

Board of Education Minutes  
May 27, 2009

A regular meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, May 27, 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, Mrs. Dame, and Mr. Secchiaroli. Also present were Dr. Pukas, Mr. McCarthy, Mrs. Costa, Mr. Susi, and Mr. Sandford. Mrs. Wilkison was absent. Chairman Robert called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

Dr. Robert told those present the meeting was being audio-taped and read a statement about the recording equipment.

2. Public Comment/Request to Comment on Agenda Item – None.
3. Community Relations – Dr. Pukas explained the items at their places.
4. Presentations – a. “Encountering Survivors” Post-Trip Presentation – Mr. Susi introduced Ms. Nichole Connolly, social studies teacher. She explained the “Encountering Survivors” program. She read a letter from Mrs. Saglio, advisor, about the program. Students Greg Thompson and Jenna Galinsky told of their experiences with the group and what they got out of it. Ms. Connolly had further comment. Mr. Sandford thanked Ms. Connolly and Mrs. Saglio for their time and effort and commented on the caliber of these students.
5. Administrators Reports – Mrs. Costa gave the elementary school report in Mrs. Wilkison’s absence. She spoke of student Author Day, the past concerts, the Brighter Smiles program, the Civil War reenactment, the grade 5 visit to the middle school, the upcoming concerts, and the Flag Day event. Mrs. Costa said on Friday the lead consultant from the State Department of Education will be coming to see how we are doing with our Improvement Plan. There were questions and comments. Mr. Susi thanked Mrs. Saglio and Ms. Connolly for their hours spent on the project. He spoke of the health surveys, the informational meeting on the substance salvia and he explained. He had further comment on this. There were questions asked and answered. Suggestions were made about adjusting our policy. There was further comment and questions. Our policy will be reviewed. Mr. Susi spoke of the Distinguished Alumni award, final exams, evaluations, senior projects, the hiring process, the French position, ceramic pit-firing, the administrative intern, and the Governor’s Scholar Award Banquet. He said Rebecca D’Angelo was named a Governor’s Scholar and he elaborated on that. He spoke of the blood drive, he commended Mike Hassell and the band, he spoke of the fifth grade transition meeting, the SAMJAM field trip, the body field trip, and the Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce hosting a breakfast for the top seniors and juniors. Mr. Susi said that Ghalib Shaikh and Rebecca D’Angelo were those students chosen. There was further comment.
6. Administrative - a. Approval of Minutes – May 6, 2009 Workshop – Dr. Robert commented on an email written by Mr. Shawn Murphy and suggested tabling these minutes. He read the email at the request of a Board member. Dr. Robert and Board members had comment. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr. McCord

the Board voted five in favor, one opposed, and two abstentions to table the minutes of the May 6, 2009 workshop pending clarification of the issues. Mrs. Dame was opposed and Mr. Testa and Dr. Robert abstained.

May 8, 2009 Special Meeting – Mr. Briscoe made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Ricker to accept the minutes of the May 8, 2009, special meeting. There were questions asked and answered. The motion passed with seven voting in favor and one abstention. Mr. Secchiaroli abstained.

May 13, 2009 Meeting – On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mrs. Dame, the Board voted seven in favor and one abstention to accept the minutes of the May 13, 2009, meeting. Mr. Secchiaroli abstained.

b. Correspondence – Dr. Pukas spoke of items in the packet. There were questions asked and answered.

c. Personnel – Dr. Pukas spoke of the board clerk stipend. There was comment and questions. On a motion by Mr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr. Secchiaroli, the Board voted unanimously to increase the stipend to compensate the Board Clerk for the amount necessary to complete the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

Dr. Pukas asked for affirmation of the hiring of Nancy Liner to fill the guidance counselor position. She gave Ms. Liner's educational and experiential background. On a motion by Mrs. Ricker, seconded by Mr. McCord, the Board voted six in favor, one opposed, and one abstention to affirm the hiring Nancy Liner. Mr. Testa was opposed and Mr. Secchiaroli abstained.

Dr. Pukas asked for affirmation of the hiring of Melanie Kasperek to fill the elementary school psychologist position. She gave Ms. Kasperek's educational and experiential background. Mr. Briscoe made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Ricker to affirm the hiring of Melanie Kasperek. Mr. Secchiaroli and Mr. Testa commented on their votes. The motion passed with five voting in favor, one opposed and two abstentions. Mr. Testa was opposed and Mr. Secchiaroli and Mrs. Dame abstained.

7. Reports - a. Superintendent – Dr. Pukas told the Board about the “Let's Read” grant received for the middle school. She elaborated and said North Stonington was only one of eight schools to receive the grant. She passed around information on the Connecticut Science Center and spoke of the Governor's Scholar Banquet. Questions were asked and answered.

b. BOE Chairperson – Dr. Robert welcomed Crystal Dame. She gave some background information on herself. Dr. Robert said the rescheduled joint meeting with the PSPBC and the Selectmen is June 22<sup>nd</sup>. He asked all members to contact the Central Office if they are not able to attend a meeting.

c. Committee Chairs – Mr. Briscoe said the Policy Committee met and changes are coming forward. A workshop was held to go over the policy for the activity fund. He elaborated.

d. PSPBC Liaison – None.

e. Committee Action List – Mr. Briscoe added “Review of Substance Abuse Policy” to the Policy Committee’s action list. The administration will be asked for their recommendations on that. Mrs. Dame asked to be added to the Athletic, Community Relations, Curriculum, and Policy Committees.

8. Financial – a. Transfer Request – On a motion by Mr. Secchiaroli, seconded by Mr. Briscoe, the Board voted seven in favor and one opposed to accept the proposal from the Business Manager in a memo dated May 27, 2009 to transfer \$18,000 from regular education teachers’ salaries to legal. Mr. Testa was opposed. Mr. McCarthy explained the remainder of the transfers. There were questions asked and answered. Mr. Secchiaroli made a motion that was seconded by Mrs. Dame to accept the transfer of \$2,849 from bus fuel to middle school music new equipment and \$1,000 from heating oil to postage. There were questions asked and answered. The motion passed unanimously. Mrs. Ricker made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Briscoe to transfer \$11,900 from bus fuel to elementary school instructional supplies to purchase math and language materials. There was comment about the budget process. Dr. Pukas responded. The motion was withdrawn.

9. Old Business – 2009-2010 Proposed Education Budget – Dr. Pukas said this was put on the agenda in case the budget didn’t pass. There was comment.

b. Board of Education Minutes Format – Dr. Robert said he asked to have this put on the agenda. Mr. Briscoe made a motion that was seconded by Mr. McCord to amend the minutes to include only those items needed by law. There was discussion. The motion failed with four voting in favor, two opposed, and two abstentions. Mr. Secchiaroli and Mrs. Banker were opposed and Mr. Testa and Mrs. Dame abstained. There was further discussion and comment about how abstentions should be interpreted. Mr. Testa asked to change his vote to opposed. Dr. Pukas will get information on what is needed to be in the minutes.

10. New Business – None.

11. Calendar – A joint Policy/Finance Committee meeting will be at 6:00 p.m. on June 10<sup>th</sup>. An Executive Session will be held at 6:45 p.m. on June 10<sup>th</sup>.

12. Public Comment – Mr. McCarthy commented on the transfer request from the elementary school. Mr. Murphy clarified the Executive Session portion of the agenda. Dr. Pukas explained there was no Executive Session at this meeting.

13. Proposed for Executive Session – None.

On a motion by Mr. Secchiaroli, seconded by Mrs. Ricker, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to  
The Board of Education