

**GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 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 Bill Bloss, Keith Bishop, Barbara Dudley, Naomi Migliacci, Kathleen Nolan, Lou Iorio and Ted Zuse. Administrators present were Tom Forcella, Anne Keene, Rick Misenti, Anne Snurkowski, Merry Leventhal, Marilynn Sturgess, and Nancy Bishop. Also present was School Business Administrator Andy Potochney.

Action on Minutes of:

- 1.1 August 13, 2007 (Finance Subcommittee)**
- 1.2 August 13, 2007 (Regular Meeting)**
- 1.3 August 29, 2007 (Special Meeting)**

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded by Dr. Iorio, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the minutes from August 13, 2007, (Finance Subcommittee), August 13, 2007, (Regular Meeting), and August 29, 2007, (Executive Session) with one correction noted on the August 13 Finance Subcommittee minutes (Dr. Meyers was not present at this meeting).

7.1 ACT ON Resolution to Establish General Lindquist Scholarship (exhibit)

Chairman Bloss requested that this agenda item be moved up to accommodate the presenter of the scholarship information. Jim Beaulieu, Financial Advisor and Trustee to General Lindquist introduced The Esther Byington Lindquist Scholarship Fund and The Brigadier General Warren Lindquist Scholarship Fund to the Board.

Mr. Beaulieu explained that the net income of General Lindquist's Trust will be divided between the two funds and recipients of the scholarships will be granted four sums for each of their four years of post secondary education. The Esther Byington Lindquist Scholarship will be awarded to a Guilford High School student planning to further his or her education as a full-time music education major. The Brigadier General Warren Lindquist Scholarship will be awarded to a Guilford High School student planning to further his or her education in theatre arts.

Mr. Beaulieu explained that the Board of Education will award the scholarships each year. Chairman Bloss noted that they will do so with appropriate input from GHS staff.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Zuse and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of the resolution to establish the General Lindquist Scholarship.

6.1 Introduction of New Teachers

Chairman Bloss requested that this agenda item also be moved up to accommodate the new teachers in attendance.

Dr. Forcella introduced the following new teachers to Guilford Public Schools: Harry Brielman, GHS Science teacher; Alison Strzepek, GHS Math teacher; Diane Hirsch, GHS Guidance Dept.; Christine Labonte, Lakes Pre-K teacher; Colleen Delaney, Cox/Leete psychologist; Lara Silvestro, Leete Kindergarten teacher; Daniel Shay, GHS Math teacher; Sarah Suerth, GHS Science Chairperson; Ernest Smoker, GHS Physics teacher; Vincent Mascola, Cox 2nd grade teacher; Amanda Mazzarella, Leete 3rd grade teacher; Joe Flood, Cox World Language teacher; Adrienne Terribile, GHS Social Studies teacher; Laura Bernardi, Baldwin 6th grade teacher; Edna Gerrity, Baldwin Speech and Language pathologist; George Cooksey, GHS English teacher; Barbara Tokarska, GHS Math teacher; and Rick Misenti, GHS principal.

The Board took a two minute recess following the introduction of the new staff.

2. Review and Approval of Expenditures for the Month of August Reviewer for Month: Bill Bloss

Chairman Bloss noted that there was no Finance Subcommittee meeting prior to the regular Board meeting. He proceeded to review the expenditures for the month of August and the following warrants: S080107, S080807, and S082207. He noted that expenditures for the month of August were \$1,776,396.29.

Chairman Bloss noted that warrant S080107 totaling \$716,821.51 was for medical, life and disability payments.

Chairman Bloss noted an expenditure of \$376,046.08 to Dell Computer for new computers per the district's technology plan. Mr. Potochney noted the distribution of the 366 computers as follows: 142 to GHS, 76 to Adams, 6 to Baldwin, 70 to Lakes, 36 to Cox, and 36 to Jones.

Chairman Bloss noted the following expenditures on warrant S082207: \$27,994.61 to Fletcher Thompson for the next stage of facility planning; \$55,656 to The Ergonomic Group for 72 new computers distributed to Cox (16), Jones (20), Lakes (16), and Leete (20); and additional technology expenditures for new computers at Adams and Baldwin and wireless technology at GHS.

Mr. Zuse congratulated the facilities department on the job they have done improving the exteriors of the school buildings in preparation for the start of the new school year.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Zuse and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the expenditures for the month of August as presented by Chairman Bloss.

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

None

4. Communications

Chairman Bloss noted that he received communications regarding the increase in the student parking fee at the high school from \$40 to \$80.

5. Student Representatives

None

10. Public Questions

Chairman Bloss, with the Board's permission, moved this agenda item up to accommodate the member of the audience waiting to address the Board.

Suzanne Carlson addressed the Board regarding the recent enforcement of the GHS dress code and subsequent consequences. She stated that her daughter was sent home with an out of school suspension for wearing a tank top to school. Mrs. Carlson stated that, while she is in favor of a stricter dress code, she believes that the penalty for a first offense was too harsh. She further noted that the Board policy and GHS Student Handbook should provide a more detailed description of what constitutes inappropriate dress.

Mrs. Carlson noted that GHS Connection will hold a meeting on Wednesday, September 12 on the topic of the dress code.

Dr. Forcella responded that there were several students sent home for violating the dress code. He noted that the comments he received from parents echoed those of Mrs. Carlson – most were in support of enforcing the dress code, but felt that the punishment was too strict.

Dr. Forcella explained that he looks forward to the result of the conversation with parents and Mr. Misenti at the GHS Connection meeting and is confident that, together, appropriate consequences will be identified.

Mr. Zuse asked the Superintendent to comment on the no smoking policy at GHS. Dr. Forcella stated that there is a policy of no smoking by students, staff or anyone on the campus.

6. Superintendent's Report (cont'd)

6.3 Opening of School - Convocation

Dr. Forcella explained that he began to lay the foundation over the 2006-2007 school year regarding the district's belief system on learning that with sustained effort and outstanding

instruction all students should be able to achieve at high levels. He noted that time has been spent by administrators at the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh and by 54 faculty members at a conference in Boston this summer to understand the Principals of Learning and to learn how to create a culture within the schools that supports Professional Learning Communities.

Dr. Forcella reported that the Professional Learning Community model was presented at this year's convocation. He explained that to create PLCs, teachers work in collaborative teams to create common assessments, analyze results and make informed decisions about instruction. Schools will be creating goals that are in line with the vision of the district.

CMT, SAT and other assessment results will be analyzed by teachers and administrators on a regular basis to determine what steps need to be taken to achieve goals.

Dr. Forcella stated that teams have been formed in every school and he expects initial common assessments to be developed by December. He noted that the process is ongoing and assessments are subject to change based on feedback within the teams.

Mr. Zuse commented that it would be beneficial to communicate the PLC concept to parents and the general community.

6.4 Preliminary Enrollment Reports

Dr. Forcella noted that the report he provided the Board is preliminary. He noted that the preliminary numbers reflect increases in enrollments in most grades. There will be adjustments made as the district investigates those students who may have transferred/moved and not yet notified the district. The official enrollment report will be generated on October 1, 2007.

Dr. Forcella noted that the Town Demographic Study has been completed and will be discussed in more detail at a later meeting.

6.5 CTFSF Update

Dr. Forcella reported that members of the Board joined the CTFSF on tours of Adams Middle School and the high school in August. These tours provided the group with firsthand observations of the facility issues and concerns at both schools. The CTFSF is in the process of developing options to address the program and space needs at each facility. The CTFSF is carefully examining all alternative including renovation options as well as new construction.

6.6 Quarterly Curriculum Update

Dr. Keene reported that a Comprehensive Review has been completed in the K-12 Language Arts Curriculum. She noted that the Board approved the curriculum on July 9, 2007. Teachers have been asked to complete feedback forms on the implementation during the school year. The LA Committee will reconvene in December to review progress to date. Elementary staff

will be coordinating their efforts during monthly grade level language arts meetings beginning in September. A complete update for the Board will be presented in January.

Dr. Keene reported that the Mathematics Review Committee is scheduled to begin their work this school year. A calculus course has been added at GHS.

Under Targeted Reviews, Dr. Keene reported that the Foreign Language in Elementary Schools (FLES) program in Spanish has been expanded to include grades two and three in addition to grade one. During the first year of implementation for the additional grades, the curriculum document may be adjusted.

Also under Targeted Reviews, Dr. Keene stated that the grade 3 science curriculum has been adjusted to include more inquiry skills related to the life science strand. Teachers will be using the FOSS Structures of Life module to help support the change. Additional professional development for third and fourth grade teachers was provided prior to the beginning of the school year. The CMT science exam for grades 5 and 8 will be administered for the first time in March 2008.

Mrs. Nolan asked how the district has addressed the vacancy created in the elementary World Language program. Dr. Keene explained that a long-term substitute has been hired for the position. He is working toward certification and is a native speaker of Spanish.

Mr. Zuse asked if parents will be receiving print outs of grade level expectation at Back to School nights. Dr. Keene explained that teachers need to be involved in the process of communicating these expectations and there has not been time to accomplish that at this early point in the school year. She noted that these expectations will be developed and made available to parents in the near future.

Mr. Zuse asked if a more detailed implementation plan for the Language Arts Curriculum will be developed. Dr. Keene explained that, at the Board's request, she developed a timeline for implementation. The implementation process will be developed and refined by the Language Arts Committee. Mr. Zuse asked that he receive a copy of this continuum once established. Dr. Keene stated that this document should be ready to present to the Board at the January 2008 meeting.

7. BOARD AGENDA

7.2 ACT ON Personnel Items (exhibit)

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the resignations of the following teachers: Maria Auchterlonie, Calvin Leete Kindergarten teacher, effective August 31, 2007, and Laura Webster, Guilford Lakes Special Education, effective August 31, 2007.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Migliacci and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the following appointments: Diane Hirsch, Guilford High

School Guidance Department; Christine Labonte, Guilford Lakes Special Education Pre-K; and Lara Silvestro, Calvin Leete Kindergarten, all effective September 1, 2007.

7.3 DISCUSS Use of the Schools as Polling Locations

Chairman Bloss explained that the Town of Guilford would like to use Melissa Jones School as the 5th polling location in Guilford. Currently, the North Guilford Fire House is used for residents in North Guilford. This location has been deemed unsafe by the Town as it does not offer enough parking for voters, forcing cars to park on the side of the narrow, heavily traveled Route 77.

Chairman Bloss stated that First Selectman Carl Balestracci assured him that the Town would commit to posting a police officer at the entrance to the school.

Discussion continued regarding parking and safety concerns. Chairman Bloss noted that there are no other public buildings in this voting district that could be used as a polling location.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Zuse and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously in favor of adding an agenda item to act on the use of Melissa Jones as a polling location.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Zuse and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of sending a letter to the Board of Selectman supporting the use of Melissa Jones as a polling location.

8. Unfinished Business

Mr. Zuse stated his support of GHS Principal Rick Misenti's enforcement of the dress code.

Mr. Bishop stated his support to increase enforcement of the no smoking policy at GHS.

Mr. Bishop restated his concern that drivers respect the parking restrictions in place at the schools including not parking in the fire lanes or on the lawns.

9. Reports of Committees

None

12. New Business

Mr. Zuse suggested that guidelines be developed in order to clarify the role and procedural issues for PTOs and the PTA.

Mr. Zuse noted that a letter regarding the Wellness Policy was sent home with Back to School information. This letter was sent on behalf of the Health Advisory Committee. Mr. Zuse noted that the letter was signed from a Board member and a GPS administrator. He reminded the Board that communications should not be sent to the public directly from a Board member,

but rather from the Superintendent. The letter, also on the website, will be changed to reflect Dr. Forcella's signature.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Migliacci and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session at 9:10 p.m. Chairman Bloss stated that the Board would not return to public session and no votes would be taken during the Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorri L. Hahn
Clerk to the Board of Education