

Suffield, Connecticut

Approved by Bd. Of Ed: February 7, 2012

Board of Education Meeting

**January 17, 2012**

Call to Order

Board Chair, Susan Porcello called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. in the Suffield Middle School Media Center. Present: Board members Sue Porcello, Mary Roy, Robert Eccles, Lori D'Ostuni, Jeanne Gee, Scott Schneider, Michelle Zawawi, and George Beiter and Superintendent of Schools Karen Baldwin.

Executive Session

Gee moved, Roy seconded to move into executive Session at 6:02 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

A discussion was held regarding Superintendent's Goals and Evaluation.

Regular Meeting

Gee moved, Roy seconded to move into regular session at 6:28 p.m. The Chair called the regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. The meeting continued with all members present including the Director of Fiscal Administration, Ed Basile and observers.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Statement from Susan Porcello, Chair "At this time, I would like to remind everyone that although this meeting is held in public, it is not a public meeting. Which means that we welcome you to state your comment or question but in an effort to run this meeting as effectively as possible, questions will not be answered at this time. Even what seems like a simple yes or no question should sometimes theoretically be discussed before the full board before answering.

I will however make sure that your question/comment is noted in the minutes, and either the Superintendent or staff responsible for it or a board of education member will get back to you as soon as possible. It has been assigned to the communication subcommittee to ensure that this is done.

Another reminder that I'd like to talk about is that if you have a particular issue with the school system, you need to go through the proper chain of command to resolve the issue. That means teacher first, then principal, then superintendent and then if your issue hasn't been resolved satisfactorily the Board of Education. By doing it this way, records can be kept along with actions taken. If an issue becomes a pattern, by following this procedure, data can be addressed faster by administration and the Board. I am confident that with our new leadership structure that this really will work, and results can be achieved faster and issues will not be ignored. I also understand that although this might be uncomfortable for people to follow this it really is the only way to resolve procedures that are not working and it avoids the miscommunication that sometimes happens when a story goes through many people before the Superintendent or Board member hears it."

### **Communications**

Mr. Richard Davis, 6 Harmon Drive, Suffield, CT presented the Board with some materials for their review and discussion at a future date and time concerning multiculturalism. Mr. Davis is a retired teacher from the Suffield Public Schools. He has grandchildren that are currently attending the Suffield Public Schools and is very pleased with the education they are currently receiving.

Ms. Laurie Foster, a parent, asked if the 100 day plan from the CREC study would be discussed tonight, which was mentioned in a prior meeting. The Superintendent stated that the administration was still in the process of completing the plan and that it was not available yet.

### **Student Representative – SHS**

Alyssa Puia, Suffield High School student representative, updated the Board on the recent activities at the high school.

- Suffield 's Indoor Track team competed in the NCCC Competition Gaby Attanasio won in the Pole Vault Competition and Peri Stevens in the 55 hurdles, resulting in a new school record.
- The Student Senate is organizing a "Snow Ball" to be held at Chez Joseph to raise school spirit. This dance is being offered to all classes at the high school. Presently 80 tickets have been purchased and the students are working hard to encourage more students to participate.
- "Once Upon and Mattress", adapted from "The Princess and the Pea" is the spring musical production. Students are in the process of auditions at this time.
- Alyssa reported on a field trip that the AP History class took to Hartford to the Mark Twain House. Included in the tour of mansions was the Colt Mansion. Alyssa said they enjoyed the trip as it brought a new awareness of the City of Hartford and the significance of the people and its history.

- **Course Selection Process** – The course selection process is now available to students through the student portal. It just started this week. The process is now changed in that teachers recommend students for certain classes and then the student chooses based on that recommendation. The final decision still remains with the parent, who has the final sign off. Alyssa said that the students are being instructed during their advisory as to how to use the new system and it seems to be going well.

### **Approval of Minutes**

D’Ostuni moved, Gee seconded to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2011 Board meeting as presented. The motion passed with 7 votes and Mary Roy abstained.

### **Consent Agenda**

#### **A. November and December Financial Reports**

#### **B. Policy Approval – Series 5000 – 5141.21 REG Administration of Student Meds**

**5131.911 Bullying Prevention and Intervention/Safe**

**School Climate Plans**

**Series 4000 4131 Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified Staff Development**

**MOTION #12-001:** Eccles moved, Roy seconded to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Discussion Action Items**

#### **A. Field Trips**

- 1. SHS – Tours, France – April 10, 2012** – Carl Casinghino showed the Board a short video from a previous trip to Tours, France. He explained that the program with the school in France is in its eighth year and it is a very worthwhile experience for all involved. Carl has lived in France and is very familiar with the country and will be acting as the tour guide.

**MOTION # 12-002:** Roy moved, D’Ostuni seconded to approve the field trip to Tours, France as per Board of Education Policy. The motion was unanimously approved.

- 2. SHS – High School Lacrosse Field Trip – Seneca Nation – March 22-25, 2012**

Matt Conway and Luis Lee gave the Board an overview of the Lacrosse Trip planned for the high school. Along with their spring training practices and games with Seneca Nation teams in box lacrosse, a different and intense style of lacrosse that increases the boys’ skills, the students will be learning Iroquois culture, history, and traditions, including a trip to the Iroquois Indian Museum, a dance exhibition, a traditional meal along with neighboring Amish lifestyle and trade, with opportunity to shoe horses.

**MOTION #12-003:** D’Ostuni moved, Schneider seconded to approve the field trip to Seneca Nation as per Board of Education Policy. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. **Suffield Middle School Field Trips to Quebec, Canada - May 18-21, 2012  
in addition, New York City – Spanish Cultural Tour – May 18-20, 2012.**

Assistant Principal, Ida Hickerson, introduced Mario Carullo and Amy DeMarco, who reviewed the proposed trip to Quebec and Ida spoke in regard to the trip to New York City, which is to expose students to French and Spanish cultures, respectively. Mrs. Hickerson will be attending the trip to New York City with the students.

**MOTION #12-004:** Eccles moved, D’Ostuni seconded the approval of both Suffield Middle School field trips as per Board of Education Policy. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Acceptance of Gift**

Karen Baldwin has met with Mrs. Barbara Powell who has graciously donated \$100 per month to be used to supplement the student snack program at Spaulding and McAlister Schools. This donation will be for Jan – June 2012 and again for the next school year. The Superintendent wanted to thank Mrs. Powell for her concern for the well-being of our students and for her generosity.

**MOTION #12-005:** Eccles moved, Schneider seconded to accept the gift from Mrs. Powell of \$100 per month for Jan – June 2012 and again for the 2012 – 2013 school year to supplement the student snack programs at both Spaulding and McAlister Schools. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Superintendent’s Report**

1. **Strategic Planning Survey** - The Superintendent reported that 675 surveys have been returned to date and that the survey is still available through January 22, 2012.  
A goal analysis and priorities retreat is scheduled for Friday, January 27, 2012 from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Suffield Ambulance Building. Subcommittees are all working hard and gathering information and the superintendent is pleased with the current status of the project.
2. **Update on School Building Issues** – The Superintendent reported that last week there was an issue at the Suffield High School with the smell of gas throughout the building. Advanced Mechanical has made the necessary repairs and the building is fully functional with gas and oil heat. There was another issue this morning – due to lack of water pressure (as the result of a water pipe bursting in the Agriscience area) to the boiler at the high school. This has been bypassed and the pressure regulator will need to be replaced. The boiler is operating fine with the cold temperature moving to 64 and rising by 11:20 a.m. This issue is not related to the previous boiler issue and a new pressure regulator has been ordered.

There was also a broken hot water pipe in the ceiling of the B Wing in the Suffield Middle School, this has been repaired as of 1/18/12.

### **Board Chair's Report**

Board Chair, Sue Porcello, discussed Board attendance at the NSBA Conference to be held on April 21-23, 2012 in Boston, Massachusetts. It was decided after some discussion additional information regarding the conference workshops should be brought to the next meeting before sending someone.

### **Business Managers Report**

Ed Basile reported on the status of the large animal facility at the Suffield High School. At this time, rough plumbing has begun and they are installing light fixtures. The masonry and roof are almost complete which will bring the building closer to being buttoned up. The IPE wood siding will be complete within the next three weeks. Windows and doors will be completed and the building should be totally secure within a month. The plan is for the project to be complete in March - however, there will still be some items that need to be finished once the spring arrives, including final paving and grading, etc. The final completion should be well before the contract completion date of August.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

#### **Board of Education Budget Subcommittee**

Mr. Eccles reported that he has met twice with the Budget Subcommittee and that they have been reviewing and discussing the ACCE requests.

#### **Community Engagement and PR Subcommittee**

Jeanne Gee reported that the Subcommittee held their first meeting prior to the regular meeting on January 17, 2012. There will be another meeting to set priorities soon.

**Return to Executive Session**

**MOTION #12:006:** Eccles moved, Roy seconded to move back into executive session for the purpose of continuation of discussion of the Superintendent Goals and Evaluation, at 7:32 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Roy moved, Eccles seconded to move back into regular session at 8:45 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori D'Ostuni  
Secretary

LD/dal

