

**Regular Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Pinney Administration Building
Monday, February 25, 2008**

Board Members Present: Mr. Mark Fontanella, Chairperson
Mrs. Lisa Bradway
Mrs. Lisa Finch
Mrs. Tracy Rummel
Ms. Patricia Saunders
Ms. Julie Stafford

Absent: Mrs. Sandy Fowler, Secretary

Also Present: Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Ms. Jill Gregori, Business Manager
Mr. Francis Kennedy, Principal, Stafford High School
Dr. Daniel Lefebvre, Director of Pupil Services
Miss Cassandra Weed, Student Representative

The meeting was called to order at 7:27 p.m. A quorum was established.

ITEM I. Secretary's Report – Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting, February 4, 2008

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the February 4, 2008, Board of Education regular meeting, as presented.

ITEM II. Treasurer's Report

A. Report on Bills

Board Bills

February 6, 2008	\$ 2,031.00
February 6, 2008	\$44,068.68
February 13, 2008	\$61,276.60
February 20, 2008	\$89,081.05

Grants:

Federal Grants	January 30, 2008	\$ 1,560.44
State Grants	January 30, 2008	\$32,296.27
Federal Grants	January 30, 2008	\$ 2,857.42
State Grants	January 30, 2008	\$33,896.46
Federal Grants	January 30, 2008	\$26,011.12
State Grants	January 30, 2008	\$28,421.43
Federal Grants	February 15, 2008	\$12,090.26
State Grants	February 15, 2008	\$15,199.54
Local Grants	February 15, 2008	\$ 1,125.76

A consensus of the Board approved the Board Bills and Grants, as presented.

ITEM III. Correspondence

A. Building Committee Minutes- 12/18/07 and 1/15/08

Mrs. Bradway asked if the curtain would be up on the stage in time for the reception for Ms. Festi on March 2, 2008. Dr. Fishman said that it would be.

Mrs. Bradway stated that the main corridor is now open, and it is beautiful.

Mr. Fontanella read an e-mail that the Board received from Echo Paixao, a former student of Stafford High School. Miss Paixao wrote to the Board on behalf of the students working to benefit the Joshua R. Smialek Fund. Mr. Fontanella stated that the students will be hosting a Three-Man Basketball Tournament on Saturday, March 22, 2008, at 5:00 p.m., at Stafford High School in the gym. Mr. Fontanella encouraged everyone to participate or attend.

ITEM IV. Board Reports

Miss Weed reported on the following:

- ❖ Last week, the students in the National Honor Society visited St. Edward School, West Stafford School and Staffordville School. Miss Weed reported that this program was a success and that the teachers appreciated their help.
- ❖ Stafford students were very respectful at the home and away basketball games with Somers. The high school administration set up a conference with Somers and Stafford students, which went very well.
- ❖ The high school library media center and main corridor is now open for use by the students. The auditorium is expected to be available soon.
- ❖ The boys' basketball team lost to Coventry by 10 points and senior night was taking place tonight.
- ❖ CAPT testing will take place next week.
- ❖ A safe graduation meeting will take place tomorrow (2/26).
- ❖ The middle school presented *Bye, Bye Birdie* last weekend. Tickets for Friday night's production, which was cancelled due to inclement weather, will be honored on Tuesday, February 26, 2008. Miss Weed said that the play was great.

Mr. Fontanella reminded everyone about the upcoming ceremony honoring Ms. Festi, which will be held at Stafford High School on Sunday, March 2, 2008, at 1:30 p.m.

ITEM V. Superintendent's Reports

A. Report on Tuition at ACT and Magnet Schools

Dr. Fishman reported that Dr. McQuillan, Commissioner of Education, encouraged the passage of a new law that states that any student can apply to attend any magnet school in Connecticut, and any available slot will be awarded to students from schools that don't have a contract with the magnet school.

Dr. Fishman stated that she was bringing forward a proposal to purchase three seats / slots at ACT, which is a Connecticut accredited arts magnet high school located in Willimantic and administered through EASTCONN. She stated that the reason the proposal was being presented at this time was that she has learned that six or more of our students are interested in attending the ACT school next year. If the district does not purchase slots, then it is possible that the district could be responsible for the tuition and transportation for all of the students that are accepted by ACT. Dr. Fishman stated that by purchasing three slots at \$5,000 per slot, it would be easier to budget in subsequent years.

Board members had questions regarding the acceptance rate of student applicants to ACT and what the acceptance criteria is. After considerable discussion, the Board determined that they would make a decision regarding the addition of slots as part of the budget discussion and approval later during this meeting.

B. Continuation of the Presentation of the Proposed 2008 – 2009 School Budget- Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools, and Ms. Jill Gregori, Business Manager

As requested by the Board of Education at the last meeting, Dr. Fishman and Ms. Gregori provided the Board with a list of possible cuts to the proposed 2008 – 2009 school budget. Dr. Fishman reviewed each item on the list with the Board and explained the reason that it was on the list.

Board members thanked the administration for creating the list of possible cuts; however, there were items that they may be willing to give up that did not make the list.

ITEM VI. Public Forum

There were no questions or comments.

ITEM VII. Old Business

There was no Old Business.

ITEM VIII. New Business

A. Review and Approval of a Proposal to Purchase Three Slots at ACT Magnet School

This item was discussed as part of the approval of the 2008 – 2009 Board of Education budget. Ms. Stafford made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, that the Board of Education approve adding two slots at the ACT Magnet School, which could possibly be reduced to adding one slot, depending on funding. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Saunders and Ms. Stafford voted for the motion, which carried.

B. Approval of 2008 – 2009 Board of Education Budget

After considerable discussion, the Board voted to approve the 2008 – 2009 Board of Education budget in the amount of \$24,724,362, an increase of 6.94% over last year's budget. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Saunders and Ms. Stafford voted for the motion, which carried.

ITEM IX. Personnel Matters

A. Resignations- Certified Staff Members

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Ms. Stafford, that the Board of Education accept the resignations of the following staff members:

Name	Position	School	Effective Date	Reason
Bendzinski, Margaret	Spanish Teacher	Stafford High School	End of school year, June 2008	Personal.
Ferency, Susan	Special Education Teacher	Staffordville School	End of school year, June 2008	Personal.
Gregori, Jill D.	Business Manager	Pinney Administration Building	8/31/08	Retirement.
Grimason, Diane	Special Education Teacher	Staffordville School	End of school year, June 2008	Personal.
Gunther, Kristin	School Guidance Counselor	Stafford High School	End of school year, June 2008	Personal.
Hilyard, Virginia	Foreign Language Teacher	Stafford High School	End of school year, June 2008	Personal.
Huber, Stanley	Math Teacher	Stafford High School	End of school year, June 2008	Personal.

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

Ms. Stafford made a motion, seconded by Ms. Saunders, to place Item. X.A.-
Consideration of Superintendent of School's Recommendation for Expulsion of

Student D from Stafford High School (Executive Session Anticipated) into executive session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Ms. Saunders voted for the motion, which carried.

The Board took a brief recess at 9:34 p.m.

ITEM X. Student Matters

A. Consideration of Superintendent of School's Recommendation for Expulsion of Student D from Stafford High School (Executive Session Anticipated)

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, that the Board enter executive session to discuss a matter that would result in the disclosure of public records or the information contained therein as described in Connecticut General Statutes Sections 1-210(b)(2), (11) and (17). Only those invited by the Board may be present in the executive session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Ms. Saunders voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 9:45 p.m.

The Board invited the following individuals into the executive session:

Dr. Therese Fishman, Superintendent of Schools
 Mr. Robert Campbell, Assistant Principal, Stafford High School
 Sgt. Thomas Duncan, Connecticut State Police
 Attorney Peter A. Janus, Counsel for the Board of Education
 Mr. Francis Kennedy, Principal, Stafford High School
 Dr. Daniel Lefebvre, Director of Pupil Services
 Student D, who is the subject of this proceeding
 The Mother and Father of Student D
 Mrs. Christine Marinelli, Recording Secretary

At approximately 10:20 p.m., all individuals invited to attend executive session by the Board, with the exception of Attorney Peter Janus, left the conference room so that the Board of Education could deliberate.

All invited individuals returned to the Board of Education conference room at approximately 10:25 p.m.

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Stafford, to return to regular session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Ms. Saunders voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 10:26 p.m.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Ms. Saunders, that based on the evidence and testimony received after a due process hearing, it is the finding of the Stafford Board of Education that on or about February 6, 2008, Student D committed an expellable offense, namely that Student D was in possession of a deadly weapon and/or firearm on school premises; and Student D violated the board of Education's Policy 5114 (a) – (l), Policy 5131.7, and the disciplinary guidelines as outlined in the Stafford High School 2007 – 2008 Student-Parent Handbook. It is the further finding of the Stafford Board of Education that such action constitutes conduct which is detrimental and an endangerment to the health, safety and welfare of other students, that such conduct is seriously

disruptive of the educational process, and that such conduct also violates a publicized policy of the Stafford Board of Education. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Ms. Saunders voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, to enter executive session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Ms. Saunders voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 10:28 p.m.

At approximately 10:42 p.m., all individuals invited to attend executive session by the Board, with the exception of Attorney Peter Janus, left the conference room so that the Board of Education could deliberate.

All invited individuals returned to the Board of Education conference room at approximately 11:07 p.m.

Ms. Stafford made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, to return to regular session. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Stafford and Ms. Saunders voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 11:08 p.m.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Bradway, that based on the previous decision of the Stafford Board of Education that Student D had committed an expellable offense, and based upon the evidence and testimony received as to the length of any expulsion to be imposed for the offense by Student D, it is the finding of the Stafford Board of Education that Student D shall be expelled from the Stafford Public Schools, from any and all school privileges and premises, and all school-sponsored activities, for disciplinary reasons effective immediately, for a period of one calendar year.

Moved further that the Administration provide Student D with an alternative educational opportunity during the expulsion period.

However, Student D may apply for early readmission to school at the beginning of the second marking period of the 2008 – 2009 school year by submitting an application to the Superintendent of Schools for consideration by the Board of Education no later than at its scheduled meeting on or about October 20, 2008. The Board will condition Student D's application for early readmission on the following:

1. satisfactory performance in tutoring with no unexcused absences and maintaining a satisfactory academic record,
2. satisfactory performance in counseling to be provided by the school,
3. submission to the Superintendent of a satisfactory research paper addressing the impact of guns in the school, the impact of this offense on Student D, what Student D has learned from this incident, what he should have done differently, and how to avoid such an incident in the future,
4. continuation of counseling through the full period of one calendar year.

If Student D fails to abide by the Board's policies and disciplinary guidelines or does not comply with the continued counseling following any early readmission, then the full period of the original expulsion shall be automatically reinstated. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Saunders and Ms. Stafford voted for the motion, which carried.

ITEM XI. Adjournment

Mrs. Finch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Saunders, to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Bradway, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Saunders and Ms. Stafford voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary

Mark Fontanella, Chairperson

Sandra Fowler, Secretary

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