

**Special Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Stafford Elementary School
Tuesday, December 4, 2018, 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. Tim Kinel, Assistant Principal, Stafford High School
Ms. Beth LaPane, Supervisor of Food Services
Ms. Susan Mike, Principal, Stafford Middle 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 6:30 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

Special Meeting, November 5, 2018

Mrs. Walsh made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board approve the Secretary's Report for the special meeting held on 11/5/18, 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. Grants, 18-19, 11/15/18- \$23,546.18
- B. Grants, 18-19, 11/28/18- \$3,386.98
- C. Bills, 17-18, 11/15/18- \$18,159.00
- D. Bills, 18-19, 11/28/18- \$185,198.06
- E. SMS Obsolete Books 2018
- F. Resignation- Certified Staff Member
- G. Cafeteria Profit / Loss through October 2018
- H. Update on Self-Funded Insurance Account, July – September 218

Mrs. Walsh made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, 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.

Some of the Board members expressed their concern with regard to the way the district handles obsolete books. They would like to have the books made available to others before being discarded.

Item V. Correspondence

A. Ms. Shegogue read the Budget Committee and Board meeting reminder that was posted on the agenda.

Mr. Moccio stated that he received an email invitation from the National Honor Society secretary regarding the induction, which is scheduled for Thursday, December 13, 2018, at 6 p.m., in the library at Stafford High School.

Mr. Moccio shared a thank you letter from The Network regarding the Shine Purple Campaign in which the district participated. The school social workers organized the campaign, which focuses on healthy relationships.

Item VI. Board Reports

A. Student Representatives' Report

Mr. Wyse reported on the following:

- Honor Roll Ice Cream Social
- Parent / Teacher Conferences Makeup Day, 11/29
- Trip to the Newport Mansions
- Sports Update

Miss Zopelis reported on the following:

- Middle School Update- Upcoming Concert, PJ Day
- SES Update- Safe Net Fundraiser
- SHS Update- Madrigal Feaste

Several handouts were distributed by the student representatives regarding upcoming events.

B. Budget Committee

The Budget Committee members are Ms. Shegogue, Mrs. Locke and Mr. Delano (Mrs. Davis, alternate). Mr. Moccio stated that committee meetings have been scheduled for Wednesday, December 12, 2018, and Wednesday, December 19, 2018, at 5:45 p.m., in the library at Stafford High School.

Item VII. Superintendent's Reports

A. Stafford High School Core Values- Academic, Social and Civic Expectations Report

Mr. Moccio stated that during quarters 3 and 4 of the 2017 – 2018 school year, and during quarter 1 of the current school year, high school teachers utilized the comment bank fields within the student information system (PowerSchool) to record student performance, within their respective classes, regarding the Academic, Civic, and Social Expectations that are delineated in the Stafford High School Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations Standards. A memo and chart detailing student performance on the SHS Core Values were provided for Board members via the portal.

Mr. Pelliccia, Principal, and Mr. Kinel, Assistant Principal, were present at the meeting to elaborate and respond to questions. Mr. Pelliccia stated that as part of the NEAS&C accreditation process, the high school is expected to report out on these data points, and they landed on this reporting tool. He said that each report card has a comment bank where teachers rank students' performance for those expectations of which they have knowledge.

He said that this information will be shared out through School Messenger and the high school's website. He said that he wanted to share the information with the Board before it was shared out with the rest of the community.

Mr. Melnick noted that this information would be difficult to analyze and report. Mr. Pelliccia stated that teachers are expected to report on their observations during class and their interactions with the students.

Mr. Delano asked how this information will be used to guide students. Mr. Pelliccia said that the high school is already making some adjustments based on the information obtained.

B. Common Graduation Gown Information

Mr. Pelliccia, Principal, Stafford High School, and Mr. Kinel, Assistant Principal, Stafford High School, provided information for Board members via the portal regarding graduation gowns, including legal recommendations, gown color options at NCCC schools and DRG F schools, other considerations and next steps.

Mr. Pelliccia stated that he attended an NCCC meeting the day prior at which graduation gowns were discussed. He said that many schools have moved to one color gown, with most others investigating doing the same. Mr. Pelliccia said other districts have noted that when the request to change to one color gown is led by students, it is usually most successful.

Mrs. Davis asked what other districts have done when their colors are blue and white, as blue is usually considered gender specific and white isn't really a color. Mr. Pelliccia stated that some districts have gone to black gowns with a different color sash, while others have combined the school colors into one gown (i.e. blue with white sash).

Mr. Moccio stated that input from all stakeholders is invaluable as this change involves a long-standing tradition. He noted that ultimately, it would be a decision made by the Board of Education. He said that he would like to see the entire class unified with one gown as it is every student's graduation.

Mr. Pelliccia stated that he would meet with the Student Advisory Council, continue to collect data and present back to the Board at the second meeting in January 2019. Mrs. Davis said that she would like to see some gown options that the students are interested in.

Ms. Shegogue asked for the student representatives' opinions. Miss Zopelis stated that personally, she would like to have one color gown, which she feels unifies the school. Ms. Shegogue stated that she would like the students to have considerable input, and she would like to hear from them directly.

C. 2018 – 2019 Financial Report, July 1 – November 21, 2018

Mrs. Diane Peters, Business Manager, provided an update of monthly spending and account balances, and highlight other areas of significance. At this time, 95.10% of the budget has been encumbered or expended.

Item VIII. Public Comment

A member of the audience stated that she doesn't care what color gown the students wear at graduation. However, she is concerned about the fiasco that happened the last time the graduation gowns were discussed and that it doesn't get repeated. She said that social media was used to hurt individuals. She asked that the adults keep the students' safety in mind.

A member of the audience stated that it is important to keep the most vocal students safe. She said that she would like to caution against asking the students to vote. In a situation where majority rules, certain voices go unheard. She said that the message should be unity.

Mrs. Davis responded that student input will be considered, but the decision will be driven by administration and the Board.

A member of the audience stated that leadership and guidance from the adults is important in this process and during discussions about this topic. He said that some voices may be missing from the conversation if no one is advocating on their behalf.

Item IX. Old Business

A. Review and Possible Approval of Board of Education Policy Revisions (Second Read)- 4121- Per Diem Substitute Teachers; 4121.1- Long Term Substitute Teachers; and 5110- Attendance, Excused Absences and Truancy

Mr. Moccio presented that following policies for a second reading:

Policy #4121- Per Diem Substitute Teachers: The policy change would accompany a recruitment campaign to increase the number of substitutes available in the district. The proposed changes include an increase in the rate of pay for substitute teachers from \$80.00 to \$90.00/day. The rate for Connecticut certified teachers is also proposed to increase from \$85.00 to \$95.00/day. An additional rate of \$115.00/day was added for Connecticut retired teachers with 20-years or more experience. Based on last year's information, the cost for substitute teachers would have increased by approximately \$12,000.00. However, savings may be realized by a reduction in the number of teachers covering a classroom during his / her prep (paid at the tutoring rate, which is currently \$33.00/hr.), and in the number of paraprofessionals covering classrooms (paid his/her hourly rate and an additional \$30.00 per day). Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Walsh, that the Board accept the policy as revised(20 years or more of teaching experience in Connecticut will...). Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion. Ms. Bachiochi opposed the motion. The motion carried by majority vote.

Policy #4121.1- Long-Term Substitute Teachers: A language change is proposed. Current language of "The Board reserves the right to exceed this amount for any reason." would be changed to be in alignment with Policy #4121, which reads, "There may be situations, which warrant a higher compensation rate due to extenuating circumstances. In such cases, the Superintendent of Schools may, at his or her discretion, offer a higher rate of compensation for substitutes who possess qualifications that are deemed sufficient to execute the responsibilities of the role." Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board accept the policy as presented. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Policy #5110- Attendance, Excused Absences, and Truancy: There are no language changes within the policy. Language changes are required in the regulation, as references to "family with service needs petition to the Superior Court for truancy purposes" needed to be removed. Mrs. Walsh made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board approve the policy as presented. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Mr. Melnick and Mrs. Walsh voted for the motion, which carried.

Mr. Moccio noted that new district procedures and protocols regarding communication of absences were instituted and communicated to parents this fall. The timing and amount of communication with parents / guardians required by the schools has been updated to be in alignment across the district. A copy of the procedures provided to administrators was made available via the portal.

Item X. New Business

A. Review and Possible Approval of Board of Education Policy Revisions (First Read)- 5125- Student Records- Confidentiality; 6172.3- Home Schooling; 9325- Meeting Conduct; and 9325.2- Order of Business

Mr. Moccio presented the following policies for a first reading:

Policy #5125- Confidentiality and Access to Education Records: In accordance with Public Act 18-125, the district's policy will be updated using Shipman and Goodwin's model policy, which contains clear guidelines detailing how student records should be handled and forms to be used to release and/or transfer confidential student information.

Policy #6172.3- Home Schooling: Additional language and detail was added to the policy regarding the portfolio review required for those students requesting participation in co-curricular activities. The portfolio review is conducted by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Mr. Moccio stated that language was also added to invite parents to an informational meeting with administration to discuss reasons for homeschooling and to review the planned program. He said that currently there are 46 homeschooled students registered with the district. Mrs. Davis requested the number of home-schooled students in other districts, as well as a statewide average.

Policy #9325- Meeting Conduct: Language was added to allow for additional public input during meetings rather than a change in placement of the Public Comment item on the agenda. Research of other districts shows most having a public comment section as one of the first items on the agenda. The proposed language change will allow individual board members to request that the Chairperson allow additional comment from the public.

Policy #9325.2- Order of Business: The agenda item for public comment is being changed from Public "Forum" to Public "Comment" to align with current practice.

Item XI. Personnel Matters

There were no Personnel Matters.

Item XII. Student Matters

There were no Student Matters.

Item XIII. Adjournment

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Davis, 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 7:55 p.m.

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

Sonya Shegogue, Chairperson

Andrea Locke, Secretary