



Stratford Board of Education

STRATFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION – OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: 12/19/2016

**Meeting Location: Administration Center – Board
Room**

Approved: DRAFT

Recorded By: Teresa Lycoudes

1 ATTENDANCE

Name	Title	Location	Present
James Feehan	Board Chair		Y
Leonard Petruccelli	Board Vice Chair		Y
Theresa Sheehy	Board Secretary		Y
Chris Barnaby	Board Member		Y
Maria Buturla	Board Member		Y
Susan Lance	Board Member		Y
Eric Lazaro	Board Member		Y
Dr. Janet Robinson	Superintendent	Central Office	Y
Clarence Zachery	Chief Operating Officer	Central Office	Y
Linda Gejda	Asst. Superintendent	Central Office	Y
Teresa Lycoudes	Recorder / Board Secretary	Central Office	Y
Jack Dellapiano	SAA Representative	SHS Principal	Y
Kristin Record	SEA President	BHS Instructor	Y
Lou Spetrino	Videographer		Y

2 MEETING LOCATION

Building: Auditorium / Victoria Soto School

3 MEETING START

Meeting Scheduled to Start: 6:00 PM

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board met in Executive Session from 5:55 PM until 6:15 PM for the purpose of discussing possible retention of outside legal counsel to assist with the Magnet School tuition issue. Executive Session included all Board members present, Dr. Robinson, Chief Operating Officer, Clarence Zachery, Fred O'Brien and Norman Pattis.

The second matter during Executive Session took place from 6:16 PM until 6:20 PM. It included all Board members present, Dr. Robinson, Chief Operating Officer, Clarence Zachery, and Director of Personnel, Joan Libby.

The purpose of this session was to review and discuss ratification of the nurses' contract.

Executive Session ended at 6:20 PM

Regular Meeting scheduled to start at 6:30 PM.

Actual Start time was 6:35PM.

4 AGENDA

- **Opening Remarks by Chair**

1. Chairman Feehan called the December 19, 2016 Board of Education meeting to order at 6:35 PM. A quorum was confirmed, and Mr. Feehan asked everyone to stand and join **Board Member, Susan Lance**, for the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

- **Presentations** – There were no presentations at this meeting.

- **Public Participation** – Five members of the public spoke.

1. **Zachary Kenney**, 45 Pauline St., Stratford CT – spoke about Drama Club funding.
2. **Charles Lindberg**, 145 Glenwood Ave., Stratford CT – spoke about High School Drama Programs.
3. **Donald Goodson**, 409 Sherwood Place, Stratford CT – spoke about Board's attention to C.A.R.E. Thanking Board for support.
4. **Justin Gendron**, 198 Summer St., Stratford CT – spoke about Drama Society funding.
5. **Tina Manus**, 315 Fox Hill Road, Stratford CT - spoke about Drama Society funding.

- **Student Representatives Report** – The 2016-2017 School Representatives to the Board of Education were introduced. **Joseph Pellegrino represented Bunnell High School** and **Roula Kouvatas represented Stratford High School**. Each gave a brief report about their respective school.

- **Superintendent's "Status of the Schools" Report** – Dr. Robinson reported about the following items:

1. **Status of the Schools** – Dr. Robinson addressed the following:

1. Appreciation of Student Representatives to the Board – Jason Pellegrino and Roula Kouvatas. Dr. Robinson said these students are fine examples of Stratford's youth.
2. Recruitment of strong minority teachers.
3. Early College Acceptance notifications - Roula Kouvatas (Stratford High School) has been accepted to Harvard

University, and Ndidi Anekwe (Stratford High School) has been accepted to Princeton University. Dr. Robinson expressed her pride upon learning of these early acceptances.

4. Chris Koch (Assistant Principal at Bunnell High School) has been selected as State of CT Assistant Principal of the Year (Secondary School Level).
5. Lori DiBlasi (Assistant Principal at Franklin and Wilcoxson Elementary Schools) has been selected as State of CT Assistant Principal of the Year (Elementary School Level).
6. Dr. Robinson introduced the students performing at this meeting:
 - Nichols Elementary School directed by Mr. Vidal Orduz.
 - Eli Whitney Grade 6 Chorus Students directed by Mrs. Carrie Lugo.
 - Wooster Middle School Select Choir directed by Mrs. September Baraquin.

Mr. Feehan asked Mr. Jack Dellapiano (Principal at Stratford High School) to come to the podium and talk about Stratford High's participation in the Career and Technical Education State Conference in Rocky Hill, CT. During the annual awards portion of the conference, Stratford High School was recognized by the state for their performance on the 2016 Connecticut State CTE Assessment. Stratford High School students who participated in the various exams ranked 4th collectively on the state with schools who had more than 100 tested students. In total, there were 27 schools tested.

Mr. Feehan then asked for a motion to waive the rules and add Drama Club funding to the agenda. A motion was made by Mr. Petruccelli; seconded by Mr. Barnaby to waive the rules and add Drama Club funding. The motion carried unanimously.

Another motion was made by Mr. Petruccelli to take \$7500 from the budget's contingency account for both Bunnell and Stratford High Schools, and add the funds to the Drama Club accounts at each high school. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Sheehy and **carried unanimously**. Mr. Feehan stated his applause for students and community members in taking the initial steps for a cause they believe in. He said a need was identified and community members rose to the challenge and developed a "Go Fund Me" page. Mr. Feehan noted the Board recognizes this type of courage.

Music Performance

2. Eli Whitney Grade 6 Chorus directed by Mrs. Lugo.
3. Wooster Middle School Select Choir directed by Mrs. Baraquin.

Mr. Feehan welcomed those in attendance to take part in the holiday reception. He announced the meeting would recess at 7:16 PM.

- **Meeting reconvened at 7:51 PM.**

- **Consent Agenda**

- Mr. Feehan entertained a motion for the items contained in the **Consent Agenda** (meeting minutes, overnight trips and personnel assignments).
 - **Item 1: Meeting minutes from November 28, 2016 regular meeting. Meeting minutes from December 7, 2016 special meeting.**
 - **Item 3: Personnel Status Document.**

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PETRUCCELLI; SECONDED BY MRS. LANCE, TO ACCEPT AND APPROVE ITEMS THE **CONSENT AGENDA**. THE **MOTION CARRIED** UNANIMOUSLY (7:0).

- **Budget Transfers** – There were no transfers for this time period.

- **Items for Action**

- **Possible action regarding items from Executive Session:**
 - **Nurses' Contract:** A motion was made by Mr. Petrucelli; seconded by Mrs. Sheehy for ratification of the Nurses' contract. Mr. Feehan, for the record, commended the nurses who worked on this contract as well as the Director of Personnel, Joan Libby. The **motion carried** unanimously.
 - **Hiring of Legal Counsel:** A motion was made by Mr. Petrucelli to approve the retention of outside counsel (Norman Pattis) to assist in the Magnet School tuition topic / issue. The motion was seconded by both Mr. Barnaby and Mrs. Lance. Mr. Feehan stated the Board has an obligation to the taxpayers of Stratford, and to the children. He said the bottom-line question is, "Do you want your tax dollars to go for funding the City of Bridgeport". He said they (Bridgeport) are taking taxpayer monies they are not entitled to, and are using it to fund their city's general fund. Mr. Petrucelli said he believes this is a worthwhile endeavor. He stated that in the long run (even though legal fees are

incurred), this issue is something that needs to be dealt with in this manner and followed through. It will save money in the long run. The **motion carried** unanimously.

- **There were no other items requiring action.**

- **Tabled Items -**

1. **Scholarship Opportunities for District Student Teachers / Minority Teacher recruitment – (remained tabled)**
2. **BHS Field House – *Mr. Petruccelli made a motion to take Item 2 off the table; seconded by Mrs. Sheehy, and carried unanimously.*** Mr. Feehan informed the gathering the funding for the project has been approved by the Town Council to take care of the renovations to Bunnell High School Field House. Mr. Feehan thanked the Town of Stratford for their support and funding. He entertained another motion to strike this item from the agenda. A motion was made by Mr. Petruccelli; seconded by Mrs. Lance, and **carried unanimously.**
3. **Strategic Plan – Remained tabled.**

- **Old Business**

1. **Update: Residency Verification – *Mr. Lazaro made a motion to take this item off the table; seconded by Mr. Petruccelli, and carried unanimously*** – There is still a large number of families (Grade 5 students) who have not complied with residency verification. The next letter is set to go out to these families letting them know a hearing will be scheduled if they do not comply with residency verification by a specific date.

In addition, most of the residency issues have come out of not grade 5 verifications, but notice given by teachers, staff or community members. Since the start of school, over 50 cases have been investigated and approximately 2/3 of those cases have resulted in families moving out of Stratford, at this point in time.

Chairman Feehan requested a residency report be provided to the Board on a monthly basis regarding these cases that are under investigation.

Mr. Petruccelli made a motion to direct the administration to speak to the Board attorney and find out what options are available regarding these residency issues. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Sheehy, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Petruccelli made a motion to have residency verification remain on future agendas; seconded by Mr. Barnaby and carried unanimously.

▪ **New Business (For Information / Discussion)**

1. **Discussion re: Middle School Attendance Policy** – A brief discussion took place. Mrs. Lance stated that she would like to include this topic on a future agenda for further discussion.

▪ **Committee Reports**

1. **Athletic Review** – Mrs. Lance reported the Athletic Review Committee did not meet during the month of December; however, she is looking to schedule a meeting for mid-January 2017.
2. **School Plant / Planning Committee** – Mr. Barnaby reported that the School Plant Planning Committee did not meet during the month of December.
4. **Finance Committee** – Mr. Petruccelli reported that the Finance Committee did not meet during the month of December, as well. He noted that budget meetings would be scheduled to begin approximately the third week in January 2017.
5. **Curriculum Committee** – Mrs. Sheehy reported the Curriculum Committee did not meet during the month of December. She said the committee is scheduled to meet next on Tuesday, January 10th, 2017 at 6:00 PM.

▪ **Other Committees:**

- **CABE** – Mr. Feehan reported that he and Dr. Robinson attended the Legislative breakfast at CES on December 9th. He said the topic of conversation centered on “burden of proof” in regards to special education. Dr. Robinson said the level of excitement at the meeting was tremendous. Most state requirements are that the burden of proof falls on the parents.
- **CES** – The CES Legislative Breakfast took place on December 9th at CES.
- **Town / BOE Liaison** – Mr. Petruccelli reported the Town/BOE Liaison Committee did not meet during the month of November.
- **Town Building Needs** – Mr. Petruccelli reported that the Town Building Needs Committee will be meeting regularly as the Stratford High School renovation project gets more and more under way.

- **PTSA** – Mrs. Lance reported the PTA Council did not meet in early December, as initially scheduled. She asked that in the future, timely notification be made available to the Board if and when meetings are cancelled.
- **CARE Committee** – Mr. Feehan asked that the CARE Committee be added to the agenda. A motion to add was made by Mr. Petruccelli; seconded by Mrs. Sheehy and carried unanimously. Mr. Feehan reported that he and Dr. Robinson have been regularly attending the CARE Committee monthly meetings. The Committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month. Mr. Feehan informed the group that the CARE Committee Recognition Banquet will be held March 24, 2017 at Oronoque Country Club. He asked for Board members to send in their recommendations for Safety, Education, Youth who best exemplify the values of CARE. He said this recognition is for any level of civil service and community leaders.

Mr. Feehan also reported that it was brought up by Stephanie Phillips at the last CARE Committee meeting about Jeffrey Fletcher and his presentation of Black History. Mr. Fletcher has a group of artifacts (re slavery) from the early 1930's to present. He has been visiting various school communities. Last year his presentation was on exhibit at the Birdseye Complex (Stratford). Mr. Feehan said it was suggested that Mr. Fletcher be allowed to bring this presentation into the high schools.

Dr. Robinson stated that she and Mr. Zachery saw the exhibit while at Birdseye Complex, and they were moved by the display. She said she believes it would be appropriate for high school students as part of their history lessons. Mr. Zachery said the display brings history to life.

A motion was made by Mr. Petruccelli to allow the exhibit to be displayed at the high schools. The motion was seconded by both Mrs. Buturla and Mrs. Sheehy, and carried unanimously.

- **Committee Appointments / Assignments** – There were no Committee appointments / assignments.

- **Board Goals 2016-18** – The Board Goals for 2016-18 will be reviewed at the January 23rd meeting. Mr. Feehan did state, for the record, that his goal is in progress for Bunnell High School Field House.

- **Good and Welfare** – The following items were reported:
 1. December 24 through January 2nd – Schools CLOSED.

- **ITEMS “TO DO”**
 1. Residency Report.
 2. CARE Community Awards nominations.

- **ADJOURNMENT**
 - The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM upon a motion made by Mr. Petrucelli; seconded by Mr. Barnaby, and carried unanimously.

The next meeting of the Stratford Board of Education is scheduled for **Monday, January 23rd, 2017**. The meeting will be held at the Administration Center (as normally scheduled) in the Board Room. The meeting start time will be the regular start time of 7:15 PM.

Meeting recorded and minutes transcribed by:



Teresa Lycoudes, Board Secretary & Executive Assistant to the Superintendent