

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held on Tuesday, September 2, 2008, at 7:30 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; Director of Special Services Christopher Quirk, Woodbury Middle School Principal Alice Jones; Nonnewaug High School Interim Principal Kimberly Gallo; newspaper reporters and about 15 members of the community were in attendance.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Bulvanoski called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

III. INTRODUCTION OF NONNEWAUG STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. Gallo introduced class officers Tessa Kalin, Kristen Blum, Daphne Kounavis and Rachel McNally who will report to the Board on an alternating schedule this year.

IV. REVIEW OF MINUTES

1. Regular Board Meeting of August 25, 2008

Ms. Juhas made a *motion to table approval of these minutes*. The motion was seconded by Mr. Paluskas and the **motion carried 8-0**.

2. Special Board Meeting of August 26, 2008

Ms. Juhas made a *motion to approve these minutes*, seconded by Mr. Paluskas. The **motion carried 8-0**.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Bulvanoski reported on correspondence received, in the form of an invitation, regarding a full day coaching conference as part of the math/science partnership grant. As the conference will be held during school hours, Ms. Bulvanoski has asked Ms. Gati to attend in her stead.

VI. REPORT FROM CHAIRPERSON

Ms. Bulvanoski reviewed the Privilege of the Floor sign up procedure. She noted that she had also left at the sign up table contact cards for the parent support group. She also displayed a copy of the peer connection resource guide, which she said she would make available to all the schools.

VII. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Cronin handed out a list of presentations to the Board which will occur at Board meetings throughout the year.

Ms. Bulvanoski noted that they all emphasize curriculum and instruction.

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Dr. Cronin reported on a successful opening day of school commenting that, overall, all went well. He noted that ten kindergarten students are taking part in the extended day option through Education Connection until the end of September when Kindergarten will be a full day. He also reported that grades 1 and 2 at BES participated in a bus safety refresher today.

VIII. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Duncan McDougal recalled a comment in the spring regarding expanding enrollment in the agriscience program. He feels that more students should not be "pumped in" until the Region fixes the facility problems it has.

Pam Gengenbach read a prepared letter regarding her views on reconfiguration.

Michelle Escedy offered positive comments for the local SEPTA program. Her daughter was one of the high school students recruited over the summer to help with swimming, and the volunteer hours were valuable for her, as was the experience.

Diane Stockwell, of the local SEPTA group, also spoke of their great summer program and the five Region 14 students who helped out with it. She hopes their volunteer hours will somehow be weighted as she considered their participation significant. She also noted the group's first meeting of the year, this Friday at 7:00 pm at Aylas.

Bill Mulready spoke of his issues regarding ADA policies and enforcement. He also asked who had paid for the new wrestling mats and football equipment, and stated that Gradnite organizers discriminated against him by not allowing him to volunteer.

IX. REPORT FROM DIRECTOR OF FISCAL SERVICES

Mr. Hubelbank responded to the letter submitted by Susan Scherf at the last Board meeting which was said to have been written by a First Student bus driver. He refuted most all of the statements made in the letter and offered accurate information and data to support how the Region has always maintained it is managing the transportation of students.

X. OLD BUSINESS

The Board discussed the two policies recently revised by counsel, Policy 5131.911 Bullying and Policy 5114 Student Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion/Removal, both of which were offered for a first reading at the last Board meeting.

Mr. Sordi had a number of questions and suggestions about wording, disclosure of names, transporting suspended students, and possession versus use of tobacco at the high school and middle school levels.

Ms. Gallo urged discretion in matters of high school students and punishments given.

Regarding bullying, Mr. Sordi requested a definition for "injury" as being used in the policy.

Ms. Juhas added that she disagrees with the idea that bullying, by definition, must occur more than once to be considered such. Dr. Cronin explained that statute dictates the definition. Ms. Juhas felt there should be zero tolerance for bullying in Region 14, that it is too subjectively defined, and that it is not consistently dealt with in the schools. Ms. Corsico added that cyber-bullying also needs to be addressed, and that the Region needs to make a commitment to training everyone to understand that any type of bullying is not ok.

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Dr. Cronin commented on last week's professional development session with JoAnn Frieberg of the State Department of Education. She stressed the importance of creating a culture of behavior that is respectful, and not "mean." Adult to adult, adult to student, student to student, in all aspects of our relationships with others, it is important to create a culture of respect and positive behavior, as this ultimately affects student success, he said.

Eventually, it was decided to bring the policy revisions to the Policy Committee for review. Board members were directed to forward their comments on these policies to Ms. Corsico, who chairs the committee.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

The Board had previously received a partial list of extra duty appointments for review. Dr. Cronin requested a *motion to approve the extra duty appointments as listed*. Mr. Paluskas made the motion, seconded by Mr. Cosgriff. The **motion carried 8-0**.

XII. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:32 p.m., Mr. Paluskas made a *motion to move to Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter*. Mr. Baider seconded the motion and the **motion carried 8-0**.

Ms. Gengenbach noted that no topic for Executive Session was listed on the agenda.

Ms. Corsico made a *motion to add "personnel matter" to the agenda*, seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, and the **motion carried 8-0**.

Ms. Corsico restated the *motion to move to Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter*, seconded by Mr. Baider, and the **motion carried 8-0**.

All Board members and Dr. Cronin were present for the session, which began at 8:37 p.m.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Following the session, Mr. Cosgriff made a *motion to deny Special Education Teacher Carey Atherton a second year of maternity leave for the 2008-2009 school year*. The motion was seconded by Mr. Paluskas, and the **motion carried 8-0**.

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 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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