

# **DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 2018 – 7:00 PM**

**Administrative Center, 63 Beaver Brook Road**

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Chairperson, Patrick Johnston, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **ROLL CALL**

Present: Rachel Chaleski, Gladys Cooper, Patrick Johnston, Frederick Karrat, Emanuela Palmares, Farley Santos, Amy Spallino

Absent: Richard Hawley, Richard Jannelli, David Metrena, Kathleen Molinaro

Also Present: Dr. Pascarella, Dr. Glass, Joe Martino, Kim Thompson, Kelly Truchsess

## **RECOGNITIONS**

DHS Assistant Principal, Fallon Daniels, one of seven educators invited to go to Washington D.C. to attend a meeting with Secretary DeVos

- Recognized by US Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos.
- Ms. Daniels was selected with six other teachers across Connecticut and other districts in the US to speak about school safety and climate.
- Conversation came to Secretary DeVos' office because of concerns given Parkland situation and the 2014 Obama Discipline Guidance Document that current administration wanted to reverse.
- Ms. Daniels was able to share her experience at DHS and it's diversity as well as an understanding of the importance of working with students and understanding social-emotional development and the significance of doing that before going straight into consequences.
- Ms. Daniels did invite Secretary DeVos to visit us so she can see specifically what is happening within our district to support all our students.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

- Melinda Scott- 4th grade teacher at Stadley Rough. Thanked Dr. Sal and rest of the members from the Board for putting forth a budget with the best interest of the kids in mind. Ms. Scott is a member of the K-5 Literacy Committee, which really allowed the voices of teachers to be heard and valued. One common theme the committee came back to over and over was the need to not continue to do the same thing they have always done. As we enter another challenging budget year, they encourage the Board to solicit the opinions of teachers about how we can do things differently to potentially get more bang for whatever buck the city can give us.
- Marissa Fraser - 3rd grade teacher at Ellsworth. Spoke of the increased stress levels and feelings of inadequacy among teachers. The numbers of tasks teachers are required to complete have increased without increased planning time. The current SRBI process is not adequately serving the students of Danbury. They need a full time SRBI facilitator in each building to schedule and conduct meetings and support teachers. Ms. Fraser and coworker, Rene Hellmann, have volunteered to take on some of the responsibilities as SRBI co-chairs at Ellsworth. They meet before and after school, outside of their work hours, to try and comply with the process. Another frustration is that they can't provide appropriate Tier 3 interventions for students who need them. Tier 3 interventions need to be done for at least 45 minutes, 4 to 5 days per week by a certified teacher outside of Tier 1 instruction (meaning a classroom teacher cannot do this). The Language Arts and Math Coaches have been reduced to part time with inconsistent schedules, making it impossible for them to serve most Tier 3 students. Most Interventionists are not certified and frequently get pulled to substitute. Ms. Fraser asked the Board to create a task force to review the district's compliance with SRBI mandates and to provide a plan for how SRBI will be realistically implemented in our district given our high population of ELL and below grade level students. Ms. Fraser asked that the Coaches be moved back to full time and that SRBI Facilitator positions be created to help support this process.

- Bevin Ginty - ELA teacher at Broadview. The new EL curriculum requires ELA teachers to meet with their classes 6 times a week and requires them to plan a minimum of 11 lessons. Each week they plan for 5 CORE EL lessons. One intervention or accelerated lesson and a minimum of five small group lessons for the day when they meet with CORE classes for a 6th time that week. The plans that the teachers are given can be 60 pages long. On average Ms. Ginty spends four hours planning each lesson. With 4.5 hours of prep time per week, ELA teachers are working outside of school hours for a minimum of 19.5 hours each week. In those hours, tests have not been graded, anchor charts have not been created, and parents have not been corresponded with. These tasks add an additional 24 hours a week to her workload. Ms. Ginty also addressed the amount of copying for each lesson. Last week, one lesson required her to copy over 400 pieces of paper. Not only is that time consuming, but that leads to a tremendous amount of handouts that students receive on a daily basis. Often times the handouts are the same graphic organizer and the students get bored and disengaged when the work is repetitive for several days or even weeks in a row. They are also overwhelmed with keeping track of the abundance of handouts. Grading is another time consuming part of the new curriculum. EL assessments can be upwards of 10 pages in length. These tests are very overwhelming for the students and oftentimes they will be given another assessment just days later. The students become easily frustrated and often times don't perform well. Ms. Ginty stated that teachers are working tirelessly to make the curriculum as successful as possible for their students. The result is overworked teachers and overwhelmed students, both of whom are under an extreme amount of pressure and stress to meet the demands of this curriculum on a daily basis.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

**MOTION** - F. Santos moved, seconded by F. Karrat that the Board of Education approves the items on the Consent Calendar, Exhibits 18-46 through 18-49, as recommended:

### A. MINUTES

- 3/27/18 Superintendent Evaluation Committee
- 3/27/18 Board Workshop
- 3/28/18 Board Workshop
- 3/28/18 Board Meeting

**Motion passed at 7:17 pm**

## **EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE (SPOTLIGHT YOUR SCHOOL)**

### **Stadley Rough School**

- Principal Lenny Cerlich stated that he couldn't think of a better way to represent the heart and soul of Stadley Rough other than bringing in his students.
- Students handed out information in the form of a newspaper, Stadley Rough Tribune, and spoke about some of the articles in the paper.
- Articles included Leaders of Stadley Rough, Science of the Next Generation, Stadley Sends 2 to UCONN, Principal Lunch, Kindness and Compassion, What's Happening Across the Grades, Fine Dining, Book Buddies, Building a Community, What's There To Do?, All City Success, Running Club, Star Lab, Kind Kids, Our Journalists, a comics section, a save the dates section.
- 525 students.
- Students Face Timed with DHS journalism class to see how they run Hatters Herald.
- E. Palmares offered a field trip to Tribuna to see how they run a newspaper.

## **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

DHS: Monique Delima

- The 3rd Quarter just ended and now entering the 4th Quarter.
- Graduation is set for June 22nd.

- Junior's just finished the NGSS testing and SATs were rescheduled for April 24th. The makeup date is April 25th.
- The students who qualified for DECA Nationals will be competing over Spring Break in Georgia.
- Junior Prom will be held on May 25th.
- Construction is going smoothly and should be over next month.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

### **A. Focus Group Feedback**

- Dr. Sal shared the focus group feedback with the Board.
- Future budget reduction.
- Making sure that if we have an initiative, the initiative is planned well and that we have materials to sustain the program.
- SRBI process. We don't have enough staff for intervention. That has been a problem.
- We need to find ways to support SRBI students.
- Looking at utilizing technology.
- We are teaching differently, particularly ELA in the middle schools.
- Finding holes in the curriculum at elementary level and adjustments need to be made.
- Without one hour early release, we would have an even greater challenge to try and provide professional development to our teachers.
- More collaborative groups, more piloting information, more working together.
- Groups also looking at SRBI, ELL, interventions, schedule.
- Also main topics of Coaches and paraprofessionals and resourcing them.

### **B. TDEC Update**

- Dr. Glass stated that there is a statutory requirement that each board of education shall have a subcommittee of the board that looks at curriculum instruction.
- Very robust years ago because it had to be as we were working very closely with the state.
- As the alliance money came in, TDEC set it to twice a year versus monthly.
- Dr. Sal said we need to be robust again with it because so much was going on in the district.
- We have amped it back up again with a very good turn out and a well designed team.
- Teacher voice is important as well as administrator voice.
- Looking at literacy committee recommendations, ELL program, budget implications for support.
- New vision for professional development.

### **C. Lifetime Excursion Update**

- This has been turned over to our attorney's.
- It has been three years. Right now they are in state's attorney's office.
- They had a court date, but did not show up.
- Parents who paid with credit card got some reimbursement. Parents who paid with cash did not get reimbursed.

### **D. CAFE Equity Tool Kit**

- CAFE is creating a tool kit and we may pilot it for them. Dr. Sal will keep Board posted.
- This plays right into the grant that Anne Mead has.

### **E. Summer School**

- Scheduled for RPMS.
- Dr. Glass stated each year is a challenge of summer being hot in CT. Last year SPED summer school was at AIS because of air conditioning. This year they have chosen to use several schools with air conditioning. Mill Ridge Primary, Park Ave, King Street Primary and Ellsworth.
- Dr. Sal stated we will be monitoring schools who are multi-level and who have challenges with heat when it gets warmer. They will also be monitoring which activities students will or will not be participating in as the weather gets warmer at the end of the school year.
- Parent Leadership Coordinator, Katherine Tucker from Families Network of Western CT. First time in many years where they have been able to bring back the Parent Supporting Education Excellence Model

back to Danbury. 18 participants in the class. For parents who are interested in learning more about how the schools work and how to get positive outcomes in the schools.

- During the meeting, Dr. Sal received an email from the Connecticut State Department of Education that South Street School was identified as a school of showing strong academic growth in assessments.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **A. 2018-2019 Budget Discussion**

- J. Martino stated \$4 million allocated in Mayor's budget will be debated at City Council at 6:15 pm on April 12, 2018.
- Once it is approved it will be sent to the full council for the May meeting.
- \$6 million coming to city in education dollars if everything is approved.
- See some savings in health insurance.
- A lot of our contracts, heating oil, propane bus fuel, are locked in.
- Portables at WSMSA are moving along. Heavy bidding environment, which can reduce prices so that is a good thing. Expecting to bid in two weeks.
- Tried to hire school security coordinator a few years ago. We are going to do that this year. The money is reimbursable.

## **INFORMATION**

A. Broadview trip to Paris, France & Barcelona, Spain, July 2019 (8 days)

B. Danbury Day at State Capitol, April 12, 11:00-2:30 (will talk about Early College Program and advocate for the budget.

C. City Council Budget Committee Meeting, April 12, 6:15 pm at City Hall

## **BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS**

- E. Palmares spoke to parents that were present on how important it is to speak up at city council meetings and to advocate for more funds.
- F. Santos stated that they went to Mayor's budget proposal last week. As a member of the Board, he wants parents to know they advocate for students and teachers but reminded parents that they are just as important and they are the voices of the kids. Mr. Santos asked parents to go to the budget hearing on April 16th. It has made some difference this year and there is still some time to make some changes.
- E. Palmares thanked K. Truchsess for coming to the Autism Awareness Night at City Hall. There were close to 200 people at city hall that night.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

G. Cooper moved, seconded by F. Santos, that the Board of Education adjourns its Meeting of April 11, 2018 and the meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

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Rachel Chaleski, Secretary

(Meeting was videotaped)