

**DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES**  
**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27, 2018**  
**6:30 PM RETIREE RECEPTION - 7:00 PM BOARD MEETING**  
**Administrative Center, 63 Beaver Brook Road**

**RETIREE RECEPTION – 6:30-7:00 pm**

A retiree reception was held at 6:30 pm. Below is a list of retirees' and their years of service.

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

Present: Rachel Chaleski, Gladys Cooper, Richard Hawley, Richard Jannelli, Patrick Johnston, Frederick Karrat, David Metrena, Kathleen Molinaro, Farley Santos, Amy Spallino

Absent: Emanuela Palmares

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

Ms. Thompson acknowledged the retirees and their tremendous years of service to the Danbury school system. She asked when she called their names, if they would come to the Board table. The asterisked names below were the retirees that were present at the reception. The Board gave each a gift and congratulated them on their retirement and thanked them for their years of service.

**RECOGNITIONS**

**2018 Retiree Reception**

\*Richard Antonios, Custodian, 33 years  
Sandra Atanasoff, Principal, 31 years  
Theresa Barb, IT Specialist, 21 years  
Patricia Blaiotta, Administrative Assistant, 24 years  
\*Marilyn Brenning, Gr. 5 Teacher, 26 years  
\*Maria Cefaloni, Food Service, 11 years  
Michael Clarke, Assistant Principal, 27 years  
Leslie Dell, Reading Teacher, 17 years  
\*Marie Dennis, Gr. 5 Teacher, 34 years  
\*Janet DePaul, Gr. 5 Teacher, 32 years  
Nanci DiPerrio, Special Education Teacher, 27 years  
Carol Donaty, Paraprofessional, 36 years  
\*Pamela Doubek, Math Teacher, 23 years  
Cheryl Ernst, Reading Teacher, 21 years  
JoAnn Francisco, Food Service, 39 years  
\*William Glass, Deputy Superintendent, 20 years  
\*Jean Hyer, Paraprofessional, 31 years  
\*Patricia Joaquim, Principal, 13 years  
Eloise Kennen, Gr. 1 Teacher, 28 years  
Margo Khalil, ESL Teacher, 21 years  
Linda Laboy, Paraprofessional, 22 years

\*Kathleen LaValley, Media Specialist, 29 years  
\*Martha LoGiurato, Physical Therapist, 13 years  
\*Melanie Lucas, Transportation Coordinator, 29 years  
Susan Margolis, Tech Ed Teacher, 12 years  
\*Michele Masi, Kindergarten Teacher, 19 years  
Lauren Miller, Administrative Assistant, 25 years  
\*Mary Nimer, PE Teacher, 42 years  
\*Debbie Pietras-Nolan, Special Education, 38 years  
Elise O'Grady, ESL Teacher, 24 years  
\*Christine Pruss, Director K-8 Reading/LA, 26 years  
Margaret Robbins, Math STEM Gr.6, 9 years  
Michael Senese, Special Education, 9 years  
Georgeann Shields, Grants Coordinator, 27 years  
Jennifer Soran, Tutor, 4 years  
\*Melvin Sprueill, Custodian, 35 years  
\*Connie Swanson, Music Teacher, 42 years  
Marie Sweetman, Payroll Coordinator, 17 years  
\*Jose Vazquez, Gr. 2 Teacher, 34 years  
Patricia Voytek, Paraprofessional, 38 years  
Robert Weinheimer, Teacher, 18 years  
Jose Zambrano, Custodian, 28 years

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Greg Ciany, parent of a Special needs student at Broadview told the Board that his son came home with a note saying that he threw himself on the floor and therefore had a bruise on his leg. Mr. Ciany said if they had cameras in the Special Education classrooms, a parent could actually see what happened. These children cannot tell you what happened. You have to rely on what the teacher or principal tells you. With a camera in the classroom it would solve a lot of the problems. I don't know if he really did throw himself on the floor. I only know that from a note. A parent doesn't know how their child got the bruise and the student can't really tell them how it happened. With a video, the principal would be able to see exactly what happened and so would the parent. This would rectify a lot of problems. No one can tell me how his day was, but if I could see a video I could see firsthand. It would be a great investment for the school and would cut tensions for everyone. It would be protection for kids who cannot protect themselves and the parents would not have to rely on someone else information. Mr. Ciany passed out a letter from Mrs. Christine Ciany to the Board describing her twins' experiences at both Pembroke School and Broadview.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

**MOTION** - F. Santos moved, seconded by R. Hawley that the Board of Education approves the items on the Consent Calendar, Exhibits 18-81 through 18-83, as recommended:

### MINUTES

6/13/18 Superintendent Evaluation Meeting

6/13/18 Board Meeting

6/18/18 Finance Committee Meeting

### DONATION

Ridgefield's Scotland Elementary School donation to Pembroke Elementary School

*Motion carried at 7:22 pm.*

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

### **Pembroke Elementary School**

Dr. Sharon Epple, Principal of Pembroke Elementary School introduced Andrew Lambo, 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher at Pembroke. Mr. Lambo interviewed his student, Xiara Duron. He asked her questions about flexible seating arrangements in the classroom. Did she prefer sitting at desks or sitting at a table? She said she likes sitting at a table. He then asked about her favorite sport. Her response was basketball because it teaches you friendship. Danielle Apellaniz, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher introduced her student Benjamin Miller who spoke on his own with his suggestions on flexible seating and the playground. It was stated that there is not a playground in Danbury that is considered accessible to students' with special needs.

Dr. Epple told the Board that Pembroke is trying to raise \$150,000 for an accessible new playground for students' with special needs as well as all children. She introduced Amanda Pasquarella of Ridgefield's Scotland Elementary School and thanked her school for their donation of \$1,000 towards Pembroke School's playground fund. A student from Scotland spoke on behalf of her school and told the Board that this donation came from funds that they collected and wanted to share with Pembroke.

A slide show was presented that outlined the research and philosophy behind flexible seating, how it is being funded, together with a list of donors. The school Governance Council has launched a fundraising project to build a new, accessible playground for Pembroke and the City of Danbury. The projected cost is \$150,000. They listed the SGC Mission and what the playground features would be. They asked that the Board spread the word and they would welcome all donors to their project. They have received great support from the community.

## **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

DHS: Monique Delima, Samantha Mortara, Cameron Slingerland, Luana Barcelos

Monique told the Board that this is our last meeting. We'd like to introduce the new 2018-2019 BOG Officers, but first we just wanted to thank you all for this opportunity. Samantha and I have been attending these meetings for the past two years and for all of us it's been a pleasure being able to represent Danbury High School and now being able to call ourselves graduates, even though it doesn't quite feel like it just yet, and another thank you for coming to graduation. We also thought you might be interested in what our plans are for next year. Monique said she will be attending UPENN as a nursing major; Samantha Mortara will be attending UCONN for History, Cameron Slingerland will be attending GMU for Criminal Justice and Luana Barcelos will be attending UCONN for studio art. Now, we'll have our new BOG Officers' first order of business to be to introduce themselves and their positions and give DHS' last update of the year. The Board thanked the outgoing Officers for their attendance at the Board meetings and their informative information about DHS over the past two years. The Board wished them well in their new endeavors.

The new Board of Governors' Officers for the 2018-2019 school year were introduced: Jazzlyn Torres, President; Alisha Nagarsheth, Vice President; Gabrielle D'Ostilio, Secretary; Joanna Wenchell, Treasurer.

This year's graduation was a success! Each student walked in identical gender neutral blue and white gowns. The graduating class had the highest percentage of students with a 4.0 GPA, and we even ran out of gold cords for them to wear. This was an extremely successful graduating class, and they will represent Danbury High by attending many prestigious colleges, like Yale, Cornell, and the University of Pennsylvania. Gabriella told the Board that the senior's had a barbeque last week which was a huge success. There were many exciting activities for them such as a dunk tank and inflatables. Overall it was a great time. There were also senior awards and scholarships given out this year. It was actually the most money ever awarded, since there was a large amount of very qualified students receiving them. The new addition to Danbury High School, known as the "Freshman Academy Building," is now officially completed and opened. Teachers have already started moving into their respective classrooms. The building is no longer limited to the Freshman Academy, and is for other grade levels as well. As a group one of the goals we have for the upcoming year is to establish more fundraisers for funding. We want to create events where all grades can be involved rather than specific grades with their Officers to improve our maintenance and things like the bathrooms. Thank you!

**PRESENTATION** - None

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### May 2018 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

MOTION: D. Metrena moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education accept the May 2018 Operating Results Analysis (General Fund)

Mr. Martino told the Board that during the month of May, 2018, the District expended \$10,139,360 resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$103,349,155 which represents 80.6% of the General Fund total budget.

*Motion carried at 7:46 pm.*

### May 2018 Operating Results Analysis (Grants/Projects)

MOTION: D. Metrena moved, seconded by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education accept the May 2018 Operating Results Analysis (Grant/Projects)

Mr. Martino told the Board that during the month of May, 2018, the District expended \$2,369,543 resulting in a fiscal year-to-date expenditure value of \$18,558,540 which represents 60.8% of the Grants budget.

*Motion carried at 7:47 pm.*

Amendment to Sodexo Agreement

MOTION: D. Metrena moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education approve the Amendment to the Sodexo Management Agreement

Hr. Hawley asked Mr. Martino to give the Board an update on the Sodexo Management Agreement and contract for the benefit of the new Board members. Mr. Martino gave the Board a thumbnail sketch of the Agreement. Mr. Jannelli asked Mr. Martino for an accounting of the Enterprise fund. He said he would bring the audit to the next meeting.

*Motion carried at 7:50 pm.*

School Lunch Price Increase

MOTION: D. Metrena moved, seconded by K. Molinaro that the Board of Education approve the increase of .05 school lunch prices for the 2018-2019 school year

*Motion carried a 7:50 pm.*

Superintendent's Contract

MOTION: D. Metrena moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education implement the findings of the Finance Committee to affect an increase of 2.5% and approve a one-year extension to the Superintendent's contract for 2018-2019.

*In favor:* G. Cooper, R. Hawley, R. Jannelli, F. Karrat, D. Metrena,  
K. Molinaro, A. Spallino

*Opposed:* P. Johnston, F. Santos, R. Chaleski

*Absent:* E. Palmares

*Motion carried at 7:49 with a vote of 7 to 3.*

Mr. Metrena asked that the Board amend the motion for the Exempt Staff Contract. ***The motion to amend the Exempt Staff Contract carried at 7:50 pm.*** Mr. Metrena then read the following amended motion:

Exempt Staff Contracts – as amended

MOTION: D. Metrena moved, seconded by R. Chaleski that the Board of Education implement the findings of the Finance Committee to affect an increase to all exempt staff of 2.5% with adjustment to health and welfare benefits as described, and adjustment to durations of contracts were appropriate ***not including the Superintendent who has a separate contract.***

*In favor:* R. Chaleski, R. Hawley, R. Jannelli, F. Karrat, P. Johnston,  
K. Molinaro, F. Santos, A. Spallino

*Opposed:* G. Cooper

*Abstain:* D. Metrena

*Absent:* E. Palmares

*Motion carried at 7:51 with a vote of 8 to 2.*

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

### **Graduation update**

The Superintendent thanked all the Board members for attending the Danbury High School graduation. He said the students were respectful and he felt it was a wonderful graduation and evening.

### **Assistant Superintendent/Director update**

Dr. Pascarella asked Ms. Thompson for an update. She said started by thanking the Interview Committee for their efforts. She told the Board that they have hired Kevin Walston to be the new Assistant Superintendent and Kara Casimiro for the District Development. She said Mr. Walston was in the District today to help with interviews and will officially start his position at the end of July. Ms. Casimiro will be assuming her position on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Dr. Harry Rosvally is leaving us and we will be looking for a replacement for that position. We are currently working on the Shelter Rock principal position.

The Superintendent asked Ms. Thompson about Summer School. She said it will start on Monday and will be in three buildings: Broadview, Hayestown and Pembroke.

### **Budget update**

Dr. Pascarella asked for an update on the budget. Mr. Martino said as he mentioned at the last meeting, it is a complex situation. He gave the Board a brief explanation of where the District's budget is at the moment.

### **Update on Westside Middle School Portable Classrooms**

Mr. Martino said we got four bids, the lowest being at \$1,166,392. The City will be awarding the bids next Wednesday.

**DISCUSSION** - None

**INFORMATION** - None

## **BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

The Chairperson, Patrick Johnston, read the following letter dated June 12, 2018, signed by Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education, to Dr. Pascarella from the State Board of Education regarding the waiver of the 180 day.

“I am writing to inform you that the State Board of Education (the “Board”), at its meeting on June 6, 2018, approved my recommendation to waive the 180-day requirement pursuant to Section 10-15 of the Connecticut General Statutes for the 2017-18 school year. The Board conditioned this waiver on the Danbury Board of Education extending next year's school calendar to include 182 days of instruction for Hayestown Elementary, Pembroke Elementary and Broadview Middle School and 181 days of instruction for the remaining schools in your district. I have attached a copy of the signed resolution for your records.”

“RESOLVED, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-15 of the Connecticut General Statutes, authorizes the Danbury Board of Education, given the unusual circumstances presented, to shorten the 2017-18 school year for Hayestown Elementary, Pembroke Elementary and Broadview Middle Schools to 178 days and to shorten the 2017-18 school

year to 179 days for the remaining schools. Such authorization is contingent upon Hayestown Elementary, Pembroke Elementary and Broadview Middle having at least 182 school days for the 2018-19 school year and the remaining schools 181 days. The State Board of Education hereby directs the commission to take the necessary action. (Approved by a vote of 9-0 this sixth day of June, Two Thousand Eighteen.”

Mr. Johnston called Dr. Glass to the table and told him how much he will be missed by the Board. He presented Dr. Glass with a plaque that showed the “learning tree” and was developed by Dr. Glass many years ago for the Danbury Public Schools. The Board gave Dr. Glass a standing ovation.

Dr. Glass thanked the Board for all their support over the years and said he too will miss being a part of the Danbury Public School District. He thanked them for their thoughtful gift.

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

Mr. Santos told the Board that he attended a couple of moving up ceremonies. He mentioned that he attended the ACE graduation and was moved by some of the stories that the students were telling. They told where they came from and where they are going. One student told how difficult it was when he was homeless and still going to school. He said the teachers would buy him gift cards and give him \$5 for food. Mr. Santos went on to say that he was impressed with the students and has an appreciation for the staff and administration. He believes ACE may have a life impact on some of those students. Any little thing you do will impact their lives. They have faith in God and in the teachers at ACE. The teachers are really dedicated to their students.

Dr. Pascarella said there is a lot of success at ACE, even though the State considers it a failing school.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION - None**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

K. Molinaro moved, seconded by D. Metrena that the Board of Education adjourn its meeting of June 27, 2018 and the meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

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Rachael Chaleski, Secretary

(Meeting was videotaped)