

**GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2005  
GUILFORD HIGH SCHOOL, GUILFORD, CONNECTICUT**

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Bishop called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Board of Education members present were Keith Bishop, William Bloss, Cynthia Cartier, Barbara Dudley, Louis Iorio, Alan Meyers, Kathleen Nolan, and Ted Zuse. Administrators present were Anne Keene, Catherine Walker, Anne Snurkowski, Merry Leventhal, Nancy Bishop, Charlotte Nelson, Jim Saisa, and Marilynn Sturgess. Also present was Business Manager Andy Potochney and GEA President Rose Dostert.

**1.1 Administer Oath of Office – Attorney Richard Beatty**

Richard Beatty administered the Oath of Office to newly elected Board members Keith Bishop, Cynthia Cartier, Barbara Dudley, Louis Iorio, Alan Meyers and Ted Zuse.

**1.2 Election of Officers**

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded by Dr. Meyers, the Board, by written ballot, voted unanimously in favor of electing Mr. Bloss to the position of Chairman.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Cartier and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board, by written ballot, voted unanimously in favor of electing Keith Bishop to the position of Vice-Chairman.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Dudley and seconded by Mrs. Cartier, the Board, by written ballot, voted unanimously in favor of electing Mrs. Nolan to the position of Secretary.

**2.1 October 11, 2005 (Regular Meeting)**

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted two in favor of approving the minutes of October 11, 2005, as presented. Mrs. Cartier, Mrs. Dudley, Dr. Iorio, Dr. Meyers, Mrs. Nolan, and Mr. Zuse abstained from the vote

**2.2 October 24, 2005 (Working Committee Meeting)**

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mrs. Cartier, the Board voted four in favor of approving the minutes of October 24, 2005, as presented. Mrs. Dudley, Dr. Iorio, Dr. Meyers and Mr. Zuse abstained from the vote.

Mr. Bloss congratulated and welcomed all of the newly elected Board members noting that they all worked very hard during their campaigns and earned the trust of the voters.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Cartier and seconded by Mr. Zuse, the Board voted unanimously in favor of adding an item to the Board agenda portion of the meeting to explain the November 8, 2005, municipal election results and the appointment process for the 9<sup>th</sup> Board member.

**3. Review and Approval of Expenditures for the Month of October  
Board Reviewer for the Month: Kathleen Nolan**

Mrs. Nolan reviewed the expenditures noting that the percent expended and encumbered to date this year, 23.81%, is comparable to the 23.92% expended and encumbered during the same period last year. She noted and explained the following line items: the increase in teachers' salaries due to the early retirement payment of \$555,949; anticipation that the tuition account, currently 21.06% expended compared to 37.87% last year at this time, will be under budget; and the projection that the fuel expenses will be approximately \$200,000 over the budgeted amount. Mrs. Nolan noted that the school lunch program is reflecting a profit of \$40,000 for the first two months of the school year compared to \$16,000 in 2004.

The corresponding warrants presented were dated October 1, 2005, October 5, 2005 and October 19, 2005. Mrs. Nolan noted that the warrant dated October 1, 2005, totaling \$586,201, is for medical, life and disability insurance. The October 5, 2005, warrant reflects the following: \$7,030 to Air Dynamics, Inc. for HVAC work at Leete and Adams; \$10,345 to Delta Education, Inc. for Science materials; and \$4,400 to Goens/Esparo, LLC for services during the superintendent search.

Mrs. Nolan further explained that the payment to Glencoe/McGraw Hill on page 2 of the October 5, 2005, warrant in the amount of \$7,830 was for textbooks for GHS. On page 11 of the same warrant Sullivan, Schoen, Campana & Co. was paid \$8,318 for their services in the negotiation process with the Guilford Association of Educational Support Services union. On page 12 she explained that the payment to BKM of \$16,735 was for carpeting and tile at Lakes, Jones and GHS. Finally on this warrant, Mrs. Nolan noted the payment of \$7,300 to Mantilia Ford for the used pick up truck approved at the August 15, 2005, regular meeting.

Mrs. Nolan summarized the October 19, 2005, warrant noting payments to Delta Education in the amount of \$7,045 for Science materials; Funk Boiler Works in the amount of \$8,300 for work at Leete; and CIRMA for worker's compensation in the amount \$36,106.

Mr. Zuse asked Mr. Potochney what the final resolution will be for the 2004-05 budget. Mr. Potochney responded that there is an unexpended balance of approximately \$212,000.

Mr. Zuse asked Mr. Potochney to forecast salaries expenses through the end of the school year. Mr. Potochney stated that, based on current contracts, he would project salary expenses to be between \$75 - 100,000 under budget.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mrs. Cartier, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the expenditures for the month of October as presented by Mrs. Nolan.

**3. Public Forum for Topics on the Board Agenda Only (three minute limit)**

None

**4. Communications**

Mr. Bloss announced that there will be a Workshop for Public Input on the Budget on November 28, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. in the chorus room at Adams Middle School. The public may address the Board and provide input into the 2006-07 Budget process.

**5. Student Representatives**

Elizabeth Pino, Jonathan Baker, and Erin Staff reported on Unity Week at GHS during the week of October 24<sup>th</sup>. Unity Week is designed to promote spirit and tradition among the classes. During the week each class was responsible for developing an activity or event to support the concept of unity .

Assemblies were held throughout the week by the Unity Club and the concept of ROPES was introduced to all of the students and staff. The acronym ROPES was explained by Ms. Pino as follows: R represents respect, risk and responsibility; O stands for openness, “oops”, and “ouch” to represent words used when someone says something hurtful; P is for participation; E stands for effort and escuchar (listen in Spanish); and S stands for sensitivity.

The students reported that for the first time the Unity Club held Freshmen and Sophomore assemblies to promote unity principles to all GHS students. The culminating activity was a pep rally on Friday attended by the entire student body.

The students asked how they can contribute to future BOE meetings. The Board responded that they are very interested in hearing the students’ views on subjects discussed at the meetings, would like to correspond with the students between meetings via e-mail, and would like to attend more activities at GHS.

**7. Superintendent’s Report**

**Update on Feasibility Planning by Community Task Force on School Facilities (CTFSF) and Fletcher-Thompson Architects**

Co-chairpersons Mary Jo Kestner and Mauro Rubbo of the CTFSF reviewed the progress of the task force to date for new Board members, revisiting portions of the PowerPoint presentation previously presented to the Board in June 2005. Ms. Kestner reminded the Board that the CTFSF was appointed to evaluate the needs of the Guilford Public Schools

facilities over the next ten years. Following a screening and interview process by the Standing Building Committee, the architectural firm, Fletcher Thompson was selected in September 2005 to begin the feasibility and budget studies approved by the Boards of Education and Finance in Action Step 1 of the Priority Path Recommendations Progress Report approved in July 2005.

Jim Beaudin of Fletcher Thompson provided the Board with an overview of the work being done for Action Step 1 of the CTFSF report for Leete, Adams, and Baldwin. He reported that the boiler and windows at Calvin Leete are being evaluated to improve energy efficiency and function. The firm is studying various window and ceiling configurations, and developing recommendations for a new heating system.

Mr. Beaudin explained that the two issues facing Adams Middle School are drainage in the front of the school and the septic system. Initial assessments indicate that the septic system will require a pretreatment plant and approximately 2 acres of land raised 6-8 feet. This elevation process will require reconfiguring existing ball fields on the property.

Recommendations for Baldwin Middle School include modifications to its entrance for buses and parent drop offs, and additional parking. Mr. Beaudin also presented preliminary plans for classroom additions, an orchestra room, an expanded cafeteria, a new elevator and modified office spaces in the building.

Dr. Iorio asked what the energy cost savings will be at Leete with a new system in place. Mr. Beaudin explained that an analysis will be provided in the report presented in December.

Dr. Iorio asked if the intermediary projects proposed will be expandable should additional needs arise in the future. Mr. Mauro explained that it is one of the priorities of the CTFSF to maintain flexibility with all projects considered allowing for future growth and changing needs.

Mr. Zuse asked about the drainage pipe at Adams Middle School. Ms. Kestner explained that further hydrology studies may be done to analyze that issue.

Mr. Zuse requested that the CTFSF provide more than one alternative to the septic system solution at Adams. Ms. Kestner explained that other options are being considered and members from the Standing Building Committee with expertise in this area have been invited to join the CTFSF discussions.

Dr. Iorio asked if additional funding may be available from the DEP for the hydrology studies being conducted. Mr. Beaudin responded that engineers from Fletcher Thompson are researching these options.

Mrs. Cartier expressed concern that the enrollment figures from the state that the CTFSF is using may not accurately reflect the growth in town. Ms. Kestner responded that while the CTFSF has accepted the state's figures for their studies, they are also receiving data from

the schools' principals about the student populations. Mr. Beaudin added that a more accurate projection of enrollments will effect the amount of state funding, explaining that reimbursements are based on the number of students per square foot.

Ms. Kestner stated that the task force is currently looking for 4 new members, 2 from the community at large and two Board of Education members.

## **7.2 Overnight Field Trip Request Report (exhibit)**

Dr. Keene presented a request from the music department at GHS to travel to Florida on April 17 – 23, 2006, (Spring vacation week) to participate in Disney World's Magic Music Days. Dr. Keene explained that the group has met all of the requirement of Board policy #6326 regarding field trips including the mode of transportation, numbers of chaperones, and the itinerary. She has given the 80-student group her approval to attend the event. Fundraising will take place to help defray the cost of the trip.

Board members asked about insurance coverage for the students, their safety regarding bus drivers' hours of driving, and the specific arrangements for chaperones. Dr. Keene explained that she will research the details of the district's insurance plan. Mr. Boates, chairman of the music department, explained that bus drivers are replaced regularly to avoid fatigue. He further explained that chaperones are assigned a specific group of students (one chaperone for every ten students, 50% staff members).

The Board questioned Mr. Boates about students who may not be able to afford the trip. He explained that the three music teachers are very knowledgeable about their students and he is confident that financial needs will be recognized and arrangements made for these students.

## **8. BOARD AGENDA**

### **8.1 ACT ON Personnel Item (exhibit)**

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the resignation of Rebecca Hastings (Leete, Grade 4) effective December 24, 2005.

### **8.2 ACT ON Waiver of Bidding Requirement for Water Tank Replacement at Melissa Jones Elementary School (exhibit)**

Mr. Saisa explained that on October 21, 2005, the water storage tank for well number 1 at Melissa Jones had developed a slow leak. The metal tank was installed in 1971 and has a large amount of surface corrosion on the bottom. Hungerfords, Inc., the GPS certified water operator analyzed the situation and recommended that the tank be replaced as soon as possible. Mr. Saisa requested a quotation from them for repairing the existing tank and one for replacing it. The cost to repair the tank was estimated at \$19,600 while the cost to

replace the tank with 3 free standing bladder style tanks was estimated at \$23,400. Mr. Saisa recommended purchasing the new tanks.

Mr. Saisa asked the Board to waive the bid requirement and consider it an emergency repair. The new tanks have a two-week lead-time and the existing leaking tank may not last much longer. Mr. Saisa further explained that because Hungerfords is the district's certified water operator, they are responsible for drinking water quality and State code compliance, and would need to be present during the installation process.

Dr. Meyers expressed his discomfort with not having another bid to compare the tank replacement and installation monitoring costs. Dr. Iorio suggested that the school system is at a disadvantage when attempting to solicit other bids when we are already obligated to Hungerfords as our certified water operator.

Mr. Saisa explained that he researched tank prices on line from other companies and networked with other facilities managers from the Connecticut School Buildings and Grounds Association. He feels confident that the quote from Hungerfords is competitive. The range of prices on new tanks was between \$23,000 and \$30,000 for comparable products.

Mr. Bloss explained for the benefit of the new Board members that waiving a bid requirement is a highly unusual situation and that the Board takes the bidding process very seriously.

Mr. Saisa, responding to Mr. Zuse's question about the condition of the other tank at Baldwin, explained that the tank in question was installed in 1955 and should be replaced next year. A complete bidding process will take place.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Zuse and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously in favor of waiving the bidding requirement for the water tank replacement at Melissa Jones as presented by Mr. Saisa.

Mr. Bloss asked Mr. Saisa to explain the contaminated water report at Jones. Mr. Saisa explained that due to a power outage, the pumps lost their prime and trace amounts of bacteria were detected in the school's water supply from one of the school's 2 wells. Immediate chlorination took place and a letter was sent home by Mrs. Nelson explaining the situation. The school's water is being supplied by the uncontaminated well until test results come back on the affected well. The school's cafeteria and the majority of the school's drinking fountains are supplied by the well that was unaffected.

At the request of Mr. Bloss, Mr. Saisa updated the Board on the condition of the roofs of the schools following the extensive rains of the past month. Mr. Saisa reminded the Board that the referendum for new roofs and repairs for GHS and Baldwin was approved in April 2005. He explained that time did not permit the new roofs to be installed prior to the start of this school year and they will be replaced during the summer of 2006. In the meantime, the seams of the GHS roof are being sealed until the roof can be replaced.

A few leaks have been found at Lakes and Cox resulting from the extensive rain and winds blowing water underneath valleys in the shingles. Mr. Saisa also reported that the transition area at Calvin Leete between the main building and the older modular section experienced some leaking. This area of flat roof will be replaced in the future.

Mr. Zuse asked what the projected roofing needs will be for the other facilities. Mr. Saisa explained that there is a five-year site improvement plan included in the budget that includes roofing needs. Mr. Saisa explained that the engineering and design costs for projected roof projects will be budgeted in the year preceding the projected installation year so there will be no delays in installing roofs.

### **8.3 Explanation of Election Process (Addition to Agenda)**

Mr. Bloss explained that as a result of state law and the town charter, only 6 of the 10 candidates running for the 7 available seats were elected. The Board is comprised of 9 members. In November of 2003 2 Democrats, Mr. Bloss and Mrs. Nolan, and 2 Republicans, Mrs. Burkle and Mrs. Muccilli, were elected to the Board. As a result of the tragic death of Mrs. Muccilli and the resignation of Mrs. Burkle, two new Republican Board members, Greg Muccilli and Cynthia Cartier were appointed by the Board, per state law. These newly appointed members could only serve until the next municipal election in November 2005, creating 2 two-year seats in the election. In addition, the terms of Mr. Bloss and Mrs. Nolan, both Democrats, run until 2007.

Mr. Bloss explained that the town charter states that no political party can have more than a bare majority representation on a Board. Based on opinion by legal counsel, it was determined that this provision in the town charter does not have to be applied separately to the two-year seats and the four-year seats, but may be applied to the 7 vacant seats together.

The November 8, 2005, election included 4 candidates (2 Republicans and 2 Democrats) vying for the 2 two-year seats, and 6 candidates (3 Republicans and 3 Democrats) vying for the 5 four-year seats on the Board. It was predetermined that the two-year seats would be decided first.

Democrats Mrs. Dudley and Mr. Zuse won the 2 two-year seats creating 4 Democratic seats on the Board. As a result, only one more Democrat could be elected from the candidates vying for the 5 four-year seats. Democrat Dr. Meyers won the election for the four-year seats filling the fifth and final Democratic seat. This left 4 four-year seats to be filled by Republican candidates, based on the bare majority rule. The 3 four-year term Republican candidates, Mr. Bishop, Mr. Iorio, and Mrs. Cartier, filled 3 of the 4 seats. There were no other four-year Republican candidates in this election. As a result, the Board has 60 days to appoint the ninth member of the Board.

Mr. Bloss expressed the Board's desire to invite all interested parties to contact the Board. While the Board wants to act in a timely manner, it is important to act thoughtfully, responsibly and cohesively to identify the final Board member.

Discussion ensued about the timeframe for the appointment process and potential deadlines for candidates to contact the Board. The consensus was that the process will begin immediately and the Board will respond to all interested parties, with a goal of filling the vacancy within the required time frame.

#### **8.4 RECEIVE 2004-05 Strategic School Profiles (exhibit)**

Dr. Keene presented the Strategic School Profiles (SSP) for Guilford Public Schools including a district summary, seven individual school profiles and one special education profile. The SSP are sources of data compiled by the State Department of Education.

Dr. Keene pointed out that the financial data in the SSP represents 2003-2004 because the State will not report unaudited figures.

Dr. Keene made note of several items in the District report: the district's minority population increasing from 218 students in 1999-2000 to 301 students in 2004-2005; the removal, for the first time, of department chairs from the administrators line item and counted separately in the District Resources section of the District Summary; and enrollment figures are for grades K, 2, 5, 7, and 9-12.

Dr. Keene did note an error in the report on page 6 of the district report in the narrative section under Improvements in Student Performance and Achievement. The statement should read: CMT scores for 2004 in grades 4, 6, and 8 remain well above the statewide averages in reading, writing, and mathematics, and in grade 6, all subjects exceed the average of our ERG.

Dr. Keene explained that the cumulative dropout rate is at 2% in the district, considerably below the ERG average of 3.6% and the State average of 8.8%. She also noted the increase of students employed or in the military from 6.8% to 10.7%.

Dr. Keene noted that the district increased revenues and expenditures in every category with the exception of instructional supplies and equipment, noting that significant money was spent at the end of the previous fiscal year on supplies and equipment that would not be reflected in this year's report. She further explained in this table that the "other" category includes co-curricular expenses including coaching and sponsorship stipends, and food service benefits.

Dr. Keene called attention to the negative percentage of -65.8% for equipment in the Expenditures by Grade Level table at the bottom of page 5 in the District report. She explained that most of the computer and other equipment purchases were completed at the end of the previous fiscal year. She further noted there was a 141.6% increase in equipment expenditures at the high school. She explained that the equipment category also includes site improvements, reflecting roof repairs and boiler replacements during that year.

Dr. Meyers noted the significantly higher percentage of students at GHS; 9.3% participating in Gifted and Talented programs as compared to our ERG; 2.4% and the State; 1.1%.

Dr. Iorio requested Dr. Keene to research the reason why only 23% of students in the district passed all four grade ten physical fitness tests when compared to 45.2% in the ERG, and 39.1% in the State.

Dr. Keene added that the SSP reports will be available on line in the near future on the State Department of Education website, accessible through a link on the GPS website.

**8.5 APPROVE Grant Award of \$1,500.00 to Adams Middle School from Exxon-Mobile (exhibit)**

Dr. Keene reported that parents of Adams Middle School children employed by Exxon-Mobile applied for and received three \$500 grants through the company's Educational Alliance Program, an initiative supporting schools attended by children of employees.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Zuse and seconded Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously to approve the grant award of \$1,500.00 to Adams Middle School from Exxon-Mobile.

Mr. Bloss asked that the Board defer agenda items **8.5** and **8.6** to the end of the meeting.

**9. Unfinished Business**

Mr. Zuse asked if the Board would be receiving quarterly curriculum updates. Dr. Keene responded that the Board received an update at the September 2005 meeting. She will forward that report to the new Board members.

**10. Reports of Committees**

Mrs. Cartier reported that she will attend the next meeting of the Health Advisory Committee in December.

Mr. Bloss noted that the Board plans to appoint Board members to committees at the next meeting.

Mr. Bishop reported that the Land Acquisitions Committee continues to plan for the future needs of the town and the schools. He also reported that the next meeting of the Community Task Force on School Facilities is Wednesday, November 16, 2005.

**11. Public Questions (four minute limit)**

Dee Jacobs spoke on behalf of the Cox PTO and expressed concern that the PTOs are now required to purchase liability insurance in the amount of \$350, previously provided by the district's insurance carrier, in order to hold events. The Board responded that they will be

asking the district's insurance carrier, CIRMA, about this situation when they meet with them at the November 28, 2005, working committee meeting.

Suzanne Carlson expressed her hope that the Board will follow through on improving communications between the Board and the public. She stated that many people are uncomfortable speaking in front of a camera and she hopes the Board will consider creating opportunities for more informal meetings for the public to dialog with the Board and the administration. Mrs. Cartier expressed her commitment to pursuing these opportunities and the Board shared her sentiment.

Chris Tracy posed the following four questions to the Board: What can we do about class sizes?; Why are 10 out of 13 of our CAPT scores at the bottom of our ERG?; Why is the publicly funded strategic plan behind schedule?; and Are we ready to fix buildings and infrastructure in serious need of capital improvement? He stated that all of these issues require investments and he asked the Board if they are prepared to reach out to the community for their support.

Mr. Bishop responded to Mr. Tracy's question about the strategic plan schedule explaining that the plan was presented to the Board in September 2005 when the original timeline for presentation was June 2005. He explained that the action steps of the plan are a management plan and require the input of the new superintendent. Mr. Bloss added that the Board is committed to moving forward with the strategic plan.

Mr. Bloss acknowledged the presence of Mr. Beatty throughout the Board meeting. Mr. Beatty served on the negotiation committee that worked with the Guilford Association of Educational Support Services and will be joining the Board in the executive session pertaining to these negotiations.

## **12. New Business**

Mr. Bishop reported that the CABA convention is Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup> and Friday, November 18<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Bishop mentioned that one of the important topics to be discussed is potential ERG changes. Dr. Keene added that the Board did receive articles on this subject from the Hartford Courant and Education Week.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded Dr. Meyers, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to executive session at 10:25 p.m.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted to unanimously to return to public session at 10:43 p.m.

## **13. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Negotiations**

Mr. Bloss summarized key components to the Guilford Association of Educational Support Services contract, noting changes to the prescription drug program and premium sharing for the health insurance. These changes will align this union's contract with other union

contracts and will result in cost savings to the town. Mr. Bloss also summarized the wage increases for the 121 full time employees in this union.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Zuse and seconded by Dr. Meyers, the Board voted unanimously to approve the terms of the Guilford Association of Educational Support Services contract, effective September 1, 2005, as presented by Mr. Beatty.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Cartier and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorri L. Hahn  
Clerk to the Board of Education

