

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT  
Regular Meeting – August 5, 2014  
Long Hill Administration Building  
Lorraine R. Smith Assembly Room

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

Members present:

D. Herbst, Chairperson  
L. Chory, Vice Chairperson  
R. Seaman, Secretary  
J. Donofrio, Board Member  
M. Ward, Board Member

Members absent:

S. LaFrance, Board Member  
J. Peddle, Board Member

Agenda Item I – Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

Agenda Item II – Preliminary Business

- A. Salute to the Flag - The Public Session began with a salute to the Flag.
- B. Correspondence –There was no correspondence this evening.
- C. Comments –Carol Corsi, parent, spoke in support of adding a class to both kindergarten and fourth grade at Daniels Farm School due to increased enrollment in those grades and to keep in line with class size guidelines.

Agenda Item III – Consent Agenda

- A. Personnel – Superintendent Dr. Cialfi noted that one resignation was received that needed Board action. It was moved (Chory) seconded (Seaman) to accept the resignation of Scott Zinser, Physical Education/Health teacher at Trumbull High School (THS) since August 2001, resigning effective July 24, 2014. Vote: Unanimous in favor. Mrs. Chory suggested that administration review starting salaries for certified staff when hiring for open positions.
- B. Approval/Minutes – Regular Meeting – 7/15/14 It was moved (Ward) seconded (Seaman) to approve the minutes as presented. Vote: Unanimous in favor.
- C. Approval/Financial Reports as of 5/30/14 –Business Manager Sean O’Keefe gave a brief overview of the recent BOE Finance Committee meeting [minutes included in Board meeting packet]. He reviewed financial reports for the 11 months ended May 31, 2014. Discussion ensued regarding the following accounts: salaries, benefits, utilities, energy, transportation, legal services, service contracts, special education tuition. Also discussed were Food Services, interdistrict grants, and BOE Program accounts including: Continuing Education, Summer Explorations, THS musical and Elementary Strings/Band. It was noted that the Elementary Strings/Band account is in a deficit for approximately \$57,000. Following discussion, it was moved (Chory) seconded (Seaman) to accept the Board of Education Financial Reports for the 11 months ended May 31, 2014 as presented. Vote: Unanimous in favor. Board Chair Mrs.

Herbst asked the Superintendent to provide the Board with information regarding the Trumbull High musical to be performed next spring.

Agenda Item IV—Reports/Action Items

- A. Approval/THS Peer Mediation Program to George Mason University—THS Assistant Dean of Students Dennis McLaughlin reviewed the details of a trip for students involved in the Peer Mediation Program, an extracurricular activity that proactively addresses the growing number of mandates in school discipline, safety and positive school environment. Students would attend the annual Regional Middle School and High School Student Mediation Conference at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia from Sunday, November 16, 2014 to Tuesday, November 18, 2014. This trip requires a two-day absence from school. Discussion ensued regarding the number of chaperones attending, the need for a female chaperone, costs for students, and fundraising. Mr. McLaughlin shared that two female counselors would be attending in addition to Intervention Specialist William Mecca and himself; the chaperones would be involved in workshops and would bring back information to be shared with THS staff. It was suggested that professional development funds be used to defray the cost of the chaperones. It was moved (Ward) seconded (Donofrio) to approve the trip to George Mason University as presented. Vote: unanimous in favor.
- B. 2014-15 Enrollment Update—Dr. Cialfi conveyed that as of today the overall district projected enrollment is down 82 students, most of which are at the elementary level (72 students). The middle schools are down by 17 students and the high school shows an increase of 7 students. Dr. Cialfi shared a preliminary chart on elementary enrollment stating that projections used were from the Milone and MacBroom Elementary Enrollment Study. He reviewed each grade level at each school. Dr. Cialfi commented that it appears the recommendations implemented, based on the Milone and MacBroom study, are successful, whereby the least amount of students have been impacted by school reassignment and class sizes are within BOE guidelines. He also noted that no classes will be held in portable classrooms at the elementary level. Dr. Cialfi emphasized that these are preliminary numbers, enrollments are being closely monitored, and he will again report on this item at the next Board meeting. Mrs. Herbst suggested that the Superintendent share information on the positive results of redistricting/removal of elementary portable classrooms with the media when school enrollment has been finalized.
- C. Student Athletic Insurance—Mr. O’Keefe conveyed that the district’s carrier for Student Athletic Insurance recently informed him that the company will not renew the policy for 2014-15 due to consistently high claims. He shared that he surveyed other Connecticut districts on how they administer student athletic [accident/injury] insurance and conveyed that Trumbull is the only district that charges students a mandatory fee for this insurance when trying out for an athletic team. He and the BOE Finance Committee reviewed various options with other insurance companies and selected Bollinger Insurance as the carrier for 2014-15 at a cost of approximately \$116,000. This company provided the lowest cost for the insurance with the premium based on claim history. Mr. O’Keefe conveyed that he and the Finance Committee are making the following recommendations: mandatory student athletic insurance fee should be rescinded for the 2014-15 school year; all students choosing to participate in athletics must sign a waiver for any accidents/injuries that occur and that any claims must be submitted to their primary insurance company first; and all student athletes will be encouraged to purchase inexpensive optional student accident insurance directly with Bollinger. Considerable discussion ensued regarding the following: rescinding the fee for insurance; from what account the insurance premium will be paid since that fee is not included in the BOE operating budget; insurance claims for costs not

covered by student's primary insurance; language for the waiver of claims; the need for attorney input on waiver language; postponing decision on this agenda item until language of waiver has been reviewed by Board and attorneys. Mr. O'Keefe commented that the insurance would cover all students with accident/injuries that are school related, such as field trips, sports activities, etc. Mr. Donofrio suggested the following language to be included in the waiver: acknowledging that the parent/guardian is aware that he/she is responsible for any costs associated with any medical care/damages arising from an injury; a coordination of benefits in the student athletic insurance policy; and parents/guardians will indemnify, defend, and hold the Town/BOE harmless in the event that any of the representations [on the waiver] are false. Athletic Director Michael King was also in attendance and shared that he has already collected checks for the insurance fees and that football practice begins on August 18<sup>th</sup>. Mr. King commented that it would be helpful to have a decision on these items as soon as possible. More discussion ensued on the language of the waiver; the need for attorney review; parent/guardian understanding of their responsibility with regard to student accidents/injuries; and Board action and the necessity of advising parents/guardians of these changes in a timely manner. It was suggested that the Board could act this evening on the rescission of the fee for student athletic insurance. It was moved (Ward) seconded (Seaman) to rescind the mandatory fee of \$60 for student athletic insurance [for students trying out for a sports team]. Vote: unanimous in favor. It was moved (Donofrio) seconded (Chory) to direct the Superintendent to provide the Board with a thoroughly vetted waiver [regarding insurance for student accidents/injuries] to be acted upon at their next meeting on August 19, 2014. Vote: Unanimous in favor. Mrs. Herbst commented that the waiver should include language regarding insurance coverage for all students as this policy covers any school related student accident/injury. She also requested that the Board Attorney and Mr. Donofrio review the language of the waiver.

- D. 2013-14 Year-End Update—Mr. O'Keefe reported that the 2013-14 financials are in the final stages of completion, with all work to be completed by the end of this week. He shared that the BOE Finance Committee thoroughly reviewed financials at their July 30, 2014 meeting. He commented that as of this time, he expects that there will be approximately \$300,000 in unspent monies from the 2013-14 operating budget. Mr. O'Keefe reminded the Board of their vote at the June 17, 2014 Board meeting where they directed the Superintendent to apply any potential surplus amounts up to \$250,000 to the Health Reserve account and any monies above the \$250,000 to be allocated to capital projects not approved by the Board Of Finance and Town Council at their joint meeting on June 12, 2014. Upon review of the May 2014 financials and year-end projections of certain "at risk" BOE Program accounts, the Finance Committee agreed to recommend to the full Board to redirect up to \$60,000 of any surplus funds initially targeted for unfunded capital projects to the Elementary Strings/Band account. Discussion ensued regarding the Elementary Strings/Band program. The Finance Committee is also recommending an analysis of the revenue and cost structure of the Elementary Strings/Band program and will report back to the BOE with its findings and recommendations. It was moved (Chory) seconded (Seaman) to approve the Finance Committee recommendations as presented [to redirect potential unspent monies for unfunded capital projects to the Elementary Strings/Band account]. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

#### Adjournment

Board Members gave unanimous consent to adjourn the Public Session at 8:40 p.m.