

**APPROVED
MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
November 10, 2015**

PLACE:

Darien Board of Education
Meeting Room
7:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Harman, Chair; Mesdames Hagerty-Ross, Stein, Zuro, Sullivan and McNamara; and Messrs. Dineen, Martens and Burke.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

Dr. Dan Brenner, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Susie DaSilva, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Ms. Shirley Klein, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education and Student Services; Mr. Michael Feeney, Director of Finance and Operations; Ms. Marjorie Cion, Director of Human Resources.

VISITORS:

Approximately 25.

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Harman called the meeting to order at 7:39 p.m. He said the next Regular BOE meeting would be scheduled for Tuesday, November 24, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. in the Board of Education Meeting Room.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT.

Mr. Harman welcomed back the three incumbent Board members, Ms. Zuro, Ms. Stein and Ms. Hagerty-Ross and congratulated them on their re-election. He also thanked Ms. Hagerty-Ross for her past leadership during a difficult time and her willingness to remain on the Board during the transition.

PUBLIC COMMENT.

Ms. Susan Vogel, 10 Linda Lane, came forward and explained how the Reiss Fund began as a Board of Education fund for Darien teachers and would soon begin their annual appeal for donations at reissfund.org.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT.

Dr. Brenner said that he had the recent opportunity to watch both the DHS boys and girls soccer teams. On Friday, Dr. Brenner visited Ox Ridge and Hindley Schools, where the students were celebrating Veteran's Day. The level of honor and interest in the rooms was amazing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

Town of Darien
Darien Board of Education
Regular Meeting
November 10, 2015

October 27, 2015 Special Meeting and Executive Session

- ** MS. HAGERTY-ROSS MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING AND EXECUTIVE SESSION ON OCTOBER 27, 2015.**
- ** MS. SULLIVAN SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED WITH EIGHT IN FAVOR (HAGERTY-ROSS, HARMAN, ZURO, STEIN, MARTENS, MCNAMARA, SULLIVAN AND DINEEN) AND ONE ABSTENTION (BURKE).**

October 27, 2015 Regular Meeting

- ** MS. STEIN MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON OCTOBER 27, 2015.**
- ** MR. DINEEN SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS.

There were no reports at this time.

PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS.

A. PRESENTATION BY REISS FUND SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT. (File #s2420 and 2421)

Dr. Da Silva gave a brief history of the Reiss Fund as outlined in her memo dated November 5, 2015. She thanked everyone who made the Scholarship Fund possible, including the donors.

Hindley teacher, Ms. Jeanne Turschmann came forward to present an overview of her experiences at the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) National Conference as outlined in her PowerPoint presentation.

Board question and response: a) **Is there a way for the entire elementary faculty to participate?** (Ms. Turschmann said that the work was already breaking out in the various Darien schools.)

B. DISCUSSION ON COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS AND MATH PRACTICES AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

Dr. Da Silva introduced new administrator Ms. Linda Johnson to the community. Ms. Johnson came forward and narrated a PowerPoint presentation (File #2422) on developing parents understanding of math standards and practices. She detailed a series of upcoming planned workshops for parents.

Board comments and questions and Administration's responses: a) **Would it be valuable to talk about the various resources the District has for the parents to support these curriculum goals?** (Ms. Johnson said that she planned to show the different resources, whether it is a website or an app for the parents. She hadn't thought about connecting the resources in the first workshop, which will be focused on developing an understanding of the Common Core. This could be discussed at the second workshop in January. Dr. Brenner said that there would be more communication with the parents about the resources in the coming months. It is being developed.) b) **One of the biggest changes with the Common Core is the testing and SBAC. I would**

imagine the parents would want to understand what the test questions would look like and how they would interface with the curriculum. (Dr. Brenner said that there would be collaboration between Dr. DaSilva and Ms. Johnson. Ms. Johnson said that the parents naturally wonder how the SBAC connects to the Common Core. It is a consideration that needs to be kept in the back of their mind as they talk about the SBAC.)

C. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON CONTEMPLATED GIFTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAMS: FOOTBALL PROGRAM AND WINTER SPORTS TEAMS.

The Blue Wave Booster Club Contemplated Gift Form (File #s2423 and 2424)

(Gymnastics Team Banner and Sign, Girls Hockey, Squash subscription, Squash Banner, Wrestling, Boys and Girls Swimming, Girls Basketball) Dr. Brenner gave a brief overview of the various details involved with the gifts from the Blue Wave Booster Club.

Board comments and questions and Administration's responses: a) **Will we return to the procedural meeting where these types of gifts are presented before being voted on by the full Board?** (Mr. Harman said that this was part of the discussion that still needed to take place regarding the role of the committees. However, these two gifts have a time constraint regarding the season. Ms. Hagerty-Ross pointed out that on the smaller gifts, there was no need to call a committee meeting.) b) **Where will the power training equipment for the boys and girls swim team be housed?** (Dr. Brenner said it will most likely be housed at the Y during the season.) c) **Would you briefly describe the process for how the Booster Club decides what to donate?** (Mr. Manfredonia came forward and said that the coaches have an opportunity to make a request. Some do and some don't. The suggestions are given to him and he reviews the items for appropriateness.) d) **So the Booster Club goes directly to the coaches?** (Dr. Brenner clarified that the Booster Club contacts the coaches through Mr. Manfredonia. They receive their information from the coaches through Mr. Manfredonia.) e) **And Mr. Manfredonia decides whether what they ask for is appropriate?** (Correct and whether this is balanced between the girls and boys teams.)

The New York Jets Football Team (A one-time donation to the football program in honor of Mr. Rob Trifone, named as Coach of the Week after achieving the coaching milestone of 200 career wins.)

Dr. Brenner stated that this gift was unsolicited. The NY Jets have decided to donate \$2,000 to the football program in his name. There has been some discussion about purchasing capes for the team members and the cheerleaders. The capes would be owned by the District.

Board comment and Administration's response: a) **It is quite an honor for Mr. Trifone to be recognized that way.** (Dr. Brenner agreed.)

**** MR. MARTENS MOVED TO ACCEPT THE CONTEMPLATED GIFTS FOR THE DARIEN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS TEAMS FROM THE FOLLOWING: THE BLUE WAVE BOOSTER CLUB AND THE NEW YORK JETS FOOTBALL TEAM.**

**** MS. MCNAMARA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

D. DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED UNIFIED SPORTS PROGRAM FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON CONTEMPLATED GIFT: CONNECTICUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION. (File #2425)

Mr. Manfredonia came forward to give an overview of Unified Sports, a program that pairs up special needs athletes with other athletes to play various sports. This is an arm of the Special Olympics. The two sports that would be offered this year would be basketball and track and field. The \$2,000 grant would serve to initiate the program.

Board comments and questions and Administration's responses: a) **This is an excellent program. When will basketball start?** (Mr. Manfredonia said that it would start in early December.) b) **How will this be advertised to students?** (Mr. Manfredonia said they've already started conversations about this. Dr. Brenner commented that when the students who might not otherwise have this type of opportunity to get out and play in front of an audience, it is amazing.) The Board then viewed a brief news broadcast about the Unified Sports basketball program. c) **The slide states that these will be students without intellectual disabilities?** (Mr. Manfredonia explained that there is a range of athletes with disabilities in the program. Some have cognitive disabilities; others have different disabilities.) d) **So how are you going to choose the typicals?** (Mr. Manfredonia said that the opportunity would be offered to the entire student body.) e) **First come, first serve?** (Dr. Brenner said that it hadn't been totally sorted out just yet. While the staff does not want to turn potential athletes away, this is just the first step. The staff will need to figure out how to manage this.) f) **Many people are familiar with the Challenger Baseball program and the wait list for that program is huge. The connection between the students and the high school volunteers is incredible.** (Dr. Brenner said that there are a number of ways to handle the program and if the numbers are what they anticipate, there are other programs that allow the students to participate. Dr. Brenner said that he had seen one time bowling, miniature golf, and soccer. If there is a momentum, the staff could get creative. This is just a first step.)

**** MS. HAGERTY-ROSS MOVED TO ACCEPT THE CONTEMPLATED GIFT FOR A UNIFIED SPORTS PROGRAM FOR DARIEN HIGH SCHOOL.**

**** MS. ZURO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

E. UPDATE ON 2015-16 CAPITAL WORK.

Mr. Lynch came forward and reviewed the various Capital projects as outlined in the memorandum dated November 4, 2015 and a hard copy of a PowerPoint report dated November 10, 2015. (Files #s2426 & 2427)

Dr. Brenner then walked the Board through the specific timeline for the Central Office heating issues. The bids will be opened on the 12th. He said that it is expected that the heating system will be completed by March.

Board comments and questions and Administration's responses: a) **You talked about an upgrade for the phone system.** (Mr. Lynch explained that Mr. Adams has been working on this. Dr. Brenner said that the phones were delivered several weeks ago.) b) **On the SUVs, do you know when they are going to arrive?** (Mr. Feeney said that he expected to have them in service by February.) c) **Regarding the Middlesex roof, I have concerns that the RTM will pull the roof for the Central Office and it will affect the middle school.** (Dr. Brenner said he would make sure that the bid projects were set up so the school roof can be done.)

F. REPORT ON CONDITION OF ALL SCHOOL DISTRICT FIELDS.

Mr. Lynch then narrated a PowerPoint presentation on the status of the sports fields in the Darien schools. (File # 2428). Dr. Brenner said that he had been spending time on the fields and the DAF has done a significant job in their work on these fields.

Board comments and questions and responses: a) **I want to echo the Superintendent's comments. It has been wonderful to see the students' enthusiasm for the new fields. As we approach the baseball field, is it possible to have the infield dirt?** (Dr. Brenner said that the multi use functionality that we get because there is no clay infield is an important consideration.) b) **But it is a variety baseball field and it should look like it.** (Ms. Hagerty-Ross said that one problem was that the field was built on a swamp and there have been water problems because of the high water table.) c) **I'm just going to echo other comments. I think there should be some acknowledgement of all that the DAF did.** d) **There should be some kind of community recognition of the DAF.**

G. FURTHER REVIEW OF THE 2016-2017 BUDGET CALENDAR.

Dr. Brenner then reviewed the details and changes to the 2016-2017 Budget Calendar, including the Saturday Budget Meeting on January 9th with a snow date of January 23rd. (File #2429).

Board question and response: a) **Have we officially communicated with the other boards about this?** (This cannot be done until our Board has approved this calendar.)

ACTION ITEMS.

A. PERSONNEL ITEMS.

- i. Teacher/Administrator Appointments.**
- ii. Resignations.**

There were no items to consider at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT.

Ms. Jill McCammon, 81 Old Kings Highway South, requested that when the parents are told about the Unified Sports program, that the information is clarified.

Ms. Stacey Tie, 10 Clocks Lane, came forward and said that having access to curriculum resources would be helpful and she spoke about her hopes for the upcoming math workshops.

Mr. Dineen said that he had contacted David Genovese and he is willing to come to the Board and give an overview.

ADJOURNMENT.

- ** MS. HAGERTY-ROSS MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MS. ZURO SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Schneider Zuro
Secretary