

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held on Monday, November 3, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in the Nonnewaug High School Library, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present were Board Chairperson Linda Bulvanoski, and Board members Scott Baider, Deborah Corsico, Charles Cosgriff, Monica Gati, Carla Juhas, Stephen Paluskas and Stephen Sordi. Also, Superintendent of Schools Robert Cronin; Director of Fiscal Services Jay Hubelbank; Principals Alice Jones, Dawn Hochsprung, Melinda McKenna and Interim Principal Kimberly Gallo; Director of Special Services Christopher Quirk; K-8 Math Coach Anne Uberti; Director of Buildings and Grounds Michael Molzon; Woodbury Fire Marshal Janet Morgan; Nonnewaug High School student representative Kristen Blum; reporters and about 6 members of the community.

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Bulvanoski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

### **II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Ms. Bulvanoski led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **III. REPORT FROM STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**

Ms. Blum updated the Board on events at her school, including a successful Trick or Treat Street. She told of plans for the Senior Café, and for the upcoming Mr. Nonnewaug contest. She gave sports highlights, including sophomore Jackie Nicholas's 3<sup>rd</sup> place finish in the state cross country track meet. She noted the FFA students' success at the national convention in Indianapolis, and concluded by expressing how "happy" the students were to have not missed school due to the weekend fire. She was sincere in saying the students were glad their school had not been harmed.

Mr. Hubelbank offered a detailed report on the weekend electrical fire at Nonnewaug High School and outlined all the steps taken to insure the safety of students and staff when they returned to school today. He was thankful for the efforts of the night custodian who first detected and immediately reported the fire, Valdir Nascimento; as well as Mr. Molzon; Ms. Morgan; Ms. Gallo; representatives from Pomperaug Health District and J.P. Maguire; custodians who worked through the weekend to clean up, including Steve Mulhall, Eric Beardsley and Evaldo De Melo; and the fire departments that responded quickly and handled the situation efficiently and professionally.

### **IV. PRESENTATION**

Dr. Cronin presented his District Improvement Plan to the Board and audience. He explained the goals of clarity and coherence and said building principals will begin in December to present plans for their schools, starting with Ms. McKenna. He cited four goal areas: Board of Education, Superintendent, Director of Fiscal Services, and Director of Special Services, and considers all four to be critical. The work of Region 14, he said, is grounded in its Norms and Core Beliefs, Mission Statement, and his Theory of Action which is his key focus. He explained that the Board met with the Administrative Council to develop five Board goals and, for each goal, they identified rationale

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#### **IV. PRESENTATION (CONT)**

for choosing that area as well as indicators and action steps to reach it. The Superintendent's goals are likewise formatted.

Mr. Hubelbank explained that his goals are tied to those of the Board, and he strives to provide information to the public and produce "clean" audits. Updated software has allowed for human resources data to be added, he said, and buildings are being maintained to the best of his and his staff's abilities.

Mr. Quirk's goals are also tied to the Board goals and he must also adhere to federal and state guidelines and understand the changing needs of students. While reviewing staffing and spending, he will work to inform instruction to enhance progress for students. He also noted that Region 14 will continue to work toward complying with federal and state guidelines emphasizing early intervention with students experiencing learning struggles.

Dr. Cronin referred the Board to a section in the report dealing with goals both met and not yet met. He noted methods for monitoring progress and concluded by stressing the goal of coherence from grades K-12.

#### **V. REVIEW OF THE MINUTES**

Ms. Juhas first made a *motion to add approval of the minutes of the Special Board Meeting of October 22, 2008 to the agenda*. Mr. Paluskas seconded the motion and the **motion carried 8-0**.

Ms. Juhas made a *motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of October 20, 2008*. The motion was seconded by Mr. Paluskas, and the **motion carried 8-0**.

Ms. Juhas made a *motion to approve the minutes of the Special Board Meeting of October 22, 2008*. This motion was seconded by Mr. Paluskas, and the **motion carried 8-0**.

#### **VI. CORRESPONDENCE**

Ms. Bulvanoski noted receipt of a report from NHS Athletic Director, Jim Parker, distributed copies of it, and urged Board members to review it at their leisure.

#### **VII. REPORT FROM THE CHAIRPERSON**

Ms. Bulvanoski added her thanks to everyone involved in the expedient response to the electrical fire at NHS on Friday night. She noted that SATs were relocated to the Vo Ag building and went on as scheduled, as did Saturday's football game.

She also reported that scheduled coffees with the Superintendent and Board members will resume on Thursday evening. She called upon Ms. Gati to explain how parents were invited, which she did. Every 5<sup>th</sup> name on parent rosters was chosen for the two coffees on Thursday, for a random sampling of families.

Lastly, Ms. Bulvanoski distributed materials to Board members and asked them to complete the CAFE self-assessment survey prior to 11/10. CAFE facilitators will utilize information from the survey to prepare for the Board's upcoming workshop.

#### **VIII. REPORT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Cronin reported receipt of the 2007-2008 Strategic School Profile from the State. He explained that this report is compiled by the State, and based on data provided by the Region.

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### **IX. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

Duncan McDougal, Woodbury, went to the soccer game and noted that the team is a nice group of kids. Though he objected to the placement of the sign at the corner of Rt. 6, he said if it is to be there the letters used on it should be larger because no one knows what is going on (games, etc). He also noted nothing in Dr. Cronin's objectives or goals about reconfiguration and feels that issue needs to be resolved. He said it is wonderful to have goals but is not sure how they will be measured. He said the goals cannot be the process; all students should be at least at goal; and he believes the kids not at goal are not being addressed.

Pam Gengenbach, Woodbury, said she is pleased with some of the goals but agreed that how they are measured is important. She asked the time frame for the parent survey and was told it would be done by year's end. She asked how parents are to be engaged in the process and was told that parents, who are supportive of the schools, are sometimes asked to sit on committees. She reviewed with Ms. Gati the process for inviting parents to the coffees. She was pleased to know that the budget process would be explained in detail.

Gary Suslavich, Woodbury, contended that minutes are still not on the website and he does not consider this a "good faith effort." It was explained where to look for committee minutes (BOE link, then "agendas and minutes", then "committee minutes") and he was told the committee minutes webpage has been up for over 1½ weeks. He understands that policies are being revised, but feels they should be on the website so people can see them. He also felt that, at the last BOE meeting, his comments from a letter to the editor about purchasing curriculum had been misrepresented.

Dr. Cronin took the opportunity to respond to questions raised at the last meeting. To Ms. Scherf's contention that early preparation for kindergarten dismissal results in 10 minutes of lost instruction per day, he responded that, in conversations with the teachers, he has learned that they have always begun that process early to allow students to independently ready themselves to go home. Once ready, they can hear a story or participate in other activities until dismissed.

To the question of how many children ride the bus or are picked up from BES, he offered average numbers from last year and this: last year an average of 312 rode the bus, compared to 318 this year, and an average of 68 were picked up last year, compared to 56 this year.

He also addressed the implementation of curriculum, and spoke of the roles of the reading consultants, science coordinator and math coach. As to a lack of spelling words, he explained the method of "word study" in grades 1-5 and how students use knowledge in their written work, phonics lessons, review words and high frequency words. He considered the question about a coordinated curriculum to have been covered in his earlier presentation. He admitted that the WMS science labs were not used as he had hoped last year, but still intends to address this idea and implement it. He does not yet have answers to the question about fuel consumption.

### **X. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mr. Sordi, reporting for the **Building Committee**, said his committee had met and toured the Oxford High School, which it is using as a model for the auditorium work at NHS.

### **XI. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

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**XII. NEW BUSINESS**

Dr. Cronin requested a *motion to approve the appointment of Jennifer Armour as Cheerleading Coach at Woodbury Middle School*. Mr. Paluskas made the motion, seconded by Mr. Cosgriff and the **motion carried 8-0**.

**XIII. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Corsico noted several of the upcoming sporting events upcoming, including the field hockey team's first round game tomorrow, boys soccer's first round game on Wednesday, and girls soccer's first round game on Thursday.

**XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

**XV. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Paluskas made a *motion to adjourn*, seconded by Ms. Corsico. The **motion carried 8-0**. The meeting of the Board of Education adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Carla Juhas, Secretary  
Regional School District #14 Board of Education