

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Plymouth Public Schools is to challenge, inspire, and prepare all students for success in an ever-changing and complex world.

SPECIAL MEETING  
PLYMOUTH BOARD OF EDUCATION  
77 Main Street  
Terryville, CT 06786

BOARD OF EDUCATION CONFERENCE ROOM

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2016

6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

Present: Board of Education: Mr. Melchionna, Mrs. Kremmel, Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Orsini, Mrs. Lucian, Mr. Bourbonniere, Ms. McCann, Mrs. Kulesa, and Mrs. Johnson

Administrators: Dr. Semmel, Superintendent, Dr. Tenney, Mr. Penn, Business Manager, Mrs. Trinks, Director of Pupil Personnel & Special Education, Mr. Trudeau, Director of Technology, Dr. Tenney, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Mrs. Worhunsky, Principal Harry S. Fisher Elementary School, Mrs. Collins, Principal Plymouth Center School, Ms. Suffridge, Principal Eli Terry Jr. Middle School and Mr. Hults, Principal Terryville High School

1. Call to Order and Pledge to Flag

Mrs. Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and the group joined in the Pledge to the Flag.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION: To adopt the agenda. Motion Mr. Orsini, seconded Mr. Melchionna, motion passes.

3. Budget Workshop I for the 2016 – 2017 Budget

Prior to the beginning of the work shop, Mrs. Johnson, Chair explained the process and thanked everyone for attending the workshop.

Mr. Penn, Business Manager

Updates: (a) Increase of \$1,300 for intramural salary was incorrectly entered as zero; (b) Software in Curriculum – budget figure should have been \$32,200 rather than \$22,200 which is an increase of

Barbara K. Goodwin  
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\$10,000; and (c) Staff Development decrease of \$8,700 and per broker for health insurance benefits, there is a decrease of \$4,500.00.

#### Elementary School Highlights

Mrs. Collins, Principal Plymouth Center School – Personnel - a request for 2, K-5 tutors in each elementary school to assist with intervention needs in the classrooms. These tutors would provide in classroom support for Mathematics and Language Arts. This is a budget neutral item since we already have 4 tutors in the 2015 – 2016 budget.

Mrs. Worhunsky, Principal Harry S. Fisher Elementary School – (a) supplies for Language Arts; Early Literacy; and Restore General Supplies Account to what was requested last year before the 10% cut; (b) Furnishings (classroom rugs and tables for Readers Workshop); and (c) \$200 per teacher to increase classroom libraries.

Mr. Bourbonniere: (a) His understanding was that all incidentals, i.e. white paper, yellow paper, markers, pencils, chart paper, construction paper, is what is needed for the elementary schools; (b) Plymouth Center currently has 313 students and Harry S. Fisher Elementary has 375 students. In order to offset the inadequacies of each school, 2 teachers from Plymouth Center will be transferred to Harry S. Fisher. Question: How will this transfer effect the class sizes at both schools? Answer: Plymouth Center will reduce a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and a 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Therefore each 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will have 20 students and each 4<sup>th</sup> grade will have 24 students. In order to offset this, the elementary school is looking to hire K – 5 Tutors to offer academic support.

#### Middle School Highlights

Ms. Suffridge, Principal Eli Terry Jr. Middle School – (a) Furniture; (b) Table Saw; (c) Afterschool Program and (4) explained how she was able to reduce staff by three.

Mr. Melchionna – Questioned if the old table saw can be sold to offset the cost of a new saw? Mr. Penn indicated the current saw is very old, however, we can try to sell it.

Ms. McCann – Suggestion, if some of the consumer science is going to be placed in the health field, possibly consider putting monies towards health supplies.

Mr. Goodwin – Feels that an Afterschool Program is needed. However, progress of this program should be documented to prove that it is actually needed when it comes budget time next year.

Mr. Bourbonniere – Question: What has a greater impact on students, the loss of an assistant principal or the loss of 3 teachers? The administrator is not teaching children, but rather putting out fires. Salary for 3 teachers is approximately \$155,000, assistant principal is \$120,000 which is a difference

of \$30,000. His main concern is the education of the children in this town and also the enrollment projections. Addressed the Board: Who is more important the teacher or the assistant principal? Who is going to interact with the child more and who is the child going to benefit more from?

Mrs. Suffridge – Believes the administration provides the support for teachers and building capacity.

Mrs. Kulesa – She does not believe that teachers are the only individuals in the building that can teach children. Administrators are teachers too, whether it be by role modeling, making certain they can mediate situations between students, etc. The principal is the support system for the teacher.

Mrs. Johnson – There are other districts in the state that have declining enrollment.

#### High School Highlights

##### Mr. Hults, Principal Terryville High School

- A third Track & Field Coach
- Uniforms for Band (\$7,500)
- Office supplies for main office and guidance
- ISS (In School Suspension Monitor) to cover random supervision. (\$15,000 per year/hourly position/29.5 hours per week – at-will-employee/not part of any bargaining union.

Mr. Melchionna – Regarding electricity. Agreement with the solar company, the ability to purchase electricity, does it go by school or district wide? Can the power be transferred somewhere else, i.e. another building owned by the town? Mr. Penn to contact Attorney Hamzy.

#### Curriculum & Instructions Highlights

- Elementary Text is the largest increase in the curriculum budget which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the payment for the program (\$50,000).
- Word Study Kits – breaking apart words and decoding phonics
- High School and Middle School – Revising Social Studies Curriculum – looking to integrate more literacy into Social Studies - \$4,000 for books. Tier II and Tier III programs – continue to purchase books for the middle school.
- Software – Software covers Ingenuity Program which is used by students in the alternative education program and summer school program and includes assessment programs i.e. NEWA and STAR. Inform houses all data.
- Curriculum Development – the areas that need to be worked on next year are Science, Social Studies K – 5 and Unified Arts.
- Consultant Service & Staff Development – support from Columbia Reading & Writing Workshops & AP Workshops & PSAT testing.

4. Public Comment (limited to 3 minutes per speaker)

Chris Simo-Kinzer – congratulated the principals on their presentations, especially Ms. Suffridge and questioned if there have been any accidents regarding the saw, and there have been none and there are guards on the equipment.

Brian Dunn, 19 Carriage Road – Solar Panels – conception to what is actually going to be generated and can the power be banked and if so, how?

Mr. Penn, Business Manager – Indicated he would like a years' worth of data before he made a comment.

Dan Murray, 24 Hoye Street - Solar Panels – Questioned if the capacity of the panels can be expanded.

Mr. Penn, Business Manager – A years' worth of activity will help to tell a better story.

Pattie DeHuff, 20 Lynn Avenue – Question regarding empty rooms at each of the schools.

Response - High School (3 rooms, however, 1 room is not completely vacant); Middle School – 2 rooms; Harry S. Fisher – None; and Plymouth Center 3 rooms.

Ms. DeHuff – Has consideration ever been given to a K – 8 school?

Dr. Semmel – This has not been considered at this time. Ms. McCann – not at a point in time with declining enrollment are we considering reconfiguration.

Ralph Zovich, 4 Knight Lane – Concerned about the \$897,000 increase in the budget, as stated, it would not pass the Board of Finance or a referendum. A reminder, a smaller increase was proposed last year and failed twice and then went to the Town Council. Goal – to get the budget passed at the 1<sup>st</sup> referendum. He will do the best he can when he presents the consolidated general budget to the public to restore their trust. Good News - \$200,000 will be returned to the sinking fund. Suggestion – Non-recurring capital equipment, i.e. saw, chrome books, computer server (bundle these from the sinking fund); Concerns – Self funded health insurance and special education outplacements (question if there was anything that can be done to help improve SRBI and reduce statistical over identification). Lobby General Assembly to change the burden of proof. Possible consideration: School Configuration – reconfigure elementary schools – PreK, K 1, 2 (lower grades in one building) and 3,4,5 (upper grades in another building). This would eliminate

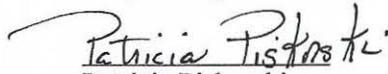
duplication of effort, classrooms will be balanced, curriculum coordination would be much easier, tutors could be placed where needed, SRBI would be focused on the lower grades but the only problem may be from parents who will complain about their child/children being bussed from one end of town to the other. Also, another suggestion was sharing services with other towns.

Dr. Semmel indicated the next Budget Workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at the Board of Education Offices. At that time the group will be hearing from Ms. Trinks, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Education, Mr. Trudeau, Director of Technology and Mr. Penn, Business Managers.

7. Adjournment

**MOTION:** To adjourn at 8:34 p.m. Motion Mr. Melchionna, seconded Mr. Goodwin, motion passes.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Patricia Piskorski  
Recording Secretary