

**GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
MONDAY, AUGUST 13, 2007
GUILFORD HIGH SCHOOL, GUILFORD, CONNECTICUT**

1. Call to Order

Chairman Bloss called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. Board of Education members present were Keith Bishop, William Bloss, Louis Iorio, Kathleen Nolan and Ted Zuse. Administrators present were Tom Forcella, Anne Keene, and Nancy Bishop. Also present were School Business Administrator Andy Potochney and Director of Facilities Clifford Gurnham.

Action on Minutes of:

1.1 July 9, 2007 (Finance Subcommittee)

1.2 July 9, 2007 (Regular Meeting)

1.3 July 24, 2007 (Executive Session)

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded by Mr. Zuse, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following minutes: July 9, 2007, (Finance Subcommittee); July 9, 2007, (Regular Meeting); and July 24, 2007, (Executive Session).

**2. Review and Approval of Expenditures for the Month of July
Reviewer for Month: Kathleen Nolan**

Mrs. Nolan noted that the Finance Subcommittee met prior to this regular meeting. She explained that the committee reviewed the warrants and budget pertaining to the end of FY 2006-2007 and the beginning of FY 2007-2008. The committee reviewed warrants S070711, S07025, and S070808, pertaining to FY 2006-2007. They also reviewed warrant S070107 reflecting expenses for FY 2007-2008.

Mrs. Nolan noted that there is an available balance at the end of FY 2006-2007 of \$59,724 which will remain in the general fund in FY 2007-2008.

Mrs. Nolan noted that professional staff has gone to Boston and Pittsburgh to receive professional development training this summer.

Mrs. Nolan reported that expenditures are at the same level this year as they were at the same time last year. She noted a payment to the State of Connecticut in the amount of \$355,949 for the teachers' retirement plan.

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

Chairman Bloss noted that the subcommittee recommended applying the unexpended balance from 2006-2007 to health benefits for 2007-2008.

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

None

4. Communications

Dr. Forcella explained that he received a letter from First Selectman Carl Balestracci noting parking concerns in North Guilford during elections. The Town plans to use the gymnasium at Melissa Jones as a polling place.

Dr. Forcella noted that there have been concerns expressed in the past regarding the safety of using the schools as polling places.

Mr. Bishop asked if there will be a police officer or other person of authority inside the school to direct voters to the polls. Dr. Forcella responded that this is the town's plan.

Chairman Bloss asked that a discussion on polling places in the schools be carried over to the September 10, 2007, Regular Meeting. Dr. Forcella will obtain more information from the First Selectman's office.

5. Student Representatives

None

6. Superintendent's Report

6.1 Report from Town Energy Committee

Dr. Forcella introduced Sid Gale and Glenn Weston-Murphy from the Town Energy Committee (TEC) to discuss potential energy conservation measures for the schools.

Mr. Weston-Murphy explained that the TEC has been meeting with members of several town committees and organizations including GPS Director of Facilities Clifford Gurnham, Dr. Forcella, the Community Task Force on School Facilities, the Standing Building Committee and others. The TEC is concerned about near-term and long-range answers to offset energy consumption in Guilford.

Mr. Weston-Murphy stated that potential short-term solutions would include solar arrays, specifically at Guilford High School. Long-term solutions would include ways to meet air quality standards, fuel cells and including energy conservation measures in all future construction/renovation plans. He noted that there are funds available from the CT Clean Energy Fund for reimbursement for specific energy conserving measures.

Mr. Weston-Murphy stated that Eastern Connecticut State University has received a grant to analyze energy consumption and evaluate facilities. He noted that the school would welcome the opportunity to study Guilford's schools.

Mr. Weston-Murphy explained that the installation of a solar array on GHS would be approximately \$300 - \$400,000 with a potential state reimbursement of 40 - 60%. He noted that it would take approximately 18 years for the system to begin paying for itself.

Mr. Weston-Murphy also noted that the Town of Guilford has committed to the State of Connecticut initiative to achieve 20% clean energy use by the year 2010 in all Town buildings.

Mr. Gale reported that the cost of electricity for Guilford's facilities is \$1.2 million. He noted that 2/3 of that cost is from the public school facilities.

Mr. Gale explained that the goal of the TEC is to gain support from the Board to begin to evaluate the school facilities and pursue a pre-application with the State's Clean Energy Fund to determine potential eligibility for reimbursement.

The Board asked questions including the life span of the solar arrays (approximately 20-30 years) and the potential energy cost savings that the district would realize.

The Board agreed that it would be beneficial for the TEC to collect more information and pursue the pre-application process with the State.

6.2 Report on Projected Elementary Class Size

Dr. Forcella reported that the decision has been made to add a Grade 1 classroom at Calvin Leete due to increased enrollments over the summer. He noted that the cost to hire this additional teacher will be absorbed in the budgeted salary expenses.

6.3 Workshop Topics (exhibit)

In discussion regarding the proposed Workshop Schedule, the Board agreed to the topics for the months of August (School Facilities CTFSE/BOE Goals), September (Professional Learning Communities) and October (Budget Priorities with DLT) as proposed by Dr. Forcella. They discussed switching the topics for November and April (November – Teacher Input Session, March – Technology Update). The Board also would like to add a Language Arts Curriculum update to one of the Workshops. Additional topics proposed include an update on School Facilities, Healthy Communities Initiative, Mentoring Program, Teacher Input Session and Superintendent's Evaluation. A revised Workshop Schedule will be developed and posted on the district website.

6.4 Summer Professional Learning Update

Dr. Forcella updated the Board on the professional learning for faculty and administrators that has taken place over the summer. He explained that the Professional Learning Community (PLC) model creates a results-based system to measure student achievement and learning.

Dr. Forcella reported that 54 members of the GPS faculty and administration attended a workshop with Dr. Richard DuFour to learn about the PLC model. He noted that this year's convocation will focus on the PLC model and how to merge good instruction and the culture needed to achieve high level achievement from all students.

Dr. Forcella explained that administrators attended the University of Pittsburgh to further their knowledge of the PLCs. He noted that teachers and administrators will be conducting learning walks as one way to improve instruction.

6.5 CMT Report (exhibit)

Dr. Keene presented the Connecticut Mastery Test Results in Reading, Mathematics and Writing for students in grades 3 - 8 for the Spring 2007.

Dr. Keene presented CMT trends for GPS students in grades 4, 6 and 8. She also presented comparison data of the percentage of students meeting state goal in Guilford, our DRG and state-wide. Dr. Keene noted that, in mathematics, all grade levels in Guilford exceeded the State average and the average of comparable towns. Students in grades 6-8 exceeded the average of comparable towns in all subjects. She further noted that preliminary reports indicate that all Guilford schools have made Adequate Yearly Progress.

Complete CMT results are available at www.ctreports.com

Mr. Zuse asked if grades have been tracked through the years to compare performance on standardized tests with overall performance in the classroom. Dr. Keene and Dr. Forcella responded that the district will be creating the systems to evaluate performance in this way.

A discussion took place regarding the leveling of classes. Dr. Forcella stated that he believes that there are too many levels at the high school and that sometimes students are placed in levels that lower expectations.

Dr. Forcella noted that the district needs to develop systems to better analyze all data. He stated that more data on individual classroom performance is needed as it is important to evaluate student progress individually and not just averages.

6.6 Parent Involvement Study Team

Dr. Forcella explained that he has developed a Parent Involvement Study Team to better utilize parents as resources in the schools. Representatives from the PTOs and the PTA participated in a discussion about Professional Learning Communities and the focus on

learning in our district. Discussion also included improving communication from teachers to keep parents better informed of their child's progress.

Dr. Forcella noted that he provided the parents with copies of our Board policies regarding parental involvement as well as those of other districts. The parents will be reading over this information and providing feedback to him.

6.7 Traffic Congestion – GHS

Dr. Forcella explained that in the morning there is a significant back-up of traffic when parents are trying to drop their children off through the same entrance that the buses are accessing. He stated that the district is looking into creating an additional entrance that would alleviate some of the traffic congestion.

Mr. Gurnham explained that he has requested prices from contractors to add another driveway to the front parking lot. This would allow parents to enter through a separate driveway, reversing the traffic flow and eliminating the competition with the buses.

Dr. Forcella also provided an update to the Board on the Calvin Leete project. He reminded the Board that the goal has been to install all of the new windows and mechanical systems prior to the start of school.

Mr. Gurnham reported that the Leete project is on schedule with the exception of a potential slight delay for the installation of all of the windows. A back-up plan has been developed with the fire marshall in the event that there is any delay. Mr. Gurnham explained that each classroom is being "turned over" one at a time, completed and cleaned in time for the start of school. There will still be some additional minimal work in classrooms after the start of school to connect piping.

7. BOARD AGENDA

7.1 ACT ON Personnel Items (exhibit)

Dr. Forcella reported that the district is actively seeking World Language teachers.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Iorio and seconded by Mr. Bishop, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the resignations of the following teachers: Dominique Argo, Adams grade 7 language arts (not accepting position for 07-08 school year); Domenica Lumb, Jones speech and language pathologist, effective August 31, 2007; Keri Hagness, GHS Social Studies Department Chairperson, effective August 31, 2007; Rachel Carrion, Lakes World Language (not accepting position for 07-08 school year); and Lisa Maciorowski, GHS guidance counselor, effective August 31, 2007.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded by Dr. Iorio, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the following appointments: George Cooksey, GHS English; Adrienne

Terribile, GHS Social Studies; Christina Tatta, Adams grade 7 Language Arts; and Joseph Zipoli, GHS Math, all effective September 1, 2007.

7.2 ACT ON Bid Recommendation for Smart Boards (exhibit)

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded by Dr. Iorio, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the bid recommendation for nine Smart Boards from Connecticut Business Systems in the amount of \$13,500.00.

7.3 ACT ON Changes to Facility Use Guidelines (exhibit)

Dr. Forcella noted that the changes in the facility guidelines will benefit Guilford organizations that use our facilities, particularly on the weekends.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Zuse and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the changes to the Facility Use Guidelines.

7.4 APPROVE \$7,000 Donation from Guilford Fund for Education to the Guilford Public Schools

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded by Dr. Iorio, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the \$7,000 donation from the Guilford Fund for Education to help fund the training of 12 GPS faculty and provide needed materials to implement The Harkness Method of Instruction at GHS for select classes.

Chairman Bloss requested that a letter be sent to the GFFE thanking them for their donation.

8. ACT ON Recommendations from Policy Subcommittee:

8.1 Removal of Regulation 5426(a-k): Job Descriptions-District Medical Personnel (exhibit)

Upon a motion made by Dr. Iorio and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously in favor of removing Regulation 5426 (a-k): Job Descriptions-District Medical Personnel.

8.2 Revisions to Policy 5218: Promotion/Acceleration/Retention (exhibit)

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving revisions to Policy 5218: Promotion/Acceleration/Retention as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

8.3 Revisions to Regulation 5326: Dress and Grooming (exhibit)

Upon a motion made by Dr. Iorio and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving revisions to Regulation 5326: Dress and Grooming as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

9. Unfinished Business

Mr. Bishop asked about the progress made initiating the new student information system. Dr. Forcella explained that training on Power School is beginning this week for high school staff and all school secretaries.

Mr. Zuse asked about the expected completion date for the turf field at the high school. Dr. Forcella responded that the field is on schedule to be completed in mid October.

Mr. Zuse asked when the in-school suspension legislation from the State will be implemented. Dr. Forcella explained that the new legislation requires compliance by the fall of 2008, but Guilford's goal is to decrease out-of-school suspensions this year and make any in-school suspension a more productive time for students.

10. Reports of Committees

None

11. Public Questions (four minute limit)

None

12. New Business

Mr. Zuse reported a conversation he had with a Madison BOE member regarding a co-op program they have with ACES offering special education services in town. He reported that the Town of Madison is saving over \$1 million each year by bringing these services in-house. Dr. Forcella responded that Guilford can investigate this option adding that there would need to be a facility available to house such a program.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Cartier and seconded by Ms. Migliacci, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorri L. Hahn
Clerk to the Board of Education