

**GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2010
GUILFORD HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY, GUILFORD, CT**

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Bill Bloss called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Board members present were, Keith Bishop, Bill Bloss, Barbara Dudley, John Ireland, Alan Meyers, Chris Moore, Susan Renner, and Ted Zuse.

Administrators present were Tom Forcella, Anne Keene, Rick Misenti, Nancy Bishop, Merry Leventhal, Michael Biddle, Paula McCarthy, and Marc Guarino. Also present was Accounting Manager Linda Trudeau.

Chairman Bloss requested that the Board entertain Item 7.1 Introduction of New Teachers first on the agenda.

7.1 Introduction of New Teachers

Marilynn Sturgess introduced the new teachers to the Board via a slide presentation and those present in the audience stood and were recognized. The new teachers introduced by Mrs. Sturgess were Lauren Anderson, Art Teacher at A.W. Cox School, John Cain, Grade 3 Teacher at A.W. Cox School, Annine Crystal, Literacy Coach at Calvin Leete and A.W. Cox Schools, Ingrid Dally, Psychologist at Guilford High School, Linda Houde, Special Education Teacher at Guilford High School, Nicole Johnson, Kindergarten Teacher at Calvin Leete School, Caitlin Kiley, Math Teacher at Guilford High School, Kristen Meyerjack, Science Teacher at Adams Middle School, April Robinson, Reading Resource Teacher at Guilford Lakes School, Theresa Smith, Literacy Coach at Guilford Lakes School, Stacy Stewart, Literacy Coach at Melissa Jones School, and Joan Pasay, Special Education Teacher at Baldwin and Adams Middle Schools.

Chairman Bloss requested that the Board entertain Item 5.1 Report from Liaison from Local Veterans Group at this time.

5. Communications

5.1 Report from Liaison from Local Veterans Group

Ted Fessel made a presentation to the Board on behalf of the local veterans and himself. Mr. Fessel talked about his background, growing up in the greater New Haven Area, and his positive experiences with the community including work with Little League and currently as crossing guard for Guilford Schools. He also spoke of his service with the military and then provided an overview of his son Ted Fessel's work as Director of National Operations and Plans with the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Program for the US Government.

Mr. Fessel expressed appreciation for the work of all of the Board members in the Town of Guilford and gratitude to Catherine Walker and the students at Adams Middle School for their generous recognition of the service of veterans.

2. Action on Minutes of:

2.1 August 9, 2010 (Finance Subcommittee Meeting)

2.2 August 9, 2010 (Regular Meeting)

2.3 August 30, 2010 (Facilities Subcommittee Meeting)

2.4 August 30, 2010 (Special Meeting)

Upon a motion made by Mr. Zuse and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of August 9, 2010 (Finance Subcommittee Meeting); August 9, 2010 (Regular Meeting); August 30, 2010 (Facilities Subcommittee Meeting); and August 30, 2010 (Special Meeting) with corrections to the August 30, 2010, Facilities Subcommittee Meeting minutes.

Mr. Ireland noted in the August 30, 2010, Facilities Subcommittee minutes that rhine zinc gutters referenced in Paragraph 3 should not be hyphenated. He also noted a correction in Paragraph 1 on Page 2 of the same minutes. The last sentence should read “Mr. Ireland noted that the tennis courts *at* Baldwin have been condemned . . .” and not “the tennis courts *and* Baldwin have been condemned.”

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

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Renner and seconded by Dr. Meyers, the Board voted unanimously to approve the expenditures for the month of August as presented by Chairman Bloss.

Mr. Zuse asked if a monthly report on the status of the health insurance account can be included in the financial reports. Chairman Bloss suggested that this decision should be left to the Board’s Finance Subcommittee.

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

None

5. Communications

Mr. Ireland noted that he received communications from parents regarding transportation issues on the first day of school.

Mr. Bishop responded with an overview of the transportation department in the district and explained that the Transportation Coordinator oversees all scheduling of bus stops and is the best person to address any concerns.

Chairman Bloss noted communications regarding the condition of the path leading to Baldwin on Bullard Drive and stated that the Facilities Department will look into what can be done to address the condition of the path.

Mr. Zuse noted that he has received positive feedback from a few shoreline communities regarding the possibility of initiating a later start time for high schools.

Chairman Bloss and Mr. Bishop read postcards they received on behalf of the Board from GHS Theatre Arts students traveling in Edinburgh, Scotland thanking them for the rewarding and life-changing experiences of traveling and performing abroad.

6. Student Representatives

Dr. Forcella introduced Jackie and Jamie Desrosier, the new student representatives to the Board. He suggested that the students consider becoming involved in discussions with the Board on topics relevant to them and offered to try to place such items early on the agenda to allow the students to participate and still leave early enough to do their homework.

Rick Misenti described the GHS seniors and twin sisters as involved students participating in Theatre Arts and the school's Student Advisory Board among other activities.

The students spoke about the opening of school and of the mission of the high school including respect. They also spoke about the importance of teachers modeling learning behaviors for their students. The students spoke about NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) and the accreditation process that Guilford High School is currently involved with, which includes faculty and students.

The students also spoke about the Developmental Assets Survey that was taken by Guilford students in grades 7-12 in December of 2009. The results of the survey will be shared with the students and action steps are planned to develop ways to build or strengthen those assets that were not found to be present in high percentages of students.

7. Superintendent's Report

7.2 Opening of School Update

Dr. Forcella explained that the 2010 Convocation included both the formal introduction of new staff, district goals and service awards as well as professional development for staff. He explained that Content Focused Coaching beginning at the elementary level will improve classroom instruction. The Superintendent noted that professional staff in grades 5-12 were involved in Disciplinary Literacy training from the Institute for Learning. He explained that the IFL also worked with principals and the district's new literacy coaches and will continue to do so during the school year.

Dr. Forcella spoke about the importance of school culture and collaboration and sharing. He spoke about the results of the Developmental Assets survey taken by students in grades 5-12 and the plan to identify areas of need to address.

In summary, Dr. Forcella noted that it was a very positive opening of school.

7.3 Preliminary Enrollment Report

Dr. Forcella noted that the official Enrollment Report for the State of Connecticut is submitted on October 1, 2010. The preliminary report indicates that there are 35-40 fewer students in the district this year as compared to last year. He noted that class sizes have remained constant or increased slightly because of slight reductions in staff.

7.4 CMT/CAPT Update

Dr. Keene presented summary results of the Spring 2010 Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and the Connecticut Academic Achievement Test (CAPT). She provided an overview of both tests, including the components of each test and sample questions. She also provided information about district reference groups. Dr. Keene reported on the performance of Guilford students as compared to DRG B and the State of Connecticut in each grade level and each test. She presented comparison data on the percent of students meeting State Goal (Proficient) on each test.

Guilford students performed higher than the State average on all tests. On the CMTs, Guilford students performed at comparable levels as students in DRG B in Grades 3, 4, 5, and 6. In Grades 7 and 8 Guilford students exceeded the performance of students in DRG B in all components of the CMT.

Performance on CAPT continues to improve for Guilford students across the components of the test – Mathematics, Science, Reading, and Writing. Grade 10 students in Guilford performed higher than the State and higher than DRG B in all components of CAPT.

Dr. Meyers asked if the district has the ability to analyze performance of the same group of students over time. Dr. Keene responded that this vertical analysis is possible and generally reflects stability in the results of analysis performed. She noted that it is difficult to measure growth within specific strands and subject areas from year to year as not all strands are focused on each year.

Chairman Bloss noted the outstanding growth in scores in recent years at the high school and middle school levels. He asked what it is about the 3rd and 4th grade that has the district performing at lower levels.

Dr. Keene responded that the district is working to address this issue, specifically by providing more reading and writing opportunities for students. She noted that the new literacy coaches in the elementary schools will impact this area.

Dr. Keene noted that complete results on all tests are available at www.ctreports.com. Dr. Keene's presentation is available on the Guilford Public School's website under Testing and Accountability.

Mr. Zuse asked about the level of difficulty in the State of Connecticut to achieve Goal and Proficiency on the tests. Dr. Keene responded that, according to the State Department of Education, the Proficiency level in Connecticut is higher than most states'.

The Board noted that they would like to continue a conversation on CMT and CAPT performance at the September 27, 2010, Workshop Meeting.

Mr. Zuse suggested that the district should be able to figure out the issues effecting performance on the CMT in the lower grades. Dr. Forcella noted that the district is focused on long-term results and that the process will take time. He stated that the district's commitment is to create meaningful change about learning, to create thinkers, and not to only focus on increasing test scores.

7.5 Update on Melissa Jones Well

Dr. Forcella explained that the results of a national pesticide study that included testing the well at Melissa Jones School revealed no pesticides present in the Jones well. Chairman Bloss suggested that the results of the study should be communicated to the parents of Melissa Jones students.

7.6 Acknowledge Donation to GHS from GHS Connection (exhibit)

Dr. Forcella acknowledged the donation of a new refrigerator valued at \$800.00 from GHS Connection to Guilford High School.

7.7 Acknowledge Donation to GHS Theatre Arts from Private Individual (exhibit)

Dr. Forcella acknowledged a monetary donation from a private individual in the amount of \$20 to the GHS Theatre Arts Department for their trip to Scotland.

7.8 Overnight Field Trip Request Report – GHS Boys Cross Country Team (exhibit)

Dr. Forcella acknowledged his approval of a request from Athletic Director Chip Dorwin to allow the GHS Boys Cross Country Team to participate in an invitational cross country event in Holmdel, NJ on October 2, 2010.

8. Board Agenda

8.1 ACT ON Personnel Items (exhibit)

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Dudley and seconded by Mr. Bishop, the Board voted unanimously to ratify the resignations of Jason Malli, Cox Elementary School, Grade 3 Teacher, effective August 31, 2010 and Michelle Afonso, Guilford High School, Technology Teacher, effective September 18, 2010.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mrs. Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously in favor of ratifying the appointments of Ingrid Dally, School Psychologist, Guilford High School (0.6 FTE); Stacy Miller, Art Teacher, Leete Elementary School (0.1 FTE); Linda Houde, Special Education Teacher, Guilford High School (1.0 FTE); April Robinson,

Reading Teacher, Guilford Lakes School (1.0 FTE); Lauren Anderson, Art Teacher, Cox Elementary School (0.1 FTE); and John Cain, Grade 3 Teacher, Cox Elementary School (1.0 FTE), all effective September 1, 2010.

Dr. Forcella noted that the district is still looking to hire one more Literacy Coach for the elementary schools.

8.2 DISCUSS Federal Jobs Program

Chairman Bloss explained that Guilford has been promised \$178,000 in grant money for education jobs from the federal government.

Dr. Meyers explained that the Finance Subcommittee determined that it was best not to designate the specific use for the money at this time due to the uncertainty of possible special education expenses and other district needs.

Mrs. Trudeau noted that the money must be spent by September 2012.

8.3 RECEIVE 2011-2012 Budget Timeline (exhibit)

Chairman Bloss noted that the 2011-2012 Budget process has begun. He noted that the first public forum for input into the budget will be held on Tuesday, October 26.

Mr. Ireland asked why the timeline for capital expenditures is not included in the Budget Timeline. Dr. Forcella explained that discussions about capital expenditures coincide with the Budget process.

Dr. Moore suggested that bonding issues should be noted on the Budget Timeline.

The Board discussed bringing bonding issues to the Standing Building Committee by December 2010.

8.4 RECEIVE for POSSIBLE ACTION: Donation from the GHS Touchdown Club

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mrs. Dudley the Board voted unanimously in favor of accepting a donation from the Guilford High School Touchdown Club in the amount of \$4,000 to pay for an assistant football coach.

9. Unfinished Business

Mr. Zuse asked if any information had been obtained about cell phone policies and restrictions of use at schools from principals. Chairman Bloss suggested that feedback from principals should go to the Policy Subcommittee. Mrs. Dudley noted that the Policy Subcommittee's next meeting is September 27, 2010.

Mr. Ireland referenced Board of Education Policies on Community Relations #1342 Advertising and Promotion and #1346 Use of School in a discussion about using advertising to raise money to pay to maintain the high school's turf field. He explained that the Standing Fields Committee has been investigating ways to raise money to put into a fund to pay for the maintenance of the turf field, but in reading the Board's policies regarding advertising they understand that there are restrictions to advertising on school grounds.

Chairman Bloss suggested that Paul Schmidt, Chairman of the Standing Fields Committee, be invited to the next Policy Subcommittee meeting to discuss the issue of advertising at the fields.

Dr. Moore asked for a timeline on the Science curriculum review. Dr. Keene explained that the Science Curriculum Committee began meeting this summer with representatives from all grade levels and parents. The group will meet during the school year and Dr. Keene anticipates providing an update to the Board in May 2011.

Dr. Keene noted that the other major initiative this year will be focused on the literacy coaches and disciplinary literacy.

Dr. Keene stated that the State Board of Education has adopted national course standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts and Guilford will be evaluating its curriculum to identify any adjustments needed to conform to the standards.

10. Reports of Committees

10.1 Policy Subcommittee

Mrs. Dudley noted that the next meeting will be September 17, 2010. An invitation to Paul Schmidt, Chairman of the Standing Fields Committee will be extended.

10.2 Facilities Subcommittee

Mr. Ireland reported that the Facilities Subcommittee walked through Adams and viewed the work completed this summer. He also noted that roof and gutter projects in the district had been completed as well. He stated that the committee will be meeting to plan needs assessment walk throughs as a first step in the capital needs planning process.

10.3 Finance Subcommittee

Dr. Meyers reported that the Finance Subcommittee, in their meeting early that evening, discussed the finances of the Food Service Department and the reporting and auditing of the Student Activity Fund.

10.4 Liaisons to Town Committees

Mr. Ireland reported from the Standing Building Committee that projects have been completed at Leete and Cox Schools. He also noted that a \$2000 credit has been received on gutters.

Dr. Meyers reported that the Health Advisory Committee plans to implement a program introduced by Michelle Obama to work with a local chef to design a school menu item with the assistance of parents, students and faculty. There is a national contest associated with the program.

Dr. Meyers stated that the Health Advisory Committee has spoken to Dr. Forcella about implementing a program in classrooms recommended by Yale Medical School that includes bursts of activity by students during the school day. Dr. Forcella will be discussing the concept with the district's principals.

11. Public Questions

None.

12. New Business

Mr. Zuse asked for clarification on the charge for the architects who will be meeting with the Board in October. Dr. Forcella explained that the purpose of the October meeting with the architects will be to continue conversation and generate ideas about the best approach to pursue with regard to the high school facility.

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

Respectfully submitted by:

Lorri Hahn
Clerk to the Board of Education