

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT  
Regular Meeting – May 6, 2008  
Long Hill Administration Building  
Lorraine R. Smith Assembly Room

The Trumbull Board of Education convened in the Long Hill Administration Building for a Regular Meeting.

Members present:

S. Wright, Chairperson  
M. Ward, Vice Chairperson  
J. Tyborowski, Secretary  
L. Chory, Board Member  
D. Herbst, Board Member  
L. King, Board Member  
L. Labella, Board Member

Agenda Item I – Preliminary Business

A. Salute to the Flag - The Public Session began at 7:10 p.m. followed by a salute to the Flag.

At this time, Chairman Wright asked to proceed to Agenda Item I-D.

D. Recognition (out of order)-- Madison Middle School participated in “We the People – the Citizen and the Constitution” competition on April 8th, sponsored by the Connecticut Consortium for Law and Citizen Education, an instructional program that enhances students’ understanding of the institution of American constitutional democracy. Students participated in simulated congressional hearings where they demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles and defended positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. Madison’s team placed first in all areas of the competition. Chairman Wright and Superintendent Iassogna congratulated the Madison team and its advisors, Roberta Weiner and Jennifer Bourque, and presented them with certificates for their achievement.

By unanimous consent, the Board agreed to take Agenda Item V-B, Policy—First Reading of Interscholastic Athletic Policy, Policy Code: IGDJ/56145.2 out of order.

Agenda Item V – New Business (out of order)

B. Policy – First Reading – Interscholastic Athletic Policy – Mr. Herbst reviewed the policy and stated that it has been revised to comply with new CIAC rules. NCAA eligibility rules were also taken into consideration when revising the policy and included the following: a current physical must be completed within 13 months instead of one year; student athletes are no longer allowed to start a season if their 20<sup>th</sup> birthday falls during the season; Carnegie Units will now be used to determine academic eligibility; final grades will determine eligibility for fall sports instead of fourth quarter grades; and there will no longer be a fifth year of eligibility. A lengthy discussion ensued involving clarification of academic eligibility, clarification of wording in policy to reflect Trumbull’s “ownership of the policy” versus “CIAC” rules, possible random drug testing, coaches’ responsibilities, playing time, and spectator behavior. It was noted that this policy will return to the Board for a second reading and, if needed, a third reading.

Agenda Item I – Preliminary Business

B. Correspondence – There was no correspondence this evening.

C. Public Comment – Jane Fleischner, parent with two students in Jane Ryan School, asked the Board to reconsider any cuts to the TAG program. She feels that all students in the elementary schools benefit as this program has contributed to increased scores on Connecticut Mastery tests. Wendy Veitze, parent of a 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grader, expressed her concerns regarding cutting sports and after school activities, which would leave

students with too much free time and exacerbate the problem of underage drinking in Town. She asked for the Board to find a way to financially support these activities.

At this time, Chairman Wright congratulated the staff and advisors of Trillium, Trumbull High School's yearbook for their receiving the New England Scholastic Press Association's awards for last year's book. These awards include Highest Achievement in Class 1; All New England; and special recognition for Best Cover, Best Theme, Best Design, Best Sports Pictures, Best Sports Story, and Best Feature Story.

#### Agenda Item II -- Personnel

- A. Personnel – It was moved (Herbst) seconded (King) to accept the resignation of Gayle Bogel, library/media specialist at Trumbull High School since August 2007, resigning effective June 30, 2008. Vote: unanimous in favor. It was moved (Herbst) seconded (King) to grant a leave of absence without pay for the 2008-09 school year for Christopher McCarthy, mathematics teacher at Hillcrest Middle School since August 2000, due to extenuating circumstances and in compliance with Policy GCBD, Trumbull Board of Education Leave of Absence Policy. Vote: Unanimous in favor. A lengthy discussion took place regarding the hiring of experienced teachers who are paid more than less experienced teachers. Lauren Dahlin, Student Board Representative, conveyed that the best teachers should be hired. Per previous Board direction, Superintendent Iassogna reiterated that the best candidate for a given position is offered the vacancy and noted that sometimes more time, energy and money is spent on training individuals with less experience.

#### Agenda Item III – Consent Agenda

- A. Approval/Minutes – Regular Meeting –4/22/08 – Ms. Labella noted that the minutes of 4/22/08 should be amended to read as follows: Trumbull High School's Color Guard placed 1<sup>st</sup> (not 4<sup>th</sup>) in the MAC Class AA Championship. By unanimous consent of members present at that meeting (Wright, Ward, Chory, Herbst, King), the minutes were approved as amended. Ms. Labella and Ms. Tyborowski abstained from voting as they were not present at the 4/22/08 meeting.
- B. Approval/Finance Subcommittee of the Board of Education Transfers – The Finance Subcommittee of the Trumbull Board of Education convened in the Office of the Business Administrator for a regular meeting on April 3, 2008. At that meeting, several transfers made in March were reviewed and discussed. Ms. Labella reviewed these transfers and it was noted that one transfer, No. 356, needed the full approval of the Board. Following discussion, it was moved (Tyborowski) seconded (Chory) to approve transfer No. 356 as noted. Vote: unanimous in favor.

#### Agenda Item IV – Reports

- A. Pilot Report Card Feedback—Trimester 2 – Mr. Kunschaft gave an update on the pilot report card for first and second grade. Developed by a core group of teachers, the report card is standards-based with a reading and writing continuum providing detailed information on student academic progress. The goal of this new reporting tool is provide parents with detailed information that will clearly indicate their child's academic progress and will be fully implemented for the 2008-09 school year. Mr. Kunschaft also reported that next year the process will begin again for piloting a report card for grades 3 through 5.

#### Agenda Item V – New Business

- A. Approval – Curriculum Guide – Mr. Kunschaft and Mrs. Rubano reviewed *Global Insights Honors*, an in-depth course offered to grade 10 students which expands upon the knowledge gained from the 9<sup>th</sup> grade program. Discussion followed and it was noted that several Board members' children have taken this course and felt it was very worthwhile. It was moved (Ward), seconded (Herbst) to approve the curriculum guide for Global Insights Honors as presented. Vote: unanimous in favor.
- C. Approval/RFP – Employee Benefits Consultation Services – Mr. Wright and Mr. Iassogna reviewed the joint Town/Board of Education RFP for Employee Benefits Consultation Services, which will go out next week with a due date of June 5, 2008. It was noted that the consultant would work directly for the Town and Board of Education, rather than the insurance company as has been previous practice. It was further noted that this

individual could offer an expansion of services, including workshops for employees, consulting on contract negotiations, etc., and that hiring a consultant may result in savings for both the Town and Board. Also noted was any savings could be used to fund programs affected by budget cuts. It was moved (Ward) seconded (Chory) to approve the RFP for Employee Benefits Consultation Services as presented. Vote: unanimous in favor.

The Board adjourned for a brief recess at 8:59 p.m.; the meeting resumed at 9:15 p.m.

#### Agenda Item VI – Old Business

A. 2008-09 Budget Discussion – Superintendent Iassogna reviewed the 2008-09 budget process and noted that following several meetings and three work sessions, as well as a great deal of input from staff and community, the process is nearly completed. He further reviewed the Composite Board Work Session Reduction document which included a tabulation error (\$8,000) in the “Total of A, B, and C,” changing that amount from \$2,291,148 to \$2,299,148, which changed the amount “To Be Determined” to \$84,053. Mr. Iassogna also reported that just this afternoon he received information that the State Legislature is postponing the implementation of the In-School Suspension Monitor mandate until July 1, 2009; therefore, this monitor will not impact the 2008-09 budget. Since the Board of Education’s original budget request to the Town included monies for a monitor, Mr. Iassogna commented that the reduction list should be revised to include \$13,000—changing the amount under “A”, “Restructure In-School Suspension Monitor Position” from \$42,000 to \$55,000. This reduction would result in the amount “To Be Determined” to be changed from \$84,053 to \$71,053. Mr. Iassogna also noted that the cuts reflected on the Composite Reduction list were the Board’s choice and at this time, would like the Board to move forward with approving the budget for 2008-09 so that planning can begin for next year. Chairman Wright commented that the Board worked well together, spent many hours in developing the budget, took into consideration all the input from administrators, teachers, parents and the community, and the current state of the economy. Mr. Iassogna reported that all Board budget work sessions were open to the public and noticed and that all updates to the budget cuts have been posted on the Trumbull Public Schools’ website. Mr. Wright asked the Board to accept the Composite Board Budget Work Session Reductions as presented and then to further discuss how to reduce the budget “To Be Determined” figure to achieve the amount allocated to the Board by the Town. It was moved (Ward) seconded (Tyborowski) to accept the corrected Composite Reductions of \$2,299,148 with \$84,053 to be determined as presented in the Composite Board Work Session Reduction Report. Discussion followed regarding the need for a .5 Data Specialist and it was moved (Labella) seconded (Tyborowski) to amend the previous motion to accept the Composite Reduction of \$2,299,148 by increasing the reduction for Data Specialist by \$30,000 for a total Composite Reduction of \$2,329,148. Vote: Unanimous in favor. Discussion followed concerning the \$13,000 not needed for the In-School Suspension Monitor. It was moved (Labella) seconded (Ward) to amend the Composite Reductions of \$2,329,148 to increase the reduction for the In-School Suspension Monitor by \$13,000 for a total Composite Reduction of \$2,342,148. Vote: Unanimous in favor. Further discussion took place regarding reducing the budget. It was moved (Labella) seconded (Herbst) to amend the Composite Reduction of \$2,342,148 by increasing the reduction for Benefits for Positions by \$7,500 for a total Composite Reduction of \$2,349,648. Vote: Unanimous in favor. It was moved (Labella) seconded (Ward) to amend the Composite Reduction of \$2,349,648 by increasing the reduction for K-12 School Text/Workbooks by \$30,553. Discussion ensued and it was noted that an additional \$3,000 was needed to achieve zero for the amount of “To Be Determined.” It was moved (Labella) seconded (Tyborowski) to amend the previous motion to read as follows: to amend the Composite Reduction of \$2,349,648 by increasing the reduction for K-12 School Text/Workbooks by \$33,553 with the total reduction of K-12 School Text/Workbooks at \$124,525 for a total Composite Reduction of \$2,383,201. Vote: Unanimous in favor. Mr. Iassogna commented that the Board now achieved the total budget reduction needed of \$2,383,201. It was moved (Chory) seconded (Herbst) to adjust the Teacher Retirement Savings Account by an increase of \$180,000 from a credit of \$500,000 to \$680,000. Ms. Chory addressed the monies in the Teacher Retirement Savings account and asked the Board to consider passing this motion. Mr. Sirico explained that the \$500,000 in that account is an amount calculated by multiplying the estimated number of retiring teachers (20) times the projected differential between salaries of the retiring teachers and new hires of \$25,000 (a best, conservative estimate of the average salary of a retiring teacher at \$80,000 and a new hire at \$55,000) Ms. Chory reported that at this time, 21 teachers have submitted their retirement and their average

salary is \$89,000, a \$9,000 difference in the figure used for that account (\$80,000) and when the \$9,000 is multiplied by 21, it totals \$180,000. Ms. Chory noted that the additional estimated funds could be used to restore programs cut from the budget. Mr. Sirico reported that any unused funds in the Teacher Retirement Savings Account would be returned to the Town at the end of the fiscal year. A discussion ensued. Several Board members indicated that while they understood Ms. Chory's rationale, they voiced serious concerns about allocating any monies in that account at this time and expressed their desire to use a conservative number for that account. It was noted that State law says Board members can be held personally liable for overspending their budget. Ms. Chory asked for clarification of where monies left over in the Teacher Retirement Savings Account go and it was noted that those monies may be used to fund shortfalls in other accounts. Chairman Wright noted that there may be considerable savings achieved by going out to bid for the Employee Benefits Consultant and that money could be used to restore some programs cut from the budget. By unanimous consent of the Board, the question was called. Chairman Wright then asked for a vote on the motion on the table. Vote: 2 in favor (Chory, Herbst) 5 opposed (King, Labella, Tyborowski, Ward, Wright). Motion failed. It was moved (Labella) seconded (Herbst) to approve the Board of Education budget for 2008-09 as amended. Vote: 5 in favor (King, Labella, Tyborowski, Ward, Wright) 2 opposed (Chory, Herbst). Motion passed. Discussion continued regarding increasing Pay to Participate fees, with increased funding intended to be allocated for restoring 9<sup>th</sup> grade freshman sports and JV Cheerleading only. It was noted that Girls' ice hockey and sophomore football would not be included. It was moved (Labella) seconded (Tyborowski) to increase Pay to Participate fees to \$200 per student per sport to a maximum of \$600 per family per sport excluding ice hockey and to \$400 per student to a maximum of \$800 per family for ice hockey. Discussion ensued and it was clarified that the Board would not be charged for ice time previously contracted for Girls' ice hockey. It was noted that the Board is increasing fees for sports with great reluctance and that scholarships would be available to students in financial need. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Ms. Labella acknowledged and thanked the Superintendent and the administrators for all their hard work on the budget, commented that extracurricular activities are as important as academics and athletics and asked the Superintendent and high school principal to make a recommendation to the Board to restore monies for after school activities.

#### Adjournment

Board Members gave unanimous consent to adjourn the Public Session at 10:16 p.m.