

Board of Education Minutes
August 26, 2009

A regular meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, August 26, 2009, at 7:30 p.m. in the Wheeler Gymnasium Music Room. Present were Dr. Robert, Mr. McCord, Mr. Testa, Mr. Briscoe, Mrs. Ricker, Mrs. Banker, and Mrs. Dame. Absent was Mr. Secchiaroli. Also present were Dr. Pukas, Mr. McCarthy, Mrs. Wilkison, Mrs. Costa, Mr. Susi, and Mr. Sandford. Chairman Robert called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. He told those present that the meeting was being audio-taped.

2. Public Comment/Request to Comment on Agenda Item – None.
3. Community Relations – None.
4. Presentations – None.
5. Administrators Reports – Mrs. Costa told the Board that all the positions have been filled and everything is all set for school to begin. Mrs. Wilkison said the elementary school was all set to start. She spoke of the number of students that attended summer school, kindergarten activities, and New Family Orientation. She said she was grateful to the custodians, maintenance and grounds people, Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Devine, and Mrs. Gonzalez for getting everything done. There were questions asked from the Board that Mrs. Wilkison answered. Mr. Susi echoed the same sentiments about the staff and their work to get the buildings ready. He told the Board the scorer's table is almost completed and thanked Mr. Testa and the PSPBC. A ceremony will be held to dedicate it. He spoke of Mr. Devine and his high school student interns, the secretaries putting together documentation for school's start, Freshman Orientation, enrollment of students daily, the handbooks and policies being in order to coordinate, the athletic handbook, the new food service director, and space reorganization at the high school. Mr. Susi said the initiative this year is "Differentiating Instruction." There were questions asked and answered.

On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mrs. Ricker, the Board voted unanimously to move item 10d, New Business, Policy Review/Revision, to Item 5a.

- a. Policy Review/Revision – i. 5113.2(a) Truancy – Mr. Briscoe explained the revisions. There were questions asked which Mr. Susi and Mr. Sandford answered. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mrs. Ricker, the Board voted unanimously to cancel Policy 5113.2. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted unanimously to accept new policy 5113.2.
- ii. 5131.6 Use/Possession of Tobacco/Drugs/Drug Paraphernalia/Alcohol – Mr. Briscoe explained the revisions. Mr. Susi had further explanation. There were questions asked and answered. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted unanimously to cancel policy 5131.6. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted unanimously to accept new policy 5131.6.

iii. 5131.81 Use of Electronic Devices – Mr. Briscoe had explanation. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted unanimously to cancel policy 5131.81. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted unanimously to accept new policy 5131.81.

iv. 6146 Graduation Requirements – Mr. Briscoe had explanation about the revisions. He said Mr. Sandford had done research on the history element. There were questions asked and answered. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted unanimously to cancel policy 6146. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted unanimously to accept new policy 6146.

Mr. Briscoe explained the draft policy on the activity account and the attendance policy.

6. Administrative - a. Approval of Minutes – May 6, 2009 Workshop – Dr. Robert explained these minutes had been tabled previously. He had further explanation. On a motion by Mrs. Ricker, seconded by Mrs. Banker, the Board voted five in favor and two abstentions to accept the minutes of the May 6, 2009, workshop. Mr. Briscoe and Mr. Testa abstained. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mrs. Ricker, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the June 10, 2009, Special Meeting. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mrs. Ricker, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the June 10, 2009 meeting. On a motion by Mrs. Ricker, seconded by Mr. Briscoe, the Board voted six in favor and one abstention to accept the minutes of the July 31, 2009, Special Meeting. Mrs. Banker abstained.

b. Correspondence – Dr. Robert read a letter from CASBO regarding Mr. McCarthy being appointed as a liaison to the Board of Directors of CASBO. The Board congratulated Mr. McCarthy. Dr. Robert explained the workshop to be held for new Board of Education members by CABE.

c. Personnel – Dr. Pukas read a letter from Kathryn Burgess retiring from her position as grade 8 teacher. She read a letter from Linda Sylvester retiring from her position as elementary school library coordinator. Dr. Pukas told the Board she had written letters to Mrs. Burgess and Mrs. Sylvester accepting their resignations and thanking them for their years of service.

On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mrs. Banker, the Board voted unanimously to appoint the persons to the positions as listed in a memo from the Superintendent to Mr. Susi and to add Whitney Karpinski and Joe Cruz to the list as unpaid volunteers.

On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted unanimously to accept the extra-duty positions as stated in a memo to the Superintendent from Mr. Susi dated August 20, 2009, with the exception of the Computer Club Coordinator.

On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Theresa Broach as elementary school drama coach.

On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Michael Noonan as AV coordinator at the elementary school.

7. Reports - a. Superintendent – Dr. Pukas thanked the staff for their hard work getting the buildings ready. She also thanked the Central Office staff. She handed out a copy of the Employee Handbook and thanked Mr. McCarthy for his hard work on that.

b. BOE Chairperson – Dr. Robert said he, Mrs. Dame, Mr. Testa, and Mr. Briscoe met with Ad hoc Building Committee and it was a very positive meeting. He elaborated. There was further comment. Mrs. Dame had questions. Board members had comment.

c. Committee Chairs – None.

d. PSPBC Liaison – Mr. Testa told the administrators to let the committee know if a new issue arose over the summer. Questions were asked and answered.

e. Committee Action List – None.

8. Financial – a. July 2009 Financial Statements –There were questions asked and answered on the statements. Mr. Briscoe made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Ricker to approve expenditures of \$311,816.86, grant expenditures of \$0.00, for a total of \$311,816.86 for the month of July 2009. There were questions asked and answered on the funds being returned to the town at the end of the year. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Old Business – None.

10. New Business – a. Report on 2008-2009 District and School Goals – Dr. Pukas spoke of the district goal for last school year. She explained the planning form. She said she believed with only a few minor exceptions the goals were met. She had further explanation. There were questions asked and answered. There were questions asked and answered on the testing scores. There was further comment from Board members.

b. Report on Draft 2009-2010 District Goal – Dr. Pukas said they will once again be using data to make informed decisions. She explained the district goal planning form. She had further explanation. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mrs. Dame, the Board voted unanimously to approve the district goal to “Use Data in Making Informed Decisions.”

c. Vacation Time for IT Director – Dr. Robert had explanation of this. He thought we should have a backup plan. There were questions. Dr. Pukas relayed her discussion with Mr. Devine. There was discussion. Mr. Briscoe suggested Dr. Pukas come to a workable solution with Mr. Devine and come back to the Board. Dr. Robert said we definitely want to make this right. There was further discussion. Dr. Pukas will speak to Mr. Devine and when solutions are in the works, he will meet with the Personnel Committee.

d. Policy Review/Revision – Covered above.

i. 5113 Truancy

ii. 5131.6 Use/Possession of Tobacco/Drug/Drug Paraphernalia

iii. 5131.81 Use of Electronics Devices

iv. 6146 Graduation Requirements

e. BOE Meeting Schedule for September and October – Dr. Pukas gave explanation of her proposal for these two months; one meeting a month for regular meetings and the other meeting for committee meetings, presentations, etc. She had further explanation. There was comment from Board members. It was decided the first meeting of the month would be the regular meeting and the second meeting of the month would be for Committee meetings. For September, the 9th would be the regular meeting and the 23rd would be for Committee meetings. For October, the 14th would be the regular meeting and the 28th would be for Committee meetings. On a motion by Mrs. Dame, seconded by Mr. Testa, the Board voted unanimously to accept this meeting schedule for September and October.

11. Calendar – None.

On a motion by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. McCord, the Board voted unanimously to add Public Comment as Item 11a.

a. Public Comment – None. Mr. McCarthy answered a question raised earlier regarding the financial statements.

Mr. Susi had further comment on the reallocation of the classrooms.

12. Proposed for Executive Session – None.

On a motion by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mr. Briscoe, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education