

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT
Regular Meeting – May 3, 2011
Frenchtown Elementary School
Cafetorium

The Trumbull Board of Education convened in the Cafetorium of Frenchtown Elementary School for a Regular Meeting.

Members present:

D. Herbst, Vice Chairwoman
T. Kelly, Secretary
L. Chory, Board Member
L. Labella, Board Member
M. Ward, Board Member
S. Wright, Board Member

Members absent:

E. Lovely, Chairman

Agenda Item I – Preliminary Business

- A. Salute to the Flag - The Public Session began at 7:05 p.m. followed by a salute to the Flag.
- B. Correspondence – Mr. Kelly noted that he has received many emails regarding the possible elimination of varsity ice hockey and in support of the TAG program; a letter from the Trumbull Chamber of Commerce in support of Channel 17; and a petition from Daniels Farm Grade 1 parents in support of small class size for next year's grade 2.
- C. Comments and Questions – Athletic Director Mike Herbst noted the importance of athletics (attached) in the development of the whole child and said that he would work with the Business Manager to review costs for each individual sport and divide the amount by the average participant over the last three years to calculate an average cost per participant. He also suggested that Pay to Participate fees would have a minimum \$250 fee, but programs that are more costly to run could have an increased participation fee, and felt the Board could make a more informed decision about increasing Pay to Play fees or eliminating any sport. Lainie McHugh, 132 Fresh Meadow Drive, spoke in support of the Board of Education (BOE) and asked them to consider how students will be impacted when making their decisions on the allocation of the 2011-12 budget (attached). The following Trumbull High students spoke in support of the boys' swim team and asked the Board to consider raising Pay to Participate fees so sports would not be cut: Ryan Freeland, Shyam Subramainian, Billy Gavin. Former student Albert Palatiello, Williams Road also spoke in support of the boys' swim team. Reenie Demkiw, 30 Golden Hill and also a Trumbull teacher asked the Board to consider raising the Pay to Participate fees for sports and to support small class size. Trumbull High students Raksha Kalyanaraman and Lily Etemad spoke in support of the girls' tennis team. Trumbull High students Josh Rubenstein, Jesse Rubenstein, and Arya ShenoI spoke in support of the boys' tennis team. Trumbull High students Andrew Pierson, Brendan McGill, and Tyler Ryderman spoke in support of boys' ice hockey. Bridget Sarosky, 51 Friar Lane, as President of the Power Play Club, spoke in support of boys' and girls' ice hockey and asked the Board to keep all sports. Maureen Pitagora, 29 Saybrook Road, spoke in support of the TAG program and small class sizes and asked the Board to reduce administrative support. Resia Sorge, 63 Limerick Road, spoke in support of the school

secretaries, sports, clubs, small class size and TAG. Chris Moore, 27 Longmeadow Road, spoke in support of the girls' tennis team. Marcy Rubenstein, 76 Greenbrier Road, spoke in support of boys' and girls' tennis and asked that Pay to Participate fees be increased. Steve McClean, Roosevelt Drive, spoke in support of the girls' tennis team and all sports. THS student Emma Connolly, on behalf of the THS Student Council, spoke in support of the Board of Education and their decision to hire an attorney to review the inappropriate action of the Trumbull Town Council to remove insurance monies from the BOE operating budget. Mike Epstein, 3 Bittersweet Lane, spoke in support of the girls' tennis team. Kay Chapman, 29 Walker Road, spoke in support of the girls' ice hockey team. THS student Taryn Bartolucci, 129 Freshmeadow Drive, spoke in support of the cheerleading team. THS student Sara Griswold and several others spoke in support of the indoor track team. Donald Shales, Bonnieview Drive, spoke in support of sports and asked the Board to be fair minded when making their decisions. Tammy Baillargeon, TEA President, spoke in support of the Board of Education and the difficult decisions to be made. Tony D'Aquila, Valley View Road, spoke in support of academics and against Pay to Participate fees. Jennifer [parent] spoke in support of academics and sports. Michele Molloy, spoke in support of small class size, especially grade 2 at Daniels Farm School, and TAG. Nicole Satin, 51 Briarwood Terrace, spoke in support of TAG and sports. David Bove, 76 Cranbury Drive, spoke in support of the golf team. Mike Buswell, 22 Woodfield Drive, spoke in support of football and Myra Waldron, West Lake Road, spoke in support of the TAG program. Superintendent Iassogna noted that the cuts to the BOE budget began last year, but programs, i.e. TAG and sports, were retained because of funding with ARRA and ECS monies. Those monies are no longer available and the BOE budget has been reduced by approximately \$2.6 million dollars, necessitating deep cuts to programs.

Agenda Item II - Personnel

- A. Personnel – Superintendent Iassogna noted that 4 veteran and valued staff members have announced their retirements. He noted that two teachers, Joe Odoardi and Joyce Dudics have been with the district 35 and 40 years respectively and two administrators also with the district for many years, Bob Gabriel and Rosemary Seaman, are superb administrators and key contributors to the district and all will be missed. He also announced that Michael McGrath has been appointed Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services and is a welcomed addition to the staff. It was moved (Labella) seconded (Chory) to accept the resignations of Joyce Dudics, Grade K teacher at Booth Hill Elementary School since October 1971, retiring effective June 30, 2011; Joseph Odoardi, English teacher at Trumbull High School since September 1976, retiring effective June 30, 2011; Robert Gabriel, Principal of Jane Ryan Elementary School since September 1974, retiring effective June 30, 2011; and Rosemary Seaman, Principal of Hillcrest Middle School since September 1979, retiring effective June 30, 2011. Vote: Unanimous in favor. Several Board members thanked the retirees for their outstanding contributions to the district and their positive impact on students.

Agenda Item III – Consent Agenda

- A. Approval/Minutes – By unanimous consent of members present and voting at that meeting, the minutes of the April 12, 2011 meeting were accepted as presented.

Agenda Item IV – Reports

- A. 2009-10 Strategic School and District Profiles—It was moved (Wright) seconded (Labella) to table this agenda item to the Board's May 17, 2011 meeting. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Agenda Item V – New Business

- A. Board Meeting Change of Date—Mr. Iassogna noted that the second June meeting date is in conflict with Trumbull High School graduation so it needs to be rescheduled. It was moved (Wright) seconded (Labella) to move the Tuesday, June 21, 2011 meeting to Wednesday, June 22, 2011. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Agenda Item VI – Old Business

- A. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Board/Town Health Insurance—Mr. Iassogna noted that at their last meeting, the Board asked Chairman Lovely and Board Member Wright to meet with Town Council leadership to request the transfer of the budget line item for the Board of Education health insurance increase to the Board's operating budget. Mr. Wright noted that he and Mr. Lovely met with Town Council Chair Carl Massaro and member Michael London to resolve this issue, and as of this evening, the Town Council had not taken any action to return these monies. Mr. Iassogna noted that Attorney Mooney noted the Town Council's action was unlawful [removing insurance monies from the BOE operating budget and placing it into a Town budget special line item] and suggested the Board try to reach a favorable resolution to the situation and use litigation as a last resort. It was also noted that all monies should be returned to the BOE without any restrictions and that the BOE should budget their monies based on the amount allocated to the Board by the Town, which at this time does not include the \$1,074,000 insurance savings. Mr. Iassogna noted that he has spoken with Attorney Mooney, who suggested that the Board give the Town 10 days to rectify this situation. Mr. Iassogna also noted that he has been in contact with the First Selectman and has received assurances from him that these monies would be returned to the Board and suggested that the Board should focus on budgeting at the 2.375% increase level at this time. Discussion ensued. It was moved (Wright) seconded (Labella) to schedule a special meeting on Friday, May 13, 2011 for the purpose of deciding this issue [possible litigation if monies not returned]. Discussion ensued including finding a legal way to restore monies, Town Charter violation, reasons why Town Council removed monies from BOE operating budget, health insurance negotiations, BOE's right to transfer monies from one account to another, and meeting on May 10th instead of May 13th. Mr. Wright amended the motion to change the Special Meeting date to Tuesday, May 10, 2011, seconded (Labella). Vote: 5 in favor (Herbst, Kelly, Labella, Ward, Wright) 1 opposed (Chory). Motion passes.

It was moved (Ward) seconded (Wright) to take a 10-minute recess (9:20 p.m.). Vote: Unanimous in favor. Meeting resumed at 9:30 p.m.

- B. 2011-12 Budget Discussion—Mr. Iassogna noted that the Board has received its budget allocation from the Town, which is a 3% reduction in the Board's adopted budget, or \$2.6 million dollars and now has the arduous task to allocate the monies available. He reviewed his list of reductions to the budget at the 2.375% [increase] level which was developed from much input from administrators and division heads. He also noted that if the Board is forced to budget at the 1.11% level, they may have to discuss the closing of an elementary school. Mr. Ward noted that he would like to see the TAG program restored, increased funding for Channel 17, and is not in favor of closing a school. Mrs. Labella noted that she was in favor of restoring reading teachers at the middle school level. Discussion ensued including lack of reading support for needy students, the need to address AYP levels, the merits of the middle school reading program, class size in Grade 2, and the reduction of several administrators' work year. Mr. Kelly noted that he would like the account for unemployment benefits increased due to potential layoffs, and his concern that increasing Pay to Participate fees would discourage students from participating in sports. Mr. Wright spoke in favor of restoring the TAG program and felt some students do not participate in sports because they cannot afford Pay to Participate fees and are embarrassed to ask for assistance. Mrs. Chory also spoke in favor of the TAG program and noted that TAG could be

supported by monies earmarked for Continuing Education. Discussion ensued regarding the merits of Continuing Education programs and the Reserve for Negotiations account. Mrs. Herbst noted she supported small class size at the elementary level and the TAG program. Principal Jackie Norcel noted that the largest reductions to the budget are at the elementary level and asked the Board to revisit those cuts. Mrs. Herbst noted that the Board would make their final decisions on the 2011-12 budget at tomorrow (May 4, 2011) evening's Special Meeting.

Adjournment

Board Members gave unanimous consent to adjourn the Public Session at 11:15 p.m.