

**GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2008  
GUILFORD HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY, GUILFORD, CT**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairperson Bill Bloss called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. Board members present were Bill Bloss, Barbara Dudley, Kathy Nolan, Linda Sanacora, Keith Bishop, Alan Meyers, Mary Beeman and Ted Zuse.

Administrators present were Tom Forcella, Rick Misenti, Michael Biddle, Marc Guarino, Nancy Bishop. Also present was Facility Director Cliff Gurnham and Accounting Manager Linda Trudeau.

**7.1 Teacher Presentation**

Chairman Bloss stated that, with the Board's permission he would move item 7.1 up in the agenda. Dr. Forcella introduced Rodgers Johnson, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for the U.S. Department of Education.

In a surprise announcement, Mr. Johnson presented Guilford High School Physics teacher, Raisa Roginsky, with the American Star of Teaching for the State of Connecticut. He explained that Ms. Roginsky combines the passion for teaching with high expectations for her students. He noted that U.S. Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings, was recognizing one teacher in each state to receive this honor.

GHS Principal Rick Misenti read the nomination letter written by Ms. Roginsky's student, Jeffrey Cash. Mr. Misenti noted that Mrs. Roginsky has raised the bar for student achievement, listing the many competitions including the Yale Physics Olympics that her students now compete successfully in.

State representatives Patricia Widlitz and Deb Heinrich, State Senator Ed Meyer and First Selectman Carl Balestracci were all present to honor Ms. Roginsky.

**2. Action on Minutes of:**

- 2.1 September 3, 2008 (Special Meeting)**
- 2.2 September 8, 2008 (Regular Meeting)**
- 2.3 September 8, 2008 (Special Meeting)**
- 2.4 September 15, 2008 (Special Meeting)**
- 2.5 September 22, 2008 (Workshop Meeting)**
- 2.6 September 22, 2008 (Facilities Subcommittee Meeting)**
- 2.7 September 22, 2008 (Policy Subcommittee Meeting)**

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the minutes of September 3, 2008 (Special Meeting); September 8, 2008 (Regular Meeting); September 8, 2008 (Special Meeting); September 15, 2008 (Special Meeting); September 22, 2008 (Workshop Meeting); September 22, 2008 (Facilities

Subcommittee Meeting); and September 22, 2008 (Policy Subcommittee Meeting) with three corrections.

Lorri Hahn will make the following changes to the minutes:

Add “and Vice Chairman Bishop” to the sentence “. . . middle school committee to be selected by Chairman Bloss \_\_\_\_.”

Clarify statement made by Chairman Bloss on page 4 of the Sept. 8, 2008, Facility Discussion Minutes in response to the question Mr. Zuse posed regarding correcting statements made by the public. The sentence “Chairman Bloss stated that it is not the Board’s responsibility to correct public statements,” will be revised to state “. . . it is not the Board’s responsibility to correct statements made by the public.”

Mr. Zuse asked that additional information be included in the Facility Subcommittee minutes of September 22, 2008. He will communicate those changes to Chairman Bloss.

**3. Review and Approval of Expenditures for the Month of September  
Reviewer for Month: Lou Iorio**

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 September as presented by Chairman Bloss in the absence of Dr. Iorio.

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

None

**5. Communications**

None

**6. Student Representatives**

Elizabeth Savrann and Marisa Mohrer reported on events at GHS. Ms. Savrann noted that the athletic teams at GHS have been involved in many community activities including participation in the Cove Walk and cancer walks.

Ms. Mohrer reported on the visibility of the Principles of Learning in the classrooms explaining that students are given clear expectations of their courses and do see their accomplishments recognized.

There was some discussion about the CT plan to increase graduation requirements from 22 to 25 credits.

Also discussed were Senior Projects whereby 12<sup>th</sup> grade students go out into the community and have “real-life” experiences before they go to college. Dr. Forcella noted his interest in continuing to have conversations about Senior Projects.

## **7. Superintendent’s Report**

### **7.2 2008-2009 GPS Goals**

Dr. Forcella reviewed the 2008-09 District Goals with the Board. The goals are as follows:

**Goal #1:** Academic Rigor and Persistent Effort will be evident in every school as measured by the successful implementation of the Principles of Learning within a Professional Learning Community environment.

**Goal #2:** All students will have access to and be engaged in a guaranteed and viable curriculum through quality instruction as evidenced by Learning Walks, and all students will achieve at high levels as measured by summative, formative, and benchmark assessments.

Dr. Forcella noted that the District will be working with Solution Tree and Richard DuFour to provide on-site professional development for GPS staff.

Dr. Forcella noted that each building has developed its own 2008-09 goals.

Mr. Zuse asked if the individual school’s goals and the district goals will be posted on the district website. Dr. Forcella noted that the district goals will be posted and that while the individual school goals have not been posted in the past, this is a possibility.

### **7.3 Proposed 2009-2010 Budget Timeline (exhibit)**

Dr. Forcella noted that the first public input session is schedule for October 28. He stated the importance of establishing Budget Goals, not just priorities. He also stated that while we are facing a difficult economic climate, he believes that the administration can be creative in the development of the 2009-10 Budget.

### **7.4 October 1, 2008, Enrollment Report**

Dr. Forcella presented the October 1, 2008, Enrollment Report that is submitted to the State. He noted slightly declining enrollments in the higher grades. He also noted that the actual increases in the lower grades are higher than the increases predicted in the Town’s demographic study. Dr. Forcella noted that the district has been enjoying remarkably stable enrollments.

### **7.5 Appointment of BOE Representative to CABA Delegate Assembly**

The Board appointed Barbara Dudley to represent the Board at the CABA Delegate Assembly.

### **7.6 Plan of Conservation and Development – Town of Guilford (exhibit)**

Dr. Forcella noted that there was much conversation about education at a recent meeting to discuss the Plan of Conservation and Development despite the fact that very little is included on the subject in the actual Plan. Dr. Forcella suggested that Board of Ed members provide input to Chairman Bloss or him prior to the next Town meeting on the Plan (scheduled in 3 months).

Chairman Bloss suggested that time be set aside at a future workshop meeting to discuss the Plan.

Chairman Bloss noted that Dr. Keene will provide a presentation to the Board on CAPT and CMT results.

**8. Board Agenda**

**8.1 ACT ON Submission of Consolidated Grants Application (exhibit)**

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Dr. Meyers, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the submission of the Consolidated Grants Application.

**8.2 ACT ON Donation of Sanders to the Guilford Parks and Recreation (exhibit)**

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the donation of sanders to the Guilford Park and Recreation.

**8.3 APPROVE \$3,000.00 Donation from Guilford Fund for Education to the Guilford Public Schools (exhibit)**

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the \$3,000 donation from the Guilford Fund for Education to the Guilford Public Schools.

**8.4 APPROVE \$1,500.00 Donation of Books to District from Nutmeg Media (exhibit)**

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the \$1,500 donation of books to the district from Nutmeg Media.

**8.5 APPROVE \$7,500.00 Donation of Lighting Equipment to GHS from Electronic Theatre Controls (exhibit)**

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Sanacora and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the \$7,500 donation of lighting equipment to GHS from Electronic Theatre Controls.

**8.6 APPROVE \$11,930.60 Donation of Backboards to Adams and Baldwin from the Guilford Basketball League (exhibit)**

Guilford Basketball League President, Chris Moore, addressed the Board and explained the league's current donation and also outlined plans to potentially install new score boards in the future.

Dr. Forcella noted the generosity of GBL and the care the league takes in researching the best equipment for the needs of the schools.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the donation of \$11,930.60 for backboards at Adams and Baldwin from the Guilford Basketball League.

**8.7 DISCUSSION and POSSIBLE ACTION on Recommendation from Finance Subcommittee: GEA Early Retirement Plan Option**

Dr. Meyers stated that the Finance Subcommittee has not yet reached a conclusion regarding the GEA Early Retirement Plan Option. He stated that Mr. Potochney will be supplying the committee with additional information and they will continue their discussions in November.

**8.8 RECEIVE Recommendations from Policy Subcommittee:**

**8.8.1 Revisions to Policy 1126: School District Records (exhibit)**

**8.8.2 Revisions to Regulation 1126: Board/School System Records (exhibit)**

**8.8.3 Revisions to Policy 5514: Administering Medications to Students (exhibit)**

The Board received the recommendations of the Policy Subcommittee. They will be included on the November 3, 2008, agenda for possible action.

**8.9 DISCUSS FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Superintendent's Contract**

Chairman Bloss asked that this agenda item be discussed during the Executive Session at the end of the meeting.

**8.10 DISCUSS BOE Recommendation to Board of Selectman and Board of Finance for Referendum on new High School**

Chairman Bloss reported that the Boards of Selectmen, Finance and Education will meet again on October 23 at 7:30 p.m. at Adams Middle School to continue discussions about a new high school referendum.

**9. Unfinished Business**

Mr. Zuse asked about the status of the practice of withholding student information to parents of high school children with outstanding library fines. Mr. Misenti responded from the audience that this practice has been discontinued.

Dr. Meyers asked if Chairman Bloss and Vice Chairman Bishop have appointed the middle school committee to study the new Adams Middle School.

Chairman Bloss responded that the appointment of the middle school committee is ongoing. He noted that there has been discussion about who should be included and he will be discussing this with Dr. Forcella.

Mr. Bishop noted that it is refreshing to hear the comprehensive reports from the student representatives to the Board.

Mr. Zuse asked about the status of a written report on the use of funds for facility improvements over the summer of 2008. Dr. Forcella responded that the annual report on facilities will be available next month.

## **10. Reports of Committees**

Mrs. Dudley shared the LEARN Annual Report with the Board.

Mrs. Beeman reported that the Standing Fields Committee continues to express interest in the placement of a new high school and concern over the potential loss of fields. She noted that the committee would like to see a 4 acre temporary replacement baseball field identified prior to the start of a building project to ensure continuity of the sports programs.

Mrs. Beeman also noted that the Standing Fields Committee has been conducting field walks and considering the most economical ways to repair damage.

Mr. Zuse reported that the Facility Subcommittee met earlier this month. He stated that there was discussion about roof projects at Adams and GHS and the decision that was made not to utilize all of the money that had been allocated for these projects. Mr. Zuse expressed concern that following a lengthy approval process by Town Boards, a decision can be made that is different than the one understood by the Board of Education regarding the scope of a project without communicating such changes back to the Board.

Chairman Bloss noted that neither the Board of Selectmen nor the Board of Education has authority over a building project. He explained that the Standing Building Committee has the authority over building projects. Chairman Bloss continued that it was his understanding that the Standing Building Committee decided that they wanted to wait to replace some of the roofs at the high school until they knew the plan to address the overall facility needs at GHS.

Dr. Forcella noted that he wants to develop better internal communications regarding facility issues including regular representation at Standing Building Committee meetings and reports from those meetings to the Board and the Administration. Dr. Forcella stated that the committee has offered to change their meeting date to Tuesday to enable Board members and GPS administrators to attend.

Dr. Forcella noted that the Standing Building Committee determined in December 2007 that they would try to limit the scope of work done on the GHS roof to smaller repairs when possible because of the possibility of a new high school being built.

Dr. Forcella stated that the original bond question that included the funding for roofs at GHS also included funding for repairs at Calvin Leete. He suggested that the Board should discuss the current facility priorities and determine the best use of the remaining \$700,000 in funds. He added that once decided the Board of Education should discuss their recommendations with the Board of Finance who, in turn, will bring their recommendations to the Standing Building Committee.

Mrs. Sanacora asked Dr. Forcella if he has received any feedback on the new school year calendar. Dr. Forcella responded that the additional time for professional development is invaluable to the staff. He noted that the Calendar Committee may make some adjustments next year.

Mrs. Beeman noted that the Theatre Arts Department has moved into the new shed and that storage containers are in place outside of the band room.

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

Joe Petrowski noted that it is impossible to hear the Board's discussion in the GHS Library. Chairman Bloss noted that there has been a sound system in use during recent meetings.

Mr. Petrowski stated that the Board needs to consider the replacement cost of the square footage of the 1998 science wing and not just the original \$3 million to build it.

Mr. Petrowski questioned where the funding came from for the high school roof project in question from the October Facilities Subcommittee meeting.

Dr. Forcella responded that the funding was from a bond.

Mr. Petrowski stated that he thought that the district did not bond repairs. He questioned why the roof sections were scheduled for repair and not replacement.

Dr. Forcella noted that decisions on repairing and/or replacing sections of the roof were based in part on what would be needed for the roof to last until a new school is built.

Mr. Petrowski questioned the use of some funds to repair roofs that came out of the Budget and not from bond funds. Dr. Forcella noted that those repairs were minor and cost a few thousand dollars.

Mr. Petrowski asked if the amount of State reimbursement would be affected if the 1998 wing of the high school were removed and rebuilt. Chairman Bloss responded that the district is currently receiving State reimbursement for that addition and that the total reimbursement for a new high school would be adjusted by that portion.

#### **12. New Business**

Mr. Zuse asked if the non-certified GPS staff's pension funds are managed by the Town. Chairman Bloss responded that they are. Mr. Zuse requested a current report from the Town on the status of these funds.

Dr. Meyers reported that the air quality at Adams Middle School has been tested and the results should be available to report at the November 3, 2008, Regular Meeting.

**13. Executive Session:**

**13.1 Legal Issue**

**13.2 Superintendent's Contract**

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session at 9:35 p.m.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers, and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously to return to public session at 9:45 p.m.

Dr. Meyers stated that the entire Board believes that Dr. Forcella has exceeded expectations and a larger increase would certainly be justified.

Mr. Bishop noted that the Superintendent and Chairman Bloss had discussed the issue and the Superintendent believes that the proposed increase is reasonable based on all of the factors that the Board must consider. Chairman Bloss agreed that Dr. Forcella's performance has been outstanding.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mrs. Dudley the Board voted unanimously to increase the Superintendent's salary for 2008-2009 by 4.2% over his salary in 2007-2008.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Nolan and seconded by Dr. Meyers, the Board voted unanimously to extend the Superintendent's contract by one year, through the 2010-2011 school year at a salary to be agreed upon by the Board and the Superintendent.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lorri Hahn  
Clerk to the Board of Education