

# Board of Education Regular Meeting #1

Tuesday, January 29, 2008 7:30 PM

Town Campus Hammonasset Room, 10 Campus Drive , Madison, CT 06443

## I. Call to Order / Attendance

## II. Executive Session - 6:30 p.m.

## III. School Community Session

III.A. Recognition: Daniel Hand High School Girls' Soccer Team **Speaker(s):** Anita Rutlin

III.B. Public Participation

IV. Board of Education Student Representatives' Report **Speaker(s):** Emma Norris and Thomas Presti

V. Acting Superintendent's Report **Speaker(s):** Anita Rutlin

V.A. Innovative Program for Cooperative Work Experience **Speaker(s):** Anita Rutlin, Fran Thompson, Pat Drew

V.B. Discussion of the 2008-2009 Budget **Speaker(s):** Anita Rutlin

## VI. Board Member Comments

## VII. Distribution of Executive Summaries from Board Committees / Liaisons

## VIII. Audience Response to Information Presented

IX. Consent Agenda (Items 9.1 - 9.4) (Ref. Policy #9540.2 and #9540.8)

IX.A. Bills Payable: \$512,233.29 (07-08)

IX.B. Line Transfers: \$78,264.00

IX.C. Budget Expenditure Report as of January 24, 2008

IX.D. Acknowledgement: Out of State Travel for Daniel Hand High School (Ref. Policy #6100.16.1)

X. Action Item: Minutes January 22, 2008 Meeting (Ref. Bylaw 9540.8)

XI. Action Item: Minutes of January 24, 2008 Budget Workshop Meeting (Ref. Bylaw 9540.8)

XII. Action Item: Approval of the 2009-2010 School Year Calendar (Ref. Policy 6030)

XIII. Action Item: Approval of 2008-2009 Board of Education Budget (Ref. Policy #3020.7)

## XIV. Old Business

## XV. New Business

## XVI. Future Agenda Items

XVI.A. Report on Tiger Fitness Center

XVII. **Meetings of Importance**

**Speaker(s):** Chairman  
Hale

XVII.A. February 12, 2008-Planning Committee,  
7:30 a.m., Central Office Room B

XVII.B. February 12, 2008-Finance Committee, 5:30  
p.m., Central Office Room B

XVII.C. February 27, 2008-Board of Education  
Presentation of Budget to Board of Selectmen and  
Board of Finance, 7:30 p.m., Hammonasset Room

XVII.D. March 4, 2008-Finance Committee, 5:30  
p.m., Central Office Room B

XVIII. **Adjournment**

Public Participation Guidelines:

Members of the community are invited to speak on topics of interest and / or topics to be addressed in the agenda. The Board of Education may choose to interact with participants, but will not act upon topics that require further study before action is taken. The participation time will be limited to three (3) minutes per person and fifteen (15) minutes overall to guarantee efficient operation of the entire meeting.

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Board of Education Meeting  
January 22, 2008  
Town Campus

Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Chairman Robert Hale at 6:35 p.m.

Present: Bill Clorite; Becky Coffey; Debbie Frey; Harriet Gowanlock; Robert Hale, Seth Klaskin; Robert Ruggiero, Holly Sellers

Also present: Anita Rutlin, Acting Superintendent.

1. Executive Session

MOTION: by Coffey, seconded by Klaskin to enter Executive Session at 6:35 p.m. to discuss personnel and legal issues.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

An issue involving protected student information was discussed.  
Legal issues were discussed.

MOTION: by Clorite, seconded by Gowanlock to adjourn Executive Session at 7:30 p.m.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

The public session of the Board of Education meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Hale at 7:37 p.m. Chairman Hale led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Bill Clorite; Becky Coffey; Debbie Frey; Harriet Gowanlock; Robert Hale; Seth Klaskin; Robert Ruggiero; Holly Sellers

Also present: Anita Rutlin, Acting Superintendent; Barbara Macauley, Acting Assistant Superintendent; administrators; faculty; staff; students; community members.

3. School Community Session

- 3.1. Recognition: Ms. Rutlin recognized the Daniel Hand High School Boys' Cross Country Team on their Class MM State Championship title. Several members of the team, along with their parents and their Coach, Tim Geary, were in attendance. Ms. Rutlin highlighted some of the accomplishments of the Cross Country Team in addition to their State Championship. Mr. Geary stated that this was a great team and one of the hardest working teams he's ever worked with.

### 3.2. Public Participation

No public comments.

## 4. Board of Education Student Representatives' Report

Ms. Norris reported that parents of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be attending a meeting at Daniel Hand High School on January 23, 2008 to talk about course selection and to learn about the Program of Studies.

She next reported on the honors breakfast scheduled for Tuesday, January 29, 2008 for students who received honors and high honors. Ms. Norris stated that more than 600 hundred students made the honor roll for the first trimester.

Ms. Norris also reported that the Connecticut Drama Association will begin rehearsals for their play "Present Tense". This play is student directed, with 22 students participating as cast and crew.

Mr. Presti reported that students will receive their interim report cards on January 24, 2008, which reflect grades from the first half of the second trimester.

He reported that the Boys Indoor Track team won their Hammonasset meet, and the Girls Indoor Track Team tied for first place at the same meet. The Ski Team is up and running as well as the Fencing Team. Mr. Presti stated that many teams are working out in the Tiger Fitness Center between seasons, as well as injured athletes.

Mr. Presti lastly reported that members of the junior class, along with their parents, are beginning to meet with their Guidance Counselors to discuss their college choices and the application process.

Ms. Gowanlock commented that parents were very appreciative of the Administration at Daniel Hand High School for the second trimester open house which was held on January 17, 2008.

Ms. Gowanlock next asked the Student Representatives if they found it difficult to choose their courses two trimesters in advance (i.e., choosing courses for the third trimester prior to beginning the second). Both Ms. Norris and Mr. Presti answered that they have never found it to be a problem, and they have always trusted the advice of their Guidance Counselors in choosing their courses.

## 5. Acting Superintendent's Report

### 5.1. Summary of Fall Sports Survey.

Mr. Craig Semple, Athletic Director, distributed and discussed overview of Fall Sports Records. Much was accomplished by our student athletes in their Fall season.

Mr. Semple then gave an overview on the Fall Sports Survey. He said they survey was very useful and provided a great deal of information. He believes that because the survey was anonymous, the results are a true depiction of how the student athletes felt about their experiences this Fall. Mr. Semple stated that the survey results have been shared with all coaches, and will be shared with the Athletic Councils as well once those are up and running.

Mr. Clorite inquired if this survey was used in any other districts, and if the results could be compared. Mr. Semple responded that Madison is the only district in Connecticut that has used this survey, and as such, this survey will be our benchmark to measure future surveys against. He further stated that it would be most beneficial to conduct the survey every other year, in order to get more quantitative data.

Ms. Gowanlock asked if there was a space on the survey for students to add additional comments; Mr. Semple answered that there was not, adding that the administrative burden of compiling that information would be difficult.

#### 5.2. Discussion: 2008-2009 Madison Public Schools Operational Budget

Ms. Rutlin provided a presentation on the 2008-2009 Budget via a Power Point presentation (on file). This was a continuation from the presentation at the last Board of Education meeting, and focused on comparative data. Some of the areas covered were enrollment history and projections; class size history and projections; K-12 Curriculum Coordination and Articulation; implications for staff growth and instructional times.

Ms. Rutlin answered a question raised as a previous meeting about the number of 11<sup>th</sup> course positions allotted in the budget. There is a total of 0.8 FTE's; 0.3 in English/Language Arts, 0.2 in World Languages and 0.3 in Science.

The discussion continued regarding School Counselors and Ms. Rutlin provided a breakdown of staff by location, along with their caseloads. The counselors in Madison Public Schools fall within state guidelines as far as their caseloads.

Ms. Gowanlock asked Ms. Rutlin to clarify the functions of the position of Student Assistance Counselor. Ms. Rutlin explained that they are part of Madison Youth Services but work with the School Guidance Counselors on issues such as socialization, student problems and substance abuse.

#### 5.3. No Child Left Behind District and School Report

Ms. Rutlin presented an overview of the State of Connecticut No Child Left Behind District and School Reports via a Power Point presentation (on file). This report included results on The Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) analysis; the CMT and CAPT results by three levels (Advanced, Proficient and Basic), and information on the percentage of teachers who are "highly qualified" as defined by NCLB. Ms. Rutlin was exceedingly proud to report that Madison Public School met all indicators across the district and for all sub groups.

Ms. Sellers asked if the high level of progress achieved this year would make it more difficult to achieve the same level of success in years to come based on the requirements of NCLB. Ms. Rutlin answered that the results for Madison Public Schools this year definitely raised the bar for the future, but the district will constantly seek improvements in order to continue to meet the standards set.

#### 5.4. Community Use of Facilities

Prompted by a question from an audience member at the last meeting, Ms. Rutlin reiterated that the policy for use of facilities is very clear. The schools, which have first priority, plan their schedules a season in advance, so there is no way to know what the availability of the facilities will be before that time period. The schools have the top priority for facilities usage, followed by Beach and Rec, and the schedule is then released so other groups can request use of the facilities.

### 6. Board Member Comments

Chairman Hale reported that he, along with Ms. Rutlin, attended a recent meeting at LEARN regarding Secondary School Reform. Chairman Hale reported that some areas have been liberalized and things are moving in the right direction. There is another committee meeting coming up on January 28, 2008.

The CABE Legislative Breakfast is also scheduled for January 28. Ms. Coffey and Mr. Ruggiero are attending to represent Madison Public Schools.

Ms. Coffey stated how much she appreciates the participation at the State level of both the Administration and Chairman Hale.

Ms. Gowanlock stated that she was speaking with a World Languages teacher from Daniel Hand High School, who told her that the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Grade student are performing at an exceptional level because of the increased instructional time afforded World Languages in middle school.

## 7. Distribution of Executive Summaries from Board Committees/Liaisons

### 7.1. Planning Committee

Ms. Frey reported that the Committee met on January 15<sup>th</sup>. The meeting also included the Elementary School Principals, who were present to discuss PreK-4 Programmatic Needs. The Principals are preparing a document addressing how space requirements have changed due to program changes.

The Planning Committee also discussed a progress report on the implementation of the Athletics Advisory Council, as well as the movable bleacher system for the Daniel Hand High School Turf Field. They are waiting for further information to move this project forward.

The Committee received a Facilities Update from William McMinn, Director of Facilities. He reported that the sidewalk has been installed at Daniel Hand High School. He also reported on the recent boiler malfunction at Island Avenue School. The school will operate with one boiler for the remainder of this year, and the other boiler will be replaced for next year.

Ms. Frey stated that this issue necessitated moving the Island Avenue School boiler repair project up and postponing the planned work at Kathleen H. Ryerson School. Therefore, the 2008-2009 Long Term Capital Maintenance Schedule would have to be amended. She requested to add this item to the Agenda and the Board complied.

Ms. Frey reported on the LOCAP meeting which was held on January 10, 2008. The Committee received approval at that meeting to hire a design professional to design the security upgrades for the schools.

Also at that meeting was discussion of Phase I of the Island Avenue School Roof Replacement, scheduled for the 2008-2009 school year. In order to comply with State of Connecticut guidelines for project reimbursement, a Building Committee must be formed by the Town of Madison. She requested to add to the agenda a motion to authorize the Board Chairman to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the Planning Committee be appointed as the Building Committee on this project. The Board complied.

### 7.2. Personnel Committee

The Committee Chairman, John Dean, was not present at this meeting.

### 7.3. Policy Committee

#### 7.3.1. Discussion: Proposed 2009-2010 School Year Calendar

The draft calendar is finalized and has been reviewed by all appropriate parties and will be voted on at the next Board of Education meeting.

7.3.2. Fourth Revision Reading: Policy #4160 Student-Activity Transportation/Vehicles

7.3.3. Fourth Revision Reading: Policy #5100.2.1 Conduct Code for Participation in Extracurricular Activities

No action will be taken on these policies, pending further discussion by the Policy Committee.

7.4. Finance Committee

7.4.1. Discussion: 2008-2009 Budget

Ms. Coffey reported that due to 2007-2008 financial projections, the Board is considering asking the Administration to institute a budget freeze in some areas for the remainder of the year. The specifics of this potential freeze will be discussed at the next meeting.

Ms. Coffey stated that the Budget Workshop meeting held on January 15<sup>th</sup> was informative with a productive give and take of information.

Ms. Coffey asked that any more questions regarding the budget document be forwarded to her by Wednesday in preparation for the January 24<sup>th</sup> Budget Workshop.

7.5. Community Outreach Committee

7.5.1. Discussion: February 29, 2008 Community Outreach Breakfast, Robert H. Brown Middle School

Mr. Klaskin reported that plans are underway and on track for this event. The topic of this meeting will be an introduction of David Klein, the incoming Superintendent to the Madison Public Schools community. Mr. Klaskin stated that any community members that wish to attend should contact the Central Office as soon as possible.

7.6. LEARN Liaison

No report.

8. Audience Response to Information Presented

No comments were offered.

9. Consent Agenda (Items 9.1. – 9.4.)

Mr. Clorite questioned the amount of the Line Transfers for the month. Ms. Rutlin explained that the amount is mainly due to staff movement (moving dollars from one staffing account to another) and usually happens twice a year when there is a large salary reconciliation.

Ms. Sellers commented on the generous donations to Walter C. Polson Middle School from their PTO. Discussion ensued and the Board agreed that these are both very worthwhile causes, and thanked the Walter C. Polson PTO for these donations.

9.1. Bills Payable: \$2,293.82 (06/07) & \$326,006.90 (07/08)

9.2. Line Transfers: \$183,767.58

9.3. Donation: \$1,000 for New Haven Symphony & Orchestra Workshops and Concert from Walter C. Polson PTO

9.4. Donation: \$1,043.50 for postage for "Operation Kids Care" from Walter C. Polson PTO

MOTION by Sellers, seconded by Clorite to approve the Consent Agenda.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

10. Action Item: Minutes January 8, 2008 Meeting

MOTION: by Frey, seconded by Coffey to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2008 meeting.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Sellers

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

11. Action Item: Minutes January 15, 2008 Board of Education Budget Workshop Meeting

MOTION: by Coffey, seconded by Sellers to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2008 Board of Education Budget Workshop meeting.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Klaskin

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

12. Action Item: Approval of the amended 2008-2009 Long Term Capital Maintenance Schedule.

MOTION: by Frey, seconded by Klaskin to amend the 2008-2009 Long Term Capital Maintenance Schedule.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

13. Action Item: Authorize the Board Chair to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that members of the Planning Committee be appointed as the Island Avenue Building Committee for the upcoming roof replacement project.

MOTION: by Frey, seconded by Klaskin to authorize the Board Chair to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that members of the Planning Committee be appointed as the Island Avenue Building Committee for the upcoming roof replacement project.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

14. Old Business

14.1. Discussion: February Board of Education Meeting Schedule

The Board of Education meeting originally scheduled for February 5, 2008 was moved to January 29, 2008, which resulted in no Board meeting scheduled for February. However, there is still a need to approve the bills for payment and Ms. Coffey offered that the Finance Committee could meet on February 12, 2008 for this purpose.

MOTION: by Coffey, seconded by Klaskin to authorize the Finance Committee to approve the bills for February.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Mr. Klaskin asked if the rest of the Board members could review those bills prior to the Finance Committee meeting, as they normally do before a regular Board meeting. The list will be posted on CABA E-Meeting so all Board members can review the list of bills.

15. New Business

16. Future Agenda Items

An update on Tiger Fitness Center will take place at a future meeting.

17. Meetings of Importance

Chairman Hale added one meeting to this list: the February 27, 2008 Board of Education Presentation of the Budget to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance.

18. Adjournment

MOTION: by Ruggiero, seconded by Gowanlock to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

Submitted for approval at the 01/29/08 Board of Education Meeting  
dmd

Madison Public Schools  
Board of Education Budget Workshop  
Community Room, Madison Police Department  
January 24, 2008

Minutes

The Board of Education Budget Workshop was called to order by Chairman Robert Hale at 5:30 p.m. Chairman Hale led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Bill Clorite; Becky Coffey; John Dean; Debbie Frey; Harriet Gowanlock; Robert Hale; Robert Ruggiero

Also present: Anita Rutlin, Acting Superintendent; Barbara Macauley, Acting Assistant Superintendent; district administrators; faculty, staff and community members.

Chairman Hale stated it was the consensus of the Board of Education to take action on the Budget at their meeting on January 29, 2008. Recommendations will then be made to the administrators before the budget is presented to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance.

Ms. Rutlin distributed a revised/updated copy of the Comprehensive Budget Detail section of the budget document, and a summary of Preliminary Budget Reductions.

Ms. Coffey stated that the Comprehensive Budget reflects an 11% increase in the district's 2008-2009 contribution to the shared town/school health insurance reserve. She reported that the Health Insurance Consultant recommended 12% this month but she is optimistic that, like in past years, the total payment recommended will drop in March after the district has two more months of health insurance claims experience in this fiscal year. Ms. Coffey stated that it is believed that the 11% is completely sufficient and that there is additional revenue this year not normally reflected, i.e. the new teachers' contract and the additional two months of experience between now and March.

Seth Klaskin entered the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

Ms. Coffey next addressed questions that were raised at the last Budget Workshop meeting. She asked Dr. Macauley to speak to the requested 8.52% budget increase for Special Education.

Dr. Macauley stated that some of the costs included in the Special Education section, such as transportation, postage, phones, are referenced in the Cost of Doing Business on the sheet entitled Major Factors. Other factors are the contractual increases for certified and non-certified staff, resulting in salary increases ranging from 5.4% - 11.9%; hiring dedicated Occupational Therapists ( these services were previously outsourced); and consultative fees.

Ms. Gowanlock inquired if it would be more cost effective to hire a dedicated consultative staff member rather than outsourcing services with contracted consultants. Dr. Macauley responded that it probably would not be at this time, but a dedicated ADA Consultant might be considered at some point in the future.

Bill McMinn, Director of Facilities, addressed the Board regarding the staff addition of an HVAC Specialist and distributed a memorandum of explanation regarding the position. Mr. McMinn stated that this position would save the district the costs of contracting with outside specialists. Ms. Gowanlock asked how much was spent on outside contractors; Mr. McMinn did not have a specific amount but stated that any time there is a problem with one of the roof top air conditioning units, for example, it costs a minimum of \$1,000 per day for an outside company to come to Madison. Having an HVAC specialist on staff would reduce (though not completely eliminate) the need for outside contractors.

Mr. Klaskin asked if this person would be able to perform other duties, and Mr. McMinn responded that all maintenance staff members are cross-trained and this position would help to alleviate some of the issues caused by the existing shortage of staff in this area.

Mr. Klaskin also asked if overtime costs are funded in the budget. Mr. McMinn answered that he does not normally approve overtime for reasons such as covering shifts due to absences. However, occasionally there are overtime costs for special circumstances such as the NEASC visits, which took place on weekends and necessitated custodial staff in the schools.

Mr. McMinn also discussed the 5.75% requested increase for utility expenses in the budget. He explained that this is a very difficult expenditure to predict and he tries to take the utility expenses as a whole and balance them out.

Mr. Clorite stated that he had met recently with members of the Guilford Board of Education and their costs for heating and fuel oil are much lower than those in Madison. He inquired as to whether Madison could investigate how Guilford is securing these reduced costs.

Arthur Sickle, Director of Administrative Services, addressed the Board and responded that he would research the busing costs and compare with Guilford's costs. He did state that all vehicles in Madison use diesel fuel; he is not sure if that is the case for Guilford.

Mr. McMinn stated that he would research the energy costs and compare Madison's costs with those incurred by the Facilities Department in Guilford.

Ms. Coffey stated that the Energy Committee should be made aware of this and they may be able to get some information.

Mr. Klaskin asked if Madison participates in regional bids for utilities and fuel oil costs. Mr. Sickle responded that we do belong to a Consortium, but no benefit has been recognized.

Mr. Dean inquired why we pay gross receipt tax on diesel fuel. Mr. Sickle responded that this tax applies to any fuel not used for a heating function.

As a matter of information, Mr. McMinn notified the Board of a violation letter that will have to be posted at Robert H. Brown Middle School and Kathleen H. Ryerson School. A scheduled September sampling of the well water did not take place and Madison received a violation that must be posted. Mr. McMinn stressed that the water is and was safe, and the only reason for the violation was that the sample was not taken in a timely manner.

The Board next received a copy of the Athletic Department Budget. Ms. Coffey stated that it was a lengthy document that the Board has not seen prior to this workshop, and asked that everyone review it carefully and forward any questions to her.

Craig Semple, Director of Athletics, provided additional information regarding the registration fees for ice hockey and how the fees relate to the Madison Ice Hockey Association. Mr. Semple also noted that there were formula errors in the totals page; they will be corrected and an updated version will be forwarded to all Board members.

Ms. Coffey next directed the discussion to the Budget as a whole.

Mr. Dean inquired about the new positions in the 08-09 budget. Ms. Rutlin explained that 1 was for the HVAC Specialist; 1 was for the Reading Specialist at the Middle School level; 1 was for the Science Specialist at the Elementary School level and the 0.8 was for the Security/In School Suspension position at Daniel Hand High School.

A revised 2008-2009 Requested Budget / Madison Public Schools by Component and a sheet summarizing Preliminary Budget Reductions for 2008-2009 were distributed. (The preliminary budget reductions sheet reflected proposed reductions totaling \$99,315 in various objects within the district's 2008-2009 operating budget. Also reflected on the sheet was a reallocation of funds within district accounts to put an additional \$50,000 into the Labor and Legal Services object for the 2008-2009 budget. The listed budget reductions would reduce the district's operating budget – before these reductions, at a 6.29% increase over last year - to a 6% increase.)

Ms. Gowanlock inquired as to what the bottom line was assuming the 11% health insurance increase and these reductions. Chairman Hale responded with reductions it would be 5.98%. Chairman Hale pointed out that a 5.66% increase to 9101, General Education, was not a large increase.

Ms. Sellers advised everyone to look at dollar amounts – not just percentages. She further stated that with regard to the 25% requested increase in School Facilities / Daily Services, costs in that area have been starved for a long time.

Ms. Rutlin stated that the focus during the Administrative Council meeting was to reduce the budget in areas as far from the classroom as possible.

A question was raised about the reduction in dollars for the Blackboard Technology Program. Mr. Sickle stated that the proposed reduction will allow us to maintain our current 2,000 seat license. He went on to say that he believes not upgrading as originally planned will not have a major impact on the lower grades.

Mr. Sickle stated that the 2,000 seat license covers the Daniel Hand High School students and staff, and will also allow for some usage at the 8<sup>th</sup> and then 7<sup>th</sup> Grade levels. The original intent was for it to be used for Grades 5 and up, but Mr. Sickle reported that Grades 5 and 6 are not utilizing it at this time.

Ms. Gowanlock asked if there are similar products on the market. Mr. Sickle responded that we will either look to improve our existing technology or investigate other options.

Ms. Gowanlock also asked if the reduction will stifle participation. Frank Henderson, Principal of Walter C. Polson Middle School stated that teachers in Grades 5 through 8 have been trained under Mr. Sickle. Mr. Henderson said that he didn't believe any momentum would be lost and the teachers will still have involvement.

Daniel Zittoun, Assistant Principal at Daniel Hand High School further stated that one of fundamental advantages of any technology based program is that once you are trained in one, you are usually able to use other similar programs.

Mr. Klaskin asked if the Blackboard Program wasn't originally intended as a tool for parents to use too. Mr. Sickle responded that communications are best when the Grade Book feature is utilized, and it is not at this time. He hopes to see improvements in the functionality of the program with the next release (8.0). Madison will receive the updated version.

Mr. Sickle further stated that although the Blackboard Program is marketed for Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade, its largest market is at the university level. Blackboard is developing the K-12 market; he therefore reiterated this reduction to the budget will not have a negative impact on the district next year.

Ms. Coffey next asked the Board members to summarize their thoughts on the Budget as presented with the preliminary reductions.

Ms. Sellers asked if the reallocation of funding for legal expenditures was made after the \$107,000 reduction, and Ms. Coffey responded that it was. Ms. Sellers strongly stated that she is not happy with the reduction in the area of Staff Development. She thought the reductions to Print Collections would have less of an impact.

A question was raised about the reductions to the extracurricular stipends for Walter C. Polson Middle School and Robert H. Brown Middle School. Mr. Henderson replied that there is new money, just less than originally projected, and the programs can still be run with modest fees. He stated that we are still increasing extracurricular activities for middle school students.

Mr. Ruggiero stated that he supports the budget as presented.

Ms. Frey stated that she wants to see the bottom line as close to 6% as possible. She further stated that she would like to see the Staff Development allocation back to \$225.00 per FTE.

Ms. Coffey stated that she would also like to see the Staff Development allocation at \$225.00, and that she would like the bottom line as close to 6% as possible.

Mr. Clorite stated that he too would like to be at 6%, and he hopes some savings can be realized in the areas of transportation and heating costs.

Ms. Gowanlock stated that she has no problem going forward with the Budget as currently presented, at 6.2%. She stated that in her opinion, it is not worth it to take any more away from the students to make up the 0.2%. She also highly values Professional Development and would like to see that reallocated back to \$250.00 per FTE.

Mr. Klaskin mirrored Ms. Gowanlock's comments.

Mr. Dean stated that he believes a bottom line of 6% is very reasonable and will pass at first referendum.

Chairman Hale stated that he is in favor of keeping the reductions as shown on the page distributed, with the exception of the Professional Development; he would like to see that remain at \$225.00, which would make for a bottom line of 6.02%.

Adjournment.

There was a MOTION by Dean, seconded by Gowanlock to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 p.m.

AYES: Clorite, Coffey, Dean, Frey, Gowanlock, Hale, Klaskin, Ruggiero, Sellers

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 9-0