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Board of Education

Regional District 13

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October 1, 2008

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, October 1, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the music room at Brewster Elementary School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Currlin, Mrs. Flanagan, Mrs. Gara (8:00 p.m.) Mrs. Golschneider, Mr. Hennick, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons. Absent: Mr. Hicks. Also present: Mr. Melnik, Mrs. Viccaro.

Mr. Hennick called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Next Board Meeting: The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held at Strong School on October 22, 2008.

On a motion by Mr. Currlin, second Mrs. Flanagan the agenda was unanimously approved.

On a motion by Mrs. Golschneider, second Mrs. Flanagan the minutes the meeting of September 17, 2008 were unanimously approved.

Communications: There were no communications.

Superintendent's Report: Mrs. Viccaro reported that there was a bus accident today involving a Memorial School afternoon route. It happened at the intersection of RT 77 and Meetinghouse Hill Road. There were three students on the bus; none of them were injured, but the driver of the bus and the driver of the other vehicle were both taken to the hospital. The children were all assessed by emergency personnel before leaving the scene with their parents.

Mrs. Viccaro told the Board that a new administrative assistant, Virginia Antonelli, began working in the Superintendent's Office this week. She will be trained on payroll as well as other office duties and will begin sharing the coverage of the Board of Education meetings. Mrs. Viccaro said that Rosemary Allen will still be the liaison for the Board and should be the one to contact for posting meetings.

Mrs. Viccaro reminded Board members that the Board retreat is coming up. She would like members to email her information to be added to the agenda. The retreat is being held at The Village at South Farms on Saybrook Road in Middletown.

Mrs. Viccaro reported that four Coginghaug students were recognized as National Merit Scholars; they are: Senya Bekut, Hannah Bober, Hannah Gossner and Meghan Wooley.

Mrs. Viccaro received a letter from Sharon Cardella, from the BEST program, congratulating Tim Fisher on receiving a score of 4 on his BEST portfolio. A 4 is the highest score that you can receive and it is given very rarely. Tim's portfolio will be used as an example in the BEST program.

Mrs. Viccaro received a call from Max Stewart of the Kiwanis Club of Middletown. They sponsor a program called "Warm the Children" that helps to provide winter clothing to children in need. They would like to extend their program into our towns. Each child identified would be given \$80.00 worth of new winter clothing. The participants would be identified through the counselors or the school principals and will be kept confidential.

Mrs. Viccaro said the school security grant application was submitted yesterday to the State. This grant is a reimbursement grant. The District must be willing to pay first and then the

State will reimburse 46% of the cost for the Durham Schools and 50% of the cost for the Middlefield Schools. It is a very competitive grant; the money will go to priority districts first and then to schools that have no security at their front entrances. The list of recipients for the grant will be announced sometime between November 1 and November 15, 2008. The money to purchase the security items has been put into the capital fund. After the work is completed the State has to inspect and then they will reimburse the grant money. Some of the items requested in the grant include: buzzers and cameras for the front entrances at all schools, new phone systems for Brewster and Lyman, a keyless entry system for staff members, software and computers to run the programs and a picture ID system including cameras.

Brewster School: Nancy Heckler presented on the teaching of comprehension strategies to young readers at Brewster School. She reviewed many of the strategies that they have learned through professional development activities and use at the school. In preparation for the CT Mastery tests students are exposed to the strategies, beginning in kindergarten and increasing each year.

Mr. Hennick questioned if children are still learning what you want them to learn even though they are teaching to the test. Mrs. Heckler said that the students are learning material that they need and that we need them to be exposed to and preparing them for the test at the same time.

Mrs. Heckler said the new reading consultant is at Brewster School two days a week. She is still getting to know all of the teachers and has been observing reading time in all of the classrooms. She has been very pleased with all of the reading activities she sees going on at Brewster.

Finance Committee: Mrs. Parsons said the committee met this evening. The auditors came in to the office today to report on their progress with the audit. They will be back in the office for another week in the middle of the month. The pension plan revision/review is progressing. Hooker & Holcombe will be the third party administrator.

Long Range Planning Committee: Mrs. Flanagan said the Long Range Planning Committee met last evening and reviewed an updated version of the five year plan. The District is now in year two of the plan. The goal is to develop information for the retreat; to make projections that the Board can then discuss and determine how to fund.

Mr. Hennick commented that the sub committees of the Board are what drive what the Board does. He said that although members are assigned to work on specific committees, he welcomed members to attend any committee meeting.

On a motion by Mrs. Golschneider, second Mrs. Adams the Board of Education unanimously approved to adjourn.