

**GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
MONDAY, MAY 9, 2005
GUILFORD HIGH SCHOOL, GUILFORD, CONNECTICUT**

1. Call to Order – Action on Minutes

Chairwoman Whelan called the meeting to order at 7:46 p.m. Board of Education members present were Richard Beatty, William Bloss, Keith Bishop, Cynthia Cartier, William Dwyer, Greg Muccilli, James Ralls and Sandra Whelan. Administrators present were Barbara Truex, Anne Keene, Marilyn Sturgess, Rose Dostert, Anne Snurkowski, Merry Levant, Nancy Bishop, Charlotte Nelson, and Michael Biddle. Also present were School Business Administrator, Andy Potochney, and BOE Student Representatives Megan Harrison and Liz Jazinski.

1.1 April 11, 2005 (Regular Meeting)

Upon a motion made by Mr. Ralls and seconded by Mr. Beatty, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the minutes of April 11, 2005 with two corrections.

1.2 April 25, 2005 (Working Committee Meeting)

Upon a motion made by Mr. Ralls and seconded by Mr. Beatty, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the minutes of April 25, 2005 as presented.

**2. Review and Approval of Expenditures for the Month of March
Board Reviewer for the Month: Andy Potochney**

Mr. Potochney reported that the revised appropriations include the special appropriation of \$250,000 approved by the Board at the April 11, 2005 regular meeting. Expenditures for the year, as of April 2005, are 74.1% of the total budget compared to 73.8% last year at this time. Mr. Potochney also noted that the payroll account for April is higher than usual due to an extra pay period during the month.

Mr. Potochney reviewed the warrant reports dated April 1, 2005, April 4, 2005, April 18, 2005, and April 25, 2005. He noted that the April 1, 2005 warrant was primarily for medical insurance payable to the Town of Guilford in the amount of \$500,106. On page 6 of the April 4, 2005 warrant, Mr. Potochney noted a payment to the Middletown Board of Education in the amount of \$26,703.60 for tuition for Guilford Vocational Agriculture students. On page 8 of this warrant, the payment to J. DeVoe Trucking for \$20,742.50 reflects the last payment for snow removal and also the amount that this account will be over budget.

Mr. Bishop asked if there will be any further prior year encumbrances to be paid this year. Mr. Potochney stated that this account should be closed out and he does not anticipate any further payments.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Beatty and seconded by Mr. Dwyer, the Board voted unanimously to approve the expenditures as presented.

3. Public Forum for Topics on the Board Agenda Only

Bobby Baird asked the Board if they received a communication from Ned Vare stating that he wanted to be considered for the Superintendent's position. Chairwoman Whelan replied that Mr. Vare requested an application. She forwarded the request to the consultants managing the search process.

4. Communications

Mr. Dwyer reported that he attended a forum presented by the League of Women Voters on the topic of educational funding by the State of Connecticut. The forum was attended by first selectmen and representatives from Guilford, Madison, Branford, and North Branford in addition to state representatives. Representatives are proposing a minimum expenditure by the state of \$1000 per student. Mr. Dwyer added that because of the large number of urban representatives, this proposal is not likely to move forward. Senator Myers is proposing a property tax relief plan in 2 years that would give Connecticut cities and towns the option of reducing property taxes by 50% and making up the difference by increasing State income tax contributions by 1 – 2%.

Mr. Bishop reported that the Land Acquisition Committee continues to evaluate potential sites for school facilities projecting needs as far as 50 - 100 years in the future.

Mr. Bishop also reported that the Community Task Force on School Facilities continues to meet two times per month. The group plans to have its report completed to present to the Board at the June 27, 2005 Working Committee Meeting.

Mr. Ralls reported that he has received communications asking about potential input from the public into the Superintendent search process. He stated that any additional public participation following the three public sessions conducted in April, has not been determined.

5. Student Representatives

Megan Harrison reported that many Calvin Leete families and students are participating in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life. The Leete staff waited on tables at Friendly's, receiving 10% of the proceeds to contribute to the American Cancer Society.

Ms. Harrison further reported that, at Leete, social studies and science curricula are being integrated into music, math, writing, and technology. For example, 2nd grade

students have been studying marine life and are now writing about their discoveries. 3rd grade students have combined reading, geography, social studies, and science to develop their understanding of Native American cultures. 4th grade students will visit the Griswold and Hyland Houses, integrating their social studies and science studies.

Ms. Harrison reported that the K-2 playground is complete at A.W. Cox. The staff, families, and students wish to thank everyone in the community that supported this effort.

Ms. Harrison reported from Guilford High School that the junior prom, held Saturday, May 7, 2005, was very successful. AP tests have been taking place over the past 2 weeks and AP art students are working on the Class of 2005 shield. The senior outing at Holiday Hill will take place on May 27, 2005, and the senior breakfast has been changed to June 10, 2005.

Ms. Jazinski reported that Adams Middle School students worked in cooperation with Liberty Service Shelters in New Haven to learn and write about issues regarding the homeless. Next year there will be a state-wide essay contest based on this year's pilot program at Adams. She further reported that 8th grade students are preparing for their Diversity Fair and trip to New York City to visit Ellis Island.

Ms. Jazinski further reported that Guilford Lakes' 4th grade students will be enjoying the PTO's cultural arts presentation, "Characters from Colonial Connecticut". The 2nd and 3rd grade classes are meeting with an artist in residence weekly in preparation for the Lorax Pageant on May 23, 2005. Nicole Mason's poem, "Light Bulbs", will be published in the magazine *Connecticut Student Writers*. Nearly 1800 students submitted works this year. Nicole will be honored on June 24, 2005 at the University of Connecticut.

Ms. Jazinski stated that the members of the Project Graduation committee, and the graduating students would like to thank everyone in the community who supported the Silent Auction on May 2, 2005.

6. Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Truex reported that she and Dr. Keene attended the CABE (Connecticut Association of Boards of Education) "Accountability for Learning in Connecticut" Workshop presented by Dr. Douglas Reeves. They found the workshop to be very informative. Mrs. Truex noted that Dr. Reeves' remarks endorsed the direction of the Guilford Public School district and provided them with information on how to use data analysis and further improve student achievement.

Mr. Bloss asked if it would be possible to obtain a copy of the materials that will be presented at the next CABE Workshop focusing on compensation, as no one from the Board will be able to attend this meeting. Mrs. Truex will try to obtain a copy.

7. BOARD AGENDA

7.1 RECEIVE FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Proposed Transfers for 2004-05 Budget (exhibit)

Mr. Potochney requested that the Board transfer funds primarily from the salaries account, including teachers' salaries and custodial over time, employee benefits, and purchased services. He requested that money saved from these accounts be transferred to tuition, supplies, including fuel for heat, and "other" which includes fuel for buses and special education transportation.

Mr. Beatty expressed his interest in the public understanding the details of the proposed transfers. While the Board did request a special appropriation of \$250,000 from the town, the tuition account exceeded the budgeted amount by \$750,000 and the "other" account was over budget by \$250,000. Despite this large deficit, the administration and Mr. Potochney were able to reconcile these accounts by making the appropriate transfers from other accounts and only requesting \$250,000 from the town. Mr. Beatty commended them for their efforts.

Mr. Bishop added that there is \$665,000 not expended that can be transferred to accounts that need additional funds. He expressed his appreciation for the careful planning that took place.

Mr. Dwyer asked when fuel goes out to bid. Mr. Potochney stated that we are not at that point, and he will have more information at the next meeting.

Mr. Ralls questioned when the first pension payment will be made for the next fiscal year. Mr. Potochney explained that the next payment is due after July 1, 2005, but the actual dates are determined by the Pension Committee. He further explained that the town is investigating the percentage to be contributed. It is currently 3%. Mr. Potochney recommended that the Board continue to make payments even if the contribution percentage is changed.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bloss and seconded by Mr. Muccilli, the Board voted unanimously to accept the proposed transfers for the 2004-05 budget.

7.2 RECEIVE for POSSIBLE ACTION: Proposed Revisions to 2005-06 Budget (exhibit)

Mr. Potochney explained that these revisions are necessitated by the \$100,000 reduction in the final budget the Board of Finance approved. The two primary revisions are the \$142,000 addition to the pension account and the \$120,000 reduction to tuition. The tuition reduction is based on receiving additional funding from the state. Other changes will include additional funding from the state for internet connections, a reduction in

worker's compensation, and a \$10,000 reduction in substitute teachers based on current data.

Mr. Beatty asked why the tuition account would be reduced based on the excessive cost reimbursement level this year. Mr. Bloss explained that Governor Rell's proposed budget includes more funding for special education. Mr. Potochney further explained that budget forecasting is based on reviewing current data. The data does not suggest that more students will be out-placed next year than have been this year.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bloss and seconded by Mr. Beatty, the Board voted unanimously to accept the proposed revisions to the 2005-06 budget.

7.3 ACT ON Personnel Items (exhibit at meeting)

Mrs. Truex presented the list of resignations and appointment ratifications. Mr. Bishop asked if all of the new hires were due to vacancies. Mrs. Truex explained that they were although many applicants interview with the understanding that the exact position within the system may change due to internal transfer requests. Mr. Bishop also asked if the ratio of men to women hired was the same as the applicant pool, approximately 80% women. Mrs. Truex said that she believed it was.

Mrs. Truex added that the candidates were outstanding and the interview process was intensive. Feedback from candidates was very positive. Mrs. Truex commended the interview team, including the 4 elementary school principals, Anne Snurkowski and Phil Ross from Baldwin, and Marilynn Sturgess.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Muccilli and seconded by Mr. Beatty, the Board voted unanimously in favor of accepting the 4 resignations presented, effective August 31, 2005. The resignations were Michael Sormrude (GHS), Victoria Kaczynski (GHS), Judith McDermott-Eggert (Adams, GHS), and Lorrie Ann Bennett (Baldwin).

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Cartier and seconded by Mr. Beatty, the Board voted seven in favor of ratifying the appointment of 19 teachers presented, effective September 1, 2005. The appointments were Kira Drummond (GHS), Meagan McGowan (GHS), Deborah Doll (Baldwin), Kirk Samuelson (GHS), Lauren Davi (Leete), Elizabeth Jacobson (Jones), Erin McGrady (Leete), Shannon Driscoll (Baldwin), Laura Piscitelli (Jones), Mary Cuff (Leete), Jamie Froelick (Leete), Elizabeth Hill (Jones), Kevin Flanagan (Lakes), Lee Beatty (Jones), Patricia Solomon (Baldwin), Brian White (GHS), Kate Driscoll (Leete), Matthew Guarnieri (Lakes), and Maria Hofelania (Cox). Mr. Beatty abstained from the vote pertaining to Lee Beatty.

7.4 RESCIND Non-renewal of Non-tenured Teachers (exhibit)

Mrs. Truex read into the record the non-renewal list of non-tenured teachers. Cox – Susan Samsel, Philomena Scarpa, May Schofield, Kathleen Summerlin, and Christine Turonis;

Adams – Lynn Arnold, Susan Barraco, Tara Bowers, Luz Buccaro, Richard Chocolate, Nancy Cocopardi, Amy Dean, Donald Giles, Martine Gundersen, Jason Malli, Tamara Marszalek, Frances McGrath, Melissa Montanaro, Kim Parent-Hayash, Cheryl Robertson, Diane Stevens, Thomas Unger, Mark Vail, Jeanette Wimmer, and Katherine Letkowski (also at Baldwin); Baldwin – Judith Bellonio, Karen Clark, Susan Coale, Charlice Culvert, Peter Cuticelli, Pamela Dear, Patricia Ryan, and Jennifer Wakelee; GHS – Lori Accuosti, Thomas Boates, Heather Bradley, James Colandrea, Michael Dalton, Kara Davis, Marissa Garibaldi, Marc Guarino, Keri Hagness, Linda Hirsch, Peter Johnson, Kyle Kruczek, James Motes, Martin Musket, Radouane Nasry, Tonya Neff, Raisa Roginsky, Laura Rowland, Laura Samperi, Laura Scarpitti, Stephanie Speicher, Debra Spencer, Ellen Swiggett, and Kristie Whitcomb; Jones – Michele Dattilo, Kristine Desroches, Joey Flanagan, Faith Hamilton, Dominica Lumb, Loretta Napoletano, and Maureen Shields; Lakes – Tara Beatty, Jennifer Brown, Mary Diette, Lisa Murno, Marcia Parks, Amy Riviere, Cheryl Signore, and Rachael Jungkeit; Leete – Jill Culler, Therese DeTora, Rebecca Hastings, Nicole Israel, and Erin Tuttle.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Dwyer and seconded by Mr. Muccilli, the Board voted seven in favor of rescinding the non-renewal of the 77 non-tenured teachers as presented by the Superintendent. Mr. Beatty abstained from the vote pertaining to Tara Beatty.

7.5 RECEIVE Recommendation for New Textbook: Holt Science Spectrum (exhibit)

Bruce Faitsch presented the Holt Science Spectrum textbook for grade 9 geophysical science. Due to the state's new standards, the 9th and 10th grade science curriculum had to be re-aligned. The total cost for the new textbook, including ancillary materials and the online editions, will be just under \$18,000 for 300 copies. The value of this purchase is \$34,000.

Mr. Faitsch clarified that 8th grade students that will be taking advanced physical science this coming school year will continue with the old curriculum for one year as they will have had no exposure to the new curriculum in grades 7 and 8.

Mr. Ralls asked what the specific changes were to the curriculum. Mr. Faitsch explained that the course is now geared toward the earth. Scientific principals will be taught relative to the earth. For example motion will be related to the earth's motion or plate tectonics.

The new textbook will be on display at Lathrop House for the next month.

7.6 ACT ON Science Material Recommendations (Grades 1-6)

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bloss and seconded by Mr. Beatty, the Board voted unanimously to accept the science material recommendations for grades 1-6.

7.7 ACT ON New Textbook Recommendation: Astronomy (Grade 5)

Upon a motion made by Mr. Beatty and seconded by Mr. Muccilli, the Board voted unanimously to accept the astronomy textbook for grade 5.

7.8 RECEIVE for POSSIBLE ACTION: Policy 1358 – Gifts to School Personnel (exhibit)

Mr. Bloss explained that the purpose of this action is to align the Board's policy with the town's ethics code. The policy committee proposed adding the language that no Board member, employee, or family member shall accept a gift having a greater than nominal value.

Discussion ensued regarding gifts to teachers. Mr. Ralls said that there was discussion that individual donations under \$10 would be acceptable even when combined to purchase one larger gift. Mrs. Cartier agreed with this interpretation while Mr. Bloss and Mr. Beatty expressed concern that the actual gift received would have greater than nominal value.

Mrs. Cartier stated that teachers and parents will be looking to the Board for guidance and interpretation of the policy. Mr. Bloss suggested that the Policy committee correspond with the town's ethics commission to clarify the interpretation of the language of the policy.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bloss and seconded by Mr. Muccilli, the Board voted unanimously in favor of amending Policy 1358 – Gifts to School Personnel.

7.9 RECEIVE for POSSIBLE ACTION: Policy/Regulation 6514 – Interscholastic/Intramural Athletics (exhibit)

Mr. Muccilli reported that the policy committee recommended 2 changes to the current policy. First, the committee eliminated elementary schools as there are no interscholastic/intramural athletics at this level. Second, the committee added a cross reference regarding evaluation and termination of athletic coaches.

Mr. Muccilli reported that the committee added site information to the regulation. The regulation will state that the games can only take place on fields that are sanctioned by the athletic director or one of the sanctioning organizations including the SCC or CIAC. Also, practices and tryouts cannot take place on private property unless authorized by the athletic director. Such properties must be maintained for the purposes of sporting events.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Dwyer and seconded by Mr. Ralls, the Board voted unanimously in favor of accepting the changes to Policy/Regulation 6514 – Interscholastic/Intramural Athletics.

7.10 RECEIVE for POSSIBLE ACTION: Regulation 5410/6326: Activity Permission Agreement (exhibit)

Mr. Bloss explained that the schools no longer use this form therefore the committee proposed deleting this item. Permission slips and medical information is obtained through different forms. Mr. Bloss requested that the administration contact the Board's attorney for the current status of the law pertaining to hold harmless provisions and to share our current agreements with him.

Dr. Keene explained that currently the schools are using a field trip policy form and the medical emergency form, kept by each school nurse, to collect all of the necessary information required by the policy.

Mrs. Cartier suggested a review of permission slips to determine their accuracy and completeness relative to liability for the Board and the town.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bloss and seconded by Mr. Beatty, the Board voted unanimously to delete Regulation 5410/6326 – Activity Permission Agreement.

7.11 RECEIVE Science Curriculum K-10 (exhibit)

Mrs. Truex requested that the board add to the agenda the receipt of the K-10 Science Curriculum.

Dr. Keene explained that the curriculum packet includes an overview with a list of committee members that included Michael Biddle, Kerry Brewster, Bruce Faitsch and others. A summary of the units of study is also included and will be available on the GPS website.

Dr. Keene noted that the Kindergarten curriculum is integrated with the Everyday Math resource used in the classrooms. The committee felt that this integration of math and science was very important in a half-day program. Kindergarten is the only section that will not be purchasing new resources.

Grades K-8 has inquiry standards embedded within the state and our local standards. At grades 9 and 10, the inquiry standards are separate. Grade 9 does represent the geophysical science curriculum presented by Mr. Faitsch early in the meeting.

Mrs. Cartier asked about the curriculum for grades 11 and 12. Dr. Keene explained that in these grades the curriculum is course-based, and is not developed for the entire grade.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mr. Muccilli, the Board voted unanimously to receive the K-10 Science Curriculum.

8. Unfinished Business

Mr. Bishop requested that committees, in the future, submit their working copies of documents so the Board can see changes, additions, and deletions and be able to compare them to the original documents.

Mr. Dwyer reported that he has received communications regarding the lack of a crossing guard on Long Hill Road at the entrance to Baldwin Middle School. Mrs. Truex explained that it was determined in the fall of 2004 that a crossing guard was not needed. Mrs. Snurkowski added that there is increased activity as the weather gets nicer.

9. Reports of Committees

Chairwoman Whelan reported that the action plans from the Strategic Planning Committee have been received and that they are extensive. The goal of the committee is to compile all of the plans and have a report ready for the Board in June.

Mrs. Cartier asked for clarification of the strategic plan and process. Mrs. Truex explained that the sections of the plan will include teaching and learning, culture, resources and facilities. The plan will be presented to the Board for review and acceptance.

Mr. Bishop reported that the Community Task Force on School Facilities will have a report ready for the Board for the June 27, 2005 Working Committee Meeting.

10. Public Questions

Bobby Baird stated that binding arbitration should be eliminated. Mr. Baird reiterated his support of Ned Vare and asked the Board who makes the hiring decision for the superintendent. Chairwoman Whelan explained that it is a Board decision.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Dwyer and seconded by Mr. Bloss, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorri Hahn
Clerk to the Board of Education