

February 27, 2008

The Brooklyn Board of Education held its regular monthly meeting in the Middle School library on February 27, 2008. In attendance were: Mrs. Lyons, Mrs. Downs, Mrs. Johnson, Ms. Gerardi-Voccio (left at 7:30 p.m.) and Mr. Gutierrez from the Board of Education. Also present were: Mr. Meehan, Dr. Keefe, Mr. Yanku, Mrs. Sweet, Mrs. Muscente and Mrs. Berry. Mrs. Hardell was also present.

1. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Lyons at 7:23 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:

a. Smart Boards

Mr. Lessig presented a program on the use of Smart Boards and commented on the Connecticut curriculum standards and resources available to teachers on the internet. He spoke about the support of the EastConn website, the use of a smart board in the classroom and the cost of this equipment as a teaching tool. He emphasized that the opportunities to motivate students to explore its use make this equipment very helpful to every teacher and he urged Board members to include this equipment in the school's budget.

Following discussion on this issue, Mrs. Lyons thanked Mr. Lessig for his presentation.

b. Woodstock Academy 2008-2009 Budget

Mr. Foye, Headmaster of Woodstock Academy, and members of his staff presented their budget for the next school year. This budget shows a projected enrollment for 2008-2009 of 1150 students and a tuition increase of 4.26% or \$10,715.

Following discussion on the data, Mrs. Lyons thanked Mr. Foye for his presentation.

4. Minutes of Board Meeting:

MOTION: (Gutierrez/Downs) to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2008 meeting with the following correction to the minutes of that date - the Little League banner will be displayed in the gym until the members of the team have graduated from the Brooklyn Middle School.

VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION: (Johnson/Downs) to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2008 meeting.

VOTE: Unanimous

5. Correspondence:

Included in Board packets were:

- a. A letter from the president of the BEA requesting information on the possibility of an early retirement plan this year.

Following Board of Education discussion, the consensus was that Board members were not interested this year and planning for such a program needed to begin in the fall for consideration for next year.

- b. A request from Mr. and Mrs. Hardell for approval of participation in the school's health insurance plan.

Extensive discussion of this request and with concern for the needs of part-time employees resulted in a request to Mrs. Berry to provide the information necessary on appropriate contacts at Anthem BC/BS so that the Hardells could request that Anthem BC/BS reduce the required hours worked each week thus allowing part-time employees to participate in the school health insurance program.

- c. A letter was received from EastConn concerning the Arts Magnet High School and Brooklyn's participation in the program.

Mrs. Berry was asked to review the student transportation costs with EastConn and provide information on this issue at the March meeting of the Board of Education.

- d. Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees meeting minutes from January 22, 2008 were distributed at the meeting.

6. Consent Agenda:

- a. Payment of Bills - a list of bills dated February 27, 2008 was distributed at the meeting.
- b. Extracurricular - no report
- c. Use of Facilities - no report
- d. Bus Driver Approval - no report
- e. Library Books - no report

MOTION: (Downs/Johnson) 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:

- administration of the CMTs with a practice test on Friday, February 29th;
- professional development day with Dr. Freiberg from the State Department of Education who spoke on teachers being responsive to the needs of students and how to address the climate of the school;
- Explore test for all students entering Woodstock Academy;
- blood drive sponsored by the National Junior Honor Society;
- parent conferences on February 27th and 28th;
- Brooklyn's participation in Math Counts at the USCGA on February 2nd; and
- activities of the After School Program and the involvement of 105 students in a variety of activities.

b. **Elementary Principal**

Dr. Keefe began her report with comments about the increasing enrollment at the elementary building, the distribution of dictionaries to grade three students by the Local Rotary Club members, and the work of the Student Council. Her major presentations included:

- 1) a power point presentation on the Reading Coordinator's position with details on the responsibilities of this position and comments on the value of this position to the elementary academic program; and
- 2) a presentation on the Responsive Classroom program - a daily teaching program where the social curriculum and the academic curriculum are fully integrated to create a community atmosphere, to foster responsive interactions and to teach skills needed by students in order to be a responsive member of his/her school. Dr. Keefe also reviewed the material in the Second Step program with the message that daily use of a program that teaches respect for others and friendly interaction is better than weekly classes in anti-bullying strategies.

c. **Assistant Principal**

Mrs. Sweet's report included the following:

- the ERR report for the periods of January 8, 2008 through February 8, 2008;
- the winter sports program; specifically:

Girls' Basketball	The girls came in second in the QVJC Small School division. Their record was 6 wins and 4 losses in the league and 8 wins, 6 losses overall. They made it to the championship round of the tournament where they lost to Canterbury. Mr. Lohbusch was pleased with this season.
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c. **Assistant Principal (continued):**

Boys' Basketball	The boys were QVJC Divisional Co-champions with Canterbury. Their record was 9 wins and 1 loss in the league and 12 wins and 2 losses overall. They were seeded second in the tournament. They also made it to the championship game and lost to Canterbury. Coach Garosshen was quite pleased with the boys' efforts.
Cheerleading	The cheerleading squad took first place in the Plainfield Cheerleading Tournament in early February. They came in third place in the Miss Cherry Pie competition in Thompson on February 16th. Mr. Chenail would like to thank Mrs. Malstrom and Mrs. Caron for all their efforts on behalf of the girls. Their expertise and dedication throughout the season goes out to Mr. Chenail who made it possible to have a cheerleading squad by taking on the position of official coach.

d. Director of Student Services

Mrs. Muscente's report included:

- a review of the current enrollment in special education programs (145); and
- a report on the number of students identified for the Art Pace program in grades 3-8.

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 in each grade.

e. Superintendent's Report

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

- the audit for 2006-2007;
- the grants for lights and cameras on doors from Homeland Security;
- a grant for drug prevention activities, as well as the development of a website about drug prevention;
- the education report for 2006-2007 which was submitted to the town for inclusion in the town report;
- Charter Communication's request for a representative to their Advisory Council;

MOTION: (Johnson/Downs) to appoint Paul Berthiaume to the Charter Communication Advisory Council for a period of one year from January, 2008 to January, 2009.

VOTE: Unanimous

e. Superintendent's Report (continued):

- request from a Killingly parent for transportation on a Brooklyn bus from Ellis Technical School to KFC/Taco Bell on Route 6 each afternoon in order to be employed.

Following a discussion of this request, the Board took the action listed below with the following restrictions: parent must submit a letter holding the Brooklyn Board of Education harmless if there is any accident; if the student stops working at this site, school bus transportation will cease; transportation is provided only if space is available; if there are behavior problems, transportation will be denied; and finally, there can be no liability attached to Brooklyn for this service.

MOTION: (Johnson/Downs) to approve the request for transportation with the restrictions listed above.

VOTE: Unanimous

- The following reports were included in the Board's packet: financial (February, 2008); cafeteria (January, 2008) and enrollment (February, 2008).

8. Public Comments: NONE

9. Committee Reports:

- Budget** - no report
- Curriculum** - minutes of the last meeting were included in Board packets.
- Educational Planning** - no meeting
- Facilities** - minutes of the last meeting were included in Board packets.
- Policy** - no report
- Public Relations** - no report
- Special Education** - no meeting
- Staff Negotiations** - no meeting
- Staff Relations** - no meeting
- Technology** - no meeting
- Transportation** - no meeting

10. Board Representatives to Other Committees:

- Eastconn** - Brooklyn's representative was unable to attend the meeting.
- Board of Finance** - no meeting
- Insurance** - copies of the bid request for health insurance coverage as required by employee contracts were distributed. Bids are due on March 24, 2008.
- Killingly Board of Education** - Mrs. Johnson reported that there is a scheduling conflict with Killingly's meeting.
- PTO** - a list of activities/events was included in January 23, 2008 Board minutes.
- Preschool Building Committee** - work is three months behind schedule. The opening of the building for class use is still projected for September, 2008.

10. Board Representatives to Other Committees (continued):

- g. Recreation** - no report
- h. School Readiness Council/Brooklyn Collaborative** - Mr. Gutierrez reported on the activities of the Brooklyn Collaborative, specifically: the Read Across America initiative, the monthly Movie Night programs, the Community Conversation Program to be held on March 13th at Quinebaug Valley Community College, and the Positive Parent Group.
- i. School Safety Committee** - no meeting
- j. Woodstock Academy** - no report

11. Old Business:

a. Proposed budget 2008-2009

Discussion of the following items resulted in no action:

- health insurance bid
- high school tuition
- textbook account

A special Board of Education meeting will be held on March 5th to review the latest draft of the budget and discuss the impact of the accounts on the school and the community.

12. New Business:

Under new business, Board members discussed methods of improving communications with the public; e.g. use of Student Council members to maintain current information and current dates on the website and signs in front of the buildings. Mrs. Berry was asked to review this issue with Mr. Lessig, the advisor to the Student Council.

13. Other: none

14. Public Comments: none

15. Adjournment:

MOTION: (Downs/Johnson) to adjourn at 11:40 p.m.

VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted:

Mrs. Jo Ann Gerardi-Voccio, Board of Education Secretary