

**APPROVED  
MINUTES  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
September 8, 2015**

**PLACE:**

Darien Board of Education  
Meeting Room  
7:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Ms. Hagerty-Ross, Chair; Mesdames Stein, Zuro, McNamara and Sullivan; and Messrs. Harman, Burke, Martens, and Dineen.

**ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:**

Dr. Dan Brenner, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Susie DaSilva, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Ms. Shirley Klein, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education and Student Services; Mr. Michael Feeney, Director of Finance and Operations; Ms. Marjorie Cion, Director of Human Resources.

**VISITORS:**

Approximately 25.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Hagerty-Ross called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. She said the next Regular BOE meeting would be rescheduled for Monday, September 21, 2015 because of the holiday.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Walter Casey, Webster Valley Road, read from the following statement:

I believe Darien should have Paramedics based in Darien in order to drastically cut response times of the much more highly trained Paramedics who now must come from Stamford or elsewhere.

Paramedics will not just make Darien safe for the middle aged and elderly. Paramedics receive 10% or more hours of training than do the EMTs that staff Post 53. This extensive training allows much more time for Paramedics to focus on pediatric medical emergencies and their treatments.

I ask that the Board of Education demand that First Selectman Jayme Stevenson stop blocking Paramedics from being based in Darien and allow them to be integrated into Post 53.

Ms. Susan Vogel, Linda Lane, asked once the concession stand in the Pavilion is open, who would be responsible for scheduling the use of the Pavilion? Dr. Brenner said it would be under the jurisdiction of the BOE and scheduling would be handled by the high school and district administration.

## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Brenner said he was happy to get through the first week and the first day of school was always an exciting time. In particular, he mentioned the "Parade of Learners" at Royle School. He apologized for the bus issues and took responsibility for any problems. He anticipated the issues would be completely solved within the next day or two. He said the heat had also posed problems but he was not a fan of closing schools. He said the teachers were doing everything possible to make sure the kids were safe, hydrated, and rotated through air conditioned classrooms.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

\*\* MS. STEIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING AND EXECUTIVE SESSION OF AUGUST 25, 2015.

\*\* MS. SULLIVAN SECONDED THE MOTION.

\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

\*\* MR. HARMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 25, 2015.

\*\* MR. DINEEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

### BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Budget and Finance Committee

Mr. Harman reported that the Committee met to discuss the 2014-2015 finances as well as a current financial review which would be discussed at the October meeting.

### PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### A. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE 2015 CHINA STUDENT EXCHANGE FIELD TRIP (FILE #2398)

The trip to Washington, DC is scheduled for October 10, 11 and 12. Accompanied by 2 teachers, there would be about 13 students from the Chinese exchange program traveling with about 10-15 Darien High School students. Ms. Armiger spoke and said this was the 10<sup>th</sup> year of the trip. She said it was always a good experience and fostered a sense of togetherness.

#### Board Discussion/Questions and Ms. Armiger's Responses:

a) **Are the students typically from the China Exchange program?** (Ms. Armiger said it is open to any students. She said that a lot of kids who had been to Shanghai in the past also wanted to attend.) b) **Is there fundraising?** (Ms. Armiger said there was no fundraising. She said there was small scholarship available. She said when fundraising was done for the China exchange, it is usually for hosting.)

- \*\* MR. BURKE MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2015 CHINA STUDENT EXCHANGE TRIP.
- \*\* MR. DINEEN SECONDED THE MOTION.
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**B. REPORT ON SUMMER SCHOOL, ESY AND GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS 2015 (FILE #2399)**

Ms. Klein gave a PowerPoint presentation on the ESY Summer School Program. She said 261 students, based on PPT recommendations, had been part of the program - 199 at Darien High School, and 62 in the Early Program at Tokeneke Elementary School. Transportation to the schools was provided. She went over the hours and dates of the programs. She said there had been 99 staff members, including regular and special education teachers, speech pathologists, psychologists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, and nurses. She said services provided included academic, instructional social skill development, and vocational training. She said, special education and regular teachers were able to group students by ability and there was enhanced coordination between regular education teachers and school service providers.

Ms. Ulreich came forward to speak about the general education summer school program. She thanked the Board and participants. She thanked the secretarial staff for the summer school and the DHS custodial staff. She said the program was a comprehensive learner centered program offering academic, arts and athletic programs. She went over the dates and hours of the programs. She shared how the Middlesex “Jump Start” program had been very successful. Mr. Power presented the financial summary of the Darien Summer School. He noted revenue was down this year, and believed it was due to 3 popular sports camps—Girls’ Lacrosse, Girls’ Volleyball and Boys’ Basketball, not being run this year. He said 95% of parents surveyed at the end of the program said they would recommend the program to others and were pleased with the experience.

**Board Questions/Discussion and Administration’s Responses:**

**a) One of the discussions we had this year was about when parents were notified their children qualified for ESY. It can make it difficult for parents to schedule if they don’t hear about ESY until later. When do you think is an ideal time for notification?** (Ms. Klein replied it is often hard to determine early on whether a child qualifies for ESY. She said in some cases it is clear students need services and in others it is important not to act prematurely and careful monitoring was required. She said it was important to be mindful of scheduling issues, and parents could reach out to their facilitators if they had any questions.) **b) Would it be possible to create a chain of command so that parents can access the various levels of personnel if they have questions?** (Ms. Klein agreed and said there would be a chain of command shared at an early point.) **c) Have we considered doing anything like the Middlesex “Jump Start” for incoming High School Students?** (Ms. Ulreich agreed - as the Middlesex Program had been successful and a similar High School program was at the top of the list for implementation.)

**C. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON K-5 MATHEMATICS AND ELA SUPERVISORS’ CHANGES IN TITLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (FILE #2400)**

Dr. Brenner said the administration is recommending changes in the two ELA and Math Supervisor positions.

He said it was decided the two positions needed administrative capabilities, in terms of evaluating and observing staff. He said they would work closely with the curriculum director and principals. He said the shift would be done inside the budget requirements and positions would be broader than just ELA and Math. ELA supervisors would also embrace Social Studies and Math supervisors would embrace Science. The positions would be across all 5 elementary schools.

**Board Questions/Discussion and Administration's Responses:**

**a) Would there be changes in qualifications for these positions?** (Dr. Brenner said the positions would require an 092.) **b) Is the current position filled by someone with the correct qualifications?** (Dr. Brenner replied that the current staff member had an 092 and could apply for the position. He said the positions would have to be posted as a matter of course.) **c) Are there contract/union implications as part of this change?** (Dr. Brenner said the positions would change from the Teachers' to the Administrators' Union and both Unions have been notified.) **d) This is for K-5. Are there similar measures being taken for 6-12?** (Dr. Brenner replied this was a first step in a more comprehensive program.) **e) Will the math coordinator also handle computer science?** (Dr. Brenner said the computer piece for K-12 would still be handled by Marc Marin but the process would continue to evolve.) **f) Further along, there will be other considerations like World Languages?** (Dr. Brenner agreed. This was a first step in an overall curriculum audit and the administration would be coming to the Board with requests and suggestions. He said there were many factors involved in reorganization including union implications.)

Ms. Hagerty-Ross summarized the shifts in staff, noting it was within the budget. Dr. Brenner said it was important to note these positions were not being added but elevated and there were positions that would not be added because of this shift, saving money over-all.

- \*\* MR. HARMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE K-5 ELA AND MATHEMATICS SUPERVISOR POSITIONS.
- \*\* MS. MCNAMARA SECONDED THE MOTION.
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**D) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE GIFT OF KITCHEN EQUIPMENT FROM THE DAF (FILE #2401).**

Dr. Brenner said he had followed up and knocked on doors of the neighbors of the High School. He said all he visited could not have been more gracious. He said not everyone was thrilled by the concept of the concession, but all were grateful for the visit. He said the DAF had filled out the donation form for the equipment.

**Board Questions/Discussions and Administration's responses:**

**a) What were some of the concerns of the residents you spoke to?** (Dr. Brenner replied the residents he spoke to often referred to the past and the lack of communication and the history of the pavilion development.) **b) What is the status of the RFP?** (Dr. Brenner replied the RFP was awaiting the Board's acceptance of the equipment. He said the process may take until the spring for the concession to be fully open and operational.) **c) The hook up and installation is part of the gift from the DAF?** (Dr. Brenner replied yes, it was.) **d) The**

**band and cheerleaders will be able to use the space for their fundraising?** (Dr. Brenner said the space would be able to be used by the band and cheerleaders for fundraising.) **e) Will other groups be allowed to use the space for fundraising?** (Dr. Brenner said it is generally the jurisdiction of the high school but in this case the particular agreement was to let the band and cheerleaders use the space for fundraising and would start there initially.) **f) Is the DAF aware that the concession may not be open or utilized as first envisioned? What are their expectations of their gift?** (Dr. Brenner said the DAF's "eyes are open," as to the future of the concession and understood that with the major dates already claimed by the band and cheerleading fundraiser, a vendor may not be found to run the concession.)

Ms. Hagerty-Ross reviewed the usage terms of the space.

- \*\* MS. MCNAMARA MOVED TO ACCEPT THE GIFT OF THE KITCHEN EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATION BY THE DAF AND THE USAGE PLANS AS SPECIFIED.**
- \*\* MS. SULLIVAN SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Hagerty-Ross noted although it may seem to many the kitchen process had taken over two years, this was indeed the first time the full measure had been presented to the BOE and it had been acted on accordingly.

#### **E. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE 2015-2016 BOE MASTER AGENDA (FILE #2402)**

Dr. Brenner said he had taken into consideration the suggestions of the Board from the previous meeting and highlighted changes in red.

#### **Board Questions/Discussion and Administration's Responses:**

**a) At the September 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, will we see an update on year end finances?** (Dr. Brenner replied, yes.) **b) At one point last year, we had spoken of considering the funding of athletic programs.** (Dr. Brenner asked for some history. Ms. Hagerty-Ross said there had been discussions of an overall examination of athletic teams and facilities.) **c) We thought it would be important to examine how teams got their budgets and appropriations from the district. There were a lot of discussions that came up about inequality in athletic team funding at the high school from school policies to gifts. There is a lot on the master agenda. There is already so much to be considered this year, even though this issue is a high priority it may not be considered on the master agenda but it can be addressed through the budget process.** (Dr. Brenner said there was a great deal going on including facilities, fundraising, and many questions he has already started to ask. He said he would be following through in the budget process. He said the fact it was not on the district's goals did not mean it would not be addressed but there was a lot on the table. He said much would be considered and handled this year.)

- \*\* MS. STEIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2015-2016 1<sup>st</sup> SEMESTER BOE MASTER AGENDA.**
- \*\* MR. DINEEN SECONDED.**
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

**A. PERSONNEL ITEMS (FILE #2403)**

- \*\* MS. SULLIVAN MOVED THE PERSONNEL ITEMS AS PRESENTED.**
- \*\* MR. HARMAN SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

- \*\* MR. BURKE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- \*\* MR. DINEEN SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Schneider Zuro  
Secretary