

Board of Education Minutes
Special Meeting
January 19, 2011

A special meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, January 19, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. in the Wheeler Gymnasium Music Room. Present were Dr. Robert, Mrs. Ricker, Mrs. Banker, Mr. Scarchilli, Mr. Testa, and Mrs. Dame. Also present were Dr. Pukas, Mr. McCarthy, Mrs. Costa, Mrs. Wilkison, Mr. Sandford and Mr. Apicelli. Absent were Mr. Hundt and Mr. McCord. Dr. Robert called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

2. Community Relations – Nothing other than what was in the Board’s packets.

3. Presentations –
 - a. Update on All-Day Kindergarten Program – Sheri Tardiff, teacher, thanked the Board for moving into a full-day program and explained how much the additional time adds to the program. She handed out a copy of the language arts curriculum. She had further explanation. Tara Holland, teacher, explained other parts of the program. Linda Coats, teacher, explained the difference in students going from a full-day program to grade one compared to a half-day program. She went over other parts of the program. Heidi Mehringer-Macina, teacher, gave her views from coming from a district with half-day kindergarten and explained the differences. There was further comment and explanation from the teachers. Dr. Robert had comment. There were questions asked and answered. Board members had comment. Dr. Robert thanked them for coming.

 - b. Report on Ledyard Vo-Ag Selection Process – Mr. Sandford handed out an application packet to the Board. He reviewed the packet and gave the Board some numbers on applicants and acceptance. He explained the process of how classes are taken. He went over enrollment numbers. Mr. McCarthy gave the number of students attending and the tuition amount which is set by the State. He explained the special education scenario for those students attending. Questions were asked and answered.

 - c. Educational Article as Per Board of Education Goal – Dr. Robert handed out an article and explained he selected it because of the options that North Stonington has and explained. He said some of the ideas in this article are worth thinking about and he elaborated. Mrs. Ricker will provide next month’s article.

4. Administrators Reports – Mrs. Costa said during professional development on Friday, Roberta Curry and Rebekah West gave a presentation on sensory learning. She told the Board that parent training sessions will be held. Roberta Curry explained they have been working on these parent education classes diligently to prepare. She elaborated. Mrs. Wilkison thanked the kindergarten team for the excellent presentation. The Artist in Residence program with Carol Glenn was started last week. In February the students will do a presentation for their families. The PTO, a yearly anonymous donor and a grant provide for this every year. She said six fifth-graders attended the CAS student leadership conference on Friday, a day of no school for them, and she explained. She said last Tuesday, the 11th, Miss Henderson arranged for an author, Christine Cody, to come to school and she explained. Teachers are working to support students’ success and getting students ready for the CMT tests. She elaborated.

Mrs. Wilkison said next week is Technology Week. Mr. Sandford said on February 2nd there will be a presentation on the current drug trends presented by PHIT and SERAC. He said he received a letter of appreciation from the Northeast Secondary School Consortium regarding the presentation on the CAPSTONE. He elaborated. He spoke of the CMT Academy that will be happening after February vacation. Pat Ostrout, teacher, explained the review of the students' scores and how they noticed a particular strand that needed attention. She elaborated. She explained all teachers are involved in the CMT Academy including specials teachers. She had further explanation of the program. Questions were asked and answered. There was comment. Mr. Apicelli explained students, teachers and community members have knitted hats to go to Kenya. He elaborated. He said the *Norwich Bulletin* has an ECC section that has student writers in it from Wheeler. Students Tessa Roy and Spencer Serra are writing for the column. He said exams finally started today.

5. Administrative - a. Approval of Minutes – December 8, 2010 – On a motion by Mrs. Dame, seconded by Mr. Scarchilli, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the December 8, 2010 meeting.

c. Correspondence – None. Dr. Robert spoke of the event on February 2nd that Mr. Sandford referred to.

d. Personnel – None.

6. Reports - a. Superintendent – Dr. Pukas said she appreciated everyone's patience and understanding during these snow days and she explained. She said she was saddened by the leaving of Commissioner Mark McQuillan and she elaborated. She told the Board the Associate Commissioner, George Coleman, is now Acting Commissioner until Governor Malloy appoints a new Commissioner. She passed out the draft annual report and two drafts of the regional calendar. She said the Board voted to support the regional calendar and she elaborated. She said the administrators per their goal are starting their next newsletter in February. Mr. Testa had comment.

b. BOE Chairperson – Dr. Robert said the budget preparation schedule was at their places. Dr. Robert reviewed it. He had further comment.

c. Committee Chairs – Mrs. Dame and Mrs. Ricker were chosen as co-chairs for the Student Success Committee. Mrs. Ricker said they met and reviewed the three new courses that were being proposed. Items will be acted upon later in the agenda. Mr. Testa was elected chair of the Facilities and Finance Committee and he gave a report of what happened at the meeting.

d. PSPBC Liaison – Mrs. Ricker said she wasn't able to make the last meeting. Dr. Robert would like to know why they are not paying for the PCB's issue invoices.

e. Committee Action List – The Finance and Facilities Committee will set some dates for meetings.

7. Financial – a. November 2010 Financial Statements – On a motion by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mrs. Ricker, the Board voted unanimously to accept accounts payable expenditures of \$426,890.32, payroll of \$593,559.30, grant expenditures of \$30,026.03 for a total of \$1,050,475.65 for the month of November 2010.

b. December 2010 Financial Statements – On a motion by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mrs. Ricker, the Board voted unanimously to accept accounts payable expenditures of \$393,350.45, payroll of \$861,425.97, grant expenditures of \$48,635.76 for a total of \$1,303,412.18 for the month of December 2010.

c. Request for Transfers – Mr. Testa made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Ricker to accept the transfer request from Mr. McCarthy in a memo dated January 5, 2011. There was explanation. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Old Business – a. Board of Education Goal Revised – Dr. Robert explained. Mrs. Dame made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Banker to accept the revised goal. Dr. Robert read the goal. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Revised List of Board of Education Committees – Dr. Robert read the list of revised committees. He had comment.

c. Coverage of Board of Education Meetings on Public Access Television – Mr. Scarchilli said he met with an individual from Comcast. He talked to Mr. Sandford about the possibility of students recording the meetings. The Comcast representative would come down and do a workshop for the students to operate the equipment. There were questions asked and answered including what would happen if students didn't do the recording. Mr. Scarchilli said he would do the recording for meetings that had more pertinent information and he elaborated. He explained the steps. There were questions about equipment liability. There was comment and questions about the equipment. There were questions asked and answered. Mr. Scarchilli will get more information so the Board can take action in February.

d. Revised RFP for Facilities – Dr. Robert reviewed the dates on the RFP. He reviewed items on the RFP. There was comment from Board members. There was discussion.

e. Feasibility Study – Dr. Pukas gave explanation of a feasibility study and different scenarios. She said the Board wanted the feasibility study to go out first. She read information she had received. She had further comment. Dr. Robert and Board members had comment. Dr. Pukas suggested meeting next week after the tripartite meeting to discuss this further. There was further comment. Mrs. Ricker made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Banker to commit to meeting January 26th to discuss the finalization of the feasibility study RFP and commit to financing the study. Questions were asked and answered. The motion passed unanimously.

9. New Business – a. Selection of Negotiator for AFSCME Contract – Tabled to the next meeting.

- b. Report on Early Retiree Reinsurance Program – Tabled.
- c. New Course Proposals for Wheeler Middle/High School – Mrs. Ricker said the committee met and voted to bring forward to the Board the new courses. Mrs. Ricker made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Dame to approve The Social Being, General Algebra II, and the Advanced Placement Environmental Science course which is a virtual learning course as well as offered to students in place here. Questions were asked and answered. The motion passed unanimously.
10. Calendar – There will be a meeting next Wednesday the 26th at 7:00 p.m. Dr. Pukas said they were also going to put the Facilities and Finance Committee budget timeline on the agenda as well.
11. Public Comment – Amy Kimball, parent, was concerned about the rumor of school of choice and closing Wheeler and elaborated. She spoke in favor of keeping Wheeler open. Dr. Robert had comment. David Isom, parent, spoke about moving to North Stonington because of the schools. He elaborated. He spoke of the feasibility study and hoped it addresses what had to be done to keep the school going. There was comment from Board members. Charlie Gray, parent, had a question on the feasibility study which Dr. Robert answered. Heidi Mehringer-Macina, parent and teacher, asked about the informational meeting and if they could address class sizes that the children would encounter if we went to a school of choice. She elaborated. Board members had comment. Sue Starr, resident and teacher, had comment. She talked about townspeople wanting to know the items that are hard to measure and not attach a dollar to. Pat Ostrout, resident and teacher, spoke about her students asking these questions and being concerned. She elaborated and said she tried to explain it to her classes. She had further comment. Board members had comment. Wendy Hauptmann, parent, asked about the Tri-Partite meeting and the feasibility study. Dr. Robert explained that meeting and the special meeting to be held after that. He elaborated. Colleen Hawrylik, resident and teacher, asked about when the study will happen. Dr. Robert answered her question and had further explanation. Mrs. Hawrylik clarified information. Robert Miner, parent, asked about the facilities study and the feasibility study. Dr. Robert answered his questions. Mr. Miner had further questions that Dr. Robert answered. There was further comment and discussion. Dr. Pukas had comment. There was discussion.
12. Proposed for Executive Session – None.

On a motion by Mrs. Dame, seconded by Mrs. Banker, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education