



**TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, September 16, 2015
355 Migeon Avenue**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Present: Fiona Cappabianca (6:14 p.m.); Jeremy Hinman; Ellen G. Hoehne; John Kissko; Bill Knight; Jim Lamoin; Andrew Nargi; Jessica Richardson; Daniel Thibault; Kenneth P. Traub, Chair

Administration: David Bascetta, Joseph L. Campolieta, Paula LaChance, Susan M. Lubomski, Lynda T. Reitman

Absent: Mayor Carbone

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY SESSION

The Chair outlined the purpose and rules of the School/Community Session. No speakers present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Thibault made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Lamoin seconded the motion. All in favor.

INFORMATION SHARING SESSION

A. Superintendent's Report

1. Teachers of the Year 2015

Interim Superintendent Reitman and The Chair congratulated the Teacher of the Year at each school in the district. Honorees in attendance were presented with a plaque: Jordan Jones of East School, Heather Riccini of Vogel-Wetmore School, and Angelo Calabrese of Torrington Middle School. Mr. Calabrese was also presented with a plaque for Teacher of the Year district wide. Honorees not in attendance were Amy Rice of Forbes School, Sarah Coolidge of Southwest School, Kate Shaggy of Torrington School, and Andrew Marchand of Torrington High School.

2. District Performance Report

Ms. Reitman reported on results from three tests, the SBAC (Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium), CAPT (Connecticut Academic Performance Test) and CMT (Connecticut Mastery Test). She provided the Board with a packet

of tables showing results and comparisons. In general, the district language arts scores were on par with the State while the math results were bit lower when compared with the State, and Ms. Reitman pointed out that district elementary schools have more literary specialists than numeracy specialists and that my help explain these results.

Twenty-two Grade 11 students (10%) opted out of the SBAC test, and Ms. Reitman explained that SAT and AP exams were scheduled around the same time as the SBAC – the Chair pointed out that all three were actually scheduled in the same week – and thus those students taking the SAT and AP exams tended to opt out of the SBAC. These students would likely have received high SBAC scores that would have brought the district scores up. Ms. Reitman said that these scores will be used particularly in considering what needs to be looked at at the elementary schools and also in deciding on interventions at the secondary level.

Ms. Reitman pointed out that regarding the CAPT scores the district was only two percentage points lower that the State average and that that represents an improvement. The district also had improved CMT results. Assistant Superintendent Lubomski cautioned that a change in science curriculum, which is based on Next Generation Science Standards, is in progress and cautioned that CMT test results will be in flux for the next year or so until the new curriculum is fully in place.

Ms. Richardson congratulated the elementary schools, and Vogel-Wetmore Grade 3 in particular, on good results in areas where demographic analysis might suggest expectations of less success.

3. Forensic Audit

Ms. Reitman updated the Board on progress with the City of Torrington's forensic audit of the district IT contract services. The city attorney made a request for documents on August 24 and the administration replied on August 28 providing the original RFP, the current vendor's response to that RFP, and the current contract. This response was accompanied by a suggestion by the superintendent to the Mayor that certain requested documents may already be in the possession of the City and recognizing this could help the district comply sooner as a deadline of October 15 might not be reasonable at a time when administration is focused on opening schools and the needs of the students. The City responded that perhaps the deadline was not reasonable as such; however, the City replied that they would like all the documents delivered at this time regardless of what may already be in the City's possession in order to avoid confusion. All efforts are being made by the district to deliver the requested documents as soon as possible.

Ms. Reitman expressed she was pleased to have participated with the Mayor and the Mayor's team in selection of the auditing firm. No questions from the Board.

4. Softball Field Renovation

Facilities Director David Bascetta presented the Board with cost estimates of a renovation of the high school softball field which compared the cost of changes being made all at one time versus in phases – all at once costing about \$24,000 less. If all at once, the project could be started in late Spring 2016 and worked on through the summer, grass sowed in September, and the field ready for play in the Spring of 2017. Contracting the project in its entirety would require a additional \$305,200 in hard costs.

Ms. Cappabianca asked if there had been any Title 9 concerns raised, and Mr. Bascetta said that neither he nor THS Athletic Director Mike McKenna have had any complaints to date.

B. Board of Education Goals for 2016-17

Mr. Kissko read a list of five proposed goals which were compiled by the School Improvement and Community Relations subcommittee. The Chair lead a member to member discussion on each goal. All were approved of with a change in the fifth. The approved goals were as follows:

1. Investigate ways to make the budget process more effective and less stressful
2. Investigate ways to develop an effective strategy to market the Options program to parents of students who may or may not attend college
3. Investigate ways and develop strategies to increase communication among parents, teachers, administrators and Board of Education members
4. Develop strategies regarding the creation of subcommittee and regular board meeting agendas so that the Board's time together can be used more effectively and efficiently
5. Pursue an ongoing, formal relationship with our elected state legislators in order to inform them about the needs of Torrington schools, make recommendations to them about the interests of Torrington Schools as they might be affected by state policy and legislation, and to discuss the impact of their votes in the state legislature by means of reports to the public

Mr. Kissko made a motion to amend the agenda to include a vote on the adaption of the goals (agenda item 7.E.). Mr. Thibault seconded the motion. All in favor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:50 p.m., Mr. Hinman made a motion to go into executive session to discuss the first non-bargaining unit contract. Ms. Hoehne seconded the motion. All in favor.

At 7:47 p.m., the Chair declared the meeting in open session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:47 p.m., Mr. Lamoin made a motion to go into executive session to discuss the second non-bargaining unit contract. Ms. Cappabianca seconded the motion. All in favor.

At 8:11 p.m., the Chair declared the meeting in open session.

ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of Out-of-state/Overnight Field Trips

Mr. Thibaut made a motion to approve one out-of-state and two overnight field trips (Gr. 6, Boston, 10/26 and 10/29 2015; THS Model UN, UConn at Storrs, 11/13-11/15 2015; THS Model UN, Yale in New Haven, 1/21-1/24 2016). Ms. Hoehne seconded the motion. All in favor.

B. Approval of non-bargaining unit contract (accountant)

Ms. Cappabianca made a motion to approve the new accountant contract as amended in executive session. Ms. Hoehne seconded the motion. All in favor.

C. Approval of non-bargaining unit contract (interim superintendent)

Mr. Thibault made a motion to approve the new interim superintendent contract as amended in executive session. Mr. Kissko seconded the motion. All in favor.

D. Consent Agenda

Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Kissko seconded the motion. All in favor.

1. Approval of August 19, 2015 Regular BOE Meeting minutes
2. Approval of Subcommittee minutes
 - a) Policy Committee Meeting – August 5, 2015
 - b) School Improvement Committee Meeting – August 5, 2015
3. Appointments & Resignations
4. Notices for Homeschooling
 - a) R.H. (Grade 2) eff. 2015-16
 - b) F.M.K. (Grade 3) eff. 2015-16
 - c) B.W. (DOB 1/5/1999) eff. 2015-16

Director of Secondary Education Eric Baim introduced to the Board of Education the new Grade 6 Administrator Laura Gagnon. Mr. Kissko remarked that the process of selecting a new administrator was very involved and selective and seemed to work very well.

E. Approval of the Board of Education Goals for 2016-17

Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the Board of Education Goals for 2016-17 (as listed above). Mr. Hinman seconded the motion. All in favor.

COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mr. Cappabianca praised the district staff for pulling things together amidst many changes and getting the schools up and running on time.

Mr. Knight pointed out Torrington School's annual Curriculum Night on September 24.

Mr. Nargi asked the superintendent for the AP test results while sharing he had made an exhausting attempt by phone to obtain the same from the State. Ms. Reitman agreed to provide the results by the next meeting.

The Chair thanked the Board for the good that has been accomplished over the past four to six years and stressed the importance of recognizing positive achievements.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Budget Committee – Ms. Cappabianca reported. Last meeting was postponed.
- B. Grievance Committee – Mr. Lamoin reported. Busy scheduling the next round.
- C. Personnel Committee – Mr. Thibault reported. Last meeting was postponed.
- D. Policy Committee – Ms. Hoehne reported. Plugging through stacks of work.
- E. School Improvement Committee – Mr. Kissko reported. Members are enthusiastic about the possibility of participating in the 275th anniversary of Torrington with an event on the grounds of Vogel-Wetmore School.
- F. THS Oversight Panel – Mr. Kissko reported. A meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, September 23, 2015 at which the committee will determine how to move forward now that two years have passed after the reorganization.
- G. Education Connection – Mr. Kissko reported. All is well with nothing particular to report.
- H. Turf Field Committee – Mr. Nargi reported. Project is ready to be turned over to the City and the Board of Education. The committee has secured \$17,000 in donations to support the installment of fencing between the field and Rt. 8 and a bidding process has begun. The recent grooming of the field under Mr. Bascetta's supervision was done well.

ITEMS FOR UPCOMING AGENDA

- A. Financial Statement
- B. Committee reports
- C. Special Education report on Procedure and Protocol manuals
- D. Proposed updates to Cell Phone/Electronic Devices policy

FUTURE MEETINGS

- A. Personnel Committee, 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 23, 2015 (Migeon)
- B. Budget Committee, 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, September 23, 2015 (Migeon)
- C. Policy Committee, 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 7, 2015 (Migeon)
- D. School Improvement and Community Relations Committee, 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 7, 2015 (Migeon)
- E. Personnel Committee, 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 14, 2015 (Migeon)
- F. Budget Committee, 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, October 14, 2015 (Migeon)
- G. Regular Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 16, 2015 (THS)

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:25 p.m. Mr. Knight made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Thibault seconded the motion. All in favor.