

**TOWN OF ROCKY HILL
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING OF May 15, 2003**

Members Present: Nadine Bell
Raffaella Coler
Tina Lionetti
Charles McMonigle
Anne Schmidt
Frank Szeps (Chairman)
Catherine Vargas
Jennifer Viggiano-Grosse

Member Absent: Marinella Tirillo

A meeting of the Board of Education was held on Thursday, May 15, 2003, in the Council Room of the Rocky Hill Town Hall. Chairman Szeps called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Mrs. Bell, seconded by Mrs. Viggiano-Grosse, to accept the minutes of the May 1, 2003, Board of Education meeting, as presented.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED**

CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Szeps noted that graduation was scheduled for June 19. He recommended that the June 5 and June 19 Board meetings be rescheduled to another date. Tuesday, June 17, was selected as a possible meeting date.

Dr. Vautour noted that on May 20, Mrs. Roy would take eighteen students from her Latin class to Holiday Hill to celebrate Connecticut Latin Day. A thank you note was received from Kristen Kelly for the goody bags the Board of Education presented to teachers for Teacher Appreciation Day. The staff of the Broadside was congratulated for their recent award. Notification has been received from the University of Connecticut's Department of English that a Rocky Hill student, Ingrid Adamow, has written a winning essay "Diminishing Warfare" which will be showcased in a University of Connecticut publication.

Rocky Hill High School Drama Club will present Les Miserable on May 17 at 7:30 p.m. and May 18 at 3:00 p.m. Tickets are \$6 for seniors and students, and \$8 for adults pre-paid and \$10 at the door.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

RHTA Liaison Committee

Mrs. Crawford, President of the RHTA, was present. There was no report.

Student Representatives

There were no student reports.

Meeting Open to the Public

No one from the public addressed the Board on any item not on this evening's agenda.

1. Consent Calendar

The May 15 consent calendar included a child rearing leave request for Leslie Poland, SE, GMS, and the purchase of French and Spanish books for GMS in the amount of \$21,265.

Moved by Mrs. Lionetti, seconded by Mrs. Viggiano-Grosse, to accept the consent calendar of May 15, 2003.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

2. Personnel and Negotiations

No report.

3. Policy

Dr. Vautour presented a second reading for proposed adoption of the policy concerning field use. The policy has been developed to address priorities assigned to field use and scheduling. The language clarifies that with respect to school fields, the Board of Education has field priority over all of them. The Council has adopted the policy.

Moved by Mrs. Bell, seconded by Mrs. Lionetti, to adopt the Parks, Facilities and Fields Use Policy.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED**

4. Finance

Mrs. Schmidt reported that the Finance Committee has offered to help Mr. Turansky review the food services contract. The Committee reviewed three proposals, and agreed to award the contract to Sodexho based on the financial presentations and the experience with Sodexho.

Moved by Mrs. Schmidt, seconded by Mrs. Lionetti, to send the food services contract to Sodexho and to instruct administration to process any of the necessary paperwork.

Mrs. Schmidt stated that Mr. Turansky is pleased with the current working relationship and the quality of the food that Sodexho has offered. They did a nice job with preparing and presenting Board dinners. In the earlier years of the contract, Sodexho gave up their

administrative fees in order to allow the district to break even.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED**

Mrs. Schmidt reported that last night the Town Council held the budget workshop to review the Board of Education's request for next year's allocation. Dr. Vautour and Mr. Turansky met with the Town Council and were well prepared and answered all questions clearly and concisely. A motion was made by Councilperson Cusano to fully fund the Board. The motion did not pass. The final deliberations will take place on Monday, and the Town Council will be notifying the Board of its allocation. The Finance Committee will be polling the entire Board to set up a budget workshop.

Mrs. Viggiano-Grosse noted that last night, in the discussion of the special education funding, the Councilors were asking if there was any cushion; it was said there was a \$30,000 placeholder in the account. She thought that had been cut. Dr. Vautour said he would review the budget detail to see if a placeholder had been left in or if it had been eliminated.

Dr. Vautour told the Board members that the district was \$410,000 short of what it needed to operate the district. The Board would have a significant task ahead of them. Chairman Szeps added that the budget that the Board adopted was a no-growth budget. At that point, anything less than what they adopted meant they would have to reduce some of the services that are currently provided. He encouraged the Board members and the members of the public to call the Council members to ask them to fully fund the Board's budget and add back the \$410,000.

Item 14, Budget 2003-04 was removed from the agenda.

5. Curriculum

Mrs. Bell reported that the Curriculum Committee met today and reviewed curriculum mapping; it will be evaluated for potential use by the District. Last week's Curriculum Committee meeting was held on textbooks. Books included in the 2003-04 budget were evaluated. She commended the staff for their recommendations. Many of the departments negotiated with the textbook companies to get some extras at no charge. Textbooks on line are part of a package with one of the World Language Department textbook purchases.

Moved by Ms. Bell, seconded by Mrs. Schmidt, to recommend approval of all textbooks and to forward that list to the Finance Committee for purchase as funds in the current budget become available.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED**

6. Professional Development

No report.

7. Facilities

No report.

8. Technology

No report.

9. Transportation/Accommodations

No report.

10. Liaison Committee

No report.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

11. CMT Follow-Up

Dr. Vautour reported that a summary of actions that have been taken with respect to the CMTs at the fourth grade level has been prepared. Items discussed this evening in terms of next year will be acted on within a month of receipt of the CMT data.

Mr. Watson stated that a CMT Intervention Team has been created. The team is made up of grade level coordinators and subject level supervisors. They hoped to meet monthly. He has met with the third grade team and earmarked some of the students who looked like they might have difficulty with the CMTS. A before-school program for thirty students at Stevens will begin next week.

The fourth grade team has met and created individual plans for the children that scored in the Level 1, 2 and 3 ranges. They looked at strategies to help the students achieve the skills they need. They were creating a structure with a much more systematic approach to the monthly meetings. Having a binder with each child's name and area of help is another plan.

Many teachers teach the skills, but need to find new ways to teach them. Teachers are meeting to get the schools to align the state structure with the textbooks. They were doing a good job with establishing the courses and evaluating how they were doing. They were bringing school based teams back together to talk about what they need to do to improve.

Mr. Pear added that teachers are doing problems of the day which will focus on the area the students are having trouble in. Teachers also discussed the idea of having a problem for the weekend where the students would take a problem home and work it out and review it in the classroom.

Grade level meetings are held once a month. Next month, math will be the focus. Administration talked about having Ann Spenelli as a resource person, to review not only the CMTs but the format in which it is tested.

Mrs. Boutilier explained that the district has begun to look at how and when they teach the strands. They were learning how to better prepare students for testing strategies. During the April professional development day, people worked with the elementary staff and middle and high school staff looking at the strategies. Three dates are set to get teachers together by grade level. They will look at the materials to see if the textbooks needs are being met.

Administration has looked at ERG data to see which districts have been performing better than Rocky Hill. They will be meeting with those districts. Strategies will be updated next year as soon as the results are received.

Mrs. Schmidt asked if Mrs. Boutilier had looked at the homework situation and sending children home with specific homework. Mrs. Boutilier said that Robin Candor from Central brought up the issue of homework at the professional development session. Those discussions have begun at the secondary level. At the elementary level, teachers will be looking at the assessments they use, including homework.

Mr. Watson had a binder that he used when he was a classroom teacher. He had assigned a problem or two for homework with a signoff by the parent, asking for responses indicating whether the child had difficulty with the problem. Mrs. Schmidt recommended that if a student is having trouble during the day, giving them five problems a night to practice on.

Mrs. Vargas asked how many students were identified in the before school program; Mr. Watson responded that 31 third graders were identified at Stevens according to teacher input. They recommended those children as being students who could use some extra help. Mr. Watson wrote a letter to those parents, and had responses from 16 of the 31.

Dr. Vautour explained that the district was trying to establish the mindset that CMTs at the fourth grade level was a function of the K-4 grades, and the CMTs at the sixth grade level was a function of the 4-6 teaching. They were looking at the intervention plans and linking them. Teachers are meeting to share intervention plans.

Mr. Watson said the three teachers involved in the before school program were two fourth grade teachers and one math resource teacher. Chairman Szeps noted the need for the information being gathered to be included in a master data base.

12. Board Retreat

Mrs. Viggiano-Grosse and Mrs. Vargas would work with the Superintendent to set a meeting date and establish an agenda for the Board retreat, to be held as an evening meeting at Griswold Middle School.

13. Recognition Ceremony

A recognition ceremony was scheduled for May 20, 2003, at West Hill School, at which time 300 individuals will be honored. All Board members said they would attend.

14. Budget 2003-04

This item was removed from the agenda.

Mr. Szeps stated that the June 5 and June 19 Board meetings have been canceled; a tentative date was set for June 17 at Griswold Middle School.

15. Executive Session

Moved by Mrs. Lionetti, seconded by Mrs. Vargas, to go into executive session at 7:45 p.m. to discuss the Superintendent of Schools' evaluation.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED**

Moved by Mrs. Lionetti, seconded by Mrs. Vargas, to go out of executive session. (8:14 p.m.)

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED**

Moved by Mrs. Lionetti, seconded by Mrs. Vargas, to adjourn the meeting. (8:15 p.m.)

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalie W. O'Neill
Recording Secretary

Accepted by: _____