

**GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GROTON, CONNECTICUT**

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

Committee of the Whole

September 8, 2014

A Committee of the Whole meeting of the Groton Board of Education was held on September 8, 2014, in multi-purpose room of Mary Morrisson School.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Rita Volkmann, Board Chairperson, at 6:00 p.m.

The first order of business was the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Mrs. Valerie Nelson.

PRESENT

Mrs. Rita Volkmann, Chairperson
Mrs. Kim Shepardson Watson, Vice Chairperson
Dr. Andrea Ackerman
Mrs. Patricia Doyle
Mrs. Katrina Fitzgerald
Mrs. Elizabeth Gianacoplos
Ms. Mary Kelly
Mr. Joey Schick

ABSENT

Dr. Kirsten E. Hoyt

Dr. Michael Graner, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Susan Austin, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Samuel Kilpatrick, Director of Buildings and Grounds

1. Approval of minutes of August 11, 2014

A motion was made by Ms. Kelly and seconded by Dr. Ackerman to approve the minutes of August 11, 2014.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

2. Report on the 2014 MCEC Conference – This report was given by Rita Volkmann, Andrea Ackerman and Valerie Nelson who attended the 2014 MCEC Conference.

Mrs. Nelson noted that the conference drummed home the challenges of the military families and explained some of those challenges which she experienced firsthand as the Principal of Charles Barnum School. She also noted Families and Teachers Guides for supporting the military families.

Dr. Ackerman stated that she was most impressed with the military kids who attended the conference.

Mrs. Volkmann stated that the theme – Keeping the Promise; that there were enrichment classes to attend both in the morning and the evening; and SAT changes as well as PSAT and AP exams.

Mrs. Nelson stated that the 2015 Conference would be back in Washington at the same location.

3. Update on the pilot of the Cell Phone Policy

Mrs. McGuire stated that the use of cell phones was allowed in the cafeteria and between classes and it was very successful. She stated that teachers allowed the use of cell phone in their classes. She noted that upon the first violation, the cell phone was taken away and the parent was called; second violation, the cell phone was taken and the parent had to pick it up.

Mrs. Gianacoplos asked what is happening at the middle school regarding cell phone use.

4. Update on the Freshman Seminar Class – This report was presented by Mr. McKenna, Assistant Principal of FHS, and Mrs. Deborah Jenkins, FHS Business Education Teacher.

Mr. McKenna stated that the Freshman Seminar Class has been in effect since 2010 and is a full year course. Mr. McKenna gave a brief overview of the class.

Mrs. Jenkins stated that she has been teaching the class from the start. She further stated that they are developing a Community Service project.

5. Review of the revised Board of Education Handbook

The Board reviewed the revised Board Handbook.

6. Update on September 21, 2014 Board Retreat

Dr. Graner stated that the September 21, 2014 Board Retreat will be held at the Nautilus Museum from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

7. Update regarding the Racial Imbalance letter

Dr. Graner gave an overview of the Racial Imbalance letter dated May 12, 2014 and shared his proposed response.

8. Update regarding the Director of Teaching and Learning

Ms. Austin stated that the posting closed last Friday; there were 25 candidates – 5 inside and 20 outside. She stated that they will hold interviews as quickly as possible.

9. Discussion regarding advertising banner on school facilities

Dr. Graner stated that Thames Valley Communication (TVC) has made a request to hang banners on the football field and gym as well as provide \$3,500 to the district. Dr. Graner stated that no advertising is permitted in Groton Schools.

It was noted that presently the Policy Committee is reviewing the district policy regarding this matter and that nothing should be done with this request until the Policy Committee has completed their review.

Mrs. Volkmann noted the passing of Catherine Kolnaski. Discussion ensued as to what the district should do in remembrance of Catherine Kolnaski in honor of her extensive service to the Town and student of Groton.

10. Review of the Referral List

11. Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Schick and seconded by Mrs. Watson to adjourn at 8:18 p.m.

PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY