

Board of Education

Regional District 13

March 16, 2016

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, March 16, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the library at Coginchaug Regional High School, 135 Pickett Lane, Durham, CT. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onofreo, and Mr. Renninghoff.

Absent: Mr. Willett

Also present: Dr. Veronesi, Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. Melnik, Business Manager.

Mrs. Flanagan called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. after it was determined that a quorum was present.

Pledge of Allegiance

Upon Mrs. Flanagan's request, three children in the audience led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Flanagan advised the Board members that they would be following Robert's Rules of Order more closely. Questions regarding the presentations being made this evening will be addressed after the presentations are completed. Board members are requested to raise their hand and wait to be called upon. Questions will be directed to the Chair. Members of the Board will be addressed as Mr. or Mrs.

Public Comment

None

Next Board Meeting

The next Board meeting will be April 6, 2016 at Brewster Elementary School.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Hicks moved to approve the agenda. Dr. Friedrich seconded.

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

Approval of Minutes of March 9, 2016

Mrs. Adams moved to approve the minutes of March 9, 2016. Dr. Friedrich seconded.

Mrs. Fronc requested that the minutes be amended under communications to read that she received a phone call from a parent regarding the weighted grade scale at Coginchaug starting with the incoming freshman class. She also stated that she received a parent communication in reference to the increase in the activity fee. Mrs. Fronc stated that Mrs. Boyle asked questions regarding the proposed new position and Mr. Renninghoff asked where the person was going to be housed. She would also like the minutes to reflect that there was a lengthy discussion of the \$130,000 salary. Mrs. Fronc questioned the significant increase in the SPED salary line at Lyman School and would like that noted in the minutes.

In favor of approving the minutes of March 9, 2016 as amended: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onofreo, and Mr. Renninghoff. Mrs. Boyle abstained. Motion passed.

Communications

Mrs. Adams received a communication regarding a social studies teacher in the budget.

Mr. Hicks referred to the November 24, 2015 letter received by the Board from the Middlefield Board of Finance. Mr. Hicks would like a copy of the letter attached to the minutes.

Mr. Hicks as Parliamentarian advised the Board of what is required in the minutes.

Business Manager's Report

Mr. Melnik called upon Mr. Barbieri for background information regarding the donation from Coginchaug Little League and Babe Ruth. Mr. Barbieri stated that there was a collaboration between Babe Ruth and Little League to fund a water gate project at the Helmuth H. Brown Varsity Baseball Field at Coginchaug High School. There will be water access for the baseball teams, tennis teams, football teams and soccer teams. In addition, the water source will be used to water down the infield clay, pitcher's mound and batter's box. The water will add to the care and treatment of the field, as well as prevent the loss of clay and drying out.

Mr. Hicks moved to accept a donation from Coginchaug Little League and Babe Ruth valued at \$5,000. Mrs. Adams seconded.

In favor of accepting the donation valued at \$5,000: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onofreo, and Mr. Renninghoff. Motion passed.

2016-2017 Budget Discussion

Dr. Veronesi stated that it was Board Appreciation month and recognized members of the Board for the work they do.

In her presentation Dr. Veronesi reviewed Board of Education priorities to increase student achievement and deliver a responsible budget while maintaining programming to move into the future.

Mr. Melnik discussed utilization expenses, reviewed the MBR calculation and the Capital Budget.

Mr. Fielding reviewed with the Board the extensive list of what has been done regarding technology during the 2015-2016 school year. He talked about the 1 to 1 at Coginchaug and the feedback he has received from staff. He also addressed the closing of Korn School and moving their equipment to other District schools.

Board members directed a number of questions to Mrs. Flanagan regarding the proposed new position, clarification on District leases, capital needs, and the emergency alert system. Other questions referred to reducing the capital reserve and MBR calculation and exemption.

Mrs. Boyle moved to cut the proposed position for the Director of Organizational Development. Mr. Renninghoff seconded.

Discussion took place.

In favor of cutting the proposed Director of Organizational Development: Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Fronc and Mr. Renninghoff. Opposed: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, and Dr. Onofreo. Motion did not pass.

Mrs. Boyle moved to decrease the certified salary line by \$132,000. Mr. Renninghoff seconded.

Board members asked if the decrease in this line item will affect the MBR. Other Board members stated it was a safe cut to make.

In favor of decreasing the certified salary line by \$132,000: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks, and Mr. Renninghoff. Opposed: Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Moore, and Dr. Onofreo. Motion passed.

Mr. Hicks moved to approve to go to the Public Hearing on the 2016-2017 Regional District 13 Education Budget on April 13, 2016 with a total gross budget of \$36,826,601.00.

In favor of approving to go to Public Hearing: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, and Dr. Onofreo. Opposed: Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Fronc, and Mr. Renninghoff. Motion passed.

Mr. Hicks moved to approve to hold a referendum on the 2016-2017 Regional District 13 Education Budget on May 3, 2016 preceded by a District Meeting to be held on May 2, 2016. Mr. Renninghoff seconded.

In favor of approving to go to referendum: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Dr. Onofreo, and Mr. Renninghoff. Motion passed.

Committee Reports

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Mrs. Flanagan reported that the committee met on Monday evening and focused on budget discussion and primarily on the new proposed position.

Public Comment

Mr. Stengel of Durham stated that his understanding was that the Boards of Finance from Durham and Middlefield would have an opportunity to speak earlier in the meeting. Mr. Stengel referred to a letter he sent to the Board and questioned why it was not addressed. He stated the Durham Board of Finance has submitted questions and would like answers to them.

Mr. Yarmartino stated he had received an email inviting him to the Board meeting and thought he would have had an opportunity to speak during the meeting. He expressed his disappointment. He stated that as a member of the Board of Finance from Middlefield he is willing to support the Board of Education if there is a cash flow problem. He also commended the Board of Education in cutting an additional \$132,000 from the proposed budget. While asking about mid-year changes in programs Mr. Yarmartino met the time limit allowed per person during public comment.

Mrs. Malcolm of Middlefield stated that the Board is responsible to account for every cent in the budget. She asked where the monies received from school fundraisers, field trips, book sales, etc. were accounted for.

Mr. Irish from Middlefield told Board members that their work was not done. He applauded the Board for the work done in answering many questions put forth by the Board of Finance. He urged Board members to reflect on what happened last year and to keep an open ear.

Ms. Opalacz of Durham would like to see our District more towards higher student achievement. She also stated she cannot support an additional administrator in the District. Ms. Opalacz also asked where we stand statewide regarding cost per student.

Adjournment

Mr. Hicks moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 p.m. Mr. Renninghoff seconded.

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

Respectfully submitted

Maureen Johnson