

**Regular Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Pinney Administration Building
October 15, 2007**

Board Members Present: Mr. Mark Fontanella, Chairperson
Mrs. Jennifer Davis
Mrs. Lisa Finch
Mrs. Sandy Fowler
Mr. Scott Nozik
Ms. Ilene Whitmarsh

Absent: Mrs. Tracy Rummel

Also Present: Dr. Thérèse G. Fishman, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Amy Couch, Teacher, Stafford Middle School
Mr. Brett Duchon, Teacher, Stafford Middle School
Mrs. Mary Folker, Food Service Coordinator
Ms. Jill Gregori, Business Manager
Mrs. Susan Linder, Director of Building Services
Mr. Hank Skala, Principal, Stafford Elementary School
Miss Cassandra Weed, Student Representative

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. A quorum was established.

ITEM I. Secretary's Report – Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting, September 24, 2007

A consensus of the Board approved the Secretary's Report for the September 24, 2007, Board of Education regular meeting, as presented.

ITEM II. Treasurer's Report

A. Report on Bills

Board Bills

September 27, 2007	\$160,027.89
October 3, 2007	\$ 76,944.64
October 4, 2007	\$ 6,556.19
October 10, 2007	\$159,639.32

Grants

Federal Grants	September 21, 2007	\$ 1,470.84
State Grants	September 21, 2007	\$ 6,403.78
Federal Grants	September 21, 2007	\$ 1,694.84

State Grants	September 21, 2007	\$ 11,907.39
Federal Grants	October 9, 2007	\$ 2,265.91
State Grants	October 9, 2007	\$ 12,380.98

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

Mr. Fontanella stated that at the next meeting, the Board members would receive a new report for the bills, as requested by the Board. Ms. Whitmarsh provided a sample report from another district.

ITEM III. Correspondence

A. Building Committee Minutes- August 21, 2007

Mrs. Davis asked if the parking situation at Stafford Elementary School was discussed. She stated that there is not enough parking if there is an all-school function. The library parking lot is not available for overflow, as they need their parking spaces for functions at the library. Mrs. Davis suggested that this be considered as a future agenda item.

Mrs. Finch asked about the status of the high school gymnasium. Dr. Fishman stated that she would be attending a meeting on Monday, October 22, 2007, at the high school to get an update on the status of the high school project. She stated that the gym should be completed close to the scheduled completion time.

Mrs. Davis asked if there were enough showers after the renovation. She stated that there were forty-five before the renovation, and now there are six. Dr. Fishman stated that Mr. Frassinelli was not working for the district at the time the educational specifications were completed. However, physical education teachers were on the committee. There was no mention of an issue with the number of showers. Dr. Fishman stated that during the school day, six showers are sufficient because most students don't make use of them after class due to the lack of time. However, it is after games that there will be a problem. Dr. Fishman stated that she will discuss this matter further with the building committee.

Mr. Fontanella reminded the audience that the Stafford Elementary School dedication ceremony would take place on Sunday, October 21, 2007, at 1 p.m.

Mr. Fontanella informed the Board members that Mrs. Marinelli has registration booklets for the CABA conference, if anyone is interested.

Mr. Fontanella stated that he received a letter from the town treasurer, dated October 11, 2007. Mr. Fontanella read the letter in its entirety to the Board. The letter asked that the Board of Education have all departments freeze all unnecessary spending due to the fact that the State of Connecticut bonding package has not yet been approved.

ITEM IV. Board Reports

Miss Weed stated that next week is Homecoming Week at the high school. She stated that there would be a Powderpuff Game and Bonfire on Wednesday, October 24, 2007, and that chaperones are needed. She stated that Wednesday – Friday would be Spirit

Days, that on Friday, October 26, there would be a home football game and that the dance would be held on Saturday, October 27.

Miss Weed informed the Board that Drama would be selling wreaths for their trip to New York in December. She said that they are working on creating a Drama Booster Club.

Miss Weed reported that they are trying to hold a Thespian Induction in winter rather than spring to help replace the graduated seniors.

Miss Weed reported that they are working on the yearbook, but having trouble selling ads. She also reported that the Honor Society held a car wash and raised about \$250, that PSATs would be held this weekend, and that the seniors voted on how the rock in front of the school would be painted. She also informed the Board members that the mimio board was used in one of her classes.

Miss Weed agreed to get Madrigal Feaste tickets for the Board members if they could give her a count at the next Board meeting. She stated that the Feaste would be held December 8-9, 2007.

Dr. Fishman stated that she would like to schedule a special meeting of the Board on Tuesday, October 23, 2007, for the purpose of interviewing two candidates for the position of Director of Pupil Services. She asked that Board members contact her office with their availability. Mr. Fontanella asked that Mrs. Marinelli contact Mrs. Rummel.

ITEM V. Superintendent's Reports

A. Status Report- Student Transportation

Dr. Fishman reported to the Board that there are two sets of problems with regard to the buses.

At the middle school, there is a backup at the entrance of the middle school front parking lot, and the stop signs on Levinthal Run cause delays for the buses trying to get from the middle school to the high school

At Stafford Elementary School, only three buses can be safely loaded at one time in accordance with the recommendations of the Laidlaw safety consultant that visited the school. Additionally, there are some very long routes and some shorter routes, which the district and bus company are trying to even out.

Dr. Fishman stated that short-term solutions include modifying the longer / shorter routes and putting an express bus on for the longest routes, which would require the addition of a bus. She stated that long-term solutions include changing the start / end times for Stafford Elementary School next year and going to a three tier bus system.

Dr. Fishman introduced Ms. Gregori, Business Manager and Transportation Coordinator. Ms. Gregori stated that in the morning at the middle school there are timing issues. When the buses are trying to leave the middle school, parents are trying to enter the lot to drop off students. Due to the angle of the exit to the parking lot, the buses need to wait until

oncoming traffic is clear before they can make the swing out of the parking lot. Ms. Gregori stated that the town DPW is working with us to make the exit wider and re-pave it.

Ms. Gregori stated that she has spoken with Sgt. Duncan regarding the stop signs on Levinthal Run. He has approved the removal of these stop signs. Ms. Gregori stated that she hopes that this will help with the afternoon middle school / high school timing.

Ms. Gregori reported that Stafford Elementary School is doing a good job loading the buses within the guidelines set forth by Laidlaw. Mr. Skala reported that on a good day, it still takes the school twenty-one minutes to load all of the students. Any problems add time. Ms. Gregori stated that a three tier bussing system will be expensive, but would probably work much better than the current system.

Ms. Gregori reported that West Stafford and Staffordville schools are not reporting any issues with bussing.

Ms. Whitmarsh asked who created the routes and whether there was software to assist with that process. Ms. Gregori stated that Ms. Auguste created the routes and that this was her first year doing so. This process was made more difficult this year with the restructuring of the schools.

Mrs. Davis asked how many of the routes were delayed because of daycare issues and she stated that the Board may have to look at their policy regarding bussing to daycares. Dr. Fishman stated that she would take a look at the number of transfers last year vs. this year. Mrs. Davis also asked if it would be possible to change the start / end times of Stafford Elementary School after the holiday break. Dr. Fishman said that she would speak with administrators.

Ms. Gregori stated that transportation would be discussed further as part of the budget process.

C. Calendar Survey for 2008 – 2009 School Year

Mrs. Davis thanked Dr. Fishman for reminding the Board about the calendar survey. She stated that the most important part of the survey is the distribution so that everyone gets to participate.

Mrs. Fowler suggested using Survey Monkey to create the survey and then post it on our web site.

Dr. Fishman stated that she would research this further and get back to the Board.

B. Report on Adequate Yearly Progress, Mr. Michael Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Fishman stated that Mr. Bednarz was ill and could not make it to the Board meeting.

Dr. Fishman reported that adequate yearly progress (AYP) is tied to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and that each year the district has to make progress toward the goal of all

students meeting the proficiency standard (year 2014). She stated that as an individual school, only Stafford Middle School tested a number of students with disabilities greater than the minimum NCLB sub-group size standard of 40. At the middle school the sub-group of special education students made safe harbor because 10% more of the students this year met proficiency as compared to last year. However, she reported that these students did not meet the actual goal, but are showing good progress. Therefore, this sub-group was given the designation of “safe harbor”.

She stated that regarding the district level report, the district did meet the minimum NCLB sub-group size standard for students with disabilities on the Connecticut Mastery Test. She also stated that the district did not meet AYP criteria on a federal standard level, which is different from the state standard level. She stated that the district would not be on any list because there was no issue at the high school level on CAPT. Therefore, because it was only an issue at the elementary level, we will not be on the list of districts not making progress.

Dr. Fishman reported that although Stafford will not be on a list of districts not making progress, we are still concerned about meeting the needs of this sub-group. Since this is a small sub-group of students, the district is looking at individual students and providing specific help for problem areas.

D. Report on Findings from Student Surveys- Cafeteria

Dr. Fishman stated that when the Board looked at raising lunch prices, they asked that the food service department conduct a student survey regarding food choices. Dr. Fishman stated that the results from the high school were recently compiled and that 406 students responded.

Mrs. Linder, Director of Building Services, reported that they were not surprised by the results. She stated that most students don't make it to school in time to purchase breakfast. To address this problem, they have put a cart out by the entrance to the school with grab and go breakfast so that students that arrive late can still purchase breakfast. She also stated that most menu changes that will come about as a result of the survey won't take place until November. Mrs. Linder stated that the after-school program is starting to catch on. She feels that the program will become more popular when the sports teams move inside.

Mrs. Folker stated that they are working with the administration at the middle school and that the middle school surveys should be done within the next few weeks.

E. Enrollment Report- 10/1/07

Dr. Fishman reported that the district's official October 1 enrollment figure is 1,904 students, which represents a loss of 47 students as compared to last year's figure, and a loss of 106 students as compared to the October 1, 2002, enrollment figure. She stated that there is no one pattern to explain the decrease in number of students.

Mrs. Fowler asked if all of the pre-kindergarten students were off the waiting list. She stated that since we accommodated 145 students last year, we should be able to do the same this year.

ITEM VI. Public Forum

There was a question from the audience regarding transportation and why there are separate buses for each school in the afternoon and not in the morning. Mrs. Davis suggested that since Laidlaw is already doing this in the afternoon, that maybe they can do it in the morning as well for no extra fees.

ITEM VII. Old Business

There was no Old Business.

ITEM VIII. New Business

A. Review and Possible Approval of Stafford High School and Stafford Middle School Fundraisers

Mr. Nozik made a motion, seconded by Ms. Whitmarsh, that the Board of Education approve the list of fundraising activities submitted by the principals of Stafford High School and Stafford Middle School for the 2007 – 2008 school year. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried.

B. Review and Possible Approval of a Proposal for a Stafford Middle School Stage and Select Choir Student Trip to Gettysburg and Hershey, PA, May 15 – 18, 2008

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Finch, that the Board of Education approve a field trip to Gettysburg and Hershey, PA, from May 15, 2008, through May 18, 2008, for Stafford Middle School Stage and Select Choir. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Mr. Duchon was available to answer questions from the Board. Mrs. Davis stated that she has heard nothing but fantastic things about this trip and Mr. Duchon's students.

C. Review and Possible Approval of Board of Education Policies 3524.1 (a)-(b)- Pesticide Application, 3541.23- Transportation / Bus Contractor, 4152.6 / 4252.6- Personal Leaves / Family and Medical Leave Act, 4212.42- Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus Drivers, 5114 (a)-(l)- Removal / Suspension / Expulsion, 5141.21 (a)-(b)- Administration of Medicines by School Personnel, 6162.6- Adherence to Copyright Laws, 6162.61- Use of Copying Devices, 6163.1- Material Selection Policy and Procedures Policy for School Libraries, and 6177- Use of Commercially Produced Video Recordings

Dr. Fishman explained that updated Board policies were being presented to the Board in two groups. This first group are policies that were updated to comply with new legislation and NEAS&C guidelines.

This item was tabled until the next regularly scheduled meeting.

D. Review and Possible Approval of Board of Education Policies 5131.6 (a)-(f) and Regulation- Alcohol Use, Drugs, and Tobacco (including Performance Enhancing Substances), 5131.8 (a)-(b)- Off School Grounds Misconduct, 5145.121- Vehicle Searches on School Grounds, and 5145.124- Breathalyzer Testing

Dr. Fishman stated that this second group of policies covers Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) recommendations regarding alcohol, drug and tobacco policies. This greatly expanded policy now includes steroid use and huffing.

Dr. Fishman stated that this group also includes a breathalyzer policy. She stated that this draft policy has been reviewed extensively by the administrators and by the Board's counsel. She stated that she would get a written opinion from Attorney Janus regarding the policy.

This item was tabled until the next regularly scheduled meeting.

E. Unusable Storage Trailer

Mr. Nozik made a motion, seconded by Ms. Whitmarsh, that the Board of Education declare the 40 foot storage container presently located at Stafford Middle School as unusable for school purposes and further authorize the administration to return this property to the town and to dispose of any and all property not needed by the town in an appropriate manner. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Davis inquired about how the district would dispose of the container and what process would be followed if the container was returned to us. She stated that she wants to be sure that if the container is sold that there is a process that lets everyone know that it is available. It should be advertised like the computer lottery.

ITEM IX. Personnel Matters

A. Appointment- Certified Staff Member

Mr. Nozik made a motion, seconded by Ms. Whitmarsh, to appoint the following candidate for a teaching position:

Name	CERTIFICATION AREA	SCHOOL/ ASSIGNMENT	REPLACING/ NEW	SALARY	EFFECTIVE DATE
Susan Ferency	Comp. Special Education, PreK-12 (065)	Staffordville School / Special Education Teacher- Autism Program	Hope Petersen	\$72,333 (6 th Year, Step 13)	10/16/07

Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried.

ITEM X. Student Matters

There were no Student Matters.

ITEM XI. Adjournment

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Whitmarsh, to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Finch, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Nozik and Ms. Whitmarsh voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary

Mark Fontanella, Chairperson

Sandra Fowler, Secretary