

**GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
**MONDAY, March 9, 2009**  
**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, Mary Beeman, Barbara Dudley, Keith Bishop, Lou Iorio, Alan Meyers, Kathleen Nolan, Linda Sanacora and Ted Zuse.

Administrators present were Tom Forcella, Anne Keene, and Rick Misenti. Also present were Business Administrator Andy Potochney, Operations Director Cliff Gurnham, and Accounting Manager Linda Trudeau.

**2. Presentation of CABA Communications Award**

Bob Rugierro of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education presented Chairman Bloss with the 2008 Excellence in Educational Communications Award for Annual Reports. Chairman Bloss recognized GPS Communications Coordinator Lorri Hahn for her work on communications for the district.

**8.1 Recognition of CAPT Newspaper Editors and Staff Advisor**

Mr. Misenti introduced GHS teacher, Susan Lott, and explained that she is the advisor for the GHS Gazette, the student newspaper. Ms. Lott explained that students Gabe Shore and Evan Brown had published a special edition of the Gazette focused on CAPT tests. Chairman Bloss presented both students and Ms. Lott with certificates of appreciation for their efforts.

**3. Action on Minutes of:**

- 3.1 February 2, 2009 (Special Meeting)**
- 3.2 February 9, 2009 (Finance Subcommittee Meeting)**
- 3.3 February 9, 2009 (Regular Meeting)**
- 3.4 February 23, 2009 (Facilities Subcommittee)**
- 3.5 February 23, 2009 (Workshop Meeting)**
- 3.6 February 26, 2009 (Facilities Subcommittee)**
- 3.7 February 26, 2009 (Special Meeting)**

Upon a motion made by Dr. Iorio and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the minutes of February 2, 2009 (Special Meeting), February 9, 2009 (Finance Subcommittee Meeting), February 9, 2009 (Regular Meeting), February 23, 2009 (Facilities Subcommittee), February 23, 2009 (Workshop Meeting), February 26, 2009 (Facilities Subcommittee), and February 26, 2009 (Special Meeting). Corrections noted were as follows: Alan Meyers was not present at the February 2, 2009, Special Meeting; the February 26 2009, Facilities Subcommittee Meeting was held at Adams Middle School, not the GHS Library; and in the February 9, 2009, Regular Meeting minutes, Mrs. Nolan received a correspondence commending the performance of Mr. Misenti, not Mr. Spencer.

**4. Review and Approval of Expenditures for the Month of February  
Reviewer for Month: Alan Meyers**

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

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

Joe Petrowski addressed the Board and asked who is authorized to write checks from the Student Activity Account. Linda Trudeau explained that a school secretary has authorization and provides monthly reports to her office on account activity.

Mr. Petrowski asked what the balance is in the account and Mr. Bishop responded that there is approximately \$300,000. Chairman Bloss noted that the auditors who review our practices are comfortable with our procedures.

**6. Communications**

Chairman Bloss noted that he and other Board members have received communications regarding recess at Baldwin.

Mary Beeman reported a phone call requesting that the student musicians representing Guilford at the CMEA regional music festival be recognized.

Mr. Zuse noted that he received a communication from Lisa Fiala stating that she supports the budget referendum.

Chairman Bloss noted that Doug Newman reported that Guilford Lakes enjoyed their Junior Achievement Day.

Mr. Bishop noted that Melissa Jones would be having their annual Invention Convention.

**7. Student Representatives**

No report. The students were excused for this month.

**8. Superintendent's Report**

**8.2 Update on Testing of Synthetic Turf Field at GHS (exhibit)**

Dr. Forcella reported that the results of testing done on the GHS Turf Field by Milone and MacBroom, a CT firm specializing in environmental science, were all favorable.

**8.3 2009-10 Budget Update**

Dr. Forcella stated that the education budget represents a 3.46% increase over the current year. He noted several decreases in the budget including capital, supplies, and purchased services. He stated that the budget honors the negotiated salary contracts. He state that the budget is fiscally responsible and does not include any new programs.

#### **8.4 Federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students Grant Update (exhibit)**

Dr. Forcella explained that Guilford Public Schools and Madison Public Schools, in conjunction with town police, juvenile justice boards, and youth and family services offices, have applied for an intercommunity Safe School Healthy Students Grant provided by US departments of Education, Health & Human Services, and Justice. The grant would provide a comprehensive community-wide plan which supports respectful and drug-free schools and promotes healthy early childhood development. The grant would provide approximately \$1M per year for four years to address the prevention of violence, drugs and alcohol, support mental health services and early childhood social and emotional learning, and provide behavioral, social and emotional support.

Dr. Forcella acknowledged the significant time that Dr. Keene and all of the representatives have spent working on the Grant.

#### **8.5 School Security Systems Update**

Dr. Forcella explained that there is money in the current and the proposed 2009-2010 budget to address security. He noted that some of the money that the district will be using to improve security will come from a grant. He referenced the recent laptop thefts in the district and explained that a security system will be piloted at Baldwin this spring.

Cameras will be installed at the entrance to the school. The doors will be kept locked and a buzzer system will be used to allow visitors to enter the building. The buzzer control will be located in the main office. The system will be tested for two weeks. The Baldwin office staff, parents and other Baldwin personnel will be asked for feedback following the two period.

Mr. Bishop noted that the budget for security at Adams was increased from \$25,000 to \$45,000 in the proposed bond package for Adams.

### **9. Board Agenda**

#### **9.1 ACT ON Non-renewal of Non-tenured Teachers**

Chairman Bloss explained that this action gives notice to non-tenured teachers about the potential non-renewal of their contracts prior to the passage of the 2009-2010 budget. He noted that it is not the intention of the Board or the administration to lay off any teachers nor are the notifications of non-renewal based on performance. He noted that in recent years this formal step had been taken annually to allow the Board flexibility to proceed with layoffs, if necessary, should a budget not pass. Due to the current economic climate, Dr. Forcella recommended continuing the practice and expanding notification to include all non-tenured teachers as a

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precaution. (During Dr. Forcella's tenure this action has only occurred once and he limited the notifications to first year teachers only.)

Chairman Bloss noted that, providing the budget passes on April 21, letters of reinstatement will be issued to all of the non-tenured teachers.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Iorio and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously to accept the non-renewal of non-tenured teachers as presented.

## **9.2 Report on Appointment of Committee**

Chairman Bloss explained that a committee has been appointed to meet with the Guilford Education Association to discuss contracts and the upcoming negotiations. The Board members on the committee are Dr. Meyers, Dr. Iorio, Mrs. Dudley and Chairman Bloss.

## **9.3 ACT ON \$3,288.00 Donation of Equipment from the Guilford Touchdown Club (exhibit)**

Chairman Bloss asked that a letter of thanks be sent to the Guilford Touchdown Club in appreciation of their donation of two new pieces of equipment for the fitness center at GHS.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Iorio and seconded by Mrs. Beeman, the Board voted unanimously to accept the \$3,288 donation of equipment from the Guilford Touchdown Club.

## **9.4 APPROVE \$4,000.00 Donation from the Guilford Fund for Education to the Guilford Public Schools (exhibit)**

Chairman Bloss stated that the Guilford Fund for Education has made donations totaling \$6,365 to the Guilford Public Schools. Four of the donations are under \$1,000 and do not require Board approval and have been received by Dr. Forcella. Chairman Bloss noted the four as follows:

Up Close and Personal with the Newberry Award: \$865 for Melissa Jones School to provide enrichment opportunities to all fourth graders to read and respond to one of the Newberry books.

Teacher Institute in Early American History: \$650 for Guilford Lakes School to provide one of their teachers the experience of a week-long institute in Early American History designed by Colonial Williamsburg.

Treasures at Melissa Jones: \$300 for Melissa Jones School to enable students to solve puzzles that lead to hidden letterboxes.

Elementary Photo Journalism Writing Project for Melissa Jones School to enable a second grade class to use digital photography as a means of collecting images to create photojournalism pieces.

The fifth donation is for \$4,000 for Adams Middle School to enable the band to incorporate Smart Music, an interactive web-based computer program, into their practicing.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Beeman and seconded by Mr. Bishop, the Board voted unanimously to approve a \$4,000 donation from the Guilford Fund for Education to the Guilford Public Schools.

### **9.5 DISCUSS Annual Audit Report**

Mrs. Trudeau noted that the auditors had no concerns about the district regarding policies and procedures and did not issue a management letter.

### **9.6 ACT ON Recommendations from Policy Subcommittee:**

#### **9.6.1 Revisions to Policy 1314: Political Activities of School Employees (exhibit)**

Upon a motion made by Dr. Iorio and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously to accept the recommendations from the Policy Subcommittee on revisions to Policy 1314: Political Activity of School Employees.

#### **9.6.2 Revisions to Policy 1348: Naming of Facilities (exhibit)**

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Dudley and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously to accept the recommendations from the Policy Subcommittee on revisions to Policy 1348: Naming of Facilities.

### **9.7 ACT ON Educational Specifications for the Roof Replacement at the Calvin Leete Elementary School including the Filing of the EDO49 and Submission of the Project to the Board of Selectmen (exhibit)**

Mr. Gurnham presented the educational specifications for the roof replacement at Leete.

Mr. Zuse asked if the completion date for the Leete roof was the same as the completion date for the Cox roof, August 15. Mr. Gurnham responded that the completion dates were the same.

Mr. Zuse asked if there were penalties applied to the contractor if the project were late. Mr. Gurnham responded that there are late fees and that this is overseen by the Standing Building Committee.

Mr. Bishop asked about the potential use of solar panels on these roofs. Mr. Gurnham responded that the Standing Building Committee is considering solar panels but that they are not a part of the current bid specifications. They could be added as an addendum to the current bid or bid as a separate project should the Committee decide to include them.

Mr. Zuse referenced the Silver Petrucelli report to the district on roofs and roof materials. He noted that the firm recommended EDPM material.

Mr. Gurnham explained that this was the initial recommendation in the report, but following further discussion with the Standing Building Committee, a modified bid vs. specifying EDPM was recommended.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Educational Specifications for the Roof Replacement at the Calvin Leete Elementary School including the filing of the EDO49 and submission of the project to the Board of Selectmen.

**9.8 ACT ON Approval of the A.W. Cox Elementary School Roof Replacement Specifications and Plans for Local Review and ED042 Application Process (exhibit)**

Mr. Gurham explained that all Town departments will review the A.W. Cox roof replacement plan including the Health and Fire Departments and the Standing Building Committee following the Board of Education's approval to move the project forward.

Mr. Bishop asked if the Cox gym is included in the roof project. Mr. Gurnham responded that the gym is included in the project as it is anticipated that similar problems may occur with this section of roof as have occurred with other sections of the roof.

Mr. Zuse questioned the use of lead in the material used in the gutter flashing. Chairman Bloss suggested that this might be a question for the Standing Building Committee.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously to approve the A.W. Cox Elementary School Roof Replacement Specifications and Plans for local review and EDO42 application process.

**9.9 DISCUSS For POSSIBLE ACTION: Referral of Baldwin Recess to Appropriate Committee**

Dr. Forcella suggested that the topic of Baldwin Recess be referred to the Health Advisory Committee for further discussion. Chairman Bloss added that if that committee does not want to address this issue, the Board may form an ad hoc committee.

**10. Unfinished Business**

Mr. Zuse referenced the Silver Petrucelli roof report and asked what action is being taken regarding the improper installation of a roof in the district. Mr. Gurham responded that the report has been given to the Standing Building Committee who has not had the opportunity to review it yet.

Mr. Zuse noted that the Silver Petrucelli report is dated July 2008. He asked why the Board of Education was receiving the report now and asked the Board Chair what might be done to expedite this process.

Chairman Bloss responded that the Board-appointed Facility Subcommittee can request a copy of a report related to facilities at any time. Mr. Gurnham noted that the report was given to the Standing Building Committee several months ago and Chairman Bloss added that the Board of Education has representation on this committee.

Mrs. Sanacora expressed concern about a Guilford Courier article that seemed to misinterpret information regarding the high school building project. She stated that the article implied that the Board has agreed to move forward with the most recent design proposal.

Dr. Forcella noted that the current "Charting the Course," the district's e-newsletter, will clarify information regarding the facilities and other topics to insure that accurate information is being communicated.

Dr. Forcella noted that the architects will be taking another look at the estimates presented on the high school designs that incorporate the existing 1998 addition. Chairman Bloss suggested that the Board discuss these revised estimates at the March 23, 2009, Workshop Meeting.

The Board had discussion about the Fletcher Thompson timeline presented at the February 26, 2009, meeting.

Mr. Bishop suggested televising the portion of the March 23 meeting that would relate to the high school facility estimates.

Further discussion took place regarding the proposed designs presented on February 26, the timing and order of the construction, the impact on the existing fields, and the perceived vs. actual benefits of maintaining the 1998 addition.

Mrs. Beeman noted that she thought the designs presented were very innovative and took into consideration both school and community uses.

Chairman Bloss noted that current information from the State suggests that the reimbursement rates for school building projects for the existing fiscal year will not change.

Additional discussion about the federal stimulus package and the IDEA grant occurred with Board members noting the uncertainty of this funding and its potential impact on Guilford's schools.

Dr. Forcella noted that he will have more information from the State Commissioner of Education on funding as he joins other school superintendents and business managers for a meeting with him next week.

#### **11. Reports of Committees**

None

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

Joe Petrowski addressed the Board commenting on the plans and estimates presented by Fletcher Thompson architects at the February 26 Special Meeting. He stated that he believes the architects are overstating the challenges at the existing GHS site. He also stated that he does not like the proposed designs and is concerned about accessibility.

**12. New Business**

Mr. Bishop asked if our AlertNow system can be used to notify community members and those not living locally about relevant information about the school system. Dr. Forcella explained that we do send communications to the community to keep them informed. Mrs. Hahn added that the district is developing data bases for people outside the school system as our AlertNow system gives us the flexibility of selecting specific groups to send messages to depending on the content.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Iorio and seconded by Mrs. Nolan, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lorri Hahn  
Clerk to the Board of Education