

**GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2005  
GUILFORD HIGH SCHOOL, GUILFORD, CONNECTICUT**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Bloss called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m. Board of Education members present were Keith Bishop, William Bloss, Cynthia Cartier, Barbara Dudley, Louis Iorio, Naomi Migliacci, Kathleen Nolan, and Ted Zuse. Administrators present were Anne Keene, Nancy Bishop and Pat Brett. Also present were Business Manager Andy Potochney and Accounting Manager Linda Trudeau.

**1.1 Administer the Oath of Office – Attorney Cynthia Cartier**

Mrs. Cartier administered the oath of office to Naomi Migliacci. Mrs. Migliacci was appointed to the Board on December 7, 2005, during a special meeting. Her term will run until November 2007.

**2. Action on Minutes of:**

**2.1 November 14, 2005 (Regular Meeting)**

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Cartier and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the minutes of November 14, 2005, with one correction noted by Chairman Bloss.

**2.2 November 28, 2005 (Meeting Summary – Information Session on Insurance)**

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the minutes of November 28, 2005.

**2.3 November 28, 2005 (Working Committee Meeting)**

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded by Dr. Iorio, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the minutes of November 28, 2005, with two corrections.

**3. Review and Approval of Expenditures for the Month of November  
Reviewer for the Month: Keith Bishop**

Mr. Bishop reported that the year-to-date expenses and encumbrances of 40.42% are comparable to the 40.93% from last year at the same time. He noted that Teachers' Salaries are 1% ahead of last year at this time. Mr. Potochney explained that the reason for the increase is the inclusion of the first payment for the early retirement plan reflected in this line item. Mr. Bishop stated that increased fuel costs remain an area of concern.

Dr. Iorio asked why expenditures for Unemployment Compensation are 40.9% this year as compared to 19.9% at the same time last year. Mr. Potochney explained that there were a few larger claims paid, and he projects this account will be over the budgeted amount. Dr. Iorio also observed large differences in the percent expended in both the Workers' Compensation and Professional and Technical Services accounts. Mr. Potochney explained that the differences are due to the timing of payments made. When Dr. Iorio asked about the Tuition account which is currently 38.47% expended as compared to 64.46% at the same time last year, Mr. Potochney stated that, based on current projections, he anticipates this account will be approximately \$100,000 under budget.

Mrs. Nolan asked why the Pension account was 73.58% expended as compared to 45.21% at the same time last year. Mr. Potochney replied that he will research the payment process last year versus this year and report back to the Board.

Mr. Bishop requested that Mr. Potochney review the four warrants dated November 1, 2005, November 2, 2005, November 16, 2005, and November 21, 2005.

Mr. Potochney noted that the November 1, 2005, warrant totaling \$585,708 reflects medical, life and disability insurance payments. On the November 2, 2005, warrant, Mr. Potochney noted the following payments: \$18,624.61 to Holt Rinehart Winston for science textbooks at GHS; \$12,690.50 to Robert H. Lord Co. for chairs and desks at GHS; and \$7,943.54 to BKM for carpet at GHS and Leete.

On the warrant dated November 16, 2005, Mr. Potochney noted the following two payments: \$142,000 to Wachovia for a pension payment and \$101,324.15 to New Haven Public schools for tuition at the Sound School.

On the warrant dated November 21, 2005, Mr. Potochney noted the following two payments: \$33,000 to the University of New Haven for three interns' tuition and \$16,956 to SimplexGrinell for the annual inspection of smoke and fire detectors.

Mr. Zuse asked if the expense for the water tanks at Melissa Jones is reflected in the current encumbrances. Mr. Potochney stated that he would check to see if the purchase order had been processed as of the printing of the summary expense report.

Mr. Potochney, responding to Mr. Bishop's inquiry, stated that there is approximately \$46,000 left in prior year encumbrances.

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

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

Gina Tracy handed out binders to each of the Board members containing information from the following sources: the Connecticut Standards for Arts Education; Connecticut State

Department of Education Arts and Music Curriculum Frameworks; a District Summary Profile of the Arts for ERG B; and other related materials. Mrs. Tracy encouraged the Board to review the information and take steps to increase the time students spend on Art and Music in the elementary schools.

Richard Evans congratulated Naomi Migliacci on her appointment to the Board and commended the Board on making a fine selection.

Suzanne Carlson stated that her experience with the music programs in the Guilford Public Schools has been very positive and that she believes the district has an excellent music curriculum. She stated that her daughter, currently a sophomore at GHS, has enjoyed great success as a musician and has been taught by well-qualified teachers throughout Baldwin, Adams and GHS. She suggested that the number of minutes spent on instructional time should not be the only measure of the quality of the program.

## **5. Communications**

Mrs. Cartier reported that she received a communication from Amy Sullivan requesting to serve on the Health Advisory Committee.

Dr. Iorio reported that he received a communication from Wendy North expressing her interest in serving on a curriculum committee.

Chairman Bloss responded that the Board is still organizing committees and wants to include input from Dr. Forcella prior to finalizing all committee assignments.

## **6. Student Representatives**

Not present.

## **7. Superintendent's Report**

### **7.1 Curriculum Report**

Dr. Keene first referenced the previous Curriculum Report from May 2005, reminding the Board that the Art and Music Curricula approved by the Board in April of 2005 were based on the current Connecticut State Department of Education Frameworks.

Dr. Keene presented her Curriculum Quarterly Report including comprehensive reviews of K-12 Social Studies and K-10 Science as well as a targeted review of K-8 Physical Education.

Physical Education: Dr. Keene reported that teachers have completed the review of curriculum documents and have presented the revised K-8 Physical Education document to the Board (approved September 2005). They have articulated what is expected of students

based on the CT Content Standards. In fall 2006, a K-12 committee will convene to ensure that the P.E. curriculum complies with the Wellness Policy to be developed by the Board.

Science: The K-10 science curriculum document was approved by the Board in June 2005 and implementation began at the beginning of the 2005-2006 school year. All science teachers in grades 1-6 were trained in the Full Option Science System (FOSS), a resource adopted by the Board and purchased over the summer. Dr. Lawrence Lowery, principle investigator of FOSS, presented an informational session to parents and staff in October. Elementary teachers were given additional training on the new curriculum document in August. New textbooks were purchased for the middle and high schools.

Social Studies: K-12 teachers have completed curriculum mapping and compared what is presently being taught to the CT Social Studies Content Standards. They have identified overlaps and gaps in the curriculum and recommended revisions. The committee is now articulating what is expected of students at each grade level using the Content Standards. The final document will be presented to the Board prior to the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

Mrs. Nolan asked how the science curriculum is being received. Dr. Keene asked principal Nancy Bishop to respond. Mrs. Bishop reported that the new curriculum including the FOSS kits are being received very positively. Teachers report that students are engaged and excited about learning.

Dr. Iorio asked if there are federal content standards. Dr. Keene explained that there are national, state and local standards, all of which are reviewed when developing curriculum.

Mrs. Cartier asked which other curriculum will be reviewed this school year. Dr. Keene explained that the Social Studies review will complete the two-year cycle for reviewing major core areas. Now the cycle will begin again with Language Arts, including collecting research and mapping. The drafting of the curriculum will begin before the end of the school year and field tests will be developed for implementation during the 2006-2007 school year. She added that the most extensive change will be the integration of reading, writing and spelling at the elementary schools into one language arts curriculum as the middle schools currently have. The curriculum is scheduled to be approved in 2007.

Mr. Zuse asked who will serve on the Language Arts committee. Dr. Keene responded that Dr. Forcella will need to provide input into that process. She described the way the curriculum has been developed to date beginning with the reading specialists, principals and teachers from each grade level. Once the mapping and research is complete, the Board and parent representatives have then been asked to join the committee.

Dr. Keene added that Marilyn Sturgess, the reading teachers and attended a meeting with Richard Allington, President of the International Reading Association, to receive updates on research.

Mr. Zuse asked if the Connecticut Blueprint is a part of the curriculum development process. Dr. Keene responded that it is. Mr. Zuse then asked at what point a draft of the language arts curriculum will be completed. Dr. Keene reiterated the process, explaining that the writing of the draft will begin before the end of the 2005-2006 school year and will be completed during the next school year.

Mr. Zuse asked if there is a draft of the Social Studies curriculum available. Dr. Keene responded that the draft is not yet final and added that there is currently an opening on this committee for a Board member.

Dr. Keene reminded the Board and the public that curriculum summaries are available on the district website.

## **7.2 Strategic Plan Update**

Dr. Keene reported on the status of the action steps of the strategic plan. Each principal is currently going through the action steps and reviewing the steps currently being taken in their buildings. They will also identify those steps that are not currently active. They will report back to Dr. Keene on December 15 and she will compile a report for Dr. Forcella. He can then evaluate the status of the preliminary action steps and make recommendations.

Dr. Keene also reported on the status of the water tanks at Melissa Jones, stating that the old tank was completely removed and the three new tanks were to be installed by Tuesday, December 13. She further explained that the new tanks will need to be chlorinated and flushed prior to use.

## **8. Board Agenda**

### **8.1 Approve Donation of Musical Instruments, Bows and Cases Appraised at \$5,200 to the Adams Middle School Strings Program (exhibit)**

Upon a motion made by Mr. Zuse and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the donation of musical instruments, bows and cases appraised at \$5,200 to the Adams Middle School Strings Program.

Chairman Bloss noted that a thank you letter should be sent to Mrs. Cynthia Stone, President of Parents Representing Orchestra Students, for the organization's generous donation.

### **8.2 Approve Recommended Appointments of Community Members to Serve on Community Task Force on School Facilities**

Chairman Bloss reported that the Board received responses from ten people interested in serving on the CTFSF. As there are only three openings available, he recommended tabling this item until the next regular meeting. The Executive Board will review all of the respondents and make appropriate appointments.

### **8.3 Receive Update on Facilities Study from CTFSS/Fletcher Thompson**

Co-chairperson Mary Jo Kestner introduced the evening's presentation as a project update to allow for feedback from the Board prior to the completion of the final report from Fletcher Thompson to the Standing Building Committee on December 19.

Jim Beaudin of Fletcher Thompson presented a slide presentation to update the progress on the feasibility and budget studies being conducted at Calvin Leete, Adams, and Baldwin Schools.

Mr. Beaudin reviewed the scope of the project at Calvin Leete including the options for windows and exterior door replacements and HVAC systems to improve ventilation and indoor air quality. He summarized the estimated costs as follows: \$900,000 for window replacement; \$100,000 for entry door and frame replacement; and \$2.5 - \$2.8 million for mechanical system upgrades. He explained that partial reimbursements may be available from the state for some of these expenses.

The Adams project includes the modification of the septic system and grounds. Mr. Beaudin presented two possible scenarios. First, the system may need to be raised and rebuilt 18" to 24" above the water table at a cost of \$300,000 to \$500,000. The second possibility is that the state will mandate a new system with a treatment plant and large leaching field at a cost of \$2 to \$2.5 million. Mr. Beaudin further explained that there are solutions being developed for the drainage issues that currently exist at Adams.

The Baldwin project includes additions and modifications to the facility and site modifications to the bus drop off and parking areas. The building work includes classroom and orchestra room additions, expanding the cafeteria, installing an elevator and reconfiguring the guidance area for a total new construction area of 21,000 square feet and a projected cost of \$9 - \$9.4 million.

The Board proceeded to ask questions and provide input into the process.

Beginning with Calvin Leete, Mr. Zuse asked for, and was given, confirmation of the total expense at Calvin Leete as \$3.4 million. CTFSS co-chairperson Mauro Rubbo explained that a portion of the window replacement will be reimbursable from the State.

Mr. Zuse asked Mr. Beaudin if they are considering a dual use fuel system to take advantage of lower priced fuel. Mr. Beaudin explained that they are considering such a system but need to determine the accessibility to natural gas and the willingness of the utility companies to provide the fuel on a part-time basis.

Mr. Zuse asked what the proposed time frame would be for this project. Mr. Beaudin explained that if a referendum were approved in spring 2006, the project would be filed with the State by June 30. Design and documentation may begin immediately after that or the Board may choose to wait until the State approves the project. Complete documentation will take approximately six to seven months. The window replacement could be done over the

summer of 2007 or in stages during the school year. The HVAC system could be completed in the next two summers, or it may be possible to do some of the work while classes are in session.

Dr. Iorio asked if Fletcher Thompson will be evaluating similar facilities when evaluating HVAC systems, particularly those with mechanical systems installed as renovations and in place for a period of time. Mr. Beaudin assured him that they have already visited one facility with a system in place for two years and are researching additional sites.

Chairman Bloss asked Ms. Kestner and Mr. Rubbo to summarize why the CTFSF identified the priorities they have for the district. Mr. Rubbo responded that the CTFSF recognizes that the highest priorities in the district are at GHS and Adams. When evaluating the elementary schools, it was clear that they were all in good condition with the exception of the windows and HVAC system at Leete. The task force believes that this project is important and can be done efficiently and reasonably. Mr. Beaudin added that the boiler at Leete is 50 years old and should be replaced. He also stated that healthy air quality and good ventilation are important, and Leete is the only elementary school without air conditioning.

Mr. Rubbo added that the Baldwin project is currently in its second extension with the State, and if it is not approved and submitted prior to June 30, 2006, the entire process will have to be approved again at the local level and all documentation resubmitted under the revised state guidelines.

The Board continued addressing issues at Baldwin. Mr. Zuse asked Mr. Beaudin to clarify the parking at Baldwin. Mr. Beaudin explained that they have developed a phase-in approach with options to add more parking spaces. He explained that the plan is to include over 200 parking spaces. There are approximately 100 staff members at Baldwin.

Mr. Mauro explained that the teams at Baldwin will have more workrooms and support spaces with the proposed additions. Additional space will be available for world language, special education and other uses. The highest projected enrollment at Baldwin in the next 10 years is 650 students. Currently there are 600 students enrolled at Baldwin. The proposed project will allow for this growth.

Mr. Beaudin explained that Baldwin currently has smaller physical classroom space than many other middle schools in the state. Therefore, Fletcher Thompson is including an additional 4000 square feet in its recommendations of new construction to be able to build larger classrooms to accommodate programming needs.

Chairman Bloss asked if it makes sense to proceed with Baldwin before making a final determination on the needs of Adams. He suggested that it might make sense to consider grade reconfiguration, creating two grades 5-8 middle schools if the work needed at Adams is determined to be very costly. He suggested that this approach might keep the enrollments lower at Adams thereby keeping the demands on the septic system lower. Ms. Kestner responded that the results of the studies at Adams are suggesting that the costs to

modify the septic system issues will be reasonable and that Adams will continue to be a viable school with the current grade configurations.

Mr. Zuse suggested that it would be very helpful for the Board and the public to see how the classrooms are used at Baldwin currently and how they will be used with the additions and modifications proposed. Mr. Rubbo, Ms. Kestner, and Mr. Beaudin agreed that a visual comparison should be created.

The Board continued with question regarding issues at Adams. Dr. Iorio asked Mr. Beaudin to clarify the best and worse case scenarios regarding the modifications that will be needed to comply with either the Connecticut Department of Health (DOH) or the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regulations. He restated the requirements as a 18” to 24” mounded system for the DOH and up to 6’ for the DEP.

Discussion continued regarding which regulatory agency’s guidelines the Adams septic system will be subject to. Mr. Rubbo explained that a combination of water flow, water tables, and other existing conditions at Adams will be evaluated by the two agencies. The CTFSF will be submitting information to the DOH and DEP for their determination.

Dr. Iorio asked, should it be determined that we currently need to comply with the less stringent DOH standards, if we would be able to upgrade the system again should our needs increase to the level of the DEP requirements. Mr. Beaudin responded that he believed our initial investment in modifying the system would not be lost and additional changes would be possible should the demands on the system increase. He added that current water usage at Adams is approximately 2,500 gallons per day and compliance with DEP standards begins at 5000 gallons per day.

Mrs. Cartier expressed concern about the accuracy of the demographic information being used in developing the recommendations for Adams and Baldwin. Chairman Bloss stated that the Board could hire a demographer. Mr. Beaudin added that one of the benefits of acquiring information from a demographer is to maximize the reimbursement rate available from the State for construction projects. He explained that without demographic input on future housing starts, etc., the State will only look at history, while they usually base reimbursements on the highest projected enrollments within an eight-year period when a demography study is submitted.

Discussion continued regarding the possibility of acquiring land from adjacent properties. The CTFSF is considering this option.

Ms. Kestner reminded the Board that \$30,000 remains from the original monies allotted for the current feasibility studies. She suggested that this money remain available to the CTFSF as additional studies may be required for the initial phase of the plan.

Mr. Bishop asked that the CTFSF develop a specific square foot per classroom recommendation for Baldwin to give to Fletcher Thompson.

**9. Unfinished Business**

Mrs. Cartier asked Dr. Keene if she has received any additional information from the insurance brokers on new plans. Dr. Keene explained that the brokers will send out Requests for Proposals (RFP) with the expectation that they will have information for the Board by mid January.

**10. Reports of Committees**

Mrs. Nolan reported that the Board's finance subcommittee met with the Board of Finance subcommittee at 6:00 p.m. that evening for a preliminary discussion about the 2006-2007 Budget. The main areas discussed were salaries, medical benefits, energy costs, and bonding. The BOE finance subcommittee will meet next on January 9 at 6:00 p.m. at GHS prior to the regular Board meeting. On January 10 the subcommittee will have a joint meeting with the Board of Finance subcommittee.

Mrs. Nolan mentioned that Stephen Spurrell of the Board of Finance suggested that the Town consider creating an internal task force to explore the possibility of combining the school and the town facilities departments.

Mrs. Dudley reported that she attended the LEARN Board of Directors meeting. Chairman Bloss stated that Ms. Migliacci would be an alternate to the LEARN Board in the event that Mrs. Dudley is unable to attend a meeting.

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

Gina Tracy referenced the materials she handed out earlier in the meeting to the Board. She questioned the existence of different elementary school music programs in Guilford, including instrumental instruction. She cited the Best Practices information that states that learning is improved in all areas when children participate in instrumental music and art programs. She asked the Board to add \$50,000 to the Budget for an additional music teacher in the elementary schools.

**12. New Business**

Mr. Zuse stated that the Board of Finance would like two copies of the Fletcher Thompson report.

Mr. Bishop would like the Board and the Administration to develop a recommendation for classroom square footage at Baldwin. This information should be provided to the CTFSF and Fletcher Thompson and included in their January report.

Mrs. Cartier asked if the Board will pursue the hiring of a demographer. Chairman Bloss expressed concern about getting information back fast enough to be included in the initial recommendations from Fletcher Thompson. He stated that he will speak with the town planner regarding projected new housing.

Mr. Zuse reminded the Board that, based on the town charter, a decision on the Fletcher Thompson/CTFSF recommendation will need to be made by the end of January. He also asked when the Board will be discussing the Budget publicly, including programming costs such as world language and all-day kindergarten. Chairman Bloss suggested that costs will need to be determined and that a discussion will take place at the January 9 regular meeting.

Chairman Bloss thanked Dr. Keene for her leadership in the district as Interim Superintendent. He stated that the Board is grateful for her outstanding and time-consuming commitment to the job. Dr. Keene responded by acknowledging the help she has received from administrators, teachers and parents in the district. She added that she looks forward to working with Dr. Forcella when he begins in the district on December 19.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded by Mrs. Cartier, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorri L. Hahn  
Clerk to the Board of Education

