

**GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GROTON, CONNECTICUT**

(*Attachments are available upon request in the Superintendent's Office.)

Regular Meeting

March 23, 2015

The regular meeting of the Groton Board of Education was held on March 23, 2015, in CR 1 of the Town Hall Annex.

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Kim Watson, Board Chairperson, at 6:10 p.m.

The first order of business was the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag led by Jamal Neal.

PRESENT

Mrs. Kim Shepardson Watson, Chairperson
Mrs. Rita Volkmann, Vice Chairperson
Dr. Andrea Ackerman
Mrs. Katrina Fitzgerald
Mrs. Elizabeth Gianacoplos

Dr. Michael Graner, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Susan Austin, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Samuel Kilpatrick, Director of Buildings and Grounds
Ms. Don Meltabarger, Business Manager
Mr. Jamal Neal, Student Representative

ABSENT

Dr. Kirsten Hoyt
Mrs. Patricia Doyle
Ms. Mary Kelly
Mr. Joey Schick

Mrs. Denise Doolittle, Director of Pupil
Personnel Services

Mr. Michael Emery, Director of Teaching and
Learning

Mr. Kevin Lemoi, Director of Technology
Services

Mrs. Laurie LePine, Director of Human
Resources

Miss Mackenzie Lyon, Student Representative

The Superintendent shared gifts from students in the district to the Board members in honor of Board Appreciation Month.

B. RECOGNITION AND PARTICIPATION AND DELEGATIONS

NONE

C. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

1. Mrs. Bobbi Jo Cini, 316 Groton Long Point Road, addressed several issues:
 - She thanked the Board for volunteering their time to Groton;
 - She clarified her point of view regarding the building of new schools by sharing a letter given to her by a student [ATTACHMENT #1] who is in 10th grade college prep classes, and is poorly written. She suggested that the Board spend district funds in the classroom rather than in building new schools;
 - She stated that she was concerned with the lack of full weeks of schools.

D. STUDENT LIAISON REPORT

The student representative reported:

- He stated that juniors made over \$200 for their St. Patrick's Day parade.
- The seniors will be having a meeting with Mr. Arcarese on April 11, 2015 to discuss end of the year activities.
- He stated that Mr. Falcon was a great success. Jamal was named Mr. Falcon.
- He noted that Prom was coming up in May.
- He noted upcoming events:
 - Chorus Concert on Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.
 - Band Concert on April 9, 2015
 - Beatle Mania on Friday
 - Chamber Choir is going to Carnegie Hall on March 27, 2015
- Baseball is holding try outs this week.
- Track began today.

II. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

Mrs. Gianacoplos noted that the use of FMS is on the Town Council's agenda for tomorrow night.

Mrs. Watson acknowledged Mrs. Cini's concern in regard to the snow days in the calendar and that new school buildings were in the hands of the School Facilities Task Force. Mrs. Watson encouraged Mrs. Cini to attend that meeting to share her concerns.

III. SUPERINTENDENT AND ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

- **Science Article Presentation by Alison Cochrane**
Dr. Graner introduced Alison Cochrane, Cutler Middle School Teacher, who gave an overview of her article which involved a 3 week project for her students relative to building a bridge.

III. SUPERINTENDENT AND ADMINISTRATION REPORTS – cont.

➤ **Recognition of the BEYA STEM Award to Erica Watson**

Mr. John Jones, Principal of West Side Middle School, introduced Erica Watson, West Side Middle Science Teacher, who gave an overview of the BEYA STEM Award which she had the honor of winning. She shared that her father also won the award in 1986. She further stated that she has been attending the conference since she was a teenager and that she has taken her children to the conference as well.

➤ **Update regarding the Common Core Standards**

Ms. Austin gave recognition to the two teachers for their efforts as a good example of Common Core Standards. She noted that the district was bringing Teachers College (Columbia University) to help teachers with writer's workshops to look at literacy in its entity; performance task with building bridges; classroom and department tests; and state tests of other skills. She will be sending a letter to families and a schedule of assessments after the April break.

➤ **Update regarding the 2015-2016 Budget**

➤ **Discussion regarding proposed Early Release Days**

Dr. Graner and Ms. Austin shared the proposed Early Release Days proposal [ATTACHMENT #2] for next year. This would involve 6 early release days for all grades.

Mrs. Volkmann asked for a draft copy of the calendar showing the early release days.

A. REPORTS AND INFORMATION FROM THE STAFF

1. Business Manager Report

- a. **FY15** – Mr. Meltabarger shared the FY 2015 Budget Summary [ATTACHMENT #3].
- b. **2015-2016 Budget Update** – Mr. Meltabarger noted the additional section of the proposed 2015-2016 budget for inclusion in the Board members budget book. He also shared the Special Education budget breakdown for FY 2016 [ATTACHMENT #4].

Mr. Meltabarger also shared a summary of the district's health insurance [ATTACHMENT #5].

2. Director of Buildings and Grounds Report

Mr. Kilpatrick reported:

- He shared a picture of the SBB flat roof that showed damage done to the roof due to the weather.

A. REPORTS AND INFORMATION FROM THE STAFF – cont.

- He stated that the FHS sign is not up yet and that the CMS window will be installed during the April break.
- The security reimbursement grant is ready to go to the State.
- He is preparing the CB asbestos grant application which will be done this summer.
- He is going out to bid for the Fire Alarm panel at WSM and hope to have it completed by the April break.
- He is working with Dr. Graner and Ms. Austin to re-establish a District Safety and Security Committee.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Finance/Facilities Committee:

Dr. Ackerman stated that the Finance/Facilities Committee met on March 26, 2015 and discussed all the projects noted by Mr. Kilpatrick.

2. Policy Committee:

Dr. Graner stated that the Policy Committee met on March 2, 2015 and discussed the Attendance policy, the Facilities Use for Profit policy, and Advertisement Policy.

3. Curriculum Committee:

There was no report.

4. Negotiations Committee:

There was no report.

5. LEARN:

Mrs. Volkmann stated that LEARN met last Thursday. She stated that Dr. Howley and Dr. Cummings discussed the changes to the Teacher Evaluation plan. They are exploring alternatives to BloomBoard to warehouse data; the Superintendents are working closely with staff on the Administrator Evaluation document.

6. Groton Parent Council:

Mrs. Fitzgerald stated that the Groton Parent Council met on March 10, 2015 and discussed early release day proposal, the PD day on March 1, 2015 and the budget. The next Groton Parent Council meeting will be May 12, 2015 at FHS, at 5:30 p.m.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS – cont.

7. Town & City Councils/RTM/Board Liaison Committee:
Dr. Graner stated that the Town & City Councils/RTM/Board Liaison Committee met March 4, 2015 and discussed the budget and school facilities.
8. GEA/AGSA/BOE Liaison Committee:
There was no report. It was noted that the next meeting will be April 8, 2015 at 4:30 p.m.
9. School Facilities Task Force:
Mrs. Fitzgerald stated that the School Facilities Task Force met on March 26, 2015. She stated that there was no quorum; however, they went ahead with the meeting for informational purposes. They had breakout groups to discuss different options. The next step is to develop a plan to go to the public and conduct a survey. The School Facilities Task Force will meet again on March 26, 2015.
10. Groton Scholarship: There was no report.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. RESOLUTION ACCEPTING BOARD MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the February 23, 2015 and the Special Meetings of February 11 (Public Hearing & Budget Worksession), 18, and March 9, 2015, are hereby accepted and approved.

2. RESOLUTION ACCEPTING WARRANTS

RESOLVED, that the Warrant dated March 27, 2015, are hereby accepted and approved.

A. **CONSENT CALENDAR** – cont.

3. RESOLUTION ACCEPTING GIFTS

RESOLVED, that the Board hereby accepts gifts to the Groton Public School as follows:

- **Target Take Charge of Education has made a donation of \$38.24 to Pleasant Valley School.**
- **Pfizer United Way Campaign (Everett Wilhelm) has made a donation of \$357.72 to the Fitch High School Robotics Team.**
- **Mable Hauck has made a donation of \$100.00 to the Fitch High School Robotics Team.**

A motion was made by Mrs. Gianacoplos and seconded by Mrs. Volkmann.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

B. **OLD BUSINESS**

NONE

C. **NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING A FIRST READING OF REVISION TO POLICY P 5113 ATTENDANCE [ATTACHMENT #6]**

A motion was made by Mrs. Fitzgerald and seconded by Mrs. Volkmann to approved Policy P 5113 Attendance as a first reading.

PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

- 2. RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO SIGN THE ADDENDEM TO THE AGREEMENT FOR CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS HEALTHY FOOD CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

C. NEW BUSINESS – cont.

A motion was made by Mrs. Fitzgerald and seconded by Mrs. Gianacoplos to authorize the Superintendent to sign the addendum to the agreement for Child Nutrition Programs Healthy Food Certification statement.

PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

3. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING RECOMMENDATION FOR AN EARLY RELEASE DAY ON GOOD FRIDAY

A motion was made by Dr. Ackerman and seconded by Mrs. Volkmann that if the Groton Public Schools has a district-wide cancellation day between March 24, 2015 and April 2, 2015, the district will have school on April 3, 2015.

YES – Watson, Volkmann, Ackerman, Gianacoplos

NO – Fitzgerald

PASSED

4. RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF ADMINISTRATION PROFESSIONALS' DAY AND WEEK

WHEREAS, Wednesday, April 22, 2015, has been designated as Administrative Professionals' Day and April 19-25, 2015 has been designated as Administrative Professionals' Week, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education wishes to express its appreciation and gratitude to all administrative professionals/secretaries who serve the Groton Public Schools; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education and Michael Graner, Superintendent of Schools, recognizes their many contributions to the children of the district and their important role in assuring the orderly and efficient operation of all district programs.

A motion was made by Mrs. Volkmann and seconded by Mrs. Gianacoplos.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

C. NEW BUSINESS – cont.

2. RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF PARAPROFESSIONAL APPRECIATION DAY

WHEREAS, Monday, April 6, 2015, has been designated as Paraprofessional Appreciation Day, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education wishes to express its appreciation and gratitude to all paraprofessionals who serve the Groton Public Schools; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education and Michael Graner, Superintendent of Schools, recognizes their many contributions to the children of the district and their important role in assuring the orderly and efficient operation of all district programs.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gianacoplos and seconded by Mrs. Fitzgerald.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

VI. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

A. LETTERS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND COMMENTS

1. Mrs. Fitzgerald noted several e-mails.
2. Mrs. Gianacoplos noted the same e-mails.
3. Mrs. Volkmann asked several questions:
 - Status of the staff copyright violations;
 - What is the process for donation of a book in memory of someone; she would like to see this reinstated;
 - She noted an article on the Robotics Team who started their season with a win and asked if a donation to the district is tax deductible?Mrs. Volkmann thanked the students of S. B. Butler School for their letters.
4. Dr. Ackerman noted the partnership with Whittles Farm and stated that she was glad to see that Ricky Whittle was still involved with the Groton Public Schools. He was a former student of hers.
5. Mrs. Watson noted:
 - That she received the same e-mails;
 - That Dr. Jed Baker would be the speaker at a Light House Vocational Program and they are sponsoring an autism conference on May 1, 2015 at the Great Neck Country Club, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The topic is “No More Meltdowns” Preventing Challenging Behaviors, Teaching Social Skills and Reducing Bullying.

A. LETTERS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND COMMENTS – cont.

- Reminder to Board members interested in attending the two day training May 12-13, 2015 entitled, *Supporting Military Children through School Transitions: Foundations*, at the Camp Niantic Army National Guard Training Site in Niantic.

VII. ADVANCE PLANNING

A. Future Meeting Dates and Calendar Items

As noted in the agenda.

B. Suggested Agenda Items

Mrs. Gianacoplos requested an update at a COW meeting on the Teacher/Administrator Evaluation Plan.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Dr. Ackerman and seconded by Mrs. Volkmann to adjourn at 8:03 p.m.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY