

**GUILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2010
GUILFORD HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY, GUILFORD, CT**

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Bill Bloss called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. Board members present were Mary Beeman, Bill Bloss, Keith Bishop, Barbara Dudley, John Ireland, Alan Meyers, Chris Moore, Susan Renner, and Ted Zuse.

Administrators present were Tom Forcella, Anne Keene, Michael Biddle, Pat Brett, Nancy Bishop and Andy Potochney. Also present was Accounting Manager Linda Trudeau and Director of Operations Cliff Gurnham.

2. Action on Minutes of:

2.1 December 14, 2009 (Finance Subcommittee)

2.2 December 14, 2009 (Regular Meeting)

2.3 December 15, 2009 (Joint BOE/BOF Finance Subcommittee)

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Dudley and seconded by Dr. Meyers, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the minutes of December 14, 2009 (Finance Subcommittee); December 14, 2009 (Regular Meeting); and December 15, 2009 (Joint BOE/BOF Finance Subcommittee) with one correction.

The wording in paragraph three of agenda item 7.1 of the December 14, 2010, Regular Meeting minutes should be revised to read as follows:

Bruce Kellogg and Graham Curtis of JCJ Architects showed the Board scaled site maps and photographs of the sites under consideration. The sites identified include the current Guilford High School site, the current Adams Middle School site, the Baldwin Corridor, and the Goss/Nut Plains property. The architects noted that in the process of analyzing potential sites for the middle school it makes sense to also consider the location for a new high school.

**3. Review and Approval of Expenditures for the Month of December
Reviewer for Month: Barbara Dudley**

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

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

Kim Beckett addressed the Board regarding agenda item 8.2 – Roof Replacement at Guilford Lakes School. Ms. Beckett stated that she has received correspondence from community members expressing concern over the possibility of lead coated gutters being used in this project. She asked the Board to address this matter with the Standing Building Committee.

5. Communications

Dr. Moore noted a communication from a parent concerned about extracurricular activities being cut from the 2010-2011 Budget.

Dr. Forcella responded that there are no proposed cuts to extracurricular activities at this time. He also stated that currently, due to unanticipated shortfalls in reimbursements from the Excess Cost Grant this year and a budget that had to be reduced considerably last spring, the district is under a freeze for any non-essential spending.

6. Student Representatives

No report. Students were excused for mid term exams.

7. Superintendent's Report

7.1 2010-2011 Budget Presentation

Dr. Forcella presented an overview of the 2010-2011 Budget including the development process, priorities, key areas impacted, and the plan for implementing new initiatives.

Dr. Forcella explained that the budget is focused on student learning and instruction. He noted that the development of the budget included a detailed review of all current personnel and programs. He noted that the schools' operating budgets have been reduced by 25 – 40% over the current year.

Dr. Forcella noted staff reductions amounting to a net savings of \$686,000. He explained that enrollments in the district are stable and slightly decreasing so that any reduction in professional staff will not significantly impact class sizes.

Dr. Forcella introduced the Content Focused Coaching model explaining that this new initiative will support rigor in elementary literacy. He explained that four instructional coaches will be hired using money reallocated from two administrative positions. The instructional coaches will provide training to K-4 principals and teachers on literacy instruction. Dr. Forcella explained that professionals from the University of Pittsburg Institute for Learning will provide training and support for the new coaches and professional development for all K-4 faculty.

Chairman Bloss stated that the proposed budget was thoughtfully prepared.

Dr. Meyers applauded the creative thinking that went into the development of the budget.

Mrs. Beeman stated that Dr. Forcella has worked closely with the Board of Education during the development of the budget.

Dr. Moore questioned how many expenses are being deferred as a result of the substantial reductions to supplies and materials in the schools. Dr. Forcella stated that the district will need to gather this data.

7.2 State of the School Update

Dr. Forcella reminded the Board and the public that the annual State of the Schools presentation to the community will take place on February 11, 2010, in the Guilford High School auditorium.

7.3 RTTT Application Date (exhibit)

The Board discussed the potential participation of the Guilford Public School in the State's Race to the Top (RTTT) grant project. The Board decided that the conditions Guilford would need to meet in the agreement with the Connecticut State Board of Education for this improvement plan might be expensive to the district and do not align with the direction the school system is committed to following.

Dr. Forcella recommended not participating in RTTT. Chairman Bloss agreed and noted that the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education has provided much valuable information on RTTT from which the Board can base an informed decision.

7.4 Cox Oil Tank Removal and Gas Line Installation Update

Mr. Gurnham reported that test results on an oil tank at A.W. Cox Elementary School indicated that the tank would need to be removed. By replacing the tank with a natural gas line the district will realize a savings of \$1800 per year. In addition, the gas company will pay for 70% of the installation costs. Mr. Gurnham stated that the project will take approximately two weeks to complete.

7.5 Melissa Jones Well Update

Mr. Gurnham reported that test results on one of the wells at Melissa Jones Elementary School indicated that the well was contaminated. The well has been treated with chlorine and continues to be flushed out until the chlorine levels are safe.

Mr. Gurnham stated that there will be a complete analysis of Well #1 at Jones to try to identify the reason for the contamination since this is not the first time it has happened. Mr. Gurnham noted that he is working with the Town and State Engineering and Health Departments on this project.

7.6 Legislative Update

Dr. Forcella noted that State Representative Pat Widlitz and State Senator Ed Meyer will attend the February 8, 2010, Board of Education meeting to provide a legislative update.

8. Board Agenda

8.1 ACT ON Personnel Items (exhibit)

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mr. Bishop, the Board voted unanimously to ratify the resignation of John Eric Spencer, Dean of Students, Guilford High School, effective January 11, 2010.

Dr. Forcella noted that Mr. Spencer will be involved in a new program in East Haddam, CT in the Guidance Department. He noted that the Dean of Students position will not be filled immediately at Guilford High School.

8.2 ACT ON Educational Specifications for the Roof Replacement at the Guilford Lakes Elementary School including the Filing of the EDO49 and Submission of the Project to the Board of Selectmen (exhibit)

Upon a motion made by Mr. Ireland and seconded by Mr. Zuse, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the Educational Specifications for the Roof Replacement at the Guilford Lakes Elementary School including the filing of the EDO49 and submission of the project to the Board of Selectmen.

8.3 ACT ON Educational Specifications for the Roof Replacement at the Adams Middle School including the Filing of the ED049 and Submission of the Project to the Board of Selectmen (exhibit)

Upon a motion made by Mr. Ireland and seconded by Mr. Zuse, the Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the Educational Specifications for the Roof Replacement at the Adams Middle School including the filing of the EDO49 and submission of the project to the Board of Selectmen.

8.4 RECEIVE Recommendation from Facilities Subcommittee for GHS Design RFQ

Mr. Ireland explained that the Facilities Subcommittee is requesting the Board's approval to create an RFQ for firms to submit their qualifications to develop schematic designs for a new Guilford High School. The Facilities Subcommittee would then bring the RFQ document to the Board in February for approval.

Mr. Ireland noted that he anticipates having a list of selection committee members ready for the Board for the February regular meeting.

8.5 RECEIVE for POSSIBLE ACTION: 2010-11 and 2011-12 School Calendar Drafts (exhibits)

Dr. Forcella introduced the School Calendar Drafts for the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years and noted that they will be available on the district website for review and comments.

Chairman Bloss indicated that action on the school calendars will be on the February 8, 2010 meeting agenda.

9. Unfinished Business

None

10. Reports of Committees

10.1 Policy Subcommittee

None

10.2 Facilities Subcommittee

Mr. Ireland noted that the Facilities Subcommittee is evaluating long-term capital projects. He stated that the Adams Middle School project continues.

Mr. Ireland stated that alarm systems in the district are old and replacement parts are becoming difficult to find. As a result, it may be more cost effective to replace some of the systems.

Mr. Ireland noted that there will be a special meeting of the Facilities Subcommittee on January 20, 2010, for a site improvement budget discussion.

10.3 Finance Subcommittee

None

10.4 Liaisons to Town Committees

Mr. Bishop reported that the Land Acquisitions Commission will hold a meeting on January 25 at the Town Hall to discuss the management plan for the Goss property.

11. Public Questions

None

12. New Business

Dr. Meyers noted the outstanding performance of the Guilford High School Theatre Arts Department of “Cinderella,” performed in December.

Mr. Bishop noted that the Town Band will join the Guilford High School Concert Band on January 20 for a performance at the high school.

Mr. Zuse questioned a sign posted at Baldwin Middle School stating “No Bike Riding.” Dr. Forcella said that he will look into the sign and report back.

Dr. Moore note that the Adult Spelling Bee sponsored by the GFFE will take place on February 5 at Guilford High School and added that the Board of Education will again have a team competing in the event.

Upon a motion made by Dr. Meyers and seconded by Mrs. Dudley, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lorri Hahn
Clerk to the Board of Education