

**Special Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Stafford Elementary School
June 24, 2019, 6:00 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. Devin Cowperthwaite, Supervisor of Building Services
Mrs. Peggy Falcetta, Principal, Staffordville School
Mr. Damian Frassinelli, Director of Athletics and Recreation
Ms. Anna Gagnon, Principal, West Stafford School
Ms. Diane Peters, Business Manager

Item 1. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, to add an item to the agenda entitled "Public Forum". Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick, and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Item 2. Configuration Study Update- Impact on Personnel and Transportation

Mr. Moccio began by reminding everyone that the information being presented is a continuation of the research that he and the administrative team have been doing since the January 14, 2019, Board meeting, where the Board authorized him to compile information related to the current grade configuration and associated spending. He stated that in early May 2019, he and Mr. Cowperthwaite presented information relative to the facilities. As a continuation of that presentation, he will be presenting information with regard to potential impact on personnel and transportation.

Mr. Moccio reiterated that the options the Board was provided with in May 2019 were, as follows:

- Make no change to the current grade configuration
- Move all pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students to West Stafford School, and move all grade one students to Stafford Elementary School. No change to Stafford Middle School or Stafford High School. Move central office staff from multiple locations across the district to Staffordville School (which will remain available for recreation and community use).
- Build a new school on the current campus, which would include space for central office.

Mr. Moccio also said that he does not anticipate a change in grade configuration for a least two school years (2021 – 2022) and that the reason that Staffordville School was selected as the school to be taken off line was due to the size of the facility and how many students it can house.

Mr. Moccio reviewed a PowerPoint presentation, which will be made available on the district website (www.stafford.k12.ct.us), under "District Information > Configuration Study".

Board members asked the following questions:

- Is Stafford Elementary School designed for first grade students? Specifically, does the facility design restrict which students can be housed on the first and second floors?
- What are the projected class sizes for 2021 – 2022 with the new grade configuration?
- Is the administration considering having some ½ day and some full-day prekindergarten sessions available?
- Can administration provide an estimated cost of revisions without spending money on an engineering study?

Item 2b. Public Forum

A member of the audience shared that the process outlined during the meeting is much better than the process that was used several years ago. She said that she appreciates that the Board and the administration is taking the time to consider the options, and she thinks that they are doing a great job. She said that because the district's enrollment is going down, the town should consider consolidating schools.

A member of the audience asked if there are estimates regarding how long students would be on the bus to West Stafford School. Mr. Moccio and Mrs. Peters, transportation coordinator, stated that M&J Bus indicated that the students should not experience any additional time on the bus. Mr. Moccio stated that Board policy indicates that students may be on the bus for up to one hour, but he does not expect that the district's youngest students ride the bus for that long.

A member of the audience asked if the Family Resource Center and School Readiness Programs would still remain at West Stafford School if the grade configuration was changed. Mrs. Gagnon, principal of West Stafford School, stated that both programs would remain at the school.

A member of the audience asked a clarifying question regarding the per pupil expenditure by school figure that is reported to the State.

A member of the audience asked a question regarding the shift in start times and when that might happen. Mr. Moccio stated that the student start times are being looked at and would not change any time this school year.

A member of the audience asked that the Board keep in mind that while the enrollment is decreasing, the number of students in the district with needs is increasing. She encouraged the Board members to spend a day in the schools to experience this first hand.

A member of the audience stated that the fact that several of the Board of Education members are retired teachers is a benefit during this process because they are aware of what happens in a school. She also stated that she appreciates two things- first, that the district has a plan for Staffordville School that keeps it available for the community (she noted that it is irresponsible to close a school without a plan for it), and second that there is an emotional attachment to the school. She thanked the Board for taking the time to do a study.

Item 3. Next Steps Regarding Playground and Parking Expansion at Stafford Elementary School

Mr. Moccio stated that he is seeking Board approval to conduct an engineering study regarding the feasibility of expanding the playground and parking area at Stafford Elementary School, to address an identified long-standing need. He said that he anticipates that the cost of the study to be in the range of \$15,000 to \$20,000, depending on the outcome of a wetland delineation.

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, that the Board authorize the Superintendent of move forward with the engineering study, as presented. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick, and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board place Item 4. Superintendent of Schools' Evaluation into executive session. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick, and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board took a brief recess at 7:40 p.m.

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board enter executive session. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick, and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at 7:50 p.m.

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Melnick, to return to regular session. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick, and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at 8:00 p.m.

Item 4. Superintendent of Schools' Evaluation (Executive Session Anticipated)

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board extend Mr. Moccio's contract of employment by two years, through June of 2022, and that Mr. Moccio receive an increase of 2% for the 2019 – 2020 school year, which is in alignment with the increase given to the non-affiliated staff. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick, and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Item 5. Adjournment

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Melnick, 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 8:02 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,
Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary**

Sonya Shegogue, Chairperson

Andrea Locke, Secretary