

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT
Regular Meeting – July 16, 2013
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
D. Herbst, Vice Chairperson
T. Kelly, Secretary
L. Chory, Board Member
L. Labella, Board Member
R. Seaman, Board Member

Members absent:

M. Ward, Board Member

Agenda Item I – Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:16 p.m.

Agenda Item II – Preliminary Business

- A. Salute to the Flag - The Public Session began with a salute to the Flag.
- B. Correspondence – Mr. Kelly noted that the Board received a letter from Sonya Wich stating that she was resigning as a member of the Policy Advisory Committee. The Board also received a copy of a parent letter regarding the Trumbull High School Marching Band.
- C. Comments – Al Barbarotta, 28 Unity Drive, spoke in support of the Board of Education employees and officials involved in the recent ethics complaint filed with the Town of Trumbull. Also, Mr. Barbarotta advised the Board that he has filed a lawsuit against the First Selectman for “tortious interference” of his contract with Trumbull Loves Children.

Agenda Item III – Consent Agenda

- A. Personnel – Superintendent Dr. Cialfi noted that 5 certified resignations and 2 non-certified resignations were received that needed Board action. He commented on Mrs. Nappi’s service and noted that she has been a tremendous asset to the district. Mrs. Seaman also gave accolades to Mrs. Nappi. It was moved (Herbst) seconded (Labella) to accept the resignations of the following certified staff: Rita Nappi, Assistant Principal at Hillcrest Middle School since November 1996, retiring effective December 31, 2013; Karyn Choromanski, physical education/health teacher at Hillcrest Middle School since August 2011, resigning effective June 30, 2013; Matthew Greaves, Spanish teacher at Trumbull High School since August 2004, resigning effective June 30, 2013; Michael Martone, music teacher (.6) at Madison Middle School since August 2012, resigning effective June 30, 2013; and Samar Sakakini, social studies teacher at Trumbull High School since August 2005, resigning effective June 30, 2013. Vote: Unanimous in favor. It was moved (Herbst) seconded (Labella) to accept the resignations of the following non-certified staff: Carol D’Agostino, financial software support technician since September 1988, retiring effective June 30, 2013 and Elaine Haner, secretary at Daniels Farm Elementary School since July 2000, retiring effective July 31, 2013. Vote: Unanimous in favor.
- B. Approval/Minutes – Regular Meeting – 6/4/13 By unanimous consent of members present at that meeting, the minutes were approved as presented.

At this time, Dr. Cialfi introduced Marc Guarino, new principal of Trumbull High School, sharing his background and welcoming him to the district. Mr. Guarino conveyed that he is happy for this opportunity and looking forward to working with staff and students. He thanked the Board and Administration for their support. Dr. Cialfi also introduced and welcomed new Student Board Representatives, Kunal Jhaveri and Alexa Bragg.

Agenda Item IV—Reports/Action Items

A. Policies, Second Reading

1. Public Conduct at School Sponsored Sporting Events and Activities, Policy Code 1316—Dr. Cialfi shared that this policy was presented to the Board for a first reading on March 26, 2013. Discussion ensued including signage regarding expected behaviors, tailgating, and security cameras in parking lots. It was moved (Chory) seconded (Seaman) to approve Public Conduct at School Sponsored Sporting Events and Activities as presented. Vote: unanimous in favor.

B. Policies, First Reading

1. High School Attendance/Loss of Credit, Policy Code 5113—Dr. Cialfi shared that the new High School Attendance/Loss of Credit policy has proven successful and noted that data was shared with the Board which shows increased high school attendance. Mr. Banks noted that some revisions needed to be made to the policy to clarify terms and procedures for students, parents/guardians and staff. He shared that considerable input was received from high school administration, guidance and teaching staff in an effort to further refine the policy. Discussion ensued regarding verified/unverified tardies to class with the Board suggesting a more detailed description. This policy will be returned to the Board for a second reading in the near future.
2. Student Possession and Personal Use of Electronic Devices and Protocol for the Use of Technology, Policy Code 6141.328—Dr. Cialfi shared that Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) met with Technology Integration Specialist Jennifer Pacelli to review procedures for the use of personal electronic devices (also known as BYOD—Bring Your Own Device) in the classroom and during school hours and considerable input was received from high school staff. Mr. Banks conveyed that PAC reviewed administrative input and information from area district's policies concerning this initiative. Dr. Cialfi stated that Technology Manager Jeff Hackett reviewed the policy and suggested minor wording changes. Discussion ensued including teacher control of use of technology in the classroom, texting, inappropriate use, recording with devices, passwords for internet access, using only district network as opposed to 3G, 4G, etc. Changes were suggested along with further review of the policy with high school administration. This policy will be returned to the Board for a second reading in the near future.
3. Student Network/Internet Use, Policy Code 6141—Mr. Banks conveyed that this policy is being updated to coincide with the approval of the Student Possession and Personal Use of Electronic Devices and Protocol for the Use of Technology. Discussion ensued and minor wording changes were suggested. This policy will be returned to the Board for a second reading in the near future.

- ##### C. Goal Setting and Professional Development—
- Dr. Cialfi shared that the new Teacher Supervision, Evaluation and Professional Learning Plan is complex and felt it important for teachers to have a clear understanding of the goal setting component. Dr. McGrath conveyed that on August 23 and 26, 2013, professional development for all certified staff will include a presentation by Lyn Nevins from Cooperative Educational Services. Ms. Nevins will lead training for teachers on writing measurable goals and how to examine student performance to determine indicators of growth, which is part of the new Teacher Supervision, Evaluation and Professional Learning Plan. Dr. McGrath stressed the importance of measurable goals for teachers who must submit their yearly goal to their respective administrator by October 1, 2013. Dr. Cialfi conveyed that 2013-14 is the beginning of implementation of the new plan with one-third of certified staff participating. Discussion ensued regarding the types of assessments being used

to evaluate teachers. It was noted that the Governor and Education Commissioner requested from the United States Department of Education to grant permission for all Connecticut districts to have options for assessments. Dr. Cialfi reviewed those assessment options: CMT/CAPT scores; assessments such as DRA, AP Exams and NorthWest; and 2 non-standardized, common assessments which show student growth. Mrs. Labella requested anonymous feedback from teachers with respect to the professional development offered and the overall process of the new plan.

- D. Administrators' Professional Development for Evaluation Plan—Dr. Cialfi reported that all principals, assistant principals, and house principals will be attending professional development sessions on August 12, 14 and 15, 2013. These sessions are to begin preparation for the implementation of the new Teacher Supervision, Evaluation and Professional Learning Plan. He shared that Patrick Flynn, a national leading authority on teacher supervision practices and founder of ReVision Learning Partnership, will be facilitating these sessions. Dr. Cialfi noted the importance of a developing a thorough understanding of the rubrics to be used for classroom observance of teachers. The focal points of these sessions include: developing a calibrated analysis of the elements of instruction; strengthening conferencing and coaching provided for teachers; and establishing fair and consistent evaluation practices for all district schools. He also shared that Mr. Flynn will be providing professional development sessions throughout the school year. Mrs. Herbst requested feedback from administrators regarding their workload due to the new teacher evaluation plan citing the possible need for additional assistance to carry out this initiative. Dr. Cialfi conveyed that the Statute regarding the new teacher evaluation plan allows for districts to refine their plan on a year to year basis for fairness and consistency.
- E. Legal Bills Incurred by Ethics Complaint—At this time, Board Chair Wright recused himself as he has an interest in this agenda item and Vice Chair Deborah Herbst assumed the Chair's position. Attorney Dugas commented on the ethics complaint filed against Board of Education former Superintendent Ralph Iassogna, Plant Manager Steve Kennedy, and Board Chair Stephen Wright, noting that the elements of the complaint are confidential since the Trumbull Ethics Commission dismissed the complaint due to lack of probable cause. He conveyed that the legal bills incurred by Mr. Iassogna, Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Wright have been forwarded to the Board of Education for payment under the statutory Indemnification Act, pursuant to Section 10-235 of the Connecticut General Statutes. He also commented that, as Board counsel, he could not represent Board employees with regard to this complaint but advised them to seek legal representation. Atty. Dugas thoroughly explained the State Statute and noted that considerable research was done in order to render an opinion; it was his legal opinion that these gentlemen were entitled to indemnification by the Board for their legal fees. He recommended that the legal bills incurred be paid by the Board of Education according to State Statute. Discussion ensued. Mrs. Labella questioned the number of bills for the Board Chair, and Mr. Wright [as a private citizen] responded that since he is a member of two state bars, three district courts, Trumbull and State Boards of Education and a practicing lawyer, he felt the need for several legal opinions. Mr. Kelly commented that the Board should support Mr. Iassogna, Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Wright in this complaint which he described as baseless. Mrs. Chory called for a point of order and Mrs. Herbst stated that the discussion should center only on the indemnification of legal bills. Mr. Kelly further commented, reading the following from the cover sheet to the agenda item: "As the Board is aware, the Trumbull Ethics Commission received an ethics complaint and determined that it was unfounded. The complaint was denied due to no probable cause reasons." He questioned Atty. Dugas as to whether Mr. Barbarotta's [also involved in the ethics complaint and a private contractor for the Board] legal bills could also be presented to the Board. Atty. Dugas responded that since Mr. Barbarotta is not an employee of the district, he is not covered under the Indemnification Act. Mr. Kelly commented that the \$18,882.50 [total amount of legal bills] coming from the Board's operating budget to pay the legal bills could have been used for substitute teachers, textbooks, or computers for the education of Trumbull's students. Mr. Kelly proceeded to make a motion regarding requesting a supplemental appropriation from the Town to cover the legal bills and a brief discussion ensued. Several Board members commented that the agenda item pertained only to the payment for legal fees. It was moved (Kelly) seconded (Labella) that the \$18,882.50

be immediately reimbursed to Board Chair Wright, former Superintendent Iassogna and Plant Manager Steve Kennedy for their legal bills [in connection with the ethics complaint] and to seek a supplemental appropriation from the Town in the exact amount [\$18,882.50] to replenish the funds [expended from the Board's operating budget] for the education of Trumbull's students. Discussion ensued. It was moved (Chory) seconded (Seaman) to split the motion. Vote: 3 in favor (Chory, Herbst, Seaman) 2 opposed (Kelly, Labella). Motion passes. Discussion ensued regarding what accounts would be used to pay for the legal bills and if situations such as this had been provided for in the Board's operating budget. Vote on first part of original motion regarding reimbursement of legal bills: Unanimous in favor. Mr. Kelly requested that Board Chair Wright be allowed to return to the Chair so that he could vote on the second part of the original motion. Atty. Dugas shared that it was acceptable for Mr. Wright to participate; however, Chairman Wright refused but thanked the Board for their support. Mrs. Labella stated that she would support the request for the supplemental appropriation as no monies in the current year's operating budget were earmarked for such matters. Vote on second part of original motion regarding a request to the Town for a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$18,882.50: 3 in favor: (Kelly, Labella, Seaman) 2 opposed: (Chory, Herbst). Motion passes. Mrs. Herbst welcomed Dr. Cialfi, Dr. McGrath and Marc Guarino in their new positions as Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Trumbull High Principal respectively, thanking them for their efforts, noting that their transition has been smooth, and wishing them well.

Agenda Item V—Receive and File

These items were received and filed.

Adjournment

Board Members gave unanimous consent to adjourn the Public Session at 8:52 p.m.