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AMENDED MARCH 11, 2015

Board of Education Regional District 13 March 4, 2015

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, March 4, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. in the library at Strong Middle School, 191 Main St., Durham, CT. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Onofreo, and Mr. Renninghoff.
Also present: Dr. Veronesi, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Melnik, Business Manager.

Chairperson Mrs. Flanagan called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. after it was determined that a quorum was present.

Pledge of Allegiance
Mrs. Flanagan led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment
There was no public comment.

Next Board Meeting
March 11, 2015 at Strong School.

Approval of Agenda
Mrs. Boyle moved to approve the agenda. Mrs. Adams seconded.

Mr. Hicks made a motion to amend the agenda to include five new items under Item V. Approval of Minutes: 1. Approval of minutes of January 2, 2015, 2. Approval of minutes of January 8, 2015, 12:00pm, 3. Approval of minutes of January 8, 2015, 2:00pm, 4. Approval of minutes of January 8, 2015, 4:00pm, and 5. Approval of minutes of February 19, 2015.

Mr. Renninghoff seconded the amended motion.

In favor of approving the agenda as amended: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Onofreo, and Mr. Renninghoff. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes of February 25, 2015
Mrs. Adams moved to approve the minutes of February 25, 2015. Mr. Renninghoff seconded.

There were a couple of minor corrections noted, the date changed on the header from 2014 to 2015 and a correction to Mr. Fulton's name.

Dr. Onofreo clarified that regarding the hiring of a School Resource Officer, he supports the intended goals, but is not sure that hiring a SRO is the solution.

Dr. Friedrich also had a correction regarding the SRO discussion. He cited two concerns voiced by Ms. Liss in her email that the District may be better off investing in consultants rather than a SRO and that the presence of a SRO would diminish administrators' authority.

In favor of the minutes as amended: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Fulton, Dr. Onofreo, and Mr. Renninghoff. Abstained: Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes of January 2, 2015
Mr. Hicks moved to approve the minutes of January 2, 2015. Mrs. Adams seconded.

In favor of the minutes: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Renninghoff. Abstained: Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Dr. Onofrio. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes of January 8, 2015, 12:00pm.
Mr. Hicks moved to approve the minutes of January 8, 2015, 12:00pm. Mr. Renninghoff seconded.

In favor of the minutes: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Renninghoff. Abstained: Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Fulton, Dr. Onofrio, Mr. Renninghoff. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes of January 8, 2015, 2:00pm.
Mr. Hicks moved to approve the minutes of January 8, 2015, 2:00pm. Mrs. Adams seconded.

In favor of the minutes: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Renninghoff. Abstained: Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Fulton, Dr. Onofrio, Mr. Renninghoff. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes of January 8, 2015, 4:00pm.
Mr. Hicks moved to approve the minutes of January 8, 2015, 4:00pm. Mr. Renninghoff seconded.

In favor of the minutes: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Renninghoff. Abstained: Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Fulton, Dr. Onofrio, Mr. Renninghoff. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes of February 19, 2015.
Mr. Hicks moved to approve the minutes of February 19, 2015. Mrs. Adams seconded.

In favor of the minutes: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Renninghoff. Abstained: Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Fulton, Dr. Onofrio, Mr. Renninghoff. Motion passed.

Communications
Mrs. Adams attended a Data Team meeting of the 3rd grade team at Korn School. They were working on the STAR program. She was impressed by their level of professionalism.

Mrs. Flanagan reminded members about the Day on the Hill, a CABE session where BOE members can meet with their legislators. If anyone else wants to attend they should contact Rosemary Allen to sign up and contact Mrs. Flanagan about carpooling to the event.

Mrs. Adams reminded members about the CVEF Trivia Bee that is being held this Friday night at Strong School. About 30 teams are participating.

Business Manager's Report
Mr. Melnik said the heating oil account will likely be used up this year. They have not been able to set back the thermostats at night because of the extreme cold. He will give an update on the heating oil account and the snow removal budget at the next meeting.

Mr. Melnik said the transfer of the pension accounts from Bank of America to Charles Schwab has been completed. He thanked Maureen Johnson for her assistance in getting this done flawlessly and on time.

Mr. Melnik said the Building Committee met for the first time this evening to discuss the Brewster

School roof replacement and solar panels.

The educational specifications for the solar panels must be approved by the Board of Education in order for the project to be eligible for state reimbursement.

Dr. Freidrich moved to approve the educational specifications for the Brewster School roof solar panel installation project. Mr. Fulton seconded.

In favor of the educational specifications for the Brewster School roof solar panels: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Onofreo, and Mr. Renninghoff. Abstained: Mrs. Fronc. Motion passed.

Mr. Melnik said the District went out to bid about a month ago for the architect and engineering services and have hired Hibbard and Rosa Architects to design the roof. The existing roof will be removed. It will have a pitched roof and a metal roof over the gymnasium. The Board needs to vote to accept the cost estimate, specifications and the plans.

Mrs. Fronc moved to accept the cost estimate, specifications and plans for the Brewster School Roof Replacement Project, # TMP213QSBV, dated March 3, 2015. Mr. Renninghoff seconded.

In favor of the cost estimate, specification and plans for the Brewster School Roof Replacement Project, #TMP213QSBV, dated March 3, 2105: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Onofreo, and Mr. Renninghoff. Abstained: Mrs. Fronc. Motion passed.

Mr. Fulton thanked Mr. Melnik and the Central Office staff for their work on the transition to the new retirement firm; it went very well.

Superintendent's Report
Dr. Veronesi introduced Sue Gaudreau and thanked her for her work on the budget book and presentation.

Dr. Veronesi also wanted to publicly thank Rob Francis and his crew for their work during all the storms. She and Mr. Francis communicate many times before the decision to close or delay school is made.

Dr. Veronesi attended the first ECHOS program at John Lyman last Friday. The students are allowed to enroll in mini-courses that interest them. It is a great example of multi-grade integrated course work.

Dr. Veronesi said the administrative team is working with a retired administrator regarding scheduling across the District. At the high school the goal is to see whether the unified arts staff can offer more electives. Administrators are also trying to see if time can be made to allow for a designated schedule for data team meetings. The elementary administrators are looking at how best to use their itinerant staff across the District.

Dr. Veronesi said she is a judge at the CVEF Trivia Bee and both the board and the administrators have a team entered this year.

2015-16 Budget Discussion
Dr. Veronesi responded to last week's questions regarding the MTA budget. Regarding the technology used at MTA, the students use iPads. It is a better device to meet their needs than a Chromebook.

Regarding the School Resource Officer proposal, Dr. Veronesi feels that adding a SRO would have many benefits to the District and add value but some of the same goals may be addressed in other ways in the coming year. Our support services staff is up to date in training but they need to be better able to reach into the community to access outside services. The District needs to be careful about the role of school personnel, cautious that they are not being asked to expand beyond their level of expertise.

Dr. Veronesi would like to be able to earmark some funds in next year's budget to pursue these areas of expertise. She is currently exploring a drug use prevention counselor with Rushford and grant opportunities. She will follow-up next week with more concrete information.

Dr. Veronesi said the health insurance increase stands at 9%. The District's broker will be contacting us by noon on Friday regarding our rates and a decision will be made then whether we go out to bid.

Mr. Melnik distributed a handout regarding printer and copier consolidation. The District is switching to managed print services and less leases wherever possible. The bottom line is a savings of about $3,400 in next year's budget.

Mr. Melnik distributed a handout on the history of substitute expenses. He explained that this is a very hard area to project. Even though the budget amount is up for next year, past history shows higher than actual totals.

Mr. Melnik distributed budget summary sheets showing the effects of a 12% health insurance renewal rate, a 9% health insurance renewal rate and a summary of a 9% health insurance renewal rate and no school resource officer in the budget.

Mrs. Flanagan asked when the transportation and excess grant amounts from the State will be known. Mr. Melnik said the numbers are not finalized until the legislative session ends in May.

Mr. Melnik also shared a spreadsheet showing how the IDEA and preschool grant money is used to cover the cost of some or all of many special education employees' salaries.

Mrs. Fronc questioned the cut to half-time for a high school English position. She is also concerned about cutting the science position at Memorial School. She does not feel that all teachers are qualified to teach science. The science standards are getting much more stringent and it is going to get more difficult to teach. School performance standards are going to be measured and this is going to affect Strong School's performance.

Dr. Veronesi said Mr. Brough told her teachers are going to all teach a unit of science. She will speak with Mr. Brough and get more information for next week.

Dr. Veronesi said the reduction to a .6 English teacher at the high school was based on a recommendation from the high school administration, based on case load. They feel the amount of staff is sufficient.

Mrs. Boyle asked for a technology schedule. She would like to see the long-term plan. Dr. Veronesi said Mr. Fielding, Director of Technology, will attend the meeting on March 18th and she will ask him to provide it.

Mrs. Boyle would also like to see the schedule of uniform replacements from the Athletic Director, Mr. Barbieri.

Committee Reports

Human Resource Committee
Mrs. Boyle said the committee met to discuss the Board of Education handbook. They will finalize it soon and send some items on to the Policy Committee. A draft of the document will be distributed to all members before finalizing. The next meeting will be held on May 6, 2015 at 7pm.

Building Committee
Mr. Fulton said the committee met this evening. All items discussed were covered under the Business Manager's Report.

Magnet School
Mr. Hicks said the committee will meet next week.

Public Comment
Jennifer Wells-DiPentina, a John Lyman parent, asked the Board to consider reinstating the .6 library media position at John Lyman School. The cut to this position has decreased the library time available at all of the elementary schools.

Follow Up
- Mr. Melnik will provide an update on this year's heating oil and snow removal budgets
- Dr. Veronesi will follow-up with information and costs on alternate ideas to an SRO.
- Dr. Veronesi will speak to Mr. Brough regarding cut to science teacher.
- Mr. Fielding will be asked to provide a long-term technology schedule on March 18th.
- Mr. Barbieri will be asked to provide a uniform replacement schedule.
- Dr. Veronesi will look into the effects of the cut to the library position at John Lyman.

Adjournment
Mr. Hicks moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 p.m. Dr. Onofreo seconded.

In favor of adjourning the meeting: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Onofreo, and Mr. Renninghoff. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Gaudreau