

DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2017 – 7:00 PM
Administrative Center, 63 Beaver Brook Road

CALL TO ORDER

The Chairperson, Ralph Pietrafesa, called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – ROTC Cadets

The Board, administration and audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by the Danbury High School ROTC Cadets.

ROLL CALL

Present: Eileen Alberts, Gladys Cooper, Michael Ferguson, Patrick Johnston, Frederick Karrat, David Metrena, Kathleen Molinaro, Ralph Pietrafesa and Farley Santos

Absent: Richard Hawley and Richard Jannelli

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

RECOGNITIONS

Update on Morris Street School, National Blue Ribbon Award Ceremony, Washington DC, November 6-7, 2017

Rhoda Guider and Jennifer Strohmeier thanked administration for providing lunch and breakfast to the staff at Morris Street School. The students each received a cupcake, which they were happy about. Ms. Guider said their days in Washington, DC were amazing. The highlights were hearing a speech by the 2017 National Teacher of the Year, Sydney Chaffee. She spoke about her daily strategies, her relationship with her students and their individual goals. We also visited with Senator Murphy. There were 342 schools involved and everyone was recognized for the work they have done. It was exciting to finally be acknowledged for all the hard work we have done at Morris Street School for a long time. We got our award and we have it here tonight and a flag that we have in our school. Morris Street has been working to close the achievement gap for at least 10 years. The staff has input into the decisions on what is best for the school, students and families. We will continue to challenge our students every day. Hard work and perseverance is what lead us to this success.

Mr. William Santarsiero, Principal of Morris Street School, said he normally would be the person to do the presentation, but Ms. Guider and Ms. Strohmeier asked if they could give the Board the overview. We work really well together - our staff is bar-none the best in Danbury. Our teachers brought us to this point. I would like to mention that the poverty level and minority is at 90%. We work together with the parents. Mr. Santarsiero thanked the Board for their support. The Board and administration congratulated the staff at Morris Street School.

Board member, Mr. Santos, said he wanted to personally congratulate the school. He mentioned that he had the pleasure of touring Morris Street a month ago. He stated that he visited a couple of different schools. Students at Morris Street love their teachers and principal. The families feel the educators care about the students. I've heard from parents and they love the Morris Street.

Mr. Pietrafesa thanked the staff for coming to the meeting and presenting an overview of their trip to Washington, DC for the Blue Ribbon Award for Morris Street School.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

CONSENT CALENDAR

MINUTES

10/25/17 Community Relations Committee Meeting (Revised)

11/8/17 Sites & Facilities Committee Meeting

11/8/17 Board Meeting

MOTION: Kathleen Molinaro moved, seconded by Patrick Johnston, that the Board of Education amend the November 21, 2017 agenda to add consideration of the submission of the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant application to the State Department of Education in the amount of \$39,583 to support the Danbury Early College Opportunity Program.

Motion passed at 7:15 pm.

MOTION: Kathleen Molinaro moved, seconded by Gladys Cooper, that the Board of Education approve the submission of the Student Support and Academy Enrichment Grant application to the State Department of Education in the amount of \$39,583 to support the Danbury Early College Opportunity Program.

Motion passed at 7:16 pm.

MOTION: Kathleen Molinaro moved, Michael Ferguson seconded, that the Board of Education approves the items on the Consent Calendar, Exhibits 17-131 through 17-133, as recommended

Motion passed at 7:17 pm.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE

Josh Richter, a teacher at Pembroke School, told the Board that they service 90 special education students out of 342 students. He stated that the kids are very well rounded and participate in all school activities. Mr. Richter thanked the Board for listening.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES - None

PRESENTATION

Technology Update

Mr. Martino introduced Yevgeny Sklyar, IT Supervisor, to the Board. Mr. Martino then showed a slide presentation, outlining the Danbury Profile, Present State of Technology, Funding Issues and Solutions and Leasing Program next steps. The Danbury Profile statistics are 9,800+ Danbury owned computer devices; 5,900+ Chromebooks; 2,652+ Apple MacOS devices; 1,000 tablets; 207 Windows devices and 80 Windows servers.

On the funding side, Mr. Martino showed a slide that stated Danbury has a Technology Grant Awards: 2013 E-rate Funding Grant Elementary Wireless Network Replacement \$213,000; 2014 State of Connecticut Technology Grant \$250,000; 2015 State of Connecticut SBAC Testing Grant \$234,000; 2016 E-rate Funding Grant \$950,000 will replace the majority of our network switching in all building.

Mr. Martino also covered instructional applications; digital curriculum resources, 3D printing, media scope, google goggles, circuit kits leasing vs. purchasing and what the next steps would be.

Some Board members has questions about; donations, one-to-one, digital text books and subscriptions to name a few. Dr. Pascarella said that it is regrettable that we cannot accept all donations due to the fact that our platforms cannot support all types of equipment. Mr. Karrat asked about the one-to-one roll out, where each child has their own computer. Mr. Martino said we are looking at a model next week. Dr. Pascarella said the cost is so high and there are pros and cons on both side of digital text books. Dr. Glass mentioned that the nice thing about digital text books is they are virtual books and all updates are immediate, you don't have to wait for update for 4-6 years. It is live.

Mr. Johnson asked about the cost. Mr. Martino did say there was is subscription cost since the book publishers don't give them away – there is a savings, but not a tremendous savings. The question was do we have classes using the digital and how many do we have. Mr. Martino responded primarily the classes at the secondary schools and we have 50% or better. Mr. Pietrafesa thanked Mr. Martino for his in-depth Technology update.

ACTION ITEMS

October 2017 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

MOTION: Kathleen Molinaro moved, seconded by Eileen Alberts that the Board of Education accept the October 2017 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

Mr. Martino told the Board that during the month of October 2017, the District expended \$9,021,970 resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$27,653,691 which represents 21.56% of the General Fund.

Motion passed at 7:48 pm.

October 2017 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

MOTION: Kathleen Molinaro moved, seconded by Michael Ferguson that the Board of Education accept the October 2017 Operating Results Analysis (Grant/Projects)

Mr. Martino told the Board that during the month of October 2017, the District expended \$1,735,397 resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$4,373,808 which represents 26.4% of the Grants Budget.

Motion passed at 7:49 pm.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Budget Update

Mr. Martino said the holdback of \$225,000 will leave us in a real dilemma. I think we should continue to work with teachers. We can't buy the buses which cost between \$60,000-70,000. We will be on a freeze, but will not be making any cuts at this time. We have done a lot of reduction in administration. We are going to have to figure out some next steps. Most of the cuts are ECS. We have to watch what we are doing. Mr. Martino said he is concerned about future cuts.

TEAM State Mandate

District/School Focus Groups

The Superintendent, Dr. Pascarella, said we heard Kevin Haddad speak at the last Board meeting about setting up a focus group to discuss teachers' stress and their work load. To that end, we sent out a message to principals for feedback. We have not, at this time, received all the responses to our questionnaire.

DISCUSSION

Secondary Modular Classrooms

Dr. Pascarella told the Board that at our Sites and Facilities meeting we have talked about more modular classrooms. Mr. Martino said specifications will be discussed in January; the cost is \$750,000. Dr. Pascarella said the City needs to step up and help us out.

INFORMATION

BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Mr. Petrafesa reminded the Board that the Annual Meeting, will be held on December 6th at 5:30 pm at the Westside Middle School.

Mr. Petrafesa thanked Drs. Glass and Pascarella, Ms. Thompson, Ms. Truchsess and Mr. Martino for all the help and support that he received in his four years on the Board, especially the last year as Chairperson. He said it was a pleasure to work with a great group of people and they are commended for always putting the kids first. He also thanked Debbie Warner.

BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS

Ms. Eileen Alberts thanked the Board for the support she received in the 16 years she has been part of the group. Ms. Alberts also extended her appreciation to the administration.

Mr. Michael Ferguson said being on the Board for the last four years has been a great opportunity and a privilege. He stated that he has learned a lot and will bring it with him to the State of Connecticut Capital. It has prepared me for assisting in the education department in the Capital, he said. You have a family member in the legislature. Best wishes to all – I will not be a stranger.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

PUBLIC SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

Kathleen Molinaro moved, seconded by Michael Ferguson, that the Board of Education adjourn its November 21, 2017 Board meeting and the meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.

Kathleen Molinaro, Secretary

(Meeting was videotaped)