

**Regular Meeting  
Stafford Board of Education  
Pinney Administration Building  
Monday, November 17, 2008**

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

**Also Present:** Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools  
Miss Katie Bradway, Student Representative  
Mrs. Meg Devlin, Financial Analyst  
Mr. Francis Kennedy, Principal, Stafford High School

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

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

Special Meeting, October 20, 2008  
Regular Meeting, October 20, 2008

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the special and regular meetings held on October 20, 2008, as corrected.

**ITEM II. Treasurer's Report**

**A. Report on Bills**

Bills:

October 14, 2008	\$154,788.37
October 22, 2008	\$110,231.41
October 29, 2008	\$296,636.54
November 5, 2008	\$ 86,429.35
November 12, 2008	\$ 52,590.50

Grants:

Federal	October 31, 2008	\$ 6,906.13
State	October 31, 2008	\$ 9,702.35
Local	October 31, 2008	\$ 1,031.47

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

**ITEM III. Correspondence**

Mr. Fontanella distributed a flyer to the Board from the West Stafford PTO for a gift card fundraiser.

## **ITEM IV. Board Reports**

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

- ❖ The Mr. Stafford High Pageant was held on Thursday, November 6, and was won by Scott Bradrick. Mrs. Lisa Bradway said that the event was very tastefully done, and she enjoyed it very much.
- ❖ The dinner theaters were held last weekend. Miss Bradway heard that they were very good and very well attended.
- ❖ On Sunday, November 16, the high school held their Rededication Ceremony. Miss Bradway said that the ceremony was very nice; however, she wished that more people were in attendance.
- ❖ The music department will be at the NCCC Music Festival in Suffield on Wednesday and Thursday and will be holding a concert on Thursday.
- ❖ This Friday there will be a football game against Avon. There will also be a football game next Wednesday night against Windsor Locks.
- ❖ The Thespian Induction will be held on Tuesday, November 25.
- ❖ The Sports Banquet will be held on Thursday, December 4. Winter sports will begin within the next couple of weeks.
- ❖ Progress reports will be distributed on Thursday, December 4.
- ❖ The Madrigal Feaste will be held on December 5, 6 and 7. Mr. Kennedy asked that Board members let his office know which date they would like to attend.

Mrs. Finch reported on her visit to TTM Technologies. She said that she was very impressed by the tour and how far the technology has come since she worked there years ago. Mrs. Finch said that TTM Technologies has had a hard time retaining employees, even though they offer a competitive wage and free tuition.

Mr. Szymanski stated that it is important to find out what skill set TTM is looking for, so that we could better prepare students, possibly through integration into the technology education curriculum. Mrs. Bradway commented that Cheney and Windham Tech might be a better choice to prepare students for this field.

Dr. Fishman noted that through the district's strategic planning process, she plans to meet with area companies to see what skills students should have to be a successful candidate for a good paying job with their company. Ms. Stafford suggested inviting these companies to a career fair at the end of the senior year, as many students may not know about the opportunities available to them.

Dr. Fishman showed the Board members the plaque that the high school students received for the Going Green Award at the CAFE Convention. She said that our district won in a highly competitive group (which is based on student enrollment), and the students represented Stafford very well. She said that she was very proud of them. The plaque will stay at the Pinney Building for a month or so and then be placed in the high school trophy case. Miss Bradway said that the students have done an incredible job in the high school to promote their cause, including creating posters and making announcements.

Mrs. Bradway updated the Board on a recent project that she worked on that involved the mentor program at the high school. She said that each homeroom had to present a poem that depicted pride in the school. Each homeroom teacher came up with several finalists at each grade level. Then Partners in Education (PIE) judged the poems and selected a winner at each grade level. PIE provided breakfast for the winners of the contest. Mr. Kennedy said that the mentor committee came up with this idea, and each subsequent group added to it. Mrs. Bradway said that maybe Stafford could make a presentation about our mentor program at the CABE Convention next year.

Mrs. Bradway reported that the Delegate Assembly, which was held on the Thursday before the CABE Convention, was a worthwhile and interesting process, and she would definitely do it again. Mrs. Bradway said that the consent calendar was accepted as presented, except that three items were removed. With regard to the regular calendar, the magnet school funding resolution, the in-school suspension resolution and the certification reciprocity resolution were modified before being accepted. All others were accepted as presented.

Mrs. Rummel, Mrs. Bradway, Ms. Stafford and Dr. Fishman will make a full presentation to the Board regarding the CABE Convention at a future meeting.

Mrs. Rummel reported that she was invited to read and has been reading in the schools this week as part of National Education Week. She also reported on the Veterans' Day Assembly that was held at Stafford Elementary School. She said that it was a huge success, very well done and very interesting.

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

### **A. Head Start Report through October 2008**

Dr. Fishman reported that the district has expended \$12,713 of the \$48,318 in Head Start grant funds, as of the end of October 2008. She noted that the grant period ends January 31, 2009.

### **B. Financial Report through October 2008**

Dr. Fishman presented the financial report for the district through October 2008, as prepared by Mrs. Devlin, Financial Analyst. She noted that 50.11% of the budget has been encumbered / expended through October 2008, versus 45.83% through October 2007.

Dr. Fishman said that the 500 object, Other Purchased Services, is over-expended due to out-of-district tuition. She reported that we only get reimbursed by the State twice yearly for special education tuitions from the Excess Cost Grant, so this number will get larger before it gets smaller. She said that Mrs. Devlin is working on a way to encumber salaries. Once that is done, we won't be able to compare to previous years.

Mr. Szymanski asked what a "budget freeze" means. Dr. Fishman answered that all possible expenditures are reviewed and may be denied based on need / fund

availability. She said that she is trying to finish this year within our budget, even with the unanticipated costs, such as oil and trash removal. Mr. Szymanski asked if that meant that we were going without items that were budgeted for this year. Dr. Fishman said that in some cases, yes.

**C. Cafeteria Profit and Loss through September 2008**

Dr. Fishman presented the cafeteria profit and loss statement through September 2008, as prepared by Mrs. Susan Linder, Director of Building Services, and Mrs. Mary Folker, Food Service Coordinator. She reported that through September 2008, there is a profit of \$7,598, as compared with September 2007, where the program showed a loss of \$12,085, due to a costly repair.

Dr. Fishman noted that an area of concern is the low percentage (49.2%) of high school students that purchase school lunch. She said that she met with two high school students to discuss ways to improve the lunch selection at the high school.

Dr. Fishman stated that the lunch program has lost \$1,200 to date from non-payment for charged lunches. She said that the district currently has an interim procedure in place and should have a regulation available for Board review at the December 8, 2008, meeting.

Mrs. Rummel noted the losses at West Stafford and Staffordville. She asked if there was anything that could be done. Dr. Fishman said that we already have as few staff members as possible at the school, and the meals are already prepared off-site and transported to the school.

Mrs. Devlin stated that she has looked into the on-line system for charging lunches and it is available at the high school, middle school and Stafford Elementary School. The service would charge a fee of 5.75% of the total of each transaction, which would have to be paid by the parents.

**D. Presentation of 2007 – 2008 Strategic School Profiles for the Stafford Public Schools, Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools**

Dr. Fishman stated that each year, by State law, she is required to present the Strategic School Profiles for the district and each of its schools in operation in 2007 – 2008 to the Board of Education at its first regularly scheduled meeting in November, following the receipt of the report from the State.

Dr. Fishman reviewed the following areas of the district report:

- ✓ 21.9% of students in the district are eligible for free / reduced price meals, as compared to 20% in the DRG and 28.7% in the State.
- ✓ 7.7% of students in grades PK – 12 are receiving special education services in district.
- ✓ 96.7% of kindergarten students attended pre-school, nursery school, or Headstart.
- ✓ The graduation rate for the Class of 2007 was 90.8%.

- ✓ The average class sizes are just about where they should be as compared with the DRG and State.
- ✓ The hours of instruction per year at the elementary level are lower than the DRG and State.
- ✓ Expenditures per pupil are \$11,615, as compared to \$12,203 for other PK – 12 districts.

Dr. Fishman then reviewed each school's individual profile highlighting areas of strength and weakness.

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

A member of the audience asked about the outcome of the October 22 Board of Finance meeting regarding the West Stafford School boiler replacement. Mr. Fontanella said that the Board of Finance approved the request to be sent to a town meeting. He said that we do not yet have a date for that meeting.

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

#### **A. Review and Possible Approval of Board of Education Policy 6146 (a)-(d)- Graduation Requirements**

Mrs. Fowler made a motion, seconded by Ms. Stafford, that the Board of Education approve the changes to Board policy 6146 (a) – (d)- *Graduation Requirements*, as presented. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried.

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

#### **A. Acceptance of Staffordville Well Project 134-0046 and West Stafford Roof Project 134-0051 as Complete**

Dr. Fishman stated that although the Board had already accepted these two projects as complete at the Board meeting on August 21, 2006, the paperwork was not filed with the State, due to some missing documentation. Now, all of the proper documentation is in place.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, that the Board of Education accept the Staffordville School Well Project 134-0046 as complete. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, that the Board of Education accept the West Stafford Roof Project 134-0051 as complete. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried.

**B. Approval of 2009 Calendar of Regular Meetings**

Ms. Stafford made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, that the Board of Education approve the schedule of regular Board meetings for 2009, as proposed. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Bradway asked why we don't move the meetings to the schools anymore. Dr. Fishman responded that there was poor attendance at those meetings. Mrs. Bradway suggested that the PTOs be notified, since this will be a very difficult budget year. She also suggested that the principals meet with their PTOs to discuss their budget so that parents know what is being sent to the Superintendent. Additionally, she said that the Board could form a sub-committee to go around to various venues, such as the senior center, to explain the budget before it goes downtown and gather support. Board members felt that this would be difficult, since the sub-committee would be "presenting" a budget that was not yet discussed and approved by the Board.

Mr. Szymanski said that the Board and / or Town should hold forums in places that are easier to access, such as the senior center.

Mrs. Rummel asked that an invitation be extended to each PTO for the Board's first budget deliberation meeting in January. She noted that even if one representative could come from each school that would be helpful in getting the word out to parents.

**C. Review and Possible Approval of Revisions to Board of Education Policy and Regulation 6142.101 (a)-(h)- Student Nutrition and Physical Activity (Student Wellness Policy)**

Dr. Fishman distributed to the Board in their packets a copy of the revised **Student Nutrition and Physical Activity (Student Wellness Policy)**. She noted that the revisions to the policy were in red ink and that most of the revisions were quotes from the law, or things that we were already doing, but we had not put them in the regulation.

Dr. Fishman also reviewed the School Wellness Policy Report issued by the Connecticut State Dept. of Education. She pointed out that Stafford's scores were well above the State and DRG scores. However, the State did provide some recommendations and noted items that were missing. She said that based on the report, the Wellness Committee met and broke into sub-groups to review sections of the regulation and suggest revisions for those areas that received a low score. These suggested revisions were also incorporated into the revised regulation that was presented tonight.

This item was tabled until the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, to place Item IX.A.- **Review of Contract Settlement Summary between the Stafford Board of Education and the Stafford Administrators' Association and Possible**

**Signing of the 7/1/2009 – 6/30/2012 Contract (Executive Session**

**Anticipated)**, into executive session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried. The Board took a brief recess at 9:30 p.m.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Ms. Stafford, to enter executive session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 9:37 p.m. The Board invited Dr. Fishman and Mrs. Devlin to attend executive session.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Stafford, to return to regular session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 9:53 p.m.

**Item IX. Personnel Matters**

**A. Review of Contract Settlement Summary between the Stafford Board of Education and the Stafford Administrators' Association and Possible Signing of the 7/1/2009 – 6/30/2012 Contract (Executive Session Anticipated)**

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, that the Board of Education approve the contract settlement between the Stafford Board of Education and the Stafford Administrators' Association, 7/1/09 – 6/30/12. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried.

**Item X. Student Matters**

There were no Student Matters.

**Item XI. Adjournment**

Ms. Stafford made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Mr. Szymanski voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary**

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**Mark Fontanella, Chairperson**

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**Sandra Fowler, Secretary**