

**Special Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Stafford Elementary School
February 11, 2016, 6:30 p.m.**

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

Absent: Mrs. Tracy Rummel, Chairperson

Also Present: Dr. Patricia A. Collin, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Sam Adlerstein, Business Manager
Ms. Michelle Backus, Teacher, Stafford High School
Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Ms. Deb Bileca, Teacher, Stafford High School
Ms. Jennifer Hoffman, Principal, Stafford Middle School
Ms. Marcia Jacobs, Teacher, Stafford Elementary School
Mr. Steven Montgomery, Assistant Principal, Stafford Elementary School
Ms. Jolene Piscetello, Principal, Stafford Elementary School
Mr. Damon Reynolds, Alternate Student Representative
Miss Allison Schoolnick, Student Representative

Item I. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. A quorum was established.

Item II. Pledge of Allegiance

Miss Schoolnick led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item III. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting, 02/01/16

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on 02/01/16, as presented.

Item IV. Treasurer's Report

Grants, 01/28/16- \$4,605.83
Bills, 02/06/16- \$873,167.08
Grants, 02/03/16- \$6,656.94

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

Item V. Correspondence

A. Board Meeting Reminder

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

Dr. Collin stated that, as she notified the Board earlier in the day via email, the district was notified today that it was awarded a \$34,760 technology grant. She thanked Mr. Bednarz and the technology department for their hard work.

Item VI. Board Reports

A. Report from Student Representative

Miss Schoolnick distributed a report, which covered three of the schools' news and events. Mr. Reynolds also gave a brief sports update.

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. 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.

Item VII. Superintendent's Reports

A. Cafeteria Profit and Loss through December 2015

Dr. Collin presented the Cafeteria Profit and Loss report for July through December 31, 2015, as prepared by Mr. Sam Adlerstein, Business Manager. She reported that the Food Services Program had a loss of \$13,113 for the month of December, and the report indicates a year to date profit of \$751. She said that it's important to note that in December there was an extra biweekly payroll. She said that Mr. Adlerstein's memorandum, which includes, in addition to information about the promotional efforts of Boar's Head Deli Meats, an explanation of revenue sources and financial system improvements, was made available via the portal for the Board's review.

Mr. Gallison asked if the main contributing factor to the loss was the third payroll that occurred in December. Mr. Adlerstein stated that it was.

B. Review and Possible Approval of 2016 – 2017 School Calendar

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gallison, that item VII.B.- **Review and Possible Approval of 2016 – 2017 School Calendar** be moved to New Business. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

C. Elementary Mathematics Program Presentation

Dr. Collin stated that in response to questions about the district's elementary mathematics program, Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, and Mrs. Marcia Jacobs, Mathematics Instructional Support Teacher, prepared a presentation for the Board of Education.

Mr. Bednarz and Mrs. Jacobs reviewed a PowerPoint presentation entitled "K-5 Mathematics in Stafford", which was provided for Board members via the portal. The presentation included information about "instructional shifts", which are inherent in the implementation of the Common Core Standards (CCS) for Mathematics, Stafford's performance on the Smarter Balanced Assessment as compared to State and DRG F averages, the tiered interventions model at Stafford Elementary School, and impressions regarding the district's recent upgrade to the *GoMath* (2015) program. Several Board members asked clarifying questions.

D. Status of School-Sponsored Domestic & Foreign Trips Scheduled for Spring/Summer 2016

Dr. Collin reported that the focus of Attorney Thomas Mooney's (Shipman & Goodwin, LLP) recently published "Nutmeg Board" scenario in the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) January 2016 publication of *The Journal*, was on the cancellation of trips due to the international climate. A copy of the CABE article was provided via the portal for the Board's review.

Dr. Collin noted that this topic was also a concern of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) as evidenced by a statewide survey, which was administered in December 2015. The survey, also attached for the Board's review, asked the following:

1. Has your district cancelled due to safety concern any international trips scheduled for this school year or in 2016? (99 respondents: 10 "yes"; 89 "no")
2. Has your district cancelled due to safety concerns any domestic trips scheduled for this school year or in 2016? (102 respondents: 14 "yes"; 88 "no")

Dr. Collin said that while it is the district's hope to continue to provide access for our students to these enrichment activities, it would be prudent to secure parental/guardian consent on the Student Conduct Agreement Form, Medical Information & Protocols Understanding & Authorization Form, and Medical & Illness Protocols Understanding & Authorization Form, and both student and parent/guardian consent on the Participant and Parent Agreement (Assumption of Risks, Agreements of Release & Other Provisions) Form as travel advisories continue to be monitored. She said that the consent forms from Shipman and Goodwin tighten up the district's liability.

She said that the district has developed a parent letter, consent and release forms, and related student conduct and medical information/permission forms, which have been tailored to three trips which are scheduled for this spring, and were provided to the Board via the portal:

- Stafford Middle School Trip to Maryland and Washington, D.C. for the Music Showcase Festival, May 18-22, 2016;

- Stafford High School Trip to Quebec City, Canada, April 13-15, 2016; and
- Stafford High School Trip to Italy in Summer 2016.

Ms. Bileca, foreign language teacher at Stafford High School, stated that she hopes that if the district decides to consider cancellation at a later time, that a discussion with the parents, students and teachers takes place. She also noted that last minute cancellation of these trips cause parents and students to lose money on deposits that are non-refundable at that time.

Mr. Gallison asked if deposits are refundable if a trip goes forward but a parent does not feel comfortable sending his / her child. Ms. Bileca said that the deposit would be non-refundable.

Mr. Kovaleski noted that both parents should be required to sign, not just one parent.

E. Financial Report through January 2016

Dr. Collin presented the financial report of funds budgeted and encumbered/expended from July 1, 2015, through January 31, 2016, as prepared by Mr. Sam Adlerstein, Business Manager. The total budget for the 2015-2016 school year is \$27,472,500. As indicated in Mr. Adlerstein's memorandum, the period to date expenditures/encumbrances total \$25,472,500, or 93.2% (43.5% expended; 49.7% encumbered), leaving a \$1,858,698 balance of the total budget to be expended or encumbered by June 30, 2016.

Mr. Adlerstein has also included a report, which includes State, federal and local grant awards, expenditures, and reimbursements received as of January 31, 2016. Most grants are on a reimbursement basis, which means that the funding source of the grant reimburses the district after the latter covers the expense.

There were no questions or comments.

F. Continued Presentation of the Proposed 2016 – 2017 Budget for the Stafford Public School District

Dr. Collin reviewed the changes that were made since the last meeting to the 2016-2017 proposed budget for the Stafford Public School District, which totals \$26,872,224 and represents an increase of \$383,911, or 1.4%.

It was noted that the district locked in oil at \$1.40 per gallon vs. the \$1.80 that was budgeted. However, Mr. Adlerstein said that the budget has yet to be adjusted because he is still having conversations with the town regarding how the debt service for the solar projects will affect the district's 16-17 budget.

Ms. Shegogue asked if there were any savings from the solar projects. Mr. Kovaleski briefly reviewed the completion status of the solar projects. He noted that at this time, no one is tracking the savings from the array installations. He suggested that a formal request be sent to the Energy Advisory Committee requesting that information.

Mr. Gallison had a question regarding the roofing project at Stafford High School. Since Mr. Cowperthwaite, Supervisor of Building Services, was not present at the Board meeting, Mr. Adlerstein said that he would forward Mr. Cowperthwaite's contact information to Mr. Gallison.

The complete budget document, including backup material, is posted on the district web site-
www.stafford.k12.ct.us

Item VIII. Public Forum

There were no questions or comments.

Item IX. Old Business

There was no Old Business.

Item X. New Business

A. Review and Possible Approval of 2016 – 2017 School Calendar

Dr. Collin presented the proposed school calendar for 2016-2017. She said that the proposed calendar has had input from administrators and, per bargaining unit agreement, teachers. She noted that St. Edward School staff has also been consulted, and it was shared with the co-presidents of the CSEA. The calendar reflects 180 instructional days for students. While school districts were required to adopt their respective regional calendars (EASTCONN's was provided via the portal), guidelines were provided which allowed for some flexibility as detailed below:

- Agree on a common start date for students within the region; the common start date shall be the last Wednesday of August with a three day +/- flexible window;
- Each region must identify three vacations: at least one (1) week during the period between July 1 and the last week of August must be identified as student vacation time; at least five (5) days during the 4th or 5th week of December (and can be extended to coincide with New Year's Day); and at least five (5) days during the 2nd or 3rd week of April;
- Election Day in November shall be a Professional Development Day with no students attending school;
- Within a region have one other common Professional Development Day that does not interfere with statewide student assessments (in consultation with the Connecticut State Department of Education); and
- Allow for five (5) flexible days for individual student needs.

Adhering to the aforementioned guidelines, the proposed 2016-2017 school calendar for Stafford Public Schools reflects a start date for students of Thursday, September 1, 2016, giving students an end date of June 12, 2017, barring any school cancellations. Because inclement weather will likely affect our ability to provide instruction during the winter months, and in alignment with the regional calendar, the only days that school is not scheduled to be in session are the following:

- January 16th, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- February 20th, Presidents' Day
- February 21st (February Break)
- March 17th (Professional Development)

Mr. Kovaleski made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gallison, that the Board of Education approve the school calendar for 2016-2017, as presented. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Item XI. Personnel Matters

There were no Personnel Matters.

Mrs. Walsh made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, to place item XII.A. - **Consideration of the Superintendent of Schools' Recommendation for the Expulsion of Student C from Stafford Middle School (Executive Session Anticipated)** into executive session. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

The Board took a brief recess at 7:40 p.m.

Item XII. Student Matters

A. Consideration of the Superintendent of Schools' Recommendation for the Expulsion of Student C from Stafford Middle School

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gallison, that the Board enter executive session to discuss a matter involving a student that would likely result in the disclosure of public records or the information contained therein as described in the Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-210, subsections (b)(2), (11) and (17). Only those invited by the Board may be present in the executive session. The Board invited the following individuals into executive session:

Student C
The Parent of Student C
The Brother of Student C
Dr. Patricia Collin, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Jennifer Hoffman, Principal, Stafford Middle School
Mrs. Christine Marinelli, Recording Secretary
Atty. Kyle McClain, Board Attorney

Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 7:52 p.m.

The Board took a recess at 8:19 p.m. All invited individuals left the meeting room, except Atty. McClain. All invited individuals returned to the boardroom at 8:26 p.m.

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kovaleski, to return to regular session. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 8:27 p.m.

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kovaleski, 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 January 20, 2016, Student C committed an expellable offense, namely that Student C wrote a bomb threat in the bathroom at the Stafford Middle School; and Student C violated the Board of Education's policy 5114 (a) – (p), and the Code of Conduct as outlined in the Stafford Middle School 2015 – 2016 Student Handbook; and it being 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. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, to enter executive session. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 8:30 p.m.

The Board took a recess at 8:47 p.m. All invited individuals left the meeting room, except Atty. McClain. All invited individuals returned to the boardroom at 9:23 p.m.

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gallison, to return to regular session. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 9:24 p.m.

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gallison, that based on the previous decision of the Stafford Board of Education that Student C 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 C, it is the finding of the Stafford Board of Education that Student C 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 through January 26, 2017.

However, Student C may apply for early readmission to school at the beginning of the sixth term (approximately April 28, 2016) of the current 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 April 11, 2016. The Board will condition Student C's readmission on satisfactory performance in tutoring with no unexcused absences; maintaining a satisfactory academic record; attending counseling sessions as scheduled by the school social worker or community based counseling with the approval of the Superintendent of Schools; and completion of a book report on a book approved or recommended by the Superintendent of Schools. If Student C is granted early readmission and subsequently commits a violation of the Board of Education's policies and regulations warranting expulsion, then the original period of this expulsion shall be reinstated without further hearings.

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

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

Item XIII. Adjournment

Mr. Gallison made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kovaleski, to adjourn. Mr. Gallison, Mr. Kovaleski, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Roberts and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

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

Tracy L. Rummel, Chairperson

Sonya Shegogue, Secretary