

**Regular Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Stafford Elementary School
Monday, January 28, 2019, 6:30 p.m.**

Board Members Present: Ms. Kathy Bachiochi
Ms. Jennifer Davis
Mr. Mike Delano
Mrs. Andrea Locke, Secretary
Mr. George Melnick
Ms. Sonya Shegogue, Chairperson
Mrs. Kathy Walsh

Also Present: Mr. Steven Moccio, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Steven Autieri, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Mr. Jonathan Campbell, Assistant Principal, Stafford Middle School
Mr. Devin Cowperthwaite, Supervisor of Building Services
Mrs. Peggy Falcetta, Principal, Staffordville School
Mr. Dean Fortin, IT / Network Coordinator
Ms. Anna Gagnon, Principal, West Stafford School
Ms. Caroline Hargraves, Assistant Principal, Stafford Elementary School
Mr. Tim Kinel, Assistant Principal, Stafford High School
Ms. Susan Mike, Principal, Stafford Middle School
Mr. Steve Montgomery, Principal, Stafford Elementary School
Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal, Stafford High School
Ms. Diane Peters, Business Manager
Ms. Jolene Piscetello, Director of Pupil Services
Mr. Nick Wyse, Student Representative
Miss Grace Zopelis, Alternate Student Representative

Item I. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m.

Item II. Pledge of Allegiance

The student representatives led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item III. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting, January 14, 2019

Mrs. Walsh made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board approve the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on January 14, 2019, as presented. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Item IV. Consent Agenda

- A. Bills, 17-18, 01-16-19, \$9,590.00
- B. Bills, 18-19, 01-24-19, \$972,207.41
- C. Grants, 18-19, 01-16-19, \$2,554.61
- D. Resignations- Certified Staff Members

Ms. Shegogue stated that Ms. Holly Sullivan and Ms. Linda Callahan would be retiring at the end of the school year in June 2019.

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, that the Board approve the items listed in the consent agenda, as presented. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Item V. Correspondence

A. Ms. Shegogue read the Board meeting reminder that was posted on the agenda. She also noted that there was an article regarding the football team in the *Journal Inquirer*.

Item VI. Board Reports

A. Student Representatives' Report

Mr. Wyse reported on the following:

- Parent Teacher Conferences at SHS on 2/7/19
- Arts on Main will be held on 2/8/19
- Red Cross Blood Drive will be held on 3/1/19
- High School Sports Update
- Staffordville School Update, including the Great Kindness Challenge
- Staffordville School will hold their next Village Meeting on 2/8/19
- West Stafford School FRC and EHS Playgroup

Miss Zopelis reported on the following:

- Fire Prevention Poster Submission- 2 winners from SES
- Invention Convention at SES
- PBIS Update
- \$1,300 raised at SES during the holidays for families in Connecticut
- Middle School Update, including the Geography Bee

Item VII. Superintendent's Reports

A. Presentation of District Assessment Results

Mr. Moccio stated that Mr. Steven Autieri, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, would be presenting on the district's assessment results from Spring 2018, as well as current year in-district assessment results.

Mr. Autieri stated that since he began with the district in September, one of the priorities that he was tasked with was to review the district's assessment results to better understand previous years' results and to create a plan for the future. Mr. Autieri reviewed a PowerPoint presentation entitled 2018 District Assessment Results, which also included details regarding next steps and responded to questions from the Board members.

This information will be posted on the district's website.

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board move item IX.A.- Continuation of the Discussion Regarding a Common Graduation Gown to the next item on the agenda. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Item IX. Old Business

A. Continuation of the Discussion Regarding a Common Graduation Gown

Mr. Moccio stated that there are student representatives present at the meeting to share their perspectives and opinions regarding the common graduation gown matter. Mr. Moccio stated that matters that involve long-standing traditions can be emotionally charged, but everyone is entitled to their opinions and should be treated with respect.

Mr. Pelliccia introduced the students present at the meeting, which included representatives from the Freshman, Junior and Senior Classes, as well as from the GSDA. He stated that he and Mr. Kinel have met with groups of students since the last Board meeting and that the students have been thoughtful, well-prepared and respectful during the process thus far.

The student and staff representatives spoke and made the following points:

- The senior class was requested by Mr. Pelliccia to refrain from distributing a survey as students might misunderstand and think that “majority rules”
- Some students will be upset if the district moves to one gown for all
- Students are interested in sharing their input and opinions regarding the gown color and selection
- Some students feel that the district should not move to one color gown for all just because other districts are doing so; Stafford should set their own path
- Making a change to the gowns will create discord among students. Students want to keep safety in mind.
- Students are interested in working directly with the Board members on this issue.
- Tradition is important, but not without flaw.
- White= purity; blue=strength / power
- Wearing different color gowns and marching by gender is a form of segregation, which is outdated.
- If boys and girls are equal, why are they being delineated by color?
- Some students feel that a unified gown would keep sexism out of the graduation ceremony.
- Some students feel that the gown decision should be made now when the students have input and to show that the student body is inclusive, instead of waiting until later when society forces the decision.
- Majority should not rule when it hurts the minority.
- This is not an issue only about gowns, but rather a human rights issue.
- It is the Board’s responsibility to protect the minority.
- This matter affects the students, but does not revolve around them.
- Students should be asked to step back and view this decision with a lens of empathy.
- The good to someone else should outweigh the small inconvenience to ourselves.
- Some students feel that the student body should come together, move forward and celebrate their achievements as a unified group wearing one gown.
- Many students are indifferent regarding this decision.

Board members noted that they appreciated the students’ taking the time to share their opinions and that their opinions matter. They said that ALL students should feel safe and included. The gowns should not be about gender, but rather a gown that represents all students. A totally new color might help and remove the historical attachment to gender. The Board would like to have input from students regarding what options they would like in one common gown. They also stated that it is also the students’ responsibility to keep other students safe and not repeat what happened several years ago on social media. Mr. Moccio stated that he would like a decision made, which would not be revisited every year.

Mr. Pelliccia stated that this must be an entire school decision. He suggested that smaller focus groups be created to construct a survey and what it might entail. It was suggested that the document be called a questionnaire rather than a survey so that students are aware that their input is being sought, but the majority may not “win”. Mr. Moccio stated that he would like the Board to review the questionnaire prior to dissemination.

B. Financial Report, July 1 – December 31, 2018

Mrs. Diane Peters, Business Manager, provided an update of monthly spending and account balances, and highlight other areas of significance. She stated that through December 31, 2018, \$938,747.86, or 3.4% remains unexpended / unencumbered.

There were no questions or comments.

C. Continuation of the Presentation of the Proposed 2019-2020 Budget for the Stafford Public Schools

Mr. Moccio provided an in-depth analysis of each object code in the proposed 2019-2020 budget. Mr. Dean Fortin, IT / Network Coordinator, made a detailed presentation regarding the district's technology needs.

The Superintendent's proposed budget for the 2019-2020 fiscal year is the result of many hours of collaborative effort from staff at all levels and addresses some of the current needs of the district. The 2019-2020 proposed budget, which totals \$28,388,256.61, is an increase of \$496,424.71, or 1.78% when compared to the 2018-2019 Connecticut State Department of Education Minimum Budgetary Requirement.

	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>	<u>2019-20 Proposed</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>% Change</u>
100 Salaries	\$16,256,360.13	\$16,522,931.98	\$16,872,015.63	\$349,083.65	2.11%
200 Benefits	\$4,785,416.84	\$4,576,485.54	\$4,832,740.20	\$256,254.66	5.45%
300 Professional Services	\$394,395.00	\$339,395.00	\$484,640.00	\$145,245.00	42.80%
400 Repairs, Rental, Other Property Services	\$868,653.22	\$807,153.22	\$741,458.00	-\$65,695.22	-8.14%
500 Transportation, Tuition, Other Services	\$3,562,167.16	\$3,671,526.61	\$3,701,380.34	\$29,853.73	-2.94%
600 Utilities, Instructional & Building Supplies	\$1,283,599.26	\$1,237,099.26	\$1,126,693.16	-\$110,406.10	-8.92%
700 Equipment and Software	\$174,134.78	\$174,134.78	\$289,561.50	\$115,426.72	66.29%
800 Dues and Fees	\$334,274.00	\$330,274.00	\$346,591.26	\$16,317.26	4.94%
Total	\$27,659,000.39	\$27,898,655.39	\$28,395,080.10	\$496,424.71	1.78%*

**Percent change compared to Connecticut State Department of Education Minimum Budgetary Requirement*

Following his presentation, Mr. Moccio asked that Board members forward questions to him via email prior to the next Board meeting so that his staff can prepare responses.

Item VIII. Public Comment

A member of the audience asked if another budget committee meeting would be scheduled. It was determined that any proposed changes to the 19-20 budget would be discussed in detail at the next regularly-scheduled Board meeting.

Item X. New Business

There was no New Business.

Item XI. Personnel Matters

There were no Personnel Matters.

Item XII. Student Matters

There were no Student Matters.

Item XIII. Adjournment

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, to adjourn. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary

Sonya Shegogue, Chairperson

Andrea Locke, Secretary

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