

**Regular Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Pinney Administration Building
January 22, 2007**

Board Members Present: Mr. Mark Fontanella, Chairperson
Mrs. Sandy Fowler, Secretary
Mrs. Jennifer Davis
Mrs. Lisa Finch
Mr. Scott Nozik, arrived at 7:09 p.m.
Mrs. Tracy Rummel
Ms. Ilene Whitmarsh

Also Present: Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Mr. Robert Campbell, Assistant Principal, Stafford High School
Mr. Richard Dobson, Chairman, Board of Finance
Mrs. Marcia Elliott, Principal, Borough Elementary School
Miss Jamie Fish, Student Representative
Mr. Damian Frassinelli, Director of Athletics and Recreation
Ms. Jill Gregori, Business Manager
Mr. Matthew Kyer, District Technology Coordinator
Mr. Hank Skala, Principal, West Stafford Elementary School
Mr. Kenneth Valentine, Principal, Stafford Middle School

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 P.M. A quorum was established.

ITEM I. Secretary's Report – Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting, January 8, 2007

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report of the January 8, 2007, Board of Education meeting, as presented.

ITEM II. Treasurer's Report

A. Report on Bills

Board Bills

January 10, 2007	\$ 43,890.14
January 17, 2007	\$118,904.18

A consensus of the Board approved the Board Bills as presented.

ITEM III. Correspondence

Mr. Fontanella acknowledged receiving an e-mail with regard to purchasing one-line ads for the yearbook, which will cost five dollars. He stated that the Board as a group has already purchased a display ad for the yearbook.

Mr. Fontanella commented about the article in the January 17, 2007, edition of the Journal Inquirer regarding Stafford making the "Super Honor Roll". Mr. Fontanella stated that he had heard that there was also an article in the Reminder Press. He requested that copies be distributed to the Board.

Miss Fish reported that the second semester began today and that report cards would be distributed on Thursday. Miss Fish also updated the Board on the sports schedule at the high school. Miss Fish asked the Board if she could take their picture for the yearbook at the next meeting. The Board agreed.

ITEM IV. Board Reports

There were no Board Reports.

ITEM V. Superintendent's Reports

A. Financial Report through December 2006

Dr. Fishman reviewed the financial report through December 2006, as prepared by Ms. Jill Gregori, Business Manager. She stated that the report indicated that 59.96% of the budget had been expended through December 2006, and since we are at about the same rate of expenditures and encumbrances as last year, she does not feel that there is a need to freeze the budget at this time.

B. Update on Governor's Commission Report on Education Finance

Dr. Fishman updated the Board on the Governor's Commission Report on Education Finance, which was recently released in final form. Dr. Fishman stated that one of the recommendations in the report was to raise the foundation level from \$5,891 to \$9,700, which is the amount of

money, per pupil, that the Education Cost Sharing Grant (ECS) contributes to a district for each student. Based upon projection charts prepared by this commission using this formula, Stafford would receive over three million dollars more from the State. The overall cost to the State of such a change in the ECS would be 1.2 billion dollars. However, she stated that if any compromise could be reached in the legislature and with the Governor, this would mean increasing moneys toward the school's budget.

She stated that the second area addressed by the Commission was the special education excess cost reimbursement grant formula, which reimburses districts for excess cost associated with the costly outplacement of special education students. At present the State reimburses a district when the cost of educating the outplaced student reaches 4.5 times the per pupil regular education cost for that district. The Commission's proposal is to reimburse a district when the cost reaches 3.5 times the per pupil regular education cost.

Dr. Fishman stated that she believed that the legislature would hold hearings on these proposals and as soon as she has any information regarding the schedule of hearings, she would notify the Board so that a representative group of Board members, taxpayers and Board of Finance members could be gathered to testify.

C. Presentation of the Proposed 2007 – 2008 School Budget- Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools and Ms. Jill Gregori, Business Manager

Dr. Fishman introduced Mr. Matthew Kyer, District Technology Coordinator, to present the technology budget. Mr. Kyer stated that because we are closing two schools, there will be savings in technology due to the elimination of the T1 lines, which connect the schools to the computer network, at Borough and Witt Schools. The new school will be connected to the network by fiber, which we own. He also stated that there would be minimal savings in student software costs.

Mr. Kyer stated that one of the larger dollar items in the 07-08 proposed budget is the upgrading of our Microsoft Office software. He said that most computers in the district are currently running on Office 97, which has created compatibility issues and makes it difficult to run the new mimio boards. Additionally, Mr. Kyer said that he has added moneys to cover battery replacement in the district's laptops, which are used daily. He has also requested several subscriptions to help students take advantage of new technology.

Dr. Fishman introduced Mr. Damian Frassinelli, Director of Athletics and Recreation, to present the district's athletic budget. Mr. Frassinelli stated that the transportation costs in his budget have increased for two reasons. First, two towns, Coventry and Bolton, have been added to our league. Secondly, he adjusted his budget this year to more accurately reflect the cost of transportation for the athletic department. There was a question from the Board regarding the cost of support staff. Mr. Frassinelli stated that the cost listed should be reduced by the gate receipts.

Mrs. Davis asked Mr. Frassinelli for an update on the \$250,000 grant that the Town of Stafford received for improvement of the Town's recreation facilities. Mr. Frassinelli stated that a majority of the grant funds would be used to make improvements to Hyde Park; however, these

funds will also be used to add fencing and a gate around the fields at Staffordville School, to enclose the fields at the middle school, and to fence the fields and add bleachers to the fields at the high school. Mr. Frassinelli stated that a walkway system between the fields at the high school and middle school was requested and the First Selectman agreed to complete that work utilizing town workers rather than using the grant funds. He stated that none of this money could be used to cover costs in our budget, as the Town is required to use the money for improvements in recreation facilities.

Mrs. Davis asked that as soon as Mr. Frassinelli receives information regarding whether or not East Windsor will be able to contribute moneys towards the cooperative football that he inform the Board.

Mr. Fontanella noted the decrease in equipment expense. Mr. Frassinelli stated that they were ordering the minimum required to run the department and that they have had help from the Booster Club.

Dr. Fishman asked if there were any other questions regarding the budget. Board members asked that the following information be provided at the next Board meeting:

- Based on the report entitled *An Analysis of Facilities Maintenance Staffing and Recommendations to Address Changing Circumstance*, dated December 6, 2006, how much would it cost or save the district to reconfigure the Building Services Department to include a Food Service Director as recommended in the report, what would the job description look like, and what other positions would be added / eliminated? Another copy of the spreadsheet that had been provided a couple of months ago that detailed the make-up of the food service / maintenance departments in other districts was requested.
- A report of how our current building services staffing, as well as changes that are included in the budget and in the scheduling for next year, correlate with the report from EASTCONN. A review of the cafeteria staffing was requested. Can the district save on labor?
- A timeline for the written plan for the timely maintenance of district systems was requested.
- An updated figure for the cost of health insurance.
- A handout that details the costs and savings related to the new school and the renovation project and the closing of Borough and Witt Schools.
- Information regarding the cost of Cox Communications handling our phone service.

Mr. Fontanella asked if there would be any savings on transportation next year. Ms. Gregori, who is also the Transportation Coordinator, stated that we should not need additional buses, but because of the large land area of Stafford, the fact that we will still be transporting the same number of students, and the restrictions on the amount of time students can be on the buses, we will not be able to eliminate any buses.

The Board asked about legal fees and the cost of arbitration. Dr. Fishman stated that arbitration with the teachers' union cost the district just over \$30,000.

The Board asked Dr. Fishman to provide them with a list of potential cuts at the next meeting in .25% increments. They also asked Mr. Frassinelli to provide them with a list of cuts that would be made if his budget was decreased by 15% and 30%.

ITEM VI. Public Forum

There were no comments or questions.

ITEM VII. Old Business

A. Review and Possible Modification of the Titles of West Stafford Elementary School and Staffordville Elementary School

Dr. Fishman explained to the Board the possible confusion with regard to the titles of the elementary schools when the new school, Stafford Elementary School, comes on-line next year. She suggested calling the pre-kindergarten through grade 1 schools, West Stafford Primary School and Staffordville Primary School.

Following discussion, Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to change the name of West Stafford Elementary School to West Stafford School and Staffordville Elementary School to Staffordville School. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Rummel, and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion. Mr. Nozik abstained. The motion carried by majority vote.

ITEM VIII. New Business

A. Schedule a Meeting of the Board of Education Policy Sub-Committee

The next meeting of the Board of Education Policy Sub-Committee was scheduled for Monday, January 29, 2007, at 7 p.m.

B. Review and Possible Approval of High School Graduation Date

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Nozik, that the Board of Education approve the last student day of the 2006 – 2007 school year as the graduation date for the Class of 2007. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik, Mrs. Rummel, and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Ms. Whitmarsh made a motion, seconded by Mr. Nozik, to move **Item IX.A.- Teacher Eligible for Tenure / Teacher Performance (Executive Session Anticipated)** and **Item X.A.- Board Consideration of the Recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools regarding the Affirmation of the Expulsion of Student J from another Connecticut School District and the Continued Term of Expulsion from Stafford Middle School pursuant to Connecticut General Statute 10-233d, and Action by the Board in Response to the Superintendent's Recommendation Regarding Student J (Executive Session Anticipated)** into executive session. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik, Mrs. Rummel, and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried.

The Board took a brief recess at 9:22 p.m.

ITEM IX. Personnel Matters

A. Teacher Eligible for Tenure / Teacher Performance (Executive Session Anticipated)

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to enter executive session to address this item. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik, Mrs. Rummel, and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 10:04 p.m.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Ms. Whitmarsh, to return to regular session. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik, Mrs. Rummel, and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 10:18 p.m.

No action was required of the Board.

ITEM X. Student Matters

A. Board Consideration of the Recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools regarding the Affirmation of the Expulsion of Student J from another Connecticut School District and the Continued Term of Expulsion from Stafford Middle School pursuant to Connecticut General Statute 10-233d, and Action by the Board in Response to the Superintendent's Recommendation Regarding Student J (Executive Session Anticipated)

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Whitmarsh, to enter executive session to consider the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools regarding the affirmation of the expulsion of Student J from another Connecticut School District and the continued term of expulsion from Stafford Middle School pursuant to CGS 10-233d and action by the Board in response to the Superintendent's recommendation regarding Student J. The Board invited Attorney Peter Janus, Counsel for the Board, Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Christine Marinelli, Recording Secretary, Attorney Yagaloff, Counsel for Student J, Student J and the mother of Student J into executive session. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik, Mrs. Rummel, and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 9:30 p.m.

At approximately 9:55 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.

Mrs. Rummel made a motion, seconded by Ms. Whitmarsh, to return to regular session. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik, Mrs. Rummel, and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 10:01 p.m.

Mr. Fontanella made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Davis, that the Stafford Board of Education adopt the decision of the South Windsor Board of Education, and that Student J be expelled from any and all school privileges and premises and all school-sponsored activities of the Stafford Public Schools for disciplinary reasons for the period of 180 days from December 14, 2006, with the opportunity to re-enter school in accordance with the decision of the South Windsor Board of Education; it being the finding of the Stafford Board of Education that Student J's conduct (the possession and distribution of a controlled substance on school premises), which was the basis for Student J's expulsion by the South Windsor Board of Education, also warrants Student J's expulsion under the policies of the Stafford Board of Education.

Moved further that the Administration provide Student J with an alternative education opportunity during the student's expulsion as deemed appropriate by the Administration and that Student J be allowed onto school premises to attend orientation and to have access to academic advising. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik, Mrs. Rummel, and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried.

ITEM XI. Adjournment

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rummel, to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik, Mrs. Rummel, and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary

Mark Fontanella, Chairperson

Sandra Fowler, Secretary