

**Regular Meeting  
Stafford Board of Education  
Stafford Elementary School  
October 23, 2017, 6:30 p.m.**

**Board Members Present:** Mrs. Andrea Locke  
Mr. George Melnick  
Mr. Jeff Roberts  
Mrs. Tracy Rummel, Secretary  
Ms. Sonya Shegogue, Chairperson  
Mrs. Kathy Walsh

**Absent:** Mr. Peter Kovaleski

**Also Present:** Dr. Paul Smotas, Interim Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. Jonathan Campbell, Assistant Principal, Stafford Middle School  
Mr. Devin Cowperthwaite, Supervisor of Building Services  
Mrs. Peggy Falcetta, Principal, Staffordville School  
Ms. Anna Gagnon, Principal, West Stafford School  
Miss Autumn Gagnon, Senior Class Student Representative  
Ms. Caroline Hargraves, Assistant Principal, Stafford Elementary School  
Ms. Susan Mike, Assistant Principal, Stafford High School  
Mr. Steve Montgomery, Principal, Stafford Elementary School  
Ms. Jennifer Murrhly, Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Mr. Paul Muska, Principal, Stafford Middle School  
Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal, Stafford High School  
Ms. Diane Peters, Business Manager  
Ms. Jolene Piscetello, Director of Pupil Services  
Mr. Nicholas Wyse, Junior Class Student Representative

**Item I. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Item II. Pledge of Allegiance**

Dr. Smotas led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Item III. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes**

Regular Meeting, 10/02/17

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, that the Board approve the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on 10/02/17, as presented. Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick, Mr. Roberts, Mrs. Rummel and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

#### **Item IV. Consent Agenda**

Dr. Smotas explained that the use of a Consent Agenda can make approval of mundane items more efficient. He said that Board members can remove any or all items on the Consent Agenda for discussion, or they can make a motion to approve all the items with one vote. He noted that future items for the Consent Agenda may include the topics currently listed, as well as field trip approvals, personnel actions or any other routine topic, which may not require lengthy discussion. The Board members were in agreement with this change in the agenda.

Dr. Smotas stated that he would bring a revised version of Board regulation #9325.2- Order of Business, forward at the next regularly-scheduled meeting for review and approval.

- A. Bills, 10/5/17- \$77,114.31**
- B. Grants, 10/5/17- \$65.39**
- C. Financial Report through September 30, 2017**
- D. Obsolete Equipment**

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, that the Board approve the items listed in the consent agenda, as presented. Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick, Mr. Roberts, Mrs. Rummel and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

#### **Item V. Correspondence**

- A. Board Meeting Reminder**

Ms. Shegogue read the Board meeting reminder that was posted on the agenda.

- B. West Stafford School's Newsletter, Fall 2017**

A copy of the West Stafford School's newsletter was provided via the portal. Dr. Smotas said that in the future he will be asking the principals to prepare periodical summary reports for the Board. Mrs. Rummel noted that the Student Representatives also provide some of this information.

#### **Item VI. Board Reports**

- A. Report from Student Representatives**

Miss Gagnon reported on the following topics:

- MS Fundraiser for American Red Cross
- Two Students Recognized as CAPSS Award Recipients
- MS Dance
- MS Donation for Uniforms
- SES Cub Scout Pack 50 Project
- Open House- September 2017
- Fundraiser at Ice Cream Depot
- SES Spirit Award- Kerry Cox, Kim Evans, JoAnn Stuart
- SES After School Program
- SHS Activity Period, October 11

- PSAT
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Step Up Day
- Homecoming Week at SHS

Mr. Wyse reported on the following topics:

- Music Department Update (distributed a hardcopy)
- District Concert, Email Laurie Dillon if interested
- Veterans' Day Celebration
- Governor's Summer Reading Challenge
- Shine Purple Project
- Sharing Assembly
- Get to a Good Book Day
- PTA Mtg.
- SV PTO Fundraiser at Basils, 10/24/17
- SV PTO Santa Visit- Saturday, 12/2/17

Dr. Smotas reported that the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) Award ceremony would be held on Wednesday, November 1, 2017. Dr. Smotas, Mr. Muska and Ms. Mike will be representing the district.

**B. Budget Committee**

The Budget Committee members are Ms. Shegogue, Mr. Melnick and Mr. Kovaleski (Mrs. Locke, alternate). There was no update from this committee.

**C. Curriculum Committee**

The Curriculum Committee members are Ms. Shegogue, Mrs. Locke and Mrs. Walsh (Mrs. Rummel, alternate). There was no update from this committee.

**D. Policy Committee**

The Policy Committee members are Mrs. Rummel, Mr. Kovaleski and Mrs. Walsh. There was no update from this committee.

**E. Negotiation Committee**

The Negotiation Committee members are Mrs. Locke, Ms. Shegogue and Mr. Roberts. There was no update from this committee.

**F. District Climate Study Committee**

Ms. Shegogue stated that she has received the results of the study. She said that she'd like to schedule a time for the committee to meet, review the summary report and determine how they'd like to present the results. Ms. Shegogue, Mrs. Walsh and Mr. Melnick said that they will check their calendars and select a mutually convenient time to meet.

## **Item VII. Superintendent's Reports**

### **A. CABE/CAPSS Conference and Delegate Assembly**

Dr. Smotas provided Board members with information via the portal, which detailed the CABE / CAPSS conference schedule and information regarding the delegate assembly. He asked that Board members let Mrs. Marinelli know if they wish to register. Miss Gagnon, Student Representative, inquired if she and Mr. Wyse would be invited to attend the conference this year. Mrs. Marinelli said that the student representatives and Mr. Pelliccia would be notified as soon as the student registration materials became available.

### **B. 2017 Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Results**

Dr. Smotas stated that the district's testing results have been trickling in. He said that the district has yet to receive the CAPT results, but has received the SAT results. He introduced Mr. Pelliccia, Stafford High School principal.

Mr. Pelliccia presented the results of the most recent Stafford High School SAT exams. He reported that performance of the Stafford High School students remains at the top of the District Reference Group for both Evidence-based Reading and Writing (with a score of 547) and Math (with a score of 530), and surpassed the state averages (524 and 507, respectively).

Mr. Pelliccia discussed the importance of the PSAT and thanked the Board for their continued support, covering the cost of the test for all students in grades 9-11.

Mr. Melnick inquired about the 96% participation rate and noted that the scores were excellent considering all students must take the SAT, regardless of whether or not they intend to go to college.

Mrs. Rummel noted that a good score on the SAT may be a springboard for students that weren't originally planning to attend college.

### **C. Professional Development Day, 10/06/17**

Dr. Smotas noted that Stafford's seven professional development days for teachers and administrators allows for time to devote to providing training for the many new staff members this year.

He introduced Mrs. Murrhy, Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Mrs. Murrhy provided a synopsis of the professional development activities, in which the staff took part on October 6, 2017.

### **D. Update on Search for New Superintendent of Schools**

Dr. Smotas provided Board members via the portal with an electronic copy of the draft announcement of the vacancy for a permanent Superintendent of Schools for Stafford. Dr. Smotas provided details regarding the schedule and process to initiate this search, as follows:

- If approved by the Board, the vacancy announcement would be posted the following day on CTREAP, K12JobSpot, AASA and CAPSS, as well as on the district website

- An interview committee would be assembled, consisting of the First Selectman, one or two business leaders, two parents, two Board members, one administrator, one teacher and one non-certified staff member
- Dr. Smotas will conduct initial screening interviews and check references
- The entire committee will meet with the pre-screened applicants on a Saturday in early December
- The full Board will interview one, two or three committee-selected candidates prior to the holiday break in December

Mr. Melnick suggested that a Board of Finance member be included on the interview committee.

Mr. Melnick made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board approve the superintendent search process, as presented. Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick, Mr. Roberts, Mrs. Rummel and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Dr. Smotas mentioned that the Board may want to review and / or update the Mission Statement, once a new Board is seated.

### **Item VIII. Public Comment**

A member of the audience stated that she feels that the free PSATs offered to students at the high school are very important and should be kept in future budgets.

A member of the audience asked if it would be possible for her to send questions for the interview committee's consideration. Dr. Smotas said that he welcomes questions from the public and that the questions should be sent to his email address.

A member of the audience stated that she wasn't comfortable with only one teacher representative on the interview committee. She said that a better option would be to have one teacher from each school on the committee.

### **Item IX. Old Business**

#### **A. Climate Study Report**

Ms. Shegogue stated that this item was discussed earlier on the agenda.

### **Item X. New Business**

#### **A. Proposed Expulsion Process Changes**

Dr. Smotas said that one of the most difficult actions a Board of Education faces is the expulsion of a student for violation of a Board policy. He said that in small communities such as Stafford, there may be times when such an expulsion process involves children who are friends, neighbors or relatives of Board members.

He explained that a process that he has used in other small districts is to hire an independent hearing officer to adjudicate the expulsion process and that the Board's current policy #5114 (a) – (z)- Removal /

Suspension / Expulsion allows for this option. The hearing officer is typically a current or retired attorney or prosecutor, licensed in Connecticut, to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer will hear the student's position on the charges they face. The school district is represented by the administration (superintendent, principal and/or police), and the student is entitled to legal representation to plea his/her case. The hearing officer will make their decision based on evidence presented, case law and Board policy, and all parties are bound by the decision of the hearing officer.

Dr. Smotas stated that the cost for the hearing officer should be close to the same cost that district has paid to have an attorney present at previous expulsion hearings.

The Board members indicated that they are in favor of this option, but asked for additional information regarding the cost as compared to the current method of holding expulsion hearings.

**B. Approval of Authorized Signers for KeyBank Accounts**

Dr. Smotas indicated that since Dr. Collin has retired, the district needs to change authorization signatures for KeyBank accounts. Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, that the Board add Dr. Paul Smotas as an authorized signer on the Key Bank accounts. Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick, Mr. Roberts, Mrs. Rummel and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

**C. Approval of Change of Authorized Signer for the Child Nutrition Programs**

Dr. Smotas indicated that since Dr. Collin has retired, the district needs to change authorization signatures for the Child Nutrition Programs. Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, that the Board add Dr. Paul Smotas as an authorized signer for the Child Nutrition Programs. Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick, Mr. Roberts, Mrs. Rummel and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

**Item XI. Personnel Matters**

There were no Personnel Matters.

**Item XII. Student Matters**

There were no Student Matters.

**Item XIII. Adjournment**

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roberts, to adjourn. Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick, Mr. Roberts, Mrs. Rummel and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary**

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**Sonya Shegogue, Chairperson**

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**Tracy L. Rummel, Secretary**