

**GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2008  
GUILFORD HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY, GUILFORD, CT**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairperson Bill Bloss called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. Board members present were Bill Bloss, Barbara Dudley, Linda Sanacora, Keith Bishop, Lou Iorio, Alan Meyers, Mary Beeman and Ted Zuse.

Administrators present were Tom Forcella, Anne Keene, Catherine Walker, Rick Misenti, Michael Biddle, Merry Leventhal and Paula McCarthy. Also present was Facility Director Cliff Gurnham and Accounting Manager Linda Trudeau.

**2. Action on Minutes of:**

**2.1 August 11, 2008 (Regular Meeting)**

**2.2 August 11, 2008 (Special Meeting-Facilities Discussion)**

**2.3 August 25, 2008 (Facilities Subcommittee Meeting)**

**2.4 August 25, 2008 (Special Meeting-Facilities Discussion)**

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Dudley and seconded by Dr. Iorio, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the minutes of August 11, 2008 (Regular Meeting), August 11, 2008 (Special Meeting-Facilities Discussion), August 25, 2008 (Facilities Subcommittee Meeting), and August 25, 2008 (Special Meeting-Facilities Discussion) with one correction to the August 11, 2008, regular meeting.

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

**3.1 2007-08**

**3.2 2008-09**

The Board requested a report from Mr. Potochney and/or Mrs. Trudeau updating 2008-2009 Budget projections for various accounts including Tuition.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers 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.

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

Ted Fessel addressed the Board as a representative of the American Legion. He thanked Chairman Bloss and the Board for their service. He stressed the importance of unity, not partisanship. He noted that his son is in charge of a national training program for the military that helps veterans get back into the workforce. Mr. Fessel noted that he has been involved in many Town organizations through the years and is particularly proud of the work done with Little League and Boys State.

## **5. Communications**

Chairman Bloss noted that Board members have received positive feedback on the ALERTNOW notification system and the general oversight by Town agencies and GPS during the Baldwin electrical fire. Dr. Forcella noted that the Police and Fire Departments reacted immediately and also supplied bottled water to the students while they waited outside the building.

## **6. Student Representatives**

GHS Principal Rick Misenti introduced Elizabeth (Beth) Savrann and Marisa Mohrer as the new student representatives to the Board. He noted that both students are seniors, co-presidents of the Student Senate, and actively involved in many civic, academic and athletic organizations at GHS.

Both students spoke favorably about the new GHS Schedule with extended class periods, noting that expanded lesson plans allow for more in-depth learning. They also stated that the new lunch schedule is working well and allows time for all students to eat lunch.

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

### **7.1 Introduction of New Teachers**

Dr. Forcella introduced new certified staff to the Board and the public. Those present came up to the podium. The new professional staff are Sarah Blum-Smith, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade at Cox; Deirdre Faherty, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade at Leete; Lindsay Fiorentino, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade at Leete; Jennifer Gallo, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade at Leete; Nicole Herring, Special Education at Leete; Jennifer Kennedy, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade at Leete; Rita Burkhardt, Special Education at Lakes; Mary Guarnieri, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade at Lakes; Alberto Martinez Spanish at Lakes; Patricia Morico, Speech and Language at Jones; Leah Goldreich, Special Education at Baldwin; Melanie Burgess, Health at Baldwin; Stacy Miller, Art at Baldwin; Margaret Ardito, Spanish at Adams; Jessica Gellert, Math at Adams; Amanda Kushin, Language Arts at Adams; Melissa Yetso, Social Worker at Adams; Marisa Faleri, English at GHS; Darlene Gessert, Special Education at GHS; Kelly Jensen, Math at GHS; Sarah Liberman, Social Studies at GHS; Cara Mulqueen-Teasdale, English at GHS; Kunal Patel, Spanish at GHS; Nicole Rasmussen, Guidance at GHS; Ralph Russo, Social Studies at GHS; Craig Vedrani, PE at GHS; Diana Gregory, Math at GHS; and Janine Lempke, Music at GHS.

### **7.2 Opening of School Update**

Dr. Forcella explained that the district continues to focus on becoming a Professional Learning Community. He noted that 54 teachers attended the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburg to learn about the Principals of Learning. He noted that the district is building a collaborative culture focused on high level learning for all students. Dr. Forcella explained that collaborative teams are working together in all of the schools to develop common assessments and to discuss instruction.

Dr. Forcella stated that 40 teachers were trained in reading this summer through a grant from the Guilford Fund for Education.

Mr. Gurnham then provided an update on facilities projects completed during the summer of 2008. He noted that the drainage project at Adams was completed and despite significant rainfall, the basement has remained dry. He also noted that the main portion of the brick work at Adams was complete and that the cupola will be completed in Summer 2009.

Mr. Gurnham reported that two sections of roof at GHS have been completed. He stated that the Baldwin paving project was complete and that the process of retraining parents and bus drivers on the revised entrances and exits had begun. He noted that new signage will be installed on the Baldwin property once the best traffic patterns have been determined.

Mr. Gurnham also stated that a bid package for the Cox roof will go out this month. And he noted that the Adams window project is being revised for a bid to go out in January. Mr. Gurnham reported that the district is waiting to receive the 2<sup>nd</sup> bid for the design phase of the Jones well project.

Dr. Meyers asked when the air quality will be retested at Adams. Mr. Gurnham replied that he is waiting until October as the environment tends to become wetter into the fall months.

Mr. Gurnham reported that the athletic training facility project is progressing including the arrival of a new shed to be used by the Theatre Arts Department.

Mr. Zuse requested written documentation of the Mr. Gurnham's facility report.

### **7.3 Preliminary Enrollment Report**

Dr. Forcella provided a preliminary, unofficial enrollment report to the Board. He noted that overall the enrollments have decreased by approximately 100 students. Dr. Forcella noted that the district anticipates growth in the first grades as many parents send their children to full-day Kindergarten programs out of district.

### **7.4 Quarterly Curriculum Update**

Dr. Keene presented a quarterly curriculum update.

#### **Comprehensive Reviews:**

Language Arts: In response to the feedback forms from staff, teachers, representing all elementary schools, convened in the spring of 2008 to clarify the K-12 Language Arts Curriculum as it relates to word work and spelling in the elementary grades. The committee developed an appendix to the curriculum document and distributed to all elementary teachers at the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year. (See attached.) Additional professional

development on word work/spelling is being planned for October 2008. Elementary staff will continue to coordinate their efforts during monthly grade level language arts meetings.

**Mathematics:** A secondary Mathematics Curriculum Review Committee met this summer to begin identifying student expectations in the core secondary mathematics curriculum. The document will be aligned with national and state standards. Additional work this fall will include the development of the instructional and assessment components in Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II courses.

Teacher representatives from kindergarten through grade eight also began the review of the current mathematics curriculum and will recommend revisions based on student achievement, state frameworks, and national standards. The two mathematics documents will be compiled this winter and presented to the Board of Education for approval.

**Targeted Reviews:**

**World Language:** The world language curriculum in Spanish has been expanded to grades four and five for the 2008-2009 school year. Students in grade six continue to have instruction in one semester of Spanish and one semester of French in anticipation of a world language sequence selection (French or Spanish) at Adams Middle School.

Dr. Keene reported that a Progress Report Committee will be realigning these reports with the intent of having them ready by Fall conference time.

Dr. Keene explained that CMT, CAPT and benchmark assessment data will be included in PowerSchool in the future for analysis. She noted that all progress reports are not yet available for all students in PowerSchool, but will be in the future.

Dr. Meyers asked about enrollments in French and Arabic and Dr. Keene stated that she will check on these numbers.

Mrs. Sanacora asked if Spanish will be offered in Kindergarten. Dr. Keene responded that there are no plans for Spanish in Kindergarten at this time primarily due to the limited time available during a Kindergarten class.

In response to a question from Mr. Zuse, Dr. Keene explained that foreign language is offered two times per six-day cycle to 5<sup>th</sup> grade students and three times per cycle to 6<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Mr. Zuse asked if it is the expectation for teachers to keep student information current in PowerSchool.

Dr. Forcella responded that each school is addressing the best ways to give parents better access to student information. He explained that now that laptop computers have been given to all teachers the expectation is that more current information will be available for parents so that communication can occur throughout the school year and not just at conference time.

Mr. Zuse asked if the district is still seeking a person to oversee in-school suspensions. Dr. Forcella explained that since the State has not mandated in-school suspensions, Dr. Forcella would like to put more thought into in-school suspensions and other alternatives before hiring any personnel for this purpose.

Chairman Bloss asked about the performance of the district's new bus company. Dr. Forcella stated that some variations to bus schedules are still being made to accommodate parent requests. Some of these requests have translated into delayed pick-ups so the district's transportation coordinator will be working with the bus company to finalize schedules that will meet the needs of the district and accommodate individual requests when feasible to do so.

### **7.5 Proposed Workshop Schedule**

Dr. Forcella proposed the following Workshop Schedule for 2008-2009:

August 25, 2008: School Facilities Discussion  
September 25, 2008: Data Review – CMT/CAPT  
October 27, 2008: Budget Priorities with DLT  
November 17, 2008: Teacher Input Session  
January 26, 2009: Budget Meeting (Public Hearing for Input)  
February 2009: Professional Learning Needs  
March 2009: GHS Schedule Update  
April 2009: School Discipline  
May 2009: Superintendent's Evaluation  
June 2009:

Dr. Forcella noted that he would like to reserve workshop time for education topics and schedule special meetings to address items including facilities.

Dr. Meyers suggested that special education be included as a topic at one of the workshop meetings.

## **8. Board Agenda**

### **8.1 ACT ON Personnel Items (exhibit)**

Upon a motion made by Dr. Iorio and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the resignation of Sigrid Diedricksen, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade teacher at A.W. Cox School, for the purpose of retirement, effective November 1, 2008.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Iorio and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the resignation of Leah Booth, Pre-K Speech and Language Pathologist at Guilford Lakes School, effective August 31, 2008.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Beeman and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the appointments of Marisa Faleri, English teacher at GHS, Sarah Liberman, Social Studies teacher at GHS, Nicole Herring, special education teacher at

Calvin Leete, Ralph Russo, social studies teacher at GHS and Janine Lempke, music teacher at GHS, all effective September 1, 2008.

**8.2 RECEIVE Request from GEA to Offer an Early Retirement Incentive Plan (exhibit)**

Chairman Bloss recommended that this item be deferred to the Board's Finance Subcommittee.

**8.3 RECEIVE FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Food Service Contract**

Chairman Bloss asked that this item be moved to Executive Session.

**9. Unfinished Business**

None

**10. Reports of Committees**

Mr. Bishop reported on activity of the Land Acquisitions Committee.

Mr. Zuse reported on activity of the Facilities Subcommittee. He noted a request from Sid Gale to better coordinate the assets of the schools with those of the Town. He noted that this discussion would be continued with the Finance Subcommittee.

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

None

**12. New Business**

None

Upon a motion made by Dr. Ioro and seconded by Mr. Bishop, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:20 p.m.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bishop and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously to reconvene at 7:30 following executive session.

Mr. Bishop reported that the Board had reached agreement on the Food Service Contract. He reported that there were some minor changes in language regarding sick leave and the inclusion of an additional travel day for funerals.

Mr. Bishop noted that the Food Service Contract reflects a 3.5% increase per year for three years. He noted that there will be a 1% increase in the co-pay amount for employees in each of the next three years.

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Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mr. Bishop, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the Food Service Contract.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Dudley, and seconded by Mrs. Beeman, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7: 38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lorri Hahn  
Clerk to the Board of Education