

DRAFT

August 26, 2009

The Brooklyn Board of Education held its regular monthly meeting on August 26, 2009 in the Middle School library. In attendance were: Mrs. Lyons, Mr. Gutierrez, Mrs. Johnson, Ms. Gerardi-Voccio and Mrs. Trivella. Also present were: Mrs. Muscente, Mr. Otto, Mr. Yanku, Mr. Caruso, Mrs. Sweet and Mrs. Berry. In the audience were: Mrs. Hardell, Mrs. Frost and Mrs. Anderson.

1. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Lyons at 7:50 p.m.

2. Public Comments/Comments by Representatives of:

a. **BEA** - no report

b. **LOCAL 1303 - AFSCME** - no report

c. **PTO** - Mrs. Frost reported for the PTO and commented on the successful conclusion of the fundraising effort to complete the elementary Boundless Playground Project. Mrs. Downs shared with Board members information on a contribution from a private donor so that the project could be completed within the next few weeks. Both individuals expressed thanks to Fred Green for his work on this project and Nathan Ives for his leadership of the fundraising activities.

Mrs. Frost also spoke on the issue of recycling in both buildings and Mrs. Berry gave her a flyer on the program that will be beginning on August 31st in both buildings. Copies of the Single Stream Recycling flyer were included in Board packets.

3. Minutes of Board Meetings:

MOTION: (Gerardi-Voccio/Johnson) to approve the minutes of the July 29, 2009 meeting.

VOTE: Unanimous with
Mrs. Downs abstaining.

4. Correspondence:

Included in Board packets were:

a. A letter from Plainfield requesting that Brooklyn offer school choice to students at Plainfield Middle School as a result of that school's designation as a school in need of improvement.

MOTION: (Downs/Gerardi-Voccio) not to accept any students from another town at this time.

VOTE: Unanimous

5. Consent Agenda:

- a. Payment of Bills - a list of bills dated August 26, 2009 was distributed.
- b. Extracurricular - no report
- c. Use of Facilities - no report
- d. Bus Driver Approval - a list of drivers and license numbers was included in Board packets.
- e. Library Books - no report

MOTION: (Gutierrez/Downs) to approve the consent agenda.

VOTE: Unanimous

6. Administrative Reports:

a. Middle School Principal

Mr. Yanku's report included comments on the following:

Woodstock Academy Advanced Credit Program - ACP Algebra I

A description of this program was included in Board packets.

CMT Data

Mr. Yanku presented a power point presentation on the 2009 test results in reading, mathematics and writing. His presentation included comments on grades 5 through 8, as well as subgroup performance.

Questions and comments were raised on the following issues:

- the reading program at the elementary;
- the vertical and horizontal alignment in reading in all classes;
- the need for information in newspapers, etc. to inform the public;
- a comparison with the schools in our District Reference Group (DRG);
- need for analysis of all scores to determine growth in performance; and
- need for an assessment of areas where students exhibit problems on the CMT with emphasis on professional development for teachers to address these problems.

b. Elementary Principal

Mr. Caruso thanked the members of the Board of Education for selecting him as principal of the Brooklyn Elementary School.

c. Assistant Principal - no report

d. Director of Student Services

Mrs. Muscente reviewed the present enrollment in special education programs (159) and commented on the new regulations for learning disability identification. Such identification is no longer based on IQ scores but requires consistent, scientific and documented performance as the criteria.

6. Administrative Reports (continued):

e. Superintendent's Report

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

Killingly Board of Education Lawsuit/High School Tuition Issue

Mrs. Berry reviewed the history of this lawsuit and noted that Killingly has now requested additional time for a discussion between the attorneys. Brooklyn's attorney will be presenting a request for an agreement to clarify those contract clauses that are in dispute and Mrs. Berry indicated that many of the issues discussed at prior Board of Education meetings had been referred to Attorney Murphy for discussion with Killingly's attorney - signed tuition forms; weekly attendance reports throughout September; withdrawal forms processed in the Brooklyn School office; the need for copies of Killingly's truancy procedures; and verified attendance of Brooklyn students.

Educational Report - Brooklyn Plan of Conservation and Development

Mrs. Berry commented on the report she had prepared for this plan and stated that copies would be included in packets for the September Board of Education meeting.

Woodstock Academy Contract for Secondary Education

Mrs. Berry reported that the Brooklyn/Woodstock Academy contract had been reviewed by the Woodstock Academy Committee and the full Board will be acting on it at its next meeting.

Staff Absences - 2008-2009

The report on staff absences (sick time, personal leave and vacation time) was included in Board packets.

Pre-K Enrollment for 2009-2010

Mrs. Berry reported on the increase in enrollment (122) in Pre-K and noted the need for an additional Pre-K class, thus expanding the one-half day program to a full-day program for Mrs. Bauch.

MOTION: (Johnson/Gerardi-Voccio) to expand Mrs. Bauch's half-time position to a full-time position in order to provide an additional Pre-K class.

MOTION: Unanimous

7. Public Comments: none

8. Committee Reports:

- a. **Budget** - no meeting
- b. **Curriculum** - a tentative meeting is scheduled for September.
- c. **Educational Planning** - no meeting
- d. **Facilities/Capital Improvement** - no meeting
The report on the middle school gymnasium by J.P.Engineering, Inc. of Windsor, CT was discussed and questions were raised about the possibility of a state construction grant to repair and/or replace this facility.

Following a discussion of the various issues involved, Mrs. Berry was asked to contact David Wedge, Chief of the Bureau of School Facilities for the State Department of Education and discuss the question of qualifying for a state construction grant for the middle school gym.

- e. **Policy** - a meeting is needed
- f. **Public Relations** - no meeting
- g. **Special Education** - no meeting
- h. **Staff Negotiations** - Administrator contracts have been negotiated and are recommended to the Board of Education for action.

MOTION: (Johnson/Downs) to approve the contracts for: Mrs. Muscente (2 years); Mrs. Sweet (3 years); Mr. Caruso (3 years): and Mrs. Berry (3 years) as presented.

VOTE: Unanimous

- i. **Staff Relations** - no meeting
- j. **Technology** - no meeting
- k. **Transportation** - no meeting

9. Board Representatives to Other Committees:

- a. **Eastconn** - Mrs. Johnson commented on the fiscal difficulties Eastconn is facing.
- b. **Board of Finance** - no report
- c. **Insurance** - the next meeting of this committee is scheduled for September 17, 2009.
- d. **Killingly Board of Education** - no report
- e. **PTO** - a report was presented at the beginning of the meeting.
- f. **Preschool Building Committee** - a meeting is scheduled on September 2, 2009 to close out this project.
- g. **Recreation Commission** - no report
- h. **School Readiness/Brooklyn Collaborative** - Mr. Gutierrez reported on the change in the name of this organization to Children First and noted that a meeting was held last week.
- i. **School Safety Committee** - no meeting

9. Board Representatives to Other Committees (continued):

- j. Woodstock Academy** - Ms. Gerardi-Voccio reported on the last meeting of the Woodstock Board of Trustees, specifically on the report of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges Visiting Committee. This report included the following:

MAJOR COMMENDATIONS

1. The Visiting Committee commends the school for its candid and wholehearted embrace of the accreditation process.
2. The Visiting Committee commends the administration for its decision to hire, train and support the campus supervisors who not only free teachers from extra duties, but who also serve as role models and as an additional point of connection between students and staff.
3. The Visiting Committee commends the faculty for its strong and fully engaged approach to teaching and supporting students in a wide variety of classroom environments.
4. The Visiting Committee commends the custodial staff for its dedicated efforts in maintaining the campus buildings and grounds.
5. The Visiting Committee commends the school on its unique and creative use of space such as the addition of a second floor loft in the library.
6. The Visiting Committee commends the school for its unique opportunities in foreign travel, the Model United Nations program, and Chinese teacher exchange, which offer students a broader perspective in this relatively isolated part of the state.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Visiting Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees immediately implement the plan to connect the Academy's sewer line to the public waste water system. A follow-up report to NEASC should be filed by November, 2009. The report should update the Commission on the progress made on this recommendation and outstanding work to be completed.
2. The Visiting Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees create a succession plan to ensure a successful transition of a new Head of School and provide appropriate administrative support to both lead the school and move the development effort forward.

9. Board Representatives to Other Committees (continued):

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS (continued)

3. The Visiting Committee recommends that the Board and the administration engage in a major development effort. The existing development effort is inadequate to meet the current and future needs of the Academy. In an effort to achieve these goals and to ensure the continued excellence in education outcomes, the Visiting Committee believes the following steps must be taken:
 - A. With the assistance of a development consultant, the Board should generate a Board recruitment plan and create a set of number expectations that will meet the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan.
 - B. With the services of a marketing expert, the Board and the administration should design a strategy to cultivate an alumni and donor, as well as help the Academy gain public support for its future growth plans.
4. The Visiting Committee recommends the Board address all handicapped accessibility issues at the Academy. A workable plan should be formulated and put into action as soon as possible.
5. The Visiting Committee recommends that the school establish a comprehensive plan to address management issues to ensure a healthy student enrollment without further overcrowding its facilities.

10. Old Business:

- a. Teacher-of-the-Year
Mrs. Johnson requested information on the Teacher-of-the-Year Program, specifically the state and local guidelines on selection and the role of parents in the selection process.

11. New Business:

- a. Committees
The Board of Education is reviewing the number of committees presently established with the intent to have a more organized system with monthly committee meetings when necessary and reports presented to the Board for action when appropriate. Mrs. Downs is chairing this activity.

12. Other: none

13. Adjournment:

MOTION: (Gerardi-Voccio/Johnson) to adjourn at 10:50 p.m.

VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted:

Ms. Jo Ann Gerardi-Voccio, Secretary
Brooklyn Board of Education