groups were aware of this change. Dr. Fishman said that she would look into these matters.

Mrs. Bradway made a motion, seconded by Ms. Stafford, that the Board of Education approve the list of fundraising activities submitted by the principals of Stafford High School and Stafford Middle School for the 2008 – 2009 school year. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel and Ms. Stafford voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Kritzman, teacher at Stafford Middle School and coach, stated that through the budget process, cross country at the middle school had been eliminated for 2008 – 2009, to cover part of the \$14,000 cut to their budget. She said that because cross country is a cheaper sport to run and because it helps with the district's fitness scores, they decided not to eliminate it, but rather to spread the cut over several other sports. Dr. Fishman and Board members noted that while the cut was made to the program, they never specified where the cuts should come from. Mrs. Kritzman stated that unless funding is increased next year, there will not be a middle school sports program. She said that she is concerned that parents don't understand this.

Mrs. Bradway suggested that they start a middle school sports booster program. She suggested that Mrs. Kritzman contact the high school booster program for ideas for getting started.

**B. Review and Possible Approval of Revision to Board Regulation #3515 (a) – (d) and Forms- Use of School Buildings and Grounds**

Dr. Fishman provided the Board with a copy of revised Board of Education regulation #3515 (a) – (d) and Forms- *Use of School Buildings and Grounds*. She stated that the Board usually does not approve regulations. However, due to some significant changes to this regulation, she requested that the Board reviews this regulation and votes on the changes at the next meeting.

Dr. Fishman reported that this regulation governs procedures for the use of school buildings and grounds by outside organizations, either in Stafford or outside of Stafford. She said that with updates to the sound system in the auditorium at Stafford Middle School, as well as the new sound / video projection systems at Stafford Elementary School and at Stafford High School, she feels that it is prudent to require a school district technician to be present when these systems are used. This would be the first major change in the policy.

Secondly, Dr. Fishman proposed adding a provision that should a commercial or for-profit organization in Stafford or a non or for-profit organization outside of Stafford use a Stafford school for an event, and a building usage fee is charged,

that this fee, less event worker salaries, is returned by the Financial Analyst to the student activity fund of the building being used. These funds are to be targeted for student recognition awards / programs.

Mrs. Bradway said that it is important to get this information out to the community groups as soon as possible so that they can budget for this new expense. She also stated that a change should be made to 3515(c), Section III C., to include the technical sound system personnel.

This item will be placed on the regularly scheduled Board meeting on Monday, October 20, 2008.

### **Item IX. Personnel Matters**

#### **A. Approval of Leave of Absence- Certified Staff Member**

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Stafford, that in accordance with Board policy, the Board of Education approve the request for an unpaid leave of absence for the purpose of childrearing as listed below:

NAME	INITIAL EMPLOYMENT DATE	SCHOOL	EFFECTIVE DATE	ENDING DATE OF LEAVE
Amanda Galligan	8/22/2006	Staffordville School	12/5/08	1/4/09

Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel and Ms. Stafford voted for the motion, which carried.

### **Item X. Student Matters**

There were no student matters.

### **Item VII. Old Business**

#### **A. Interview Candidates for Board of Education Vacancy (Executive Session Anticipated)**

Mrs. Fowler made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to enter executive session to interview candidates for the vacancy on the Board of Education, which was created when Ms. Patricia Saunders resigned. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel and Ms. Stafford voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 8:45 p.m.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, to return to regular session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel and Ms. Stafford voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 9:15 p.m.

Mrs. Stafford made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, to appoint Mr. Stephen Szymanski to the Board of Education. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel and Ms. Stafford voted for the motion, which carried.

**Item XI. Adjournment**

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel and Ms. Stafford voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary**

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**Mark Fontanella, Chairperson**

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**Sandra Fowler, Secretary**

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