

DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2011- 7:00 PM
Administrative Center – 63 Beaver Brook Road

Present: E. Alberts, G. Cooper, I. Fox, M. Fazio (7:11 pm) R. Jannelli, K. Molinaro,
S. Leroy, D. Metrena, R. Taborsak, Drs. Glass and Pascarella,
E. Longo and K. Thompson and J. Emmett from Administration
Absent: R. Austin-James

CALL TO ORDER

Irving Fox, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Fox introduced Richard Jalbert, the new Coordinator of Sites & Facilities and welcomed him to the District.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Saadi, member of the City Council, thanked the Board members for their services to the City of Danbury. He said he was at the Board meeting when the Superintendent outlined rough plans to ease the overcrowding by redistricting. He stated that it raised some concerns that it is being done for financial purposes. 10-11 Shelter Rock students will be sent to overflow schools – this issue can divide families. He told the Board that he has twins that will be going to school in 2 years – will they each be in a different school with the redistricting. He would like to know if the schools they came from in a year or so finds room, will they then be put back in their home school. City Council funds improvements, etc, I am opposed to speculative savings plans. Dollars should be directed to the classrooms rather than wish list items. The Council would like to hear that input at Council meetings – you want us to spend money on the Board’s long term plans. Mr. Saadi then asked if an interpreter could attend meetings for the parents who don’t speak English.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by R. Taborsak that the Board of Education approve the items on the Consent Calendar, as recommended:

MINUTES

Finance Committee Meeting	9/26/11
Adhoc Committee on DHS Meeting	9/26/11
Special Board Meeting (Interview)	9/27/11
Special Board Meeting	9/27/11
Special Board Meeting (Exp)	9/28/11

PERSONNEL

Resignations:	Deborah Kuilan	Micheline Montanaro
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The motion carried at 7:11 pm.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE - None

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES - None

PRESENTATION

Mary Gregory, Director of DSABC

Ms. Gregory told the Board that the program is in its 22nd year. It was started by Superintendent Anthony Singe who was looking to work collaboratively with businesses in the district. Adopt a School Program was the plan for many years. Presently we have 270 mentors and striving for 300. There are 24 corporations involved; one-third comes from the community at large. Corporations have changed in the past 22 years – our current model does work and we are looking to work with small and mid-size companies. A mentor is not a tutor; they are friends, confidants and role models. We are currently challenged by space for our mentors to meet with students; release time and instructional time is so critical. Mentors’ time is limited to when they can meet. Many of our mentors have been in relationships for a very long time – one mentor has been with the same student for 7 ½ years; kindergarten through graduation of high school is not unusual. DSABC has a scholarship program - \$2,000 one time scholarship. On Thursday, October 20th we will hold our 8th Harvest Hope and Dreams Fund Raiser and we would like to have you in attendance. That evening we will honor Mary Kiniry who has volunteered in our schools for 26 years and who ran the mentor program at the high school and has retired.

Mr. Fox asked if the district keeps statistics on DSABC information. Ms. Gregory said over the last two years they have been measuring outcomes. We are measuring year over year students’ improvement for whatever behavior that they were referred for.

Mr. Jannelli thanked Mary for all her hard work and efforts and said she does a wonderful job. Mr. Fox also thanked her for her dedicated efforts on behalf of DSABC.

Anne Mead, Great Schools Program

Ms. Mead distributed to the Board information on College Bound Great Schools and gave the Board a slide presentation on how the program works. The program is being presented by Danbury Children’s First, Danbury Public Schools and the Danbury Library. It is a program for the parents to connect online to learn more about College Bound, an innovative e-learning program for parents who want to set their kids on the path to college. It is a free online program produced by Great Schools and offers parents simple ways to help their children do well in school from kindergarten through fifth grade. The program jump-starts parent engagement programs with practical tips parents can easily put into action, parents can ask questions and get answers from other parents, parents share tips and insights on what works and a coach answers questions and supports parents every steps of the way, in both English and Spanish. At the present time workshops using grade school information will be available at the following schools: Shelter Rock, Stadley Rough, Park Avenue, Mill Ridge Primary and Family Literacy Center. However, the on-line version is open to all Danbury Public School families. We encourage and welcome families from outside of those schools to attend the workshop. We have a caravan, 42 ft. Winnebago, which is a joint endeavor between Danbury Public Works and Danbury

Public Schools as an outreach vehicle to family for family literacy, ecology and community resources. We expect this caravan will be ready in the next 2-3 weeks.

ACTION ITEMS

July 2011 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education accept the July 2011 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

Mr. Longo told the Board that during the month of July 2011, the District expended \$560,910.61, resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$560,910.61.

The motion carried at 7:43 pm.

July 2011 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by R. Taborsak that the Board of Education accept the July 2011 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

Mr. Longo told the Board that during the month of July 2011, the District expended \$173,974.93, resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$173,974.93.

The motion carried at 7:44 pm.

August 2011 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education accept the August 2011 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

Mr. Longo told the Board that during the month of August 2011, the District expended \$6,544,100.09 resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$7,105,010.70.

The motion carried at 7:45 pm.

August 2011 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education accept the August 2011 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

Mr. Longo told the Board that for the month of August 2011, the District expended \$627,939.04, resulting in a fiscal year to date expenditure value of \$801,913.97.

The motion carried at 7:46 pm.

RPMS field trip to Puerto Rico, January 13-17, 2012

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education approve the Rogers Park Middle School field trip to Puerto Rico, January 13-17, 2012

The motion carried at 7:47 pm.

Mr. Fox told the Board that he would like to add the below motion to the Action Items.

Resignation of Elio Longo

MOTION - R. Taborsak moved, seconded by S. Leroy, that the Board of Education accept the resignation of Elio Longo as of November 4, 2011.

Mr. Jannelli read Mr. Longo's resignation letter dated October 12th to the Board. Mr. Fox asked for a vote on accepting, with regret, Mr. Longo's resignation. Reluctantly, the Board accepted his resignation.

The motion carried at 7:49 pm.

Mr. Fox thanked Mr. Longo for his 10 year of service to the District; Mr. Jannelli also thanked him for his work and said it has been a privilege to know him. It was stated that Norwalk is getting a very qualified gentleman. Mr. Fox said in his 10 years of service he went over and beyond the call of duty on a continual basis and wished him good luck in his new endeavor.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Nellie Mae Education Foundation

The Superintendent told the Board that Nellie Mae Education Foundation has awarded Danbury High School a \$250,000 grant for one year (August 1, 2011 - July 31, 2012) that will be renewable for two years based on performance. Without this grant, training would not be feasible financially. Danbury also shares \$250,000 with Norwalk and New Haven schools for collaboration. Ms. Anne Mead, grant administrator for Danbury Schools' early childhood and extended learning programs told the Board the grant will be used to train teachers and provide other support services beginning this year. It will also pay for additional teaching hours to work on projects and data analysis and also will fund consultants to work with teachers. She said this grant was put together by a team. We were able to bring in a part-time teacher to be the director at the school. Dr. Pascarella said as time goes on he will keep the Board informed of additional information. Dr. Glass said this is a big win for Danbury.

Enrollment Update

Dr. Pascarella told the Board that the October 1 report is the official enrollment. This year we have a total of 10,825 students vs. last year we had 10,727. Elementary schools have 5,131 students; Broadview has 1,110 students; Rogers Park has 1,100 students; Danbury High school has 2,873 and ACE has 89 students.

Ms. Molinaro asked how the buses are handling the increase in students. Mr. Longo said the issues are time and delivery not so much the overcrowding. The Superintendent talked about some of the bus issues and also about the students that attend the STEM Academy and the movement of students due to NCLB. Mr. Taborsak asked if there were a large number of kids moving. Dr. Glass said there are only 20-25 kids that made that move, and in a number of cases they have moved back. He added that test scores are so volatile.

American Solar Project extension

Mr. Longo said they had a Sites and Facility meeting this evening and discussed the Solar Project. He told the Board that American Solar and Alternative Power asked for an extension of 6 months. The request was due to changes in personnel in the school system, financing delays and unanticipated weather related issues. They said they anticipate major components will be on site prior to November 30th.

Affirmative Action

Kim Thompson gave a preliminary report on hiring and affirmative action reporting for 2011-12. Looking at all available vacancies, she said there were more than 1,400 teacher applicants, 2,500 non-certified applicants, 550 clerical and over 1,200 applicants for substitute teaching. She is currently reviewing demographic makeup of those candidate pools in order to continue to look for ways to increase the number of minorities in the hiring pools and, ultimately, to better reflect the District's population when hiring into all positions. This is made more difficult by the fact that not all candidates report their status on their applications. Further information will be provided in subsequent meetings.

Redistricting Process

Dr. Pascarella told the Board that what he is recommending at this point is having a meeting at each of the schools involved. On October 24th a general meeting for schools affected at Broadview at 6:00 pm; a Board Workshop on November 2nd which should be moved to Broadview and a Board discussion on November 9th and 22nd and, if needed, a special Board meeting to revisit some of the concerns. When we studied this plan, the Savin Report has been updated again. I have hired Mr. Prowda.

Ms. Molinaro said we do not have to discuss this tonight, but how are the schools going to handle, say, 100 or more students than they now have. Dr. Pascarella said there are support things that need to happen. Ms. Molinaro asked if they have to be addressed. At the parent meeting are we anticipating having a dialogue? Dr. Pascarella said we are going to ask people to fill in cards and ask questions. Ms. Alberts asked if they would be answered then – the Superintendent said if we don't get to them, we will then distribute the questions with the answers. Mr. Fox asked if they would be putting out material in advance. Sometimes there is no advance notice and it makes it hard for people to have questions. Dr. Pascarella said that we plan to get it out before hand. Ms. Cooper said that the word “redistricting” needs to be changed as people are afraid of that word. The Superintendent said he will rename it. Ms. Cooper said we should have the Workshop at this office – for the Board to be educated. When we have our overall Workshop, I don't want to open it up to the public.

DISCUSSIONS - None

INFORMATION

DHS trip to Quebec, Canada, February 16-19, 2012. Ms. Deninson stated this trip has been postponed until 2013.

(Ms. Alberts and Ms. LeRoy – left the meeting at 8:22 pm.)

BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Lighthouse Training

Mr. Fox spoke briefly on the Lighthouse Training and said it would not start until after the elections in November – it will be one Wednesday a month starting the end of January. The dates will be available in December.

BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS

Sites and Facility – *K. Molinaro, Chairperson*

She stated that they had a meeting this evening and spoke about the American Solar and Alternative Power asking for an extension of 6 months. Also focused on Tools for Schools at Alternative Center for Excellence.

Policy Committee – *R. Taborsak, Chairperson*

Mr. Taborsak stated that we will be having a meeting to discuss bullying. Mr. Thompson said she is going over the statutes and that she has a stakeholders meeting at noon tomorrow. Requirement for bullying has to be individually tailored to the buildings. It is going to take us some time. Mr. Jannelli asked if the Board could be told ahead of time to review the policy. Ms. Thompson said she will try to present it. Mr. Fox asked about the graduation requirement and wanted to know when we need to release that information. Dr. Pascarella said the law just changed, they kicked it up two years.

Magnet School – *G. Cooper, Trustee*

Ms. Cooper said there will be a meeting tomorrow at 10:00 am.

The Superintendent spoke about 2 bus accidents and we did not have a nurse present. Mr. Longo said in a conversation with Danbury Hospital medical staff, they view the district as being responsible and an administrator and a nurse need to be at any bus accident. They will assist with treating students but the ultimate responsibility is the schools' responsibilities. There was an accident today and Mr. Robbs and I were at the site. Two students had minor injuries and were transported to Danbury Hospital by ambulance. The district's responsibility is to have a nurse or health official on site. Dr. Pascarella said his point is we made three cuts and we didn't realize the impact. We cut back so far now I am increasingly concerned. Mr. Fox asked if this was a financial issue – or a negotiation issue. Ms. Thompson said we are in the middle of negotiations right now. The former Director of Nurses position is now one-half time. We are pretty thinly staffed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: G. Cooper moved, seconded by R. Jannelli that the Board of Education

convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing negotiations/collective bargaining and other personnel matters.

Present: G. Cooper, I. Fox, M. Fazio, R. Jannelli, K. Molinaro, D. Metrena, R. Taborsak, Drs. Glass and Pascarella, E. Longo and K. Thompson from Administration

Absent: E. Alberts, R. Austin-James and S. Leroy

The motion carried at 8:40 pm.

Board took a 5 minute recess

Ms. Thompson updated the Board on on-going teacher negotiations.

Dr. Pascarella updated the Board on administrative openings.

PUBLIC SESSION

MOTION - R. Jannelli moved, seconded by R. Taborsak, that the Board return to Public Session.

The motion carried at 9:05 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

G. Cooper moved, seconded by R. Jannelli that the Board of Education adjourn its October 12, 2011 Board Meeting and the meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.

Kathleen Molinaro, Secretary