

February 9, 2009

The Brooklyn Board of Education held its regular monthly (January 28, 2009) meeting in the Middle School library on February 9, 2009. In attendance were: Mrs. Lyons, Mrs. Downs, Mr. Gutierrez and Ms. Gerardi-Voccio. Also present were: Mr. Otto, Mr. Yanku, Mrs. Sweet, Mrs. Muscente and Mrs. Berry. In the audience were: Mrs. Hardell, Mrs. Wimmer (left at 7:15 p.m.), Mr. Kelly, Mr. Fuss and the reporter from the Villager.

1. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Lyons at 7:10 p.m.

2. Public Comments/Comments by representatives of:

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

3. Minutes of Board Meetings:

MOTION: (Downs/Gutierrez) to approve the minutes of the December 2, 2008 and December 3, 2008 meetings.

VOTE: Unanimous

4. Correspondence:

Included in Board of Education packets were:

- a. Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees meetings of November 18, 2008, December 8, 2008 and December 16, 2008, the agenda for the January 20, 2009 Board of Trustees meeting and a report of the Woodstock Academy Curriculum Director dated December 1, 2008.

5. Consent Agenda:

- a. Payment of Bills - a list of bills dated February 6, 2009 was distributed.
- b. Extracurricular - no report
- c. Use of Facilities - no report
- d. Bus Driver Approval - no report
- e. Library Books - no report

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

VOTE: Unanimous

6. Administrative Reports:

a. Middle School Principal

Mr. Yanku's report included the following:

- review of the high school visitation and selection process by eighth grade students during January;
- close of the second marking period and distribution of report cards on January 30th;
- winter concerts - choral and band;
- new math program and Mrs. Loughlin's leadership of the committee that selected the material for this program;
- program by the Northeast District Department of Health on Lyme Disease;
- visit by the visiting Chinese teachers at Woodstock Academy;
- Chess Club and the chess tournament at Woodstock Middle School on February 10th coordinated by Mr. Quevillon; and
- the Dark Skies light pollution study which is part of the fifth grade science program.

Other comments by Mr. Yanku included: plans for the eighth grade trip to Washington and review of the 2007-2008 Middle School Strategic School Profile.

Board members raised a number of questions about the Algebra I class in our eighth grade and entrance into Algebra II at Woodstock Academy. A report from Woodstock Academy indicated that all sending schools to the academy are experiencing difficulty providing middle school students with an adequate Algebra I background for transition into Algebra II. However, it was noted that the new curriculum director at the academy was making progress in getting the above resolved.

Other issues raised by the Board of Education members were: scheduling of the bullying program; lack of reading program in grade eight, and need for additional time in language arts in grade eight.

b. Elementary Principal

In the absence of Dr. Keefe, Mrs. Berry commented on the report included in board packets from the elementary principal, specifically:

- the family and staff calendars of events for January;
- the annual reading challenge and the involvement of the CT Storytellers;
- a report on classroom enrollment and attendance for January;
- various academic assessment programs which are administered at mid-year - Degrees of Reading Power for students in grades 2-4, math assessments for students in grades 1-4, and writing prompts for all students in k-4;
- presentations and programs for students - the Word Wizard activity; environmental field trips to Ragged Hill Woods for students in grades K and 3; and a violinist from the New Haven Symphony for students in grade 3 in preparation for the concert at Hyde Center; and
- elementary teachers have been working on the language arts curriculum and participating on Smartboard training.

6. Administrative Reports (continued):

c. **Assistant Principal**

Mrs. Sweet's report included comments on the ERR Program and winter sports:

Educational Resource Room Program - Year-to-Date

	Minor Infraction 1	Major Infraction 2	Academic, etc. 3	# Students 4
8/28/08-9/25/08	18	8	12	17
9/26/08-10/27/08	58	10	60	41
10/28/08-11/25/08	64	10	31	45
11/26/08-1/8/09	70	9	38	44
1/9/09-2/9/09	97	4	50	45

Winter Sports

Girls' Basketball - The girls' team struggled this season and they played their last game today. Their record was 3 wins and 12 losses.

Boys' Basketball - The boys' team also worked hard this season. Coach Vangel reported that the boys had a good regular season with 7 wins and 7 losses. They are in the playoffs and will play on February 11th.

Cheerleading - The cheerleaders are having a good season. They've cheered at all the home games. On Saturday, January 24th they participated in the 2009 Plainfield Panther Pride Cheerleading Competition. They received the second place trophy. They are also looking forward to participating in the Annual Miss Cherry Pie Competition on February 28th. Coach Caron is very pleased with their progress.

Mrs. Sweet also commented on the plans for the spring sport season and her involvement in the CMT testing program which is scheduled for March.

d. **Director of Student Services**

Mrs. Muscente's report included a review of the January, 2009 enrollment in the special education program (156) with (119) in attendance at the Brooklyn School; (23) attending our designated high schools; and (14) students placed out of the district.

Mrs. Muscente reviewed the CMT program and specifically addressed the new procedures for medically fragile students and the number of new students with special needs.

6. **Administrative Reports (continued):**

e. **Superintendent's Reports**

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

Strategic School Profile - Mrs. Berry commented on the district expenditures and revenues listed in the 2007-2008 Strategic School Profile and noted that in the instructions areas, Brooklyn's expenditures are significantly lower than other schools in the district reference group as well as the state.

State Grants - Mrs. Berry reported that the 2008-2009 transportation grant has been reduced by \$50,555.

Common Remitter Agreement for Brooklyn's 403(b) Plan - A copy of this agreement was included in the board packets.

Healthy Food Certification - Brooklyn has complied with all of the state's requirement under Section 10-215F and has received a Certificate of Compliance.

Special Education Vacancy - Mrs. Berry recommended Kristen Schaeztle for this vacancy at the middle school.

MOTION: (Downs/Gerardi-Voccio) to approve the appointment of Kristen Schaeztle to this position.

VOTE: Unanimous

High School Choice - Eighth grade students have completed their choice of schools for next fall with (15) selecting Killingly High School, (104) selecting Woodstock Academy and the remainder of the class selecting Ellis Tech or Killingly Vo-Ag.

Woodstock Academy Contract - A draft of the agreement with Woodstock Academy was presented for review and action. Following discussion of language in this draft, Mrs. Berry was asked to contact Woodstock Academy and discuss Sections 1, 4, and 10 of the proposed agreement. This agreement shall be on the agenda at the February meeting.

Elementary Principal Vacancy - Mrs. Berry commented on the status of this search.

Appoint to town's Recreation Commission - As Mrs. Downs' appointment to this commission is ending, the following action was taken by the Board of Education:

MOTION: (Gerardi-Voccio/Gutierrez) to reappoint Valerie Downs to the Brooklyn Recreation Commission.

VOTE: Unanimous

6. **Administrative Reports (continued):**

e. **Superintendent's Report**

Appointment to Board of Directors of Charter Communications

MOTION: (Gerardi-Voccio/Gutierrez) to reappoint Paul Berthiaume as Brooklyn's representative to the Board of Directors of Charter Communications..

VOTE: Unanimous

High School Projection - Mrs. Berry presented the following report on the projected high school enrollment for 2009-2010:

PROJECTED HIGH SCHOOL COUNT FOR SEPTEMBER, 2009 - February 6, 2009

Grade	KHS	KHS VO-AG	KHS ALPS	WA	Griswold	Lyman	Montville	NFA	TOTAL	ACT Magnet	ELLIS	Windham Tech
9	15	2	0	104	0	0	0	0	121	0	8	0
10	8	5	1	80	0	0	0	0	94	0	12	1
11	2	0	0	81	0	0	0	4	87	0	8	0
12	15	0	0	74	0	0	1	1	91	0	13	0
TOTAL	40	7	1	339	0	0	1	5	393	0	41	1

Killingly High School Tuition Issue - 2007-2008 - The tuition bill from Killingly for \$22,000 for two enrolled Brooklyn students who did not attend K.H.S. has not been resolved. Mrs. Berry was asked to draft language on a tuition offer including clarification of the terms enrollment versus attendance to present to Killingly as a last offer on this issue.

Other reports in board packets were:

- enrollment report for January, 2009;
- financial report for January, 2009;
- cafeteria report for November and December, 2008;
- information on state funding for education; and
- report on Brooklyn's Crisis Management.

7. **Public Comments:** none

8. **Committee Reports:**

- a. **Budget** - no meeting
- b. **Curriculum** - need meeting
- c. **Educational Planning** - no meeting
- d. **Facilities/Capital Improvement** - need meeting
- e. **Policy** - Policy books are updated and will be distributed shortly.
- f. **Public Relations** - no report
- g. **Special Education** - no meeting
- h. **Staff Negotiations** - no meeting; a meeting is needed to negotiate four administrators' salaries.

8. **Committee Reports (continued):**

- i. **Staff Relations** - no meeting
- j. **Technology** - A meeting is scheduled for March 2, 2009 at 3:30 p.m.
- k. **Transportation** - no meeting

9. **Board Representatives to Other Committees:**

- a. **Eastconn** - Mrs. Johnson was unable to attend the meeting.
- b. **Board of Finance** - no report, see Sections 11 and 12.
- c. **Insurance** - A meeting of this committee is scheduled for February 12, 2009 at the Town Hall.
- d. **Killingly Board of Education** - Mrs. Johnson was unable to attend.
- e. **PTO** - no report
- f. **Preschool Building Committee** - Mrs. Lyons reported that the building project is almost completed with a few issues still to be resolved.
- g. **Recreation** - Mrs. Downs reported that the commission has met since the town meeting when the ordinance on changes to the membership and governance was defeated but she was unable to attend. The next meeting of the Recreation Commission will be on February 19, 2009.
- h. **School Readiness/Brooklyn Collaborative** - Mr. Gutierrez reported on the last meeting (January 26, 2009) of this organization; specifically:
 - the Read Across America Day Program scheduled for March 2, 2009;
 - the March 19th Community Conversation Program to discuss All Day Kindergarten;
 - Parent Education Series scheduled for April and May;
 - the need for tutors as a resource for parents;
 - the very popular senior tea for grade 2 parents and grandparents; and
 - fundraising, by-law review and school budget promotion.

The next meeting of Brooklyn Collaborative/School Readiness is scheduled for February 23, 2009.

- i. **School Safety Committee** - no meeting;
- j. **Woodstock Academy** - Ms. Gerardi-Voccio reported on the following issues:
 - the efforts of Mrs. Singleton, Curriculum Director at the academy in adding ACP Algebra I to the academy's math program;
 - tuition increase of 2.66% for 2009-2010; and
 - activities at the academy.

10. Old Business:

Superintendents Goals - The superintendent's goals for 2008-2009 presented to the Board of Education at the October meeting will be reviewed at the February meeting.

Woodstock Academy Contract - During a review of the latest draft of the proposed extension to the contract with Woodstock Academy, the following issues were raised:

- we need language to protect all of our students who wish to attend the academy;
- there can be no limitation on the number of Brooklyn students allowed to enroll based on capacity;
- students from other towns attending the academy cannot attend at the expense of Brooklyn students;

Mrs. Berry was asked to draft appropriate language on this issue reflecting the concerns noted above.

Middle School Gym - A letter from Christopher Barry was presented by Mrs. Lyons describing his review of the problems in the middle school gym; specifically:

Overview

There is a persistent moisture problem in the gym that has occurred for several years. The moisture causes the interior paint to peel, the masonry to spall, and the wood flooring to buckle. Further, the interior air handling units are constantly stressed in order to de-humidify the area.

Status of Current Design Progress

The current design calls for modifications to masonry at the current roof line. It appears the intent of the design is to remedy the supposed infiltration of rain penetration to the upper areas of the exterior envelope.

Opinion

To make an informed decision, there are several different issues that need to be considered. Some of these are technical relative to evaluation testing of the current building construction. Some are programmatic in nature. Ultimately, we need to retain a design firm to comprehensively assess the major variables such that the Board of Education can determine the best path forward.

The design firm's broad scope of work relative to evaluation of the existing building should be to:

1. Analyze the extent of ground water in and near the gymnasium foundation, including the adjacent parking lots.
2. Analyze the robustness of the concrete vapor barrier within the gym and the locker rooms.
3. Analyze the building structure, including the foundations, the steel, the interior and exterior envelope, and the roof, looking for robustness relative to moisture infiltration (expansion joints, contraction joints, sealants, hard interfaces like masonry on steel, etc).

Middle School Gym (continued)

Opinion (continued)

The information returned from these assessments will provide guidance whether the building in its current form is repairable, salvageable or beyond reasonable repair.

While the information might tell us what do relative the building, there are other questions relative to program and operation that need to be determined. Additional design firm scope should be to:

4. Analyze the functionality and condition of the equipment, including the divider, the bleachers, the floor, the paint, the interior and exterior doors, the sound, the visual displays, the lights, the HVAC, the locker room (showers, floors, benches, lockers, drainage, air flow, etc).
5. Analyze the current operating costs of the gym, with fans constantly running and heat loss regularly occurring.
6. Analyze whether the gymnasium in its current form meets the programmatic requirements of the community.
7. See David Kowolenko's opinion.

Once the information is gathered from these separate exercises, an informed course of action can be assessed. The following questions come to mind:

- A. Do we just want to fix the water problem, thinking we can re-use the 40 year old floor, bleachers, and HVAC equipment (relatively minor)?
- B. Do we want to try renovate the gym (fairly significant construction)?
- C. Do we want to re-program the space (necessitating major demolition and construction operations)?

Recommendations

1. The Board of Education should determine whether the gymnasium and adjacent parking meets the needs of the school district and the town, keeping in mind the building is over forty years old and is used well beyond the program of a typical middle school.
2. A scope of design phase services to vet the current building should be created, drafted, and issued for solicitation. These services should be competitively bid amongst properly vetted and experienced firms.
3. Based on the programmatic evaluation and the recommendations of the design firm relative to the integrity of the building envelope, the Board of Education should consider various construction options in the context of potential reimbursement mechanisms.

Middle School Gym (continued)

Recommendations (continued)

Following the review of Mr. Barry's report, the board members offered the following comments:

- the study must include air quality issues, health issues, design problems, an analysis of the problems with the roof, the wall and the foundation; and
- we need a comprehensive study of the needs of this facility which includes all of the problems and recommendations for corrective action.

Mrs. Berry was asked to prepare a request for bids for a feasibility study of the problems in the middle school gym and recommendations to address these problems.

MOTION: (Gerardi-Voccio/Gutierrez) to authorize Mrs. Berry to prepare a request for bids on a comprehensive assessment of the problems in the middle school gym and recommendations for resolving all of these problems.

VOTE: Unanimous

12. New Business

Budget - 2009-2010 - Following review of Draft I of the proposed 2009-2010 budget and a discussion of both the impact on the Brooklyn taxpayer of an increase in the school budget and the state/federal grants for the next fiscal year, Mrs. Berry was asked to review Draft I and reduce this proposed budget by approximately \$500,000. Areas of concern are health insurance costs at a 12% increase for next year, teacher salary increases, paraprofessional costs, high school tuition increases and special education costs. Draft II of the proposed budget will be presented at the February 25th meeting of the Board of Education.

13. Other:

Internet Account - Board members requested that Mr. Lessig add their names to the school's internet account for use on school/Board of Education issues.

Elementary Building - Board members requested that Dr. Keefe report back to the Board of Education on the number of students in the elementary building prior to 8:15 a.m., the number of staff members hired to supervise these students and the cost of paraprofessional time for this supervision. They also requested information on the assignments of teachers from 8:15 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.

14. Public Comments: none

15. Adjournment:

MOTION: (Downs/Gerardi-Voccio) to adjourn at 11:18 p.m.

VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted
JoAnn Gerardi-Voccio, Board of Education Secretary