

MINUTES
GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM
SPECIAL MEETING FOR BUDGET DISCUSSION

JANUARY 15, 2009

IN ATTENDANCE:

GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION: Mary Beeman, Keith Bishop, William Bloss, Barbara Dudley, Louis Iorio, Alan Meyers, Linda Sanacora and Ted Zuse.

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM: Elementary Schools portion - Nancy Bishop, Michael Biddle, Merry Leventhal and Paula McCarthy. Middle School portion - Anne Snurkowski and Catherine Walker. High School & Pupil Services portion – Richard Misenti, Mark Guarino and Patricia Brett. Facilities and Technology portion – Cliff Gurnham and Kevin Mitchill

BOARD OF EDUCATION STAFF: Thomas Forcella, Anne Keene and Linda Trudeau.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Dr. Forcella explained the process used to review the budgets. Mrs. McCarthy stated that the budget for Jones was reduced from \$75,000 to \$60,000. Mrs. McCarthy stated that the focus for Jones for the 2009-10 Budget is intervention and enrichment and professional development. The use of Lexia and Wilson reading programs was discussed. Ms. Leventhal stated that the phone system at Cox is a safety issue and that a new system has been requested and removed from the 2008-09 and 2009-10 budgets. Ms. Leventhal stated that intervention is also a priority for Cox. Mr. Bloss questioned if the budget is enough for Cox School. Ms. Leventhal stated that as long as there were no additional cuts to the budget that they could get creative and make it work. Ms. Leventhal noted that enrollment is down at Cox. Mr. Biddle stated the proposed budgets are what the schools can get by with especially in these economic times. A variety of reading programs were discussed. Mrs. Bishop stated that the schools need more and different resources to use with students. Mrs. Bishop noted that Leete's enrollment has increased and that funds in the current budget have been used to set up new classrooms. Mrs. Bishop discussed staffing needs for .4 Special Education and 2 additional paras. Mrs. Bishop also discussed the need for secretary office support. The use of paras in the District was discussed.

The budgets for Library books and Periodicals at Baldwin Middle School were discussed. Staffing and class sizes at Baldwin were also discussed. Ms. Snurkowski and Mrs. Walker both stated that there is no area of the Baldwin or Adams budget that could be cut. The State mandate for In-School Suspension was discussed.

Mr. Gurnham discussed the Capital budget for the 2009-10 fiscal year. Mr. Gurnham stated that the Adams projects to address health and safety issues are being reviewed. Mr. Gurnham stated that the Security budget was based on the bid and that the reduction would not allow for completion of the bid. The projects included in the Site Improvements line item were discussed. The windows at Jones were discussed.

Mr. Misenti stated that the requested budget for the High School is a “bare-bones” budget. The clerical and para positions at the High School were discussed. A discussion of classes not currently being offered was held. In-School Suspension was also discussed. The reduction to the equipment account was discussed. Dr. Meyers questioned if there were any areas that could be reduced in the High School budget. Mr. Misenti responded that there was no place to cut and that the school could survive with what is in the proposed budget. The Athletic Director’s position was discussed.

Dr. Brett stated that the proposed budget for Special Services was also a “bare-bones” budget. Dr. Brett discussed the hiring of staff to reduce contracted services expenses. The IDEA grants were discussed. The budget for tuition was discussed. Dr. Brett stated that she is unsure of what the amount of the Excess Cost Grant will be. A discussion of occupational, speech and physical therapists was held. A discussion was also held regarding using two part-time employees to fill a full-time position. Dr. Meyers requested that paras be presented in the budget as regular education paras and special education paras. Ms. Snurkowski noted that paras work with all students in a classroom where there is a special education student. Lexia and Wilson Reading programs were discussed.

Mr. Mitchill stated that the lease has been reduced in the 2009-10 Budget to \$375,000. The interest rate on the lease was discussed. Mr. Mitchill stated that a request for an additional technician was removed from the budget. The number of technicians and how they are used was discussed. The use of the technology that has been purchased from the past two leases was discussed. Mr. Zuse questioned if Lojack should be purchased for all of the laptops. Mr. Mitchill stated that the cost is approximately \$30 per year per laptop and would only work if the laptop is logged on. Mr. Mitchill added that the security that the District has on the laptops restricts others from logging on to the network. Mr. Mitchill stated that the reduction in equipment being purchased in 2009-10 will not cause any problems and that the District has made great progress in technology over the past two years. The phone systems in the District were discussed. Mr. Zuse requested a copy of the five-year technology plan.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Trudeau
Accounting Manager