

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT
Regular Meeting – September 3, 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:

Members absent:

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

Agenda Item I – Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 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 there were several parental emails to the Board with concerns on Frenchtown enrollment, residency, and class size. Mr. Kelly read a letter from Tashua Principal Charlotte Janis and her decision to retire from Trumbull Public Schools as of September 1, 2013 and that Jennifer Neumeyer would be the Interim Principal until someone is hired. Dr. Cialfi and the Board expressed their appreciation for Mrs. Janis' years of service in leading Tashua School. Also, he read a letter announcing J. Douglas Winters, THS Science teacher, as the recipient of the 2013 Yale Educator Award. The Superintendent and Board congratulated Mr. Winters and said he would be in attendance at the next Board meeting.
- C. Comments – There were 4 public comments this evening. Michelle Genuario spoke on behalf of parents at Frenchtown, their concerns for class size, overcrowding, residency, bus issues that occur from 3 students to a seat and the portables. Kerry Malzewski stated her concerns and that of other parents at Frenchtown regarding the same issues. Lainie McHugh commented on what people may see in social media regarding issues with the schools may be inaccurate and that it is best to find out the facts first. She encouraged people to call Transportation or the schools directly to obtain the actual details. Paul Sullivan expressed his displeasure regarding overcrowding at all the schools and that perhaps some people may be housing their extended families resulting in overcrowding in the schools; he urged the Board to take action.

Agenda Item III – Consent Agenda

- A. Personnel – Superintendent Cialfi noted that there was one resignation/retirement that needed Board action. He shared that Charlotte Janis has done an outstanding job as Principal of Tashua School. It was moved (Herbst) seconded (Seaman) to accept the retirement of Charlotte Janis, Principal of Tashua Elementary School since July 2003, retiring effective September 1, 2013. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

- B. Approval/Minutes – Regular Meeting – 8/20/13 By unanimous consent of all members the minutes were approved as presented.

At this time, Mr. Wright had the new Student Board Representatives introduce themselves: Kunal Jhaveri, THS Senior and a member of We The People, Alexa Bragg, THS Senior and a Peer Mentor, and Board Alternate, Kerry Marques, THS Senior and a member of Mock Trial.

Agenda Item IV—Reports/Action Items

- A. Naming of Trumbull Public School Sites - A discussion ensued regarding using the existing policy for “Naming of Buildings and Sites”. Mrs. Chory questioned if the PAC Committee was rescinding the policy. Mrs. Cantafio spoke on behalf of the Committee as the Co-President and confirmed that because the draft policy did not come before the Board in a second reading, they must use the original policy Code FFA dated February 8, 2001. The draft policy was brought before the Board as a first reading on May 15, 2012 and was determined it should be further reviewed to incorporate more specific criteria and to develop a rubric. Mrs. Chory questioned who put it on hold and why. It was thought that it was put on hold by the Board Chair, however, Mrs. Cantafio explained it was put on hold because several members of PAC felt it needed more work. Mrs. Herbst and Mrs. Chory questioned if the members of PAC were working on this policy and what that entailed. Mrs. Cantafio explained that the members of PAC made suggestions for changes based on researching other district policies. Mrs. Chory asked if the policy would be presented for a second reading. Mrs. Seaman, also on the PAC Committee, said there has been much work put into this policy and though PAC has put it on hold, she would like to continue to look at this policy further. Several Board Members concurred and would like to see the Board policy revisited. Mr. Wright stated that the BOE did not take a vote to rescind the policy so the old policy stands. It was agreed to review the policy to bring back to the Board for a second reading at a future meeting.
- B. School Opening/Enrollment/Staffing Updates – Dr. Cialfi commented that the opening of school went smoothly. Other than a few transportation issues, students were engaged, staff was well-prepared, administrators lead their schools well, and the custodial staff did an outstanding job. He thanked the Board for the resources to make this possible. He commented on the updated enrollments which were steady since the last meeting other than THS which dropped a bit possibly due to the opening of Fairchild-Wheeler Magnet. He noted that an Elementary Enrollment Study Committee is being formed and will speak more on the subject later in the meeting with agenda item IV-E. He invited several parents with enrollment concerns to meet with him and Mr. Wright next week. Mrs. Herbst commended the Superintendent for responding to each and every parent communication, offered to attend the Elementary Enrollment Study Committee and wanted it to be known that the BOE is looking at this issue closely. Mr. Kelly commented that projections historically have been close to the actual numbers. A discussion ensued on ways to detect fluctuations in enrollment.
- C. Approval/Non-Affiliate Salaries – Dr. Cialfi commented that the Board Attorney and Health Services Consultant have been doing an exceptional job and have a much larger responsibility and increased workload so therefore recommends their compensation be increased. Mrs. Chory questioned the billable hours for the attorney and the Superintendent responded that it depended upon many factors such as legal issues and expulsions. It was moved (Ward) and seconded (Labella) to approve the Board Attorney hourly rate increase to \$225 and the Health Consulting Service increase to \$41,500 a year. Vote: Unanimous.

- D. THS Post High School Plans – Ms. Cathy Hilser, THS Guidance Chair, thanked the Board of Education for supporting the Guidance Department, commended counselors and highlighted the importance of the Naviance program as an effective tool in streamlining the college application process. She presented the Post High School Plan Report of the Class of 2013. Mrs. Labella stated as a parent of a 2013 graduate, she was very impressed with the Guidance Department in the assistance to the students and the application process. A discussion ensued. Mrs. Herbst commented on the efficiency of the Guidance Department and THS Principal, Mr. Marc Guarino, offered his praise of the way THS Guidance handles each student. Mrs. Hilser noted that each of the counselors were able to know their students very well without referring to their files.
- E. Elementary Enrollment Study – Dr. Cialfi explained the intent to form the Elementary Enrollment Study Committee which will explore all facets and implications of enrollment projections for all six Trumbull elementary schools. All critical issues will be researched in order to identify possible redistricting options. Areas of study will include class size, staffing, demographics, residency checks, transportation, space utilization, implications for middle school enrollment, and long range enrollment projections. The Committee will begin this in-depth research in early October, 2013. He stated there would be three phases of this study. Phase 1 would compile the committee with members of the community, teachers, parents and BOE members and begin looking at the data. Phase 2 will include sub-committees to expand input from the six elementary schools, Transportation, a consultant and projections by Lorraine Smith. Phase 3 will include additional detail, residency checks, timelines and budgetary implications. Mr. Ward asked to be considered for that committee and mentioned his goal would be to have space for everyone including rooms for art and music. Mrs. Herbst volunteered to be on the committee as well. A discussion ensued regarding the possibility of reconfiguring the schools and redistricting. Mr. Kelly agreed but asked what would happen if there is a decrease in projections. Dr. Cialfi recommends looking beyond 5 year projections.

A motion was made (Labella) to take Agenda Item IV-H Approval of Textbook out of order and seconded (Herbst). Vote: Unanimous.

H. Approval – Textbook – AP Intro to Calculus

Mrs. Basbagill, THS Math Chair, noted the correct textbook is actually AP Intro to Calculus instead of AP Calculus and spoke about the need for a new textbook citing the old ones were dated and worn. Dr. Paslov noted this book is also a response to student requests for a course option for Seniors that wanted exposure to Calculus prior to entering college. It was moved (Ward) and seconded (Seaman) to accept AP Intro to Calculus textbook. Vote: Unanimous.

- F. CMT Report – Dr. Cialfi commented that Trumbull’s CMT results remain high and thanked the efforts of students and the staff including the program leaders, teachers, administrators and department chairs. Dr. Paslov presented the CMT Report for 2013 highlighting growth, percentages at Goal and Proficiency, Cohort gains, and Vertical Scale Scores. She noted that students are not compared to other students and that our students did well in all areas even though we are now using Common Core Standards since 2010 instead of Frameworks as in the past. She thanked the Board for the monies for technology which helped students to achieve well in testing and reminded everyone that every year this data is from a different group of students. She highlighted the data, comparisons to other DRG B schools and how tools like RTI Studio have helped teachers prepare students for the CMT’s. It was discussed whether the test would be given electronically to all students in the future. Dr. Paslov noted that although it is still a paper and pencil test, we are in an electronic world and ideally should have an electronic test. The Smarter Balanced Test will be

electronic and it will have to be looked at how to schedule the time to have all students have computer access.

- G. CAPT Report – Dr. Cialfi commented that the CAPT scores are better than in recent years. Mrs. Herbst asked for Mr. Guarino’s comments on the scores and he was impressed by Trumbull High’s results but thought it was important to look at other assessment data. He congratulated the high school staff and students. Dr. Paslov stated that the results came in very late from the State and reminded everyone that these tests were taken during the renovation that at times could be interruptive and posed challenges to students and staff, but that everyone rose to the occasion. She presented the data on the CAPT test highlighting percentages at Goal and Proficiency, DRG B standing and noting preparation for future Smarter Balanced Assessments.
- I. Approval RFP for Milk Price Audit - It was discussed as to the need to have an RFP for an audit to analyze the milk prices charged to Trumbull Public Schools. Mrs. Chory questioned this and Mr. Wright noted that the RFP does not commit us to any one firm, and they are just questioning if they were charged the right price for milk. He asked if the BOE Finance Committee would take a look at it as well. It was moved (Ward) and seconded (Herbst) to approve an RFP for an audit firm to analyze milk prices. Vote: Unanimous.

Mr. Wright mentioned on another note that THS teacher, Eric August, was a Teacher of the Year finalist at the State.

Adjournment

Board Members gave unanimous consent to adjourn the Public Session at 9:21 p.m.