

**GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2008  
GUILFORD HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY, GUILFORD, CT**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairperson Bill Bloss called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. Board members present were Bill Bloss, Barbara Dudley, Lou Iorio, Alan Meyers, Ted Zuse, Keith Bishop, Mary Beeman, and Linda Sanacora.

Administrators present were Anne Keene, Tom Forcella, GHS Principal Rick Misenti and GHS Assistant Principal Ian Neviaser. Also present was Director of Operations Clifford Gurnham, Director of Technology Kevin Mitchill, Accounting Manager Linda Trudeau and GEA President Debby Butler.

**2. Action on Minutes of:**

- 2.1 February 27, 2008 (Joint BOE/CTFSF Meeting)**
- 2.2 March 4, 2008 (Transportation Subcommittee Meeting)**
- 2.3 March 10, 2008 (Regular Meeting)**
- 2.4 March 10, 2008 (Finance Subcommittee Meeting)**
- 2.5 March 24, 2008 (Facility Subcommittee Meeting)**
- 2.6 March 24, 2008 (Expulsion Hearing)**
- 2.7 March 24, 2008 (Workshop Meeting)**

Mr. Zuse requested the following changes to the minutes presented at the meeting: March 10 Finance Subcommittee Meeting: Change “Ted Zuse and Keith Bishop joined the meeting in progress” to “Ted Zuse arrived at 6:36 p.m. and Keith Bishop arrived at 7:27 p.m.”

March 24 Facility Subcommittee Meeting: Change “The subcommittee agreed to meet prior to the next Board of Education Workshop, which is scheduled for April 28, 2008,” to “The subcommittee agreed to meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. prior to the Board of Education Workshop Meetings.

March 24 Workshop Meeting: Add to item 1. Role of BOE Facilities Subcommittee: The Facilities Subcommittee will elect a chair at their next meeting and the chair will set the agenda for all subsequent meetings.

Mr. Zuse asked that members of subcommittees be identified separately from other meeting attendees.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Dr. Iorio, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the minutes of February 27, 2008 (Joint BOE/CTFSF Meeting), March 4, 2008 (Transportation Subcommittee Meeting), March 10, 2008 (Regular Meeting), March 10, 2008 (Finance Subcommittee Meeting), March 24, 2008 (Facilities Subcommittee Meeting),

March 24, 2008 (Expulsion Hearing) and March 24, 2008 (Workshop Meeting) with corrections noted by Mr. Zuse.

**8.3 ACT ON Endorsement of Guilford PTA Turn-off Week and Guilford Clean-Up Weekend (exhibit)**

With the Board's permission, Chairman Bloss moved agenda item 8.3 up on the agenda to accommodate an audience member. Doug Newman explained that the Guilford PTA is sponsoring "Turn-Off Week" the week of April 21 – 27. The event creates awareness of the time children spend watching TV, playing video games, etc. and encourages the planning of family activities, and more active time for children. Guilford Clean-Up Weekend will be on Saturday, April 26 at Adams Middle School. Community members are encouraged to help clean up the Town. Mr. Newman also read a list of area businesses sponsoring the event.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Dudley and seconded by Dr. Meyers, the Board voted unanimously to endorse Turn-Off Week and Guilford Clean-Up Weekend.

Chairman Bloss asked that the Board approve the addition of two agenda items.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Dudley and seconded by Dr. Meyers, the Board voted unanimously to add agenda items 8.5 ACT ON Electricity Bid Process and item 8.6 ACT ON Educational Specifications for Partial Roof Replacement at Adams Middle School and Guilford High School.

**3. Review and Approval of Expenditures for the Month of March  
Reviewer for Month: Ted Zuse**

Mr. Zuse noted that the Finance Subcommittee reviewed the March 2008 Financial Reports at their meeting earlier in the evening. Upon a motion made by Mr. Zuse and seconded by Dr. Meyers, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the expenditures for the month of March as presented by Mr. Zuse.

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

Suzanne Carlson stated that she has been a member of the high school's scheduling committee since 2005 and supports the new schedule under consideration. Mrs. Carlson also reminded the community to vote on the Budget Referendum on Tuesday, April 8.

**5. Communications**

Mr. Bishop asked that the Board observe a moment of silence in honor of Larry Mucilli who passed away on Sunday, April 6. Mr. Mucilli was very active in the community. His late wife Cindy and his son Greg both served as Board of Education members. All three of the Mucilli children attended and graduated from Guilford Public Schools.

Chairman Bloss noted that Board members had received several communications on the school facilities.

## **6. Student Representatives**

Jeffrey Cash reported on news from the high school. He noted that Voices would be performing at Carnegie Hall on April 27 and that the Junior Prom is April 26. He also noted that AP testing would take place from May 5 - May 16 and the Theatre Arts Dept. will be performing "Seussical" April 30 through May 3 at the high school.

Mrs. Sanacora commended the high school students who helped to organize the mock car crash on April 7 to demonstrate the dangers of drinking and driving as proms and graduation approach.

Mr. Bishop noted that the GHS Jazz Ensemble earned 2<sup>nd</sup> place honors in a recent competition. First place went to LaGuardia High School.

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

### **7.1 TEAM Guilford Forum**

Dr. Forcella reminded the Board that TEAM Guilford will host a community forum on April 27 as a culminating event to the community conversations they have held for the past several months. Input from these conversations has been collected and the top seven issues of concern identified by community members will be discussed in the forum on Saturday, the 27<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Forcella encouraged all interested community members to register for the event.

### **7.2 Rapid Communication System**

Kevin Mitchill demonstrated the new rapid communication system, AlertNow, that the school district will use to communicate with parents of students in the event of an emergency, and to remind them of important dates and activities. Mr. Mitchill explained that the system will automatically access phone numbers and email addresses provided by parents through PowerSchool and on emergency cards at the beginning of each school year. He explained that the district will identify administrators and other key personnel who will be able to access the system and record voice messages and send emails to many different groups. For example, if there were a bus accident, a principal would be able to select just the contacts for students on that bus from the data base and notify parents about the event.

Mr. Mitchill explained that messages identified as emergencies will automatically be sent to all phone numbers and email addresses provided by parents, while general announcements would go only to primary numbers and addresses.

Mr. Mitchill provided a test of the system by sending a pre-recorded message to the cell phones of Board members. He noted that the district will be sending a letter to parents explaining the new system and identifying a date for a test message to be sent to them.

### **7.3 Update on CTFSE Options**

Dr. Forcella explained that the Board and the Community Task Force on School Facilities will be meeting with community groups this spring to explain the facility needs identified at Adams and the high school and the potential solutions to address those needs. A sign up sheet with presentation dates will be distributed to Board and Task Force members. Dr. Forcella noted that it is important for the Board members to hear from the public to help them determine the best solution to the facility needs.

Chairman Bloss noted that feedback received from parents at a recent Jones PTO meeting included questions about the potential use for the existing Adams facility if a new middle school were built.

#### **7.4 School Calendar Changes**

Dr. Forcella noted that due to the non-use of three snow days that had been built into this year's school calendar, days off have been identified to make them up. He noted that there will be no school on April 21, May 23 and May 27. Dr. Forcella also noted that there will not be snow days built into the 2008-2009 school calendar.

#### **7.5 Elementary School Time Changes**

Dr. Forcella explained that the elementary school day will be extended by eight minutes from 3:17 p.m. to 3:25 p.m. in the 2008-2009 school year. He noted that currently elementary students spend 10 to 20 minutes waiting for their buses to arrive. By extending the school day students will spend more time in classrooms learning, and less time waiting for buses. He also noted that Guilford's elementary school day is currently the shortest among schools in our District Reference Group.

#### **7.6 Update on GHS Schedule**

Dr. Forcella noted that the process of developing a new potential schedule has been an inclusive one involving parents, staff, students and administrators. He noted that the option being considered and presented by Mr. Misenti and Mr. Neviasser is the most common type of schedule used by high schools.

Mr. Misenti and Mr. Neviasser gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on the process of developing a new schedule and an explanation of how the new schedule would work. Mr. Misenti noted that several meetings have taken place to insure that all stakeholders had the opportunity to voice opinions, ask questions, and express concerns. He noted that GHS staff expressed their support of the new schedule because of the increased instructional time per class.

Mr. Neviasser explained that the new schedule will provide 58 minutes of instructional time per class as compared to 45 minutes currently scheduled. He explained that the new schedule will include four day cycles and a 20 minute lunch scheduled for every student.

Mr. Zuse asked what impact the new schedule will have on the number of instructional hours students will receive. Mr. Misenti responded that while there is a slight decrease in total hours

per year of approximately 5 hours, the amount of quality instruction time will increase because there will be fewer transitions throughout the school day and longer time periods to teach and learn.

Mr. Bishop asked about the high school's policy on dismissing students early. Mr. Neviasser explained that upper classroom are able to design their schedules for early dismissals to accommodate work, sports and other commitments.

Mrs. Sanacora asked if the idea of a later start time for the high school has been considered. Dr. Forcella noted that it would not be possible to schedule buses to meet the needs of all of the schools and all of the students if the high school changed its start time.

Mr. Bishop noted that a two-tiered bus schedule is one of the options being considered as the district accepts bids for the new bus contract.

Mr. Misenti thanked GHS Connection for all of their help organizing meetings and publicizing the scheduling process.

Mr. Misenti noted that he plans to present his recommendation for the new high school schedule to Dr. Forcella this week.

## **8 Board Agenda**

### **8.1 ACT ON Personnel Items**

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the following resignations for the purpose of retirement: Jeffrey Yates, Mathematics teacher at GHS, effective August 31, 2008, and Beverly Larson, Health teacher at Baldwin, effective August 31.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the resignation of Debra Spencer, World Language teacher at Guilford High School, effective August 31, 2008.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Dudley and seconded by Dr. Meyers, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the appointment of Nicole Rasmussen, Guidance Counselor at Guilford High School, effective March 3, 2008.

### **8.2 ACT ON Accepting 2006-07 GHS and Baldwin Roof Projects as Complete (exhibit)**

Mr. Zuse asked for a report from Mr. Gurnham upon completion of capital projects summarizing the costs and including a comparison to budget. Mr. Gurnham stated that he will provide a report to the Board on the two roof projects.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of accepting the 2006-2007 Guilford High School and Baldwin Middle School roof projects as complete.

Dr. Meyers asked Mr. Gurnham for a mold studies report on Adams and the high school. Mr. Gurnham stated that he would provide the reports to the Board.

#### **8.4 RECEIVE 2006-2007 Annual Report (exhibit)**

Mr. Zuse commented that he believes the annual report is written during the summer following the school year it pertains to and wanted to know why the Board cannot receive it in the fall instead of the spring of the next school year to potentially make use of the data included in it. He also noted that the content provided by each school is not consistent and he found some reports to be more comprehensive than others.

Dr. Forcella responded that the district meets the Town's deadline to submit the report and that it is compiled throughout the first part of the following school year because there is not enough time to complete the information sooner. He added that he believes the information included in the report is already provided to the Board throughout the school year. Dr. Forcella noted that the report is more of a historical document required by the Town and not a document used by the district for planning purposes.

Mrs. Sanacora commented that she agrees with Mr. Zuse that the content of the individual school reports varies and that more complete and consistent content from every school would make the document more useful.

Dr. Meyers commented that the State of the School report Dr. Forcella delivered in the fall provided a comprehensive overview of the school district and he hopes this event will continue.

Lorri Hahn added that the Town only publishes the District Summary of the Annual Report and not each school's information.

#### **8.5 ACT ON Electricity Bid Process**

Chairman Bloss explained that bids are being accepted for electricity purchase. These bids are only for the generation of electricity, C.L. & P. would still be used for the transmission/delivery of electricity. The bids are due on April 22, 2008 and due to the changing market must be accepted or rejected by 4:00 p.m. of that day. Due to this deadline the Board must authorize Dr. Forcella to enter into a contract for electricity depending on the bid results.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of authorizing Dr. Forcella to enter into a contract for electricity on April 22, 2008, depending on the bid results received on that day.

#### **8.6 ACT ON Educational Specifications for Partial Roof Replacement at Adams Middle School and Guilford High School**

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Dr. Iorio, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the educational specifications for the partial roof replacement at Adams Middle School and Guilford High School, including the filing of the ED-049 and submission of the projects to the Board of Selectmen.

#### **9. Unfinished Business**

Mr. Zuse asked how and when the Board will receive a report from the Superintendent answering the question posed during the October 2007 Professional Learning Communities presentation: "What do we want students to learn?"

Dr. Forcella responded that all teachers are looking at the curriculum, defining what the essential learnings are and determining what should be taught. He explained that each PLC in each school will evaluate what the curriculum, standards, local assessments and CMT and CAPT identify as essential learning and then examine methods and results in each classroom to develop consistent strategies.

Mr. Zuse stated that he understands that it is important for there to be clear expectations for all stakeholders in the education process. He noted inconsistencies in the individual school's websites, stating that those schools that have adopted the new district format are providing more information than those who have not made the changes.

Dr. Forcella responded that the goal is to have all of the schools' sites changed to the new format with the same level of access to information.

## **10. Reports of Committees**

Mr. Bishop noted that the district will be receiving bids on the new transportation contract. Included in the specifications is a two-tiered schedule option. He noted that the Transportation Subcommittee evaluated the number of students riding the buses at the different schools, noting that ridership at the high school is very light, and that middle school parents tend to pick their students up more than elementary school parents. He noted that a change in the schedule may require extra buses to deliver students to the schools to meet two start times versus the current three start times.

Mr. Bishop stated that safety is always of primary concern and the issue of seatbelts on buses has been carefully considered.

Dr. Meyers explained that statistics show that students are safer on school buses without seatbelts as compared with using seatbelts that may not be adjusted appropriately. He also noted that the compartmentalization of school bus seats provide some level of safety and protection to students. He added that students with special needs must have appropriate seatbelts and/or other restraints as needed.

Mr. Bishop noted that the Transportation Subcommittee will have a report on the bid results at the May 13 Regular Meeting.

Mr. Zuse noted that the Facility Subcommittee met and discussed the production of a schedule outlining all capital projects proposed or in process. He stated that the committee is also requesting a needs assessment for building life cycle costs for each building so the district can plan for these expenses. Mr. Zuse noted that the committee anticipates beginning to receive this information from Mr. Potochney and Mr. Gurnham at their next meeting in two weeks.

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

Ed Green asked the Board for information on the per student transportation costs to bus students out of district. Mrs. Trudeau responded that she will be forwarding information to Mr. Green tomorrow on the cost the district pays per day to take a student from Guilford to the various facilities.

Dr. Meyers noted that it is important to keep student information confidential when supplying this information.

**12. New Business**

Mr. Zuse requested that the Policy Subcommittee review the article on Freedom of Speech for teachers in the current CAFE journal and consider implementing a policy and/or clarification on the subject.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Iorio and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lorri Hahn  
Clerk to the Board of Education