

**Regular Meeting  
Stafford Board of Education  
Pinney Administration Building  
February 24, 2014**

**Board Members Present:** Mr. Tony Frassinelli, arrived at 6:37 p.m.  
Mr. Earl Goodell  
Mrs. Andrea Locke  
Mrs. Tracy Rummel, Chairperson  
Ms. Sonya Shegogue, Secretary

**Absent:** Mr. Peter Kovaleski  
Mrs. Kathy Walsh

**Also Present:** Dr. Patricia A. Collin, Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Mr. Jerry Domanico, Business Manager  
Mrs. Peggy Falcetta, Principal, Staffordville School  
Mr. Dean Fortin, Network Coordinator  
Mr. Ben Gluck, Student Representative  
Ms. Beth LaPane, Supervisor of Food Services  
Ms. Shelley Michaud, Principal, West Stafford School  
Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal, Stafford High School  
Mr. Mark Seddon, Supervisor of Building Services  
Mr. Hank Skala, Principal, Stafford Elementary School  
Mrs. Amy Stevenson, Director of Pupil Services  
Mr. Kenneth Valentine, Principal, Stafford Middle School

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

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

**Item II. Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Gluck led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Regular Meeting, 02/10/14

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on February 10, 2014.

**Item IV. Treasurer's Report**

Grants, 2/10/14- \$2,566.43  
Bills, 2/19/14- \$298,821.70  
Grants, 2/19/14- \$11,143.43

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

## **Item V. Correspondence**

Dr. Collin read a congratulatory letter that was written to Mr. Frassinelli from the Unified Sports Program. Mr. Frassinelli was named as the 2014 Friend of Unified Sports for his support and dedicated service.

Dr. Collin showed the Board the award certificate for Stafford Elementary School, which was presented by CABE for Stafford Elementary School's school procedure pamphlet.

Mrs. Rummel reminded Board members about the sharing assemblies at West Stafford School.

Mrs. Rummel stated that she received an email from Colleen Martin regarding the Board's yearbook ad. She asked that Board members bring checks to reimburse her for the cost of the ad to the next Board meeting.

It was determined that the March 10, 2014, Board meeting would be cancelled. Board members were reminded that the first public hearing on the budget is scheduled for Monday, March 10, 2014, at 7 p.m., at the Community Center.

## **Item VI. Board Reports**

### **A. Report from Student Representative**

Mr. Gluck reported on the following topics:

- Pride Breakfast at SHS
- FBLA Helped with the Father/ Daughter Dance
- SBAC Testing Scheduled
- PIE's Honor Roll, Wednesday at 1 p.m., Board Members invited to attend
- Sports Update
- Music / Drama Update

### **B. Budget Committee**

The Budget Committee members are Mrs. Rummel, Mr. Frassinelli and Mr. Kovaleski. Mr. Goodell and Ms. Shegogue are alternates. Mrs. Rummel stated that a meeting was held on Tuesday, February 18, 2014, at 6 p.m., at the Pinney Building. She noted that Dr. Collin would be reviewing information with the full Board that was discussed at the committee meeting.

### **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 Mr. Goodell, Mr. Kovaleski and Mrs. Walsh. Dr. Collin noted that a meeting is scheduled on Friday, February 28, 2014, at 8:30 a.m.

### **E. Negotiation Committee**

The Negotiation Committee members are Mrs. Rummel, Mr. Frassinelli and Mrs. Locke. Ms. Shegogue is an alternate. There was no report from this committee since none of the contracts are currently being negotiated.

**Item VII. Superintendent's Reports**

**A. Update on Self-Funded Health and Dental Insurance Funds**

Dr. Collin presented a memorandum and documentation prepared by Mr. Jerry Domanico, Business Manager, regarding the status of our self-funded health and dental insurance programs. She said that as of January 31, 2014, the health insurance fund reflects a total balance of \$498,829.64, which includes the Board of Education's February submission of \$307,886.97. As noted, there are outstanding charges for the last three months, which are being investigated. She said that at this time last year, the health insurance fund was overspent by \$326,084.89.

Dr. Collin stated that as of January 31, 2014, the dental insurance fund reflects a balance of \$59,293.69. She said that while funds had been transferred to the Town's general fund earlier this year in order to pay invoices in a timely manner, all of the borrowed funds have been returned. At this time last year, this fund reflected a balance of \$76,581.76.

Mr. Goodell asked what factors have made a difference this year. Mr. Domanico stated that since the insurance fund was funded at an amount that was recommended by our insurance agent of record for the 13-14 budget year, the fund was able to recover and the monies borrowed from the town's general fund were returned.

**B. Cafeteria Profit and Loss through January 2014**

Dr. Collin presented the Cafeteria Profit and Loss report for July through January 31, 2014, as prepared by Mr. Jerry Domanico, Business Manager. She said that the Food Services program had a profit of \$3,559.94, while for the same period last year, reports indicated a profit of \$13,006.94. She noted that the year-to-date total shows a profit of \$5,952.79, while last year at this time the program had a profit of \$6,503.97. Mr. Domanico stated in his memorandum to the Board the impact of late opening and early release days on the program (i.e. lunch is not served at the primary schools on early release days) and notes that more students are purchasing lunch at Staffordville and West Staffordville Schools, which may be attributed to the implementation of full-day kindergarten this school year.

Dr. Collin stated that the food service program was recently awarded a grant from the New England Dairy & Food Council to implement and improve access to the consumption of low-fat and fat-free dairy products. She said that funds will be used to purchase smoothie machines for the middle and high schools, which was appealing to the Student Councils. She said that Ms. LaPane and Mr. Domanico are developing a survey to elicit feedback from students in order to promote the Food Services Program.

Mr. Frassinelli asked about the amount of the grant and if this was a new program. Ms. LaPane stated that the grant was awarded in the amount of \$3,200 and that she believed this was the first year that the grant was offered.

**C. Update on the De-Centralization of Central Office**

Dr. Collin stated that on April 8, 2013, Mr. John Kennedy and Ms. Margery Clark, NESDEC Consultants, made a formal presentation and responded to questions of Board and community members regarding the Best Use of Our Educational Facilities Study. In July 2013, Administration reviewed all options and made a recommendation to the Board of Education on September 23, 2013, at which time the Board approved the de-centralization of central office staff (i.e. relocate Superintendent's and Director of Pupil Services Offices to the

Elementary School; relocate the Curriculum & Instruction Office to the High School; and relocate the Business Office to the Portable) while maintaining five schools, resulting in no impact to students and staff.

Dr. Collin reported that to date, the following has occurred:

- Construction and building plans have been reviewed with the Town Building Inspector;
- General Trades Package bids are being prepared by three contractors with work expected to begin during April vacation;
- Bids are being solicited for security cameras and monitors, installation of a new propane tank and heating/cooling unit for the portable, and moving services from Pinney to other locations; and
- Central office staff has begun to identify furniture and equipment to be moved and records to be purged.

Dr. Collin said that administration recognized the need to address potential inefficiencies, which might occur as a result of the de-centralization of central office. Because the positions of Personnel/Insurance-Bookkeeper and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent constitute a majority of issues related to the recruitment and records maintenance of staff, Dr. Collin reviewed and revised the job descriptions of each position. She said that effective January 1, 2014, the formerly entitled Personnel/Insurance-Bookkeeper, became the Human Resources Specialist/Administrative Support staff and began the transition to the Superintendent's Office and works under the direct supervision of the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools, which is now titled Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools / Human Resources Coordinator. She said that the revised job description of the former, who is a member of the CSEA bargaining unit, was reviewed by district and State CSEA representatives. The latter job description is that of a non-affiliated staff member. She said that she is confident that the re-aligned responsibilities will maintain and, in some areas, improve efficiencies for our district. In addition, this realignment will ensure that at least one support staff is in the Superintendent's Office at all times. Both job descriptions were provided via the electronic board meeting and via hard copy.

Dr. Collin stated that administration has decided to switch the locations of the Superintendent's Office and the Business Office. She said that this decision is a result of consideration and monitoring of the amount and types of "traffic" at each office. Assignment of the Business Office to the elementary school will limit outside visitors since Business Office visitors are typically current employees and vendors, who will be expected to have scheduled an appointment. By assigning the Superintendent's Office to the portable, we will limit access of persons not currently employed by the Board of Education to our elementary school. She said that this revised plan will also limit the cost of the relocation as we will not need to install a secure entrance allowing access to what was to be the Superintendent's Office at the school.

Dr. Collin said that it is the intent to relocate the offices during the second week in July, because that timeframe will have the least impact on the business office / payroll processing.

Mrs. Rummel stated that she spoke with the First Selectman regarding the status of the district's move. She said that Mr. Shuck noted that the next steps for the Pinney Building would be an appraisal and a best use study.

Mrs. Locke stated that she thinks that it is a great idea that the Superintendent's Office be moved to the portal vs. Stafford Elementary School.

**D. Discussion of the Proposed 2014 – 2015 Itemized Estimate of the Cost of Maintenance (Budget) for the Stafford Public School District**

Dr. Collin stated that at the Board of Education meeting on January 13, 2014, a proposed itemized estimate of the cost of maintenance for the Stafford Public Schools for 2014-2015 was presented. In addition to regularly-scheduled meetings of the full Board on January 27<sup>th</sup> and February 10<sup>th</sup>, the Board Budget Committee met on January 22<sup>nd</sup> and February 18<sup>th</sup>.

She noted that with the adoption of flexibility options specific to the educator evaluation plan by the State Board of Education on February 6<sup>th</sup>, Administration recommended to the Board Budget Committee on February 18<sup>th</sup> that the district eliminate the proposal for an educator evaluation consultant to assist with the evaluation of certified staff for the 2014-2015 school year (-\$50,400). In addition, after a thorough analysis of the revenue from preschool tuition, we made an adjustment to the budget (-\$7,000). These two factors resulted in a reduction in the Superintendent's proposed budget by \$57,400.

Dr. Collin projected the 2014-2015 itemized estimate summary, which reflected the aforementioned reductions and a proposed total of \$28,166,066. This amount is a 4.58% (vs. 4.79%) or \$1,233,375 increase over the current year's approved budget.

Dr. Collin projected and reviewed a detailed enrollment report. There were no questions.

Mr. Domanico distributed updated revenues reports to Board members, which he reviewed. There were no questions.

Dr. Collin projected the updated graph that was originally created in response to questions that Board members asked at the February 10<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. The revised graph included the dollar amount of each year's budget, as Mr. Kovalski requested.

**Item VIII. Public Forum**

A member of the audience asked that the graph regarding teaching salaries be projected again. He noted that Stafford's salaries are not really competitive. He said that it is important to keep this information in mind when discussing personnel costs.

**Item IX. Old Business**

There was no Old Business.

**Item X. New Business**

**A. Review and Possible Approval of Retirement Incentive**

Dr. Collin stated that in 2009, the Board of Education approved a retirement incentive plan for certified staff members. Seven certified staff members took advantage of this retirement incentive and helped us to realize substantial savings in salaries for 2009 - 2010. The Board of Education also offered such an incentive during the last budget season. As a result, six certified staff members submitted resignations for the purpose of retirement.

Dr. Collin said that since the budget for the coming school year appears to be one in which every avenue for potential savings should be followed, she and Mr. Jerry Domanico, Business Manager, recommended that a

retirement incentive plan be extended to certified staff members this year. Dr. Collin highlighted the retirement incentive plan for Board members.

Mrs. Locke asked how much was saved last year by offering the retirement incentive. Mr. Domanico said that the savings were approximately \$60,000.

Mr. Frassinelli made a motion, seconded by Mr. Goodell, that the Board of Education approve of the retirement incentive program for certified staff for three years, as proposed. Mr. Goodell, Mr. Frassinelli, Mrs. Locke and Ms. Shegogue voted for the motion, which carried.

**B. Approval of the Proposed 2014 – 2015 Itemized Estimate of the Cost of Maintenance (Budget) for the Stafford Public School District**

Dr. Collin stated that at the Board of Education meeting on January 13, 2014, she presented a proposed itemized estimate of the cost of maintenance Stafford Public Schools totaling \$28,223,176 for the 2014-2015 school year. This represented an increase of \$1,290,775 or 4.79% over the approved budget for 2013-2014.

She said that subsequently, the Board Budget Committee, comprised of Mrs. Tracy Rummel, Chairperson, Mr. Tony Frassinelli and Mr. Peter Kovaleski with Mr. Earl Goodell and Ms. Sonya Shegogue, Alternates, met on January 22<sup>nd</sup> and February 18<sup>th</sup>. As a result of the State Board of Education's acceptance of flexibility options relative to educator evaluation, it is recommended that we remove the educator evaluation consultant (\$50,400) from the budget proposed on January 13<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, while it originally included a possible \$20,000 to be collected in preschool tuition fees, a more accurate analysis as of February 14<sup>th</sup> indicates that \$27,000 more accurately reflects this revenue.

Dr. Collin noted that included in the proposed itemized estimate are the following: Reinstatement of 1.0 FTE elementary school assistant principal (10-month vs. 12-month position), mail courier (2 hours/day); summer school, K-8; 1.0 FTE Technology teacher at SHS; 0.2 FTE Intensive Education Academy (IEA) teacher at SHS, one part-time Special Education paraprofessional at SVS, and one part-time computer technician. The proposed budget also reflects funding for contractually-obligated degree changes; elimination of four positions- 0.6 FTE English Language Learner (ELL) teacher, full-time 10-month secretary at SMS, full-time 10-month central office receptionist and part-time central office custodian, due to the relocation of central office; and a reduction of heating oil due to the relocation of central office.

Dr. Collin stated that the revised itemized estimate of the cost of maintenance of Stafford Public Schools, which totals \$28,165,776 reflects a 4.58% increase or \$1,233,375 over the current year's budget. She noted that the proposed Board of Education itemized estimate for 2014-2015 must be forwarded to the Board of Finance by Wednesday, February 26, 2014.

Ms. Shegogue made a motion, seconded by Mr. Frassinelli, that the Board of Education approve the 2014-2015 itemized estimate of the cost of maintenance for the Stafford Public School district, as presented. Mr. Frassinelli, Mrs. Locke and Ms. Shegogue voted for the motion. Mr. Goodell voted against the motion. The motion carried by majority vote.

**Item XI. Personnel Matters**

**A. Approval of Request for Leave of Absence- Certified Staff Member**

Dr. Collin stated that a request for an unpaid leave of absence has been submitted by a certified staff member as listed below:

NAME	INITIAL EMPLOYMENT DATE	SCHOOL	EFFECTIVE DATE OF UNPAID LEAVE	ENDING DATE OF UNPAID LEAVE
Heather Galotto	8/22/2006	Stafford Middle School	04/21/14	5/30/14

She said that the request is in accordance with the professional agreement between the Stafford Board of Education and the Stafford Education Association and therefore, she recommended that the leave be granted.

Mr. Goodell made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board approve the request for leave of absence, as presented. Mr. Goodell, Mr. Frassinelli, Mrs. Locke and Ms. Shegogue voted for the motion, which carried.

**Item XII. Student Matters**

There were no Student Matters.

**Item XIII. Adjournment**

Mr. Frassinelli made a motion, seconded by Mr. Goodell, to adjourn. Mr. Goodell, Mr. Frassinelli, Mrs. Locke and Ms. Shegogue voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary**

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**Tracy L. Rummel, Chairperson**

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**Sonya Shegogue, Secretary**