

**Regular Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Stafford Elementary School
August 15, 2016, 6:30 p.m.**

Board Members Present: Mr. Scott Gallison
Mr. Peter Kovaleski
Mrs. Andrea Locke
Mr. Jeff Roberts
Mrs. Tracy Rummel, Chairperson
Ms. Sonya Shegogue, Secretary
Mrs. Kathy Walsh

Also Present: Dr. Patricia A. Collin, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Sam Adlerstein, Business Manager

Item I. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 6:41 p.m. A quorum was established.

Item II. Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Rummel led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item III. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting, 07/11/16

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on 07/11/16, as presented.

Item IV. Treasurer's Report

Bills, 7/14/16- \$334,927.74
Grants, 7/14/16- \$123,402.81
Bills, 7/26/16- \$642,620.09
Grants, 7/26/16- \$50.00
Bills, 7/27/16- \$129,210.81
Grants, 7/27/16- \$8,617.04
Bills, 8/4/16- \$177,385.21
Grants, 8/4/16- \$8,953.59
Bills, 8/4/16- \$187,982.75
Bills, 8/11/16- \$35,044.83
Grants, 8/11/16- \$365.61

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

Item V. Correspondence

A. Board Meeting Reminder

Mrs. Rummel read the Board meeting reminder that was posted on the agenda.

B. Special Meeting Reminder

Mrs. Rummel reminded the Board members about the special meeting scheduled on Monday, September 19, 2016, at 5:30 p.m., at the public library, for the purpose of meeting with Nick Caruso from CABE.

C. Thank You Card

Via the portal, the Board received a thank you card from Mrs. Meakim for the retirement gift she received in June.

Dr. Collin informed the Board members that several staff members appeared in the *Professional Learning at EASTCONN* flyer.

Mrs. Rummel shared that she has earned CABE's Certified Board of Education Member Award, which is awarded to board members that have earned 20 credits in the areas of board relations, policy, curriculum, school finance, school law, labor relations and board operations.

Mrs. Rummel stated that the Board was sent a copy of the CABE Board Recognition Awards application. She said that the Board should review the application to see if they have met the criteria, and, if not, perhaps use the application to guide the Board's work over the next year.

Mrs. Rummel read her letter of resignation as Board chair, effective immediately. She said that she's enjoyed being on the Board of Education for many years, but Board commitments are making it difficult for her to be available for her family.

Item VI. Board Reports

A. Report from Student Representative

The student representatives were not present at the Board meeting. Therefore, there was no report.

B. Budget Committee

The Budget Committee members are Mrs. Rummel, Ms. Shegogue 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. Mrs. Locke mentioned that the first SAA negotiation meeting would take place on Monday, August 29, 2016, at 5:30 p.m.

Item VII. Superintendent's Reports

A. Summary of Education-Related Legislation Enacted in the 2016 Regular and Special Session of the Connecticut General Assembly

Dr. Collin stated that following the legislative session each year, there is an update on new laws that will affect schools. Dr. Collin provided a summary of education-related legislation enacted in the 2016 regular and special sessions of the Connecticut General Assembly (Series: 2016-17; Circular Letter: C-1) via the portal. She noted that the first part of the summary presents newly enacted laws that concern education and the second focuses on those which address the budget and bond-related public acts affecting education. Dr. Collin stated that some of the new legislation will likely require new/revised Board of Education policies.

Dr. Collin highlighted some of the key aspects of this new legislation.

B. Head Start Report through June 30, 2016

Dr. Collin reported that the Basic Head Start (Fund 150) award of \$52,166 was for the first part of the current grant year. She said that the report reflects \$52,166 in expenditures as of June 30, 2016. The Early Head Start (Fund 180) award for the first portion of the current grant year is \$29,124 and reflects \$28,575 in expenditures and \$1,239 in encumbered funds as of June 30, 2016.

Dr. Collin reminded the Board that in February 2016, Administration recommended discontinuation of the district's participation in Basic Head Start. Ms. Shelley Michaud, Principal, West Stafford School, reported she was confident that through condensing/reducing much of the overlapping reporting, service options, and staffing within our other early childhood grants (and without the restrictions imposed by the Basic Head Start Grant), the district would be able to provide a comprehensive program similar to Head Start, that will be funded solely through our other early childhood grants as the realignment will meet the requirements of those grants without impact on the district's regular budget. As a result of this recommendation and grant awards, the district will continue to participate in the Early Head Start program.

In compliance with the Head Start agreement, the monthly program expense reports are presented to the Board of Education on a regular basis. After consulting with EASTCONN personnel last spring, we have determined that the district would meet this obligation by reporting to the Stafford Board of Education on a quarterly basis. In addition, the reports are periodically presented to the Head Start Parent Policy Committee, which also reviews the minutes of BOE meetings in order to stay abreast of the Board's actions.

C. 2016 School Climate Surveys

Dr. Collin stated that beginning with the 2012-2013 school year and in accordance with Public Act 11-232, each school district must administer school climate surveys to students, parents/guardians and staff. Unlike when the law first came into effect, districts are now required to administer the survey to ALL students with the exception of children enrolled at the primary (pre-kindergarten through grade two) level. However, parents/guardians and staff of children in the primary grades are to be provided an opportunity to complete the surveys. Copies of the surveys were provided for Board members via the portal.

Dr. Collin said that in January of 2015, the State issued a memorandum entitled, "Safe School Climate Coordinator-FAQs.". The document prescribed the use of a 5-point Likert scale (i.e. 1-Strongly disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Neither agree nor disagree; 4-Agree; and 5-Strongly agree) and the inclusion of six uniform survey questions, which were also provided via the portal for Board members (See "School Climate Questions for CT: From Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (CSCI).") She said that the questions are specific to parents/guardians, staff, middle & high school students, and elementary school students.

Dr. Collin reported that the first year the surveys were mandated by the State, the district contracted with EASTCONN for administration of the Bernhardt surveys. When the Bernhardt surveys could not be modified to include the six uniform survey questions, the administrators conducted research of other climate surveys and ultimately created one for use in our district, which included the State's questions.

Lynn Reedy, Instructional Technology Specialist, then created the surveys using Survey Monkey (at a cost to the district). When the district went to Google Apps, she then transferred the surveys to a Google Forms format, which preserves the respondents' anonymity, while automatically recording the data in spreadsheets. The spreadsheets may then be accessed by the administrators in a "view only" format.

Dr. Collin said that this year's school climate surveys were administered in April 2016. Templates of the invitation to parents/guardians, students and staff were provided for Board members via the portal. The results for the staff surveys were subsequently provided to the Board via email on July 23, 2016, and were also provided via the portal. The results of the parent/guardian and student surveys were also provided via the portal.

Dr. Collin explained that with the exception of comments about the negative impact of the testing administration investigation and the absence of the assistant principal at the middle school, and a couple of isolated comments regarding poor morale, overall staff members' input was positive. She said that the reports reflect that staff members feel safe and secure at school, are treated with respect, collaborate with staff to promote student progress, feel their work is valued, and feel their administrator(s) provide(s) support, is open to suggestions and facilitates communication effectively. Many staff identified the need for strategies and additional staff to deal with children who present with challenging behaviors and provided input to inform professional development activities (e.g. *In terms of integrating the Common Core Standards, I have made the most progress in the following. . . .* and, *My greatest need for professional learning related to the Common Core Standards is the following. . . .*),

Dr. Collin said that in June, 10 staff members attended a two-day Basic School Climate Training, in Ridgefield, Connecticut. Stafford representatives included the following: Joyce Brisson (SES), Heather Galotto (SES), Dawn Gagne (SES), Jolene Piscetello (SES), Steve Montgomery (SES), Donna Bourque, (SMS), Deidriene Knowlton (SMS), Jennifer Hoffman (SMS), Tannis Longmore (SHS), and me. The hosting district provided Stafford Public Schools with a complimentary copy of *Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future* (Brendtro, Brokenleg, VanBockern, Solution Tree Press, 1990) as recommended by Dr. Jo Ann Freiberg, CSDE, School Climate Improvement, Bullying and Character Education.

Subsequently, Steve Montgomery and Joyce Brisson also attended a two-day Restorative Training in July, and in an effort to raise the level of awareness regarding our individual and collective effect on school climate and culture, the district will be focusing on cultural competence, one of the Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning (CSDE, 2015) during the 2016-2017 school year. To enhance our district's cultural responsiveness in order to positively affect our school district, Mr. Gerald Hairston, Program Manager from the Institute of Teaching & Learning, Capitol Region Education Council (CREC), will present the keynote address at

Convocation. Mr. Hairston has been working in the area of equity education for nearly 10 years and will provide us with an overview of cultural competence, one of the Connecticut Standards for Professional Learning (CSDE, 2015). Cultural competence is not a new initiative, rather it's a way of thinking about and responding to others which ensures opportunities and support for all students. It's a plan for acquiring the knowledge and language necessary to establish meaningful connections with people from a variety of backgrounds, which positively impacts our environment and ultimately, climate and morale. Following Mr. Hairston's presentation, everyone will have an opportunity to participate in a brief survey which will include an invitation to join a district task force.

Dr. Collin reminded Board members that they are invited to attend Convocation.

D. Update on the Self-Funded Health and Dental Insurance Funds

Dr. Collin presented the report prepared by Mr. Sam Adlerstein, Business Manager, regarding the status of our self-funded health and dental insurance programs. Dr. Collin reminded Board members that a zero percent premium increase has been budgeted for 2016-2017.

She reported that the health insurance fund reflected a total unadjusted balance of \$2,306,889 as of June 30, 2016. At this time last year, the health insurance fund reflected a balance of \$1,535,838.

The dental insurance fund reflected a balance of \$117,628. At this time last year, the dental insurance fund reflected a balance of \$66,998.

Mrs. Rummel asked if there would be an impact on the fund due to the fact that town employees would be participating in the State insurance plan, as per their bargaining unit contract. Mr. Adlerstein responded that the impact will be more apparent when the district receives renewal information for next year, since the town employees pulled out after the rates for this year were set.

E. Preliminary Financial Report through June 30, 2016

Dr. Collin presented the financial report of funds budgeted and encumbered/expended from July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016, as prepared by Mr. Sam Adlerstein, Business Manager. She said that of the \$27,472,500 total, \$27,144,140 has been expended with \$145,163 still to be liquidated, leaving a preliminary balance of \$183,196 in unexpended funds. She said that via the portal, Sam has provided an explanation for the increase in unexpended funds as it compares to the \$93,187 as projected in July.

Dr. Collin stated that sizable portions of the unexpended funds are in the salaries and supplies accounts (lines 100 and 600, respectively). The balance in salaries is a result of new staff members, who were hired at salaries less than what was budgeted (i.e. salaries based on employees, who currently held the same positions the previous school year when the budget was developed) and open positions, which were extremely difficult to fill. The balance in the supplies account includes savings in electricity and fuel oil.

She said that Board members will note that the District is overspent in some lines and thus may anticipate the presentation of final transfers in the upcoming months in accordance with our practice.

Dr. Collin said that last year, the Board returned a total of \$37,571, which was ultimately transferred to the Unexpended Education Funds Account, the policy of which the Board of Finance approved on August 3, 2015. A copy of this policy was provided via the portal for the Board's review. She said that at this time, the Board may consider that \$130,000 of the current preliminary balance of \$183,196 be returned to the Town, which

approved the money to be used toward the purchase of the school district's new phone system at a time when we did not anticipate having the funds available for such a purpose. The Board may then consider requesting that the Board of Finance transfer the remaining balance (the actual amount which has yet to be determined) to the Unexpended Education Fund Account from which the district would like to request funds approximating \$25,000 for the purpose of an enclosed full-size van for the maintenance department. The current vehicle is insufficient in size and necessitates multiple trips to secure supplies and tools to and from work sites. The current vehicle, then, would be returned to the Town in accordance with Board policy.

Other options the Board may consider include requesting that the Board of Finance transfer the entire balance to the Unexpended Education Fund Account to be used in accordance with its policy.

Mr. Kovaleski asked if Mr. Adlerstein felt that there is enough money budgeted for fuel and electricity, since the solar / geothermal projects just came on line and no one is sure how much savings will be realized. Mr. Adlerstein said that he felt there was sufficient monies budgeted. Mr. Kovaleski suggested that we keep this issue in mind when determining how much money to return to the town vs. how much to put in the UEFA.

Mr. Gallison said that he was in favor of returning the \$130,000 to the town as reimbursement for the money that they provided for the new phone system.

Item VIII. Public Forum

There were no questions or comments.

Item IX. Old Business

There was no Old Business.

Item X. New Business

A. Disposal of Obsolete Desks, Books, and Technology Equipment

Dr. Collin said that three desks, which were used since at least 1991 have been deemed obsolete. With an estimated value between \$100 and \$300, the desks are of metal construction with laminated surfaces. She said that it's important to note that district staff members were first offered the three desks, which resulted in at least one "trade" before presenting these three desks to the Board for consideration. In addition, a fourth desk was damaged from supporting too much weight and has been deemed obsolete.

Second, the high school has identified books, which are no longer relevant to and/or are not aligned with the English and technology courses and curricula. Memoranda regarding the books from Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal, Mrs. Michelle Backhus, English Department Head, and Mr. David Gorski, Technology Teacher, were provided via the portal.

A list of equipment deemed obsolete by the Instructional Technology (IT) department was also provided via the portal for the Board's review. She called attention to the fact that many of the items on the list are inoperable. Dr. Collin also noted that the town IT person was contacted and allowed to identify items that he could use prior to the list being presented to the Board.

According to Board of Education policy 3260-*Sales and Disposal of Books, Equipment, and Supplies*, the obsolete items must be returned to the Town of Stafford.

Mrs. Walsh made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kovaleski, that the Board of Education approve the return of the obsolete desks, books, and technology equipment to the Town of Stafford, according to the provisions of Board policy 3260-*Sales and Disposal of Books, Equipment, and Supplies*. If the Town does not want the items, the district will assume responsibility for proper disposal. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts, Ms. Shegogue and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

B. Review and Possible Approval of Revision to Transportation Policy

Dr. Collin reported that on July 14, 2016, the district's transportation policies were initially discussed and reviewed by the Administrative Policy Committee (APC), which is comprised of the following staff: Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction; Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal, Stafford High School; Ms. Jennifer Hoffman, Principal, Stafford Middle School; Mrs. Peggy Falcetta, Principal, Staffordville School; Mrs. Amy Stevenson, Director of Pupil Services and Dr. Collin. The Board Policy Committee (BPC) is comprised of Mrs. Kathy Walsh (Chairperson), Mr. Peter Kovaleski, and Mrs. Tracy Rummel. Mr. Kovaleski and Mrs. Rummel met on July 22, 2016, to review and discuss the transportation policies.

The following policy is attached for your review:

- **Policy 3541: Transportation**

She said that **Policy 3541.24 Parent's/Guardian's Responsibility**, **Policy 3541.3 Routes and Services**, and **Policy 3541.5 Records and Reports**, in addition to a portion of **Policy 3541.22 Bus Operator's Responsibility**, and **Policy 3541.33 Day Care Centers as Bus Stops**, in its entirety, have been revised and incorporated into a single transportation policy.

Typically, when new policies are presented to the Board of Education, the initial presentation serves as a "first reading" to allow for ample review, discussion and public comment prior to possible approval at a subsequent meeting, which serves as the "second reading." In order to allow adequate time to notify parents/guardians, in particular, of the change regarding assisting children in pre-kindergarten through grade three children with crossing the street, it is administration's hope that the presentation of this revised policy at this time may serve as the second reading and be approved by the Board this evening.

Ms. Shegogue made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, the Board of Education approve revised **Policy 3541: Transportation**, as presented. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts, Ms. Shegogue and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

C. Review and Possible Approval to Repeal Existing Transportation Policies

Dr. Collin said that the Administrative Policy Committee and, subsequently, the Board Policy Committee met to review and discuss the district's transportation-related policies, which resulted in a revision to Policy 3541, which reflects incorporation of some of the policies and repeal of the six policies. Two of the policies recommended for repeal would be more appropriately addressed through our transportation contract with M & J Bus, Inc. (3541.22 and 3541.23), and the one imposes requirements on the district (3541.21), which are not reasonable (e.g. The Superintendent will report to every bus accident.) and thus may place the district at significant risk of liability.

- **Policy 3541.21 Responsibility Regarding Determination of Need for Medical Intervention for Students Involved in a School Bus Accident**

- **Policy 3541.22 Bus Operator's Responsibility** (One section of this policy has been incorporated into Policy 3541.)
- **Policy 3541.23 Bus Contractor**
- **Policy 3541.24 Parent's/Guardian's Responsibility** (This policy has been incorporated into Policy 3541.)
- **Policy 3541.3 Routes and Services** (This policy has been revised and incorporated into Policy 3541.)
- **Policy 3541.33 Day Care Centers as Bus Stops** (This policy has been incorporated, in its entirety, into Policy 3541.)
- **Policy 3541.5 Records and Reports** (This policy has been revised and incorporated into Policy 3541.)

Typically, when new policies are presented to the Board of Education, the initial presentation serves as a "first reading" to allow for ample review, discussion and public comment prior to possible approval at a subsequent meeting, which serves as the "second reading." Should the Board of Education approve **Policy 3541 Transportation**, as presented earlier this evening, the aforementioned policies should be repealed from our manual. Furthermore, because these policies are either incorporated into a single transportation policy (3541), are more appropriately addressed in our transportation, place the district as significant risk of liability, and/or are time sensitive (i.e. We need adequate time to notify parent's/guardian's of the revision to the section regarding their responsibility regarding children in pre-kindergarten through grade three.), the presentation of these policies at this time may serve as the second reading and be approved by the Board this evening.

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, that the Board repeal existing transportation **Policy 3541.21 Responsibility Regarding Determination of Need for Medical Intervention for Students Involved in a School Bus Accident; Policy 3541.22 Bus Operator's Responsibility; Policy 3541.23 Bus Contractor; Policy 3541.24 Parent's/Guardian's Responsibility; Policy 3541.3 Routes and Services; Policy 3541.33 Day Care Centers as Bus Stops, and Policy 3541.5 Records and Reports;** as presented. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts, Ms. Shegogue and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Mr. Kovaleski made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, that the Board place item **XI.B.- Superintendent's Evaluation (Executive Session Anticipated)** into executive session. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts, Ms. Shegogue and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Item XI. Personnel Matters

A. Acceptance of Resignations- Administrative and Certified Staff Members

Mr. Roberts made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, that the Board of Education accept the resignations of the following staff members, as indicated:

NAME	POSITION	SCHOOL	EFFECTIVE DATE	REASON
Michaud, Shelley	Principal	West Stafford School	End of day, 7/26/2016	To accept a position in another CT district.
Monahan, Jessica	Art, .60 FTE	West Stafford School / Staffordville School	7/27/16	To accept a full-time position in another CT district.
Paolini, Lori	Special Education Teacher, PK	West Stafford School	7/1/2016	To accept a position in another CT district.

Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts, Ms. Shegogue and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

The Board took a brief recess at 7:55 p.m.

B. Superintendent's Evaluation (Executive Session Anticipated)

Mr. Roberts made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board enter executive session for the purpose of completing the Superintendent's evaluation. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts, Ms. Shegogue and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 7:57 p.m.

Mr. Gallison made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, to return to regular session. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts, Ms. Shegogue and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 8:12 p.m.

Mr. Gallison made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board finalize Dr. Collin's evaluation and increase her salary by 2.5%. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts, Ms. Shegogue and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Item XII. Student Matters

There were no Student Matters.

Item XIII. Adjournment

Mrs. Walsh made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, to adjourn. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts, Ms. Shegogue and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

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

Tracy L. Rummel, Chairperson

Sonya Shegogue, Secretary

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