

January 23, 2008

The Brooklyn Board of Education held its regular monthly meeting in the Middle School library on January 23, 2008. In attendance were: Mrs. Lyons, Mrs. Downs, Mrs. Johnson, Ms. Gerardi-Voccio, Mr. Moses and Mr. Gutierrez from the Board of Education. Also present were Mr. Otto, Mr. Meehan, Mr. Yanku, Mrs. Sweet, Mrs. Muscente and Mrs. Berry. There were a number of members from the community in attendance.

1. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Lyons at 7:05 p.m.

2. Public Comments/Comments by representatives of:

- a. BEA - no report
- b. Local 1303 - AFSCME - no report
- c. PTO - no report

3. Educational presentation:

Ms. Paula Colen, Mr. Thomas Cronin, and Ms. Pellitier presented a program on ACT, a comprehensive Arts Magnet High School in Willimantic which is one of many EastConn Programs available to students in northeastern Connecticut. In addition, they requested that Board members consider membership on the governance board of the Arts Magnet High School and also consider sending students to this program.

4. Minutes of Board Meeting:

MOTION: (Moses/Gerardi-Voccio) to approve the minutes of the November 28, 2008 meeting.

VOTE: Unanimous

5. Correspondence:

Included in Board packets were:

- a. A letter of resignation/retirement from Mrs. Shannon;

MOTION: (Johnson/Downs) to accept the resignation with deep regret.

VOTE: Unanimous

- b. material from the State Department of Education and EastConn on the state proposal for high school reform;
- c. minutes of the Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees meetings on November 20, 2007 and December 18, 2007 and the agenda for January 22, 2008; and
- d. a thank you note from Christine Boyle.

6. Consent Agenda:

- a. Payment of Bills - a list of bills dated January 18, 2008 was included in Board packets.
- b. Extracurricular - no report
- c. Use of Facilities - no report
- d. Bus Driver approval - no report
- e. Library Books - a list of books dated December 13, 2007.

MOTION: (Downs/Gerardi-Voccio) to approve the consent agenda.

VOTE: Unanimous

7. Administrative Reports:

a. Middle School Principal

Mr. Yanku reviewed the report in Board packets and commented on the:

- presentation on bullying by Trooper Vangel to grade five students;
- class trips to a performance of Anne of Green Gables (Hyde Center) and the Pequot Museum by students in grade five;
- Night of Egypt - an evening performance by sixth grade students when they displayed their research projects on Egypt;
- geography projects on diversity researched and presented by students in grade seven; and
- activities in grade eight, specifically high school choice and the meeting with representatives of Woodstock Academy for schedule planning and testing.

Other comments included information on the eighth grade trip, band and choral concerts, academic progress reports, after-school programs and the work of faculty members on curriculum mapping using Atlas Rubicon, as well as the plans for a presentation by JoAnne Freiberg, State Department of Education Consultant, at the February 28th Professional Development Day on bullying.

Board members raised questions and offered comments on a variety of topics:

- Algebra I in grade eight;
- grouping practices specifically in math;
- homogeneous vs. heterogeneous grouping;
- skill based placement in math;
- bullying - need for a formalized program;
- an assertiveness counseling program;
- cultural issues and impact on behavior;
- needs of victims of bullying;
- need for strategies to deal with bullying/harassment - survey, counseling, a more comprehensive program;
- budget implications of new programs.

The Curriculum Committee will review these issues at its meeting on February 14th.

b. Elementary Principal

Dr. Keefe was unable to attend tonight's meeting but had submitted the material listed below for Board of Education review:

- the monthly staff calendar of events;
- the BES Family Calendar of student activities and projects; and
- a letter to parents on a Student Reading Challenge.

c. Assistant Principal

Mrs. Sweet's report included the following:

- the ERR report for the periods of October 30, 2007 through November 29, 2007 and November 30, 2007 through January 7, 2008;
- the winter sports program;

Girls' Basketball: As of 1/7/08, the girls' record stands at 4 wins and 4 losses. They are scheduled to play Pomfret at home on Friday 1/18/08.

Boys' Basketball: The boy's record is currently 7 and 1. They will play away at Pomfret on 1/18/08.

Cheerleading: Fifteen girls make up the cheerleading squad. They have been enthusiastically practicing. They will cheer at all home games. They hope to enter two tournaments this year (Plainfield and Thompson).

Intramurals: Intramurals will be held on Mondays. Mr. Lohbusch will be running this program.

- the meeting to review the policies on wellness and allergies concluded with an agreement that Brooklyn is complying with all state regulations; and
- the Magazine Drive Fundraiser has been completed but the proceeds have not been tallied. A report will be prepared for the February Board of Education meeting.

d. Director of Student Services

Mrs. Muscente's report included:

- a review of the current enrollment in special education programs (138);
- a review of the identification process for gifted and talented students and a referral form for evaluation of students who demonstrate characteristics of a gifted or talented student.

Mrs. Muscente also commented on the schedule for the administration of the CMTs to begin the week of March 3rd.

Mrs. Johnson requested a report on the number of students identified as gifted and/or talented in each grade.

e. **Superintendent's Report**

The following reports were included in Board packets and Mrs. Berry commented on a number of them.

Brooklyn Collaborative Grant

Mrs. Berry reported that this grant from the Graustein Memorial Fund is continuing with an award of \$40,000 for the 2008-2009 school year. The primary focus of this grant is to support the development of programs and education for early childhood services and needs.

Little League

Mr. Burns, representing the Brooklyn Little League, was in attendance and requested permission to display the District Little League Award Banners in the gym at the Brooklyn Middle School to provide the recognition Brooklyn students should receive for winning this competition last summer.

MOTION: (Downs/Gerardi-Voccio) to approve the request to hang these banners in the middle school gym.

VOTE: Unanimous

Reading Vacancy

Mrs. Berry recommended the employment of Linda Jung for the remedial reading vacancy at the elementary school and distributed copies of her resume' for Board members review.

MOTION: (Johnson/Moses) to appoint Mrs. Jung to the position of reading teacher at the elementary school.

VOTE: Unanimous

Mrs. Berry also commented on:

- the increase in the tuition at Killingly High School for the present year;
- grade eight student selection of high school placement for September, 2008;
- the present policy on bullying;
- the financial report for January, 2008, the cafeteria reports for November and December, 2007 and the enrollment report for January, 2008; and
- the CAFE Workshop on the Roles and Responsibilities of Board of Education members scheduled for 2-11-08.

8. Public Comments:

Members of the audience spoke on:

- the bullying policy and the need for a survey of parent concerns on bullying; and
- the use of the lower ball field by the Senior League.

9. Committee Reports:

- a. **Budget** - The first meeting on the 2008-2009 budget will be held on February 11, 2008 @ 6:00 p.m.
- b. **Curriculum** - This committee will meet on February 14th @ 3:30 p.m.
- c. **Educational Planning** - no meeting
- d. **Facilities** - A meeting is scheduled for February 5th at 3:00 p.m.
- e. **Policy** - no meeting
- f. **Public Relations** - no report
- g. **Special Education** - no report
- h. **Staff Negotiations** - no meeting
- i. **Staff Relations** - no meeting
- j. **Technology** - no meeting
- k. **Transportation** - no meeting

10. Board Representatives to Other Committees:

- a. **Eastconn** - no meeting
- b. **Board of Finance** - Mr. Moses needs dates for these meetings.
- c. **Insurance** - no report
- d. **Killingly Board of Education** - Mrs. Johnson reported that the Killingly Board of Education meeting is being held this evening.
- e. **PTO** - Mrs. Downs reviewed the activities and events sponsored and provided by the PTO. The new web addresses for the PTO is: www.Brooklynpto.org and Brooklynpto.com.
 - Holiday Event - the Basket Raffle raised \$3,222.43. The event was well attended and was a total success.
 - Holiday Store - students from the elementary and middle schools attended the holiday store making it very successful.
 - Conference Dinners will be held for staff in both the elementary and middle schools on February 27th and 28th with an Italian cuisine.
 - Talent Shows - Elementary Program will be held on April 4th and the Middle School Program on March 28th;
 - Smart Boards will be purchased for the middle school; the teachers at the elementary do not want them;
 - Buy a Brick Program; and
 - Continuing collections: Campbell soup labels; box tops; cell phones; and ink cartridges.
- f. **Preschool Building Committee** - work is behind schedule due to delay in the delivery of the steel beams. The opening of the building for class use is still projected for September, 2008.
- g. **Recreation** - no report
- h. **School Readiness Council/Brooklyn Collaborative** - The next meeting of this committee will be held on Monday, January 28th.
- i. **School Safety Committee** - no meeting
- j. **Woodstock Academy** - Mrs. Lyons and Ms. Gerardi-Voccio attended the last meeting of the Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees on January 22nd and heard a report on the NFA plan for establishing student tuition for the sending districts.

11. Old Business: none

12. New Business:

MOTION: (Gerardi-Voccio/Downs) to add to the agenda the proposed EastConn resolution that the Brooklyn Board of Education become a partner with EastConn in the governance of the ACT Arts Magnet High School.

Following a discussion of the request and the issues of transportation and guaranteed slots, as well as the opportunities for Brooklyn students to have another choice of high school placement, the Board took the following action.

MOTION: (Downs/Gerardi-Voccio) to table the request until May, 2008.

VOTE: Unanimous

13. Other:

MOTION: (Gerardi-Voccio/Gutierrez) to add to the agenda the following issues:
1) signage; communications; evaluation of reading coordinator; leveling; and discipline in the elementary building.

VOTE: Unanimous

The following issues were referred to the curriculum committee: reading coordinator and leveling.

The following issues will be on next month's Board agenda: communications, discipline in the elementary building, and signage.

14. Public Comments:

Mr. Otto commented on the value of the math coordinator at the Pomfret School. He also spoke about the increase in the health premium.

15. Executive Session (Personnel)

MOTION: (Downs/Moses) to enter executive session at 10:55 p.m.

VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION: (Johnson/Moses) to exit executive session at 11:05 p.m.

VOTE: Unanimous

16. Adjournment

MOTION: (Johnson/Gerardi-Voccio) to adjourn at 11:07 p.m.

VOTE: Unanimous