

Board of Education Minutes
May 12, 2010

A regular meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, May 12, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Wheeler Gymnasium Music Room. Present were Dr. Robert, Mrs. Ricker, Mrs. Banker, Mr. Hundt, Mr. Testa, Mrs. Dame and Mr. McCord (7:09 p.m.). Also present were Dr. Pukas, Mr. McCarthy, Mrs. Wilkison, Mr. Susi, and Mr. Sandford. Mrs. Costa was absent. Chairman Robert called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Dr. Robert told those present that the meeting was being audio-recorded.

2. Public Comment – None.

3. Community Relations – There was nothing other than what was in the packets. The good press continues.

4. Presentations – a. CAFE Student Leadership Awards – Dr. Robert said there were some special awards being presented. Mr. Susi introduced Rebecca Schilke. She told the Board about the “Letters About Literature” contest and explained it was optional. Helena DiScuillo was chosen as a finalist. She read her letter to the Board. The Board congratulated her. Dr. Robert read the letters regarding the CAFE student awards. Rachel Luce and Billy Jeckel were the recipients of the CAFE Middle School Student Leadership awards. Mr. Susi commented on the students.

b. Representative Diana Urban – Representative Urban reviewed what had been happening at the State. She spoke of the bill that she tried to get passed and she elaborated. She commended Helena DiScuillo on her writing. She spoke of the State’s budget. She explained what was securitized. ECS stayed at the same rate. She had further comment. She spoke of the “First Focus” program that looks at states across the country and how the recession affects children. Representative Urban said the State of Connecticut looked at that and did something about it. She said we are first in the nation in our achievement gap. She spoke about feeding children with federal funds. She said we are the only state in the country to try to mitigate the effect of the recession on our children. She spoke of the State banning cadmium in children’s jewelry and she explained. She spoke on the M.O.R.E. program which stands for Municipal Opportunities and Regional Efficiencies. She gave examples such as allowing multiple towns and boards of education to join in health insurance, co-ops to provide student transportation, and RESC’s providing services to multiple boards of education. She talked about the hotel tax that did not pass. She explained other items that were passed. Representative Urban commented that for what they faced this session and the numbers they were looking at they got out pretty well. She said she is nervous about the next budget. She explained results-based accounting and elaborated. She had further comment. She talked about the recession. She left some information with the Board and would like to return to discuss it at a later meeting. Representative Urban invited Miss DiScuillo to join her in Hartford some time.

5. Administrators Reports – Mrs. Wilkison told of happenings at the elementary school including tomorrow being Student Author Day, 4 fifth graders and their teacher, Stephanie Vaughn, will be recognized for their essays for the CHET Dream Big competition, the many field trips, the upcoming concerts, and May 28th is a half-day for technology training, and it is also spirit day. Mr. Susi told of happenings at the high school including the completion of AP exams and he thanked Suzanne Alfiero for her efforts, scheduling will be started soon, a team went to PBS training, data teams was the main goal this year and presentations will start at the next faculty meeting, the band trip is Friday, students are getting ready for the play, and the end-of-the-year activities list was at the Board's places. Mr. Testa asked questions of Mr. Susi regarding disciplinary actions. He elaborated and had further questions. Mr. Susi had explanation. There was discussion. Dr. Robert spoke of the letter regarding senior project presentations, the Chocolate Festival, and faculty members. He elaborated. Greg Pont spoke of the East Lyme data loss situation. He explained what we do here and explained the process. He said any crucial data is backed up. He elaborated. There were questions asked and answered.

6. Administrative - a. Approval of Minutes – April 28, 2010 – On a motion by Mrs. Ricker, seconded by Mr. Hundt, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the April 28, 2010 meeting.

c. Correspondence – Nothing other than what was in the packet and at the Board's places.

d. Personnel – None.

7. Reports - a. Superintendent – Dr. Pukas said she had nothing other than what was in their packet. She had other items under new business.

b. BOE Chairperson – The Town Hearing was discussed.

c. Committee Chairs – Mrs. Ricker had comment. Dr. Robert talked about dates for the Ad Hoc presentation.

d. PSPBC Liaison – Mr. Testa said they were waiting for the architect to get back with the proposal that had the Town's wording and the insurance company's wording so it could go to bid. Mr. Testa explained the delay.

e. Committee Action List – This will be covered under 9a.

8. Financial – a. April Financial Statements – On a motion by Mr. Testa, seconded by Mrs. Ricker, the Board voted unanimously to approve the April financial statements provided by the Business Manager of general fund expenditures of \$883,776.16, grant expenditures of \$64,731.99, for an April 2010 expenditure of \$948,508.15.

9. Old Business – a. Community Relations Committee Survey Follow-up – Dr. Robert spoke of the volunteer section of the survey. The Community Relations Committee had received the list of volunteers. Mr. Sandford said they will be contacted to see about helping with the Senior Projects. There were comments and suggestions made. There was discussion.

b. Boiler Replacement – Dr. Robert read the letter he had drafted to send to the Board of Selectmen. There was discussion. Mr. McCarthy was thanked for his work on this. Mr. McCarthy had comment. There was further comment. Dr. Robert reminded the Board that Mr. McCarthy will be receiving another award from CIRMA next week. Mr. McCarthy told the Board the prices that Mr. Mullane gave him from memory on the temporary boilers. He said it would be very expensive. There was further discussion.

10. New Business – a. Three-Year District Support Plan for Beginning Teachers/Mentors – Dr. Pukas said she had given this information to the Board at the last meeting. She said the Teacher Education And Mentoring (TEAM) program replaces the BEST program. She told of the makeup of the committee that put the plan together. She elaborated and gave some of the differences between the two plans. Dr. Pukas said this was due to the State the first of June and asked for Board approval for the three-year program. Mrs. Ricker made a motion that was seconded by Mr. McCord to support the document as it was put before them. Dr. Robert thanked everyone that worked on this and had comment about unfunded mandates and beginning teachers. There were questions asked and answered. The motion passed unanimously. Dr. Pukas thanked the Board and the Committee.

b. 2010-2011 School Calendar – Dr. Pukas explained the change she made to the calendar. She thanked the Administrators for their input in putting this together. She explained the built-in snow dates. Dr. Pukas asked for approval on the calendar. On a motion by Mr. Hundt, seconded by Mr. McCord, the Board voted unanimously to accept the calendar as it was set forward.

c. *Race to the Top* Memorandum of Understanding – Dr. Pukas explained that a few months ago she came to Board and asked them not to take part in the *Race to the Top*. She explained there were too many unanswered questions. She explained why she was recommending participation this time around. She explained the legislation that is attached to this and said we are doing a lot of these things already. She explained that North Stonington would be in a consortium to pool resources and write a plan. She said the plan would be written based on a common calendar so professional development can be scheduled with well-known names. Hardware and software would also be purchased. She said a regional plan will be submitted and we still would have the option to opt out. She had further explanation. Mr. Hundt made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Ricker to give Dr. Robert the authority to sign the memorandum of understanding to enroll us. There were questions asked and answered. Dr. Pukas explained the process and there were further questions. The motion passed unanimously. Dr. Pukas thanked the Board.

d. Change of June Meeting Date – Dr. Pukas explained the calendar issue with the June 9th meeting and asked to change the meeting to June 2nd. She explained it would be a special meeting with a set agenda. On a motion by Mrs. Ricker, seconded by Mr. Hundt, the Board voted unanimously to move the meeting date to June 2nd from June 9th.

11. Calendar – The Personnel Committee will be meeting on May 26th at 5:00 p.m. unless the Ad Hoc Committee can meet that day. If so, the meeting would be an hour later.

12. Public Comment – None.

13. Proposed for Executive Session – a. Pending litigation – At 8:44 p.m., on a motion by Mr. Hundt, seconded by Mrs. Ricker, the Board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session for Pending Litigation and to invite Dr. Pukas into the session.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:02 p.m. On a motion by Mr. Hundt, seconded by Mrs. Ricker, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education