

These minutes were approved by the Torrington Board of Education on December 12, 2012

TORRINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting
Wednesday November 14, 2012
7:00 pm

Torrington High School
Major Besse Drive

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Present: Mr. Brady, Mrs. Cappabianca, Mr. Cavagnero, Mrs. Hoehne, Mr. Kissko, Mr. Merola, Mr. Nargi, Mr. Rovero, Mr. Traub, Mrs. Batchelder, Mrs. Domanico, Mr. Joslyn, Mrs. Kloczko, Rachael Kelly

Absent: Mr. Thibault, Mayor Bingham, Austin Kelson, Kevin Finn

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY SESSION

Public Participation

Mr. Traub read aloud the purpose of the School/Community Session and related all emergency exit information.

There were no speakers.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mrs. Hoehne made a motion to amend the agenda by adding Item E Structure of Sub Committees to Action Items. Mr. Rovero seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Rovero made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Mrs. Hoehne seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Cappabianca made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 17, 2012. Mrs. Hoehne seconded the motion. The vote passed with one (1) abstention from Mr. Brady. Confusion between Mr. Rovero and Mr. Merola was discussed and clearer communication of motions was discussed.

Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the minutes from the Special BOE meeting on November 5, 2012. Mrs. Cappabianca seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

INFORMATION SHARING SESSION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

5A Student Representatives-School News

The new senior class president Rachael Kelly presented.

Mr. Traub stated that the meeting is live and thanked the student's participating.

5B Superintendent Report

1. 28th Annual CAPSS/LCSA Superintendent/Student Recognition

Mrs. Kloczko presented.

5C Curriculum for New Courses-Even Start and Civic Life Project

Mrs. Domanico presented. Mr. Merola discussed incorporating student volunteers into local politics. Mrs. Cappabianca asked about having the course overviews before the votes on the courses. Mr. Cavagnero had questions about the Civic Life Project. Mr. Traub asked about the number of students involved and costs.

5D THS Advanced Placement Courses

Mrs. Domanico presented. Mr. Nargi asked about AP courses that are not offered and online courses. Mr. Traub asked about doing a survey at THS. Mr. Cavagnero asked about parents covering some of the AP costs. Mrs. Cappabianca asked about AP requirements and tracking students. Mr. Rovero asked about students' knowledge of AP courses availability. Mr. Brady asked about interaction with other school districts offering AP courses. Mr. Nargi asked if there is anything the Board can do to encourage more math/science courses.

5E Next Steps for Small Learning Communities at THS

Mrs. Domanico presented. Mr. Cavagnero pointed out the difference between start up costs and maintenance costs when any initiative by the Board is discussed. Mr. Traub stated that the Board needs to provide the education that students need. Mrs. Cappabianca asked about how the survey was conducted and expressed that the parents and community have to be informed and the Board has to be informed of their thoughts and concerns. Mr. Traub stated that they are not trying to steal kids from Oliver Wolcott Tech, they are trying to offer a program for students who can't get into or don't want to go to Oliver Wolcott Tech.

5F Oversight Panel for THS

Mr. Kissko explained that the Board needs to take a comprehensive look at THS and talk to the students and teachers to see what the general consensus of the school is, where it's going and how to make things better. Mrs. Cappabianca suggested following the criteria of the New England Association of School/College Accreditation. Mr. Traub asked if Mr. Kissko would like to head this group. Mr. Cavagnero made a motion to approve an Oversight Panel for THS pending some kind of mission statement outlining the purpose of the Panel and its boundaries specifically. Mr. Kissko explained that he would like an Adhoc committee comprised of administrators, teachers, BOE members, community members and students. Mr. Traub suggested that at the next meeting he and Mr. Kissko would have something the Board can vote on outlining the parameters of the Oversight Panel. Mr. Cavagnero agreed and withdrew his motion.

5G Special Education Questions and Answers

Mrs. Kloczko informed the Board that Dr. Robin (the presenter) was absent due to illness. Mrs. Kloczko presented the Board with the information they had available. Mr. Cavagnero asked if the Board could have similar data from ten (10) years ago for comparison. Mrs. Cappabianca stated she is still confused about the use of a separate attorney for special education when the Board had voted to use a specific law firm. Mrs. Kloczko explained the reasons for using a separate attorney. Mr. Nargi wanted to know why this issue was not offered to the Board as an action item. Mr. Cavagnero suggested letting the Executive Committee decide to make exceptions to the rule of using attorneys voted on by the Board. Mr. Nargi was opposed to that suggestion. Mr. Kissko stated that if someone is delegated to do something they should do it; the Board does not have to be involved in every decision all the time. Mr. Traub asked each Board member if they would like to see a presentation on why a separate attorney was used in this case.

5H Board of Education Goals

Mr. Traub outlined each goal to the Board members.

1. Secondary Education Review and Realignment
2. Three Year Sustainable Budget
3. Expansion of School Programs through Community Partnerships
4. Review and Edit Policies and Bylaws

Mr. Cavagnero stated that security/safety should also be part of this goal. He also stated that the administrative duties should be broken down to what positions deal with what problems. He also stated that goal number three (3) should be part of goal number one (1).

Mr. Traub explained the thinking process behind this goal. He stated that over the years the administration may have been cut too much. Many of the students transitioning from middle school to high school feel lost.

Mr. Nargi said there is nothing outlined in this goal to address the lack of respect in the middle and high schools. There is disrespect from students to teachers and students to students and the school is not doing anything about it. He also stated that students' smoking in the school has to be addressed. He also stated that the Board has to be able to know how their goals will be implemented by the administration, and if the administration cannot implement any of the goals, what state or federal situations or legislation are preventing that.

Mr. Cavagnero stated that smoking in school and other problems would fall under administrative duties. He then suggested that the Board have a special meeting to address these goals and specify each one and how to implement them.

Mrs. Cappabianca said that the Board needs to have measurable goals that are attainable. She would like to see the Board agree on goals now so they can direct the administration to implement them instead of just talking about what they would like to do.

Mr. Cavagnero made a motion to approve BOE goals one (1), two (2), and four (4) and eliminate goal three (3). Mr. Kissko seconded the motion. Mr. Nargi stated that he would not vote for this because there is no detail that is measurable and it would benefit the administration not the BOE. The vote passed with one (1) opposed, Mr. Nargi.

5I 2013-2014 Budget Calendar

Mr. Rovero presented the Board with the Calendar.

ACTION ITEMS

6A Financial Statement

Mr. Rovero made a motion to approve the financial statement. Mrs. Hoehne seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

6B Local 1579, Council 4, Memorandum of Understandings

Mr. Joslyn addressed the Board in Mr. Thibault's absence. Mr. Rovero made a motion to approve. Mrs. Hoehne seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Mrs. Cappabianca asked about the longevity.

6C Electric Pricing

Mr. Rovero addressed the Board regarding electric providers.

Mr. Cavagnero asked about services provided besides costs.

Mr. Nargi asked how they came up with the numbers presented and how long they have been tracking the prices. He also asked about pricing within the last five (5) years.

Mrs. Batchelder explained that because the administration has to go through the Board for any expenses over ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) they have not been able to lock in on any price because the prices change daily.

Mr. Merola asked about how alternative energies would impact the contract.

Mr. Rovero made a motion to approve the Electric Contract. Mr. Cavagnero seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Rovero made a motion to let the administration act independently of BOE approval on energy costs with a savings of no less than fifteen (15) percent. Mr. Brady seconded the motion. Mr. Rovero amended his motion to have the business manager present the Board with a consortium before the Energy Contract runs out. Mr. Brady amended his second. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Nargi said instead of percent parameters there should be time parameters. He stated that the BOE has to set some kind of mechanism of evaluation of the business manager.

Mr. Cavagnero said the Executive Committee could handle the job of choosing the prices.

Mr. Traub stated that they hired a business manager and the business manager should be able to make that decision.

Mrs. Batchelder explained to the Board what a consortium is and how it works as a solution.

6D Consent Agenda

1. Notices for Homeschooling
 - A.M., Grade 10, Eff. 2012-2013
 - A.J., Grade 9, Eff. 2012-2013
 - A.K., Grade 7, Eff. 2012-2013

Mr. Rovero made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Brady seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

6E Structure of Sub Committee

Mrs. Hoehne addressed the Board. Mrs. Hoehne made a motion to receive the restructure of the sub committees. Mr. Rovero seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Mr. Merola asked if the sub committees would stay the same until the next month's meeting.

COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mrs. Cappabianca thanked the students participating in the taping of the meeting.

Mr. Nargi asked when the full Board would be discussing the bylaws. He stated that he feels the Chairman and the Executive Committee are violating the bylaws.

Mr. Cavagnero thanked the administration for getting the meetings back on cablevision so the public will be more informed. He also stated goals he would like to achieve for the students involved in video/audio programs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/MINUTES

- 8.1 Personnel Committee: October 10, 2012
- 8.2 School Improvement Committee: August 22, 2012 and October 24, 2012
- 8.3 Budget Committee: October 10, 2012
- 8.4 Policy Committee: Discuss bylaws and policies
- 8.5 Grievance Committee: No Report
- 8.6 Education Connection Update: Meeting postponed
- 8.7 Wellness: Close to finalized rough draft

ITEMS FOR UPCOMMING AGENDA

- 9.1 Financial Statement
- 9.2 Committee Reports
- 9.3 Options of Education at THS
- 9.4 Library and Textbooks
- 9.5 Expenses associated with mediated settlement with TEA
- 9.6 Attendance and Discipline at THS

- 9.7 October 1, Enrollment Report
- 9.8 Follow up on BOE Goals
- 9.9 Over Site Committee Mission
- 9.10 Special Education Questions and Answers

FUTURE MEETINGS

- 10.1 Personnel Committee Meeting: December 5, 2012
- 10.2 Budget Committee Meeting: December 5, 2012
- 10.3 Regular BOE Meeting: December 12, 2012
- 10.4 School Improvement Committee Meeting: November 28, 2012
- 10.5 Policy Committee Meeting: November 28, 2012

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Hoehne made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:41pm. Mr. Brady seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.