

**TORRINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR MEETING  
January 24, 2007**

CALL TO ORDER - The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Carbone at 7:03 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll Call:**

Present: Mr. Broverman, Mrs. Carbone, Miss Laus, Mr. Lyons,  
Mr. Lutka, Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Oliver, Prof. Royals, Mrs.  
Traub, Mayor Bingham, Dr. O'Brien, Dr. Campbell, Ms.  
Haynes

Absent: Mr. Cavagnero, Mr. Jacobs

**SCHOOL COMMUNITY SESSION**

Public Participation

Joe Ammirato, 79 Brass Mill Dam – He spoke regarding the THS GOAL program. He stated that almost a year ago on February 15, 2006, a presentation was made to the Board and the public at the beginning of the 2006-2007 budget meeting. The Superintendent urged the public to attend these presentations made by each principal for their upcoming budgets. Parents came out in numbers, and he believes the support the Superintendent gained for her proposal was overwhelming. Most agreed that THS was in serious trouble. The majority of the resources requested for the 2006-2007 budget were for the main purpose of obtaining accreditation for THS. The Board backed the Superintendent by passing the budget. But now, not even 100 days into the 2006-2007 school year, the administration has had a presentation called THS GOAL. He believes this low number of students and the high costs associated should not be placed before the rest of the student body. He believes resources should be focused on students who are motivated to do well and excel. Focus should also be put on preparing for the NEASC accreditation visit which affects the whole school. He recommended the Board vote to hold off on any more discussion of the THS GOAL program, and to instruct the Superintendent to put this proposal into next year's budget. He believes a complete and detailed proposal, including research comparing success rates of similar programs, should be presented before the THS GOAL program is initiated. He has daughters in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades at Forbes School. Each week their teachers send home newsletters with wish lists. These wish lists include items the teachers need for their classrooms such as pencils, notepads, tissues, etc. He believes the money budgeted for supplies should be used for supplies. He does not believe administrators should pedal the brakes on basic items, so they can have money left over in July to pay for budget overruns as has been done in previous years.

Christa Mikita, 34 Tarleton Street – She spoke regarding the THS Preschool and the Forbes redistricting proposal. She states she has only heard through rumors that her son is to be redistricted to a different school, and that anybody east of the Fire Department is to go to Torrington School. She has also heard conflicting information about what grades will be moving. She stated she did not receive any official notice in writing or by phone about this move. She currently has a son in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and a daughter in preschool who will be moving up to kindergarten. She is looking for information in regards to this redistricting.

Secondly, she has a 2-and-1/2-year old daughter whom she wants to attend the preschool at THS. She has not seen any kind of information about this program, such as whether or not or when to enroll. She wants to know this as many times these types of programs fill up very quickly. The teacher didn't seem to know and directed them to this meeting.

Dr. O'Brien addressed the concerns about the basic supplies. She stated that they approved thousands of extra dollars for materials and supplies for all of the schools, and she appreciates this concern. However, she thinks the correct forum for sharing those concerns would be Mrs. Lambowski at Forbes School, and asking her directly about why certain teachers seem to need supplies. She knows that in the budget the amount for supplies was increased dramatically, and that the Board supported that expenditure as did the Board of Finance. If the answers given at Forbes School are not satisfactory, she wants him to then address them to the administration at Migeon Avenue.

Dr. O'Brien apologized to Ms. Mikita about the noncommunication regarding the preschool. She stated they have held several meetings around town where information was given for parents. She stated the information about the meetings was sent in numerous newsletters. She said there was also a mailing in December, and the information is listed on the Torrington Public Schools website. The website includes information concerning which streets are involved in the particular redistricting. But again, she thinks this is not the correct forum for this particular question. She believes when a question cannot be answered by the teacher, the next person to question would be the principal of that school. She also encouraged Ms. Mikita to check the website concerning exactly which streets and which children are going to be involved. If she is not happy with the information, then she should contact the administration at Migeon Avenue.

Dr. O'Brien also addressed the preschool question. She stated that they need to make sure that their budget proposal is approved as part of the high school budget. The current preschool cost is something that might be examined by the Board in that budget proposal, so it is a little premature right now to be sending out information to parents. There will be, however, various newsletters and other ads put out there to let her know when the time will be held for visiting and registering for the preschool, and for having the correct dollar amount for attending the preschool.

Kathleen Lewis, 84 Wheeler Lane – She spoke regarding the preschool and regarding handicap accessibility. She stated that now is really the time to register for preschool and

kindergarten. If she waits until after the budget, which sounds like it could be a couple of months from now, she is concerned that will be too late. She knows that one of the administration's major concerns is that there have not been enough people signing up for the preschool, but if they have to wait too long, they will have missed the boat. This year, she has 2 children in the preschool program, and she hopes to have 1 child in the preschool program next year. She is very concerned about that. She thinks that now is also the time for open houses for preschools. At the last meeting, there was talk about doing the preschool better. She believes one way to do this would be to advertise. All the preschools, in order to maintain capacity, need to advertise and plan ahead.

The other thing she is concerned about is that the Board meeting is handicap inaccessible because the elevators are turned off. One of the comments made at the last meeting was that the elderly and disabled veterans would have to pay for the preschool program. Her first thought was they wouldn't even be able to come to the meeting to complain about it. Since this is a public forum, she feels it should be handicap accessible.

Ms. Haynes reported that there are custodians in the building who have keys and would be more than happy to allow a handicapped person to ride the elevator.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

*On a motion by Mr. Broverman, with a second by Mr. Lyons, the Board moved to approve the agenda as amended excluding 8.1 and added a community session at the end of the meeting.. All were in favor except for Mr. Lutka who abstained.*

Mrs. Carbone reported she had a request to table action item 8.1, Approval of the Proposed Plan for Alternative High School. In light of some of the information that has come forward, administration has asked for the indulgence of another couple of weeks to bring forward the plan more complete and fully developed.

One of the Board members stated that the Executive Session should also come off the agenda. Also the suggestion was made to have a School Community Session at the end of the meeting. This was added as number 9.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*On a motion by Miss Laus , with a second by Mr. Lyons , the Board moved to approve the minutes of the January 5, 2007 expulsion hearing. Mrs. Carbone, Miss Laus, Mr. Lyons, and Prof. Royals were in favor. Mrs. Traub, Mr. Oliver, Mr. Lutka, Mr. O'Connell, and Mr. Broverman abstained.*

*On a motion by Prof. Royals, with a second by Mrs. Traub, the Board moved to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2007 expulsion hearing of Student A. Mrs. Traub, Prof. Royals, Mr. Lyons, and Mrs. Carbone were in favor. Miss Laus, Mr. Lutka, Mr. Oliver, Mr. O'Connell, and Mr. Broverman abstained.*

*On a motion by Mr. Lyons, with a second by Prof. Royals , the Board moved to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2007 expulsion hearing of Student B. Mrs. Traub, Mr. Lyons, Prof. Royals, and Mrs. Carbone were in favor. Miss Laus, Mr. Oliver, Mr. Lutka, Mr. O’Connell, and Mr. Broverman abstained.*

## **INFORMATION SHARING SESSION**

### **Student Board Member Reports**

No students were available for student board member reports. However, Dr. O’Brien invited the Board, parents, and citizens to the THS Academic Awards night. She stated this was always a wonderful activity to honor the very best and brightest of THS. It will be held on Thursday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, at 7 p.m. in the THS auditorium. If it snows, the snow date is February 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **Superintendent’s Report**

Dr. O’Brien reported that they did get the minutes for the January 10, 2007 meeting, but they have a new transcriptionist who is doing the minutes and they are more than 45 pages long. She stated that she and Enid usually try to proof them for typos before they put them in the Board packet, but they were unable to get through all 45 pages. The minutes will appear in the next Board packet.

Dr. O’Brien reported that as of today, they have gone through 10 of the budget areas. They have gone through every building’s budget, the Assistant Superintendent’s budget, the technology budget, and the athletics budget. They have gone through every single line and every single expenditure in those 10 budget areas. They have 4 more areas to review tomorrow, and then they will have done a first run through every single budget area. She wants to share that they are very respectful of the Mayor’s wish to really hold costs down, tighten the belt, and sharpen the pencil. She is extraordinarily pleased with the principals, the directors, and the assistant superintendent for bringing forward very lean and responsible budgets, and for finding as many cost neutral ways to achieve goals as possible. She looks forward to presenting the Superintendent’s budget on February 21<sup>st</sup>, and she assures that it will be a very lean and responsible budget that will show several instances where they are seeking to use existing resources in different ways to achieve goals. As of Friday, they will have reviewed all the staffing requests for next year, and any staffing requests will be very lean. They will be directly related to NEASC accreditation and the No Child Left Behind AYP plan, and directly reflect many cost neutral changes.

Dr. O’Brien reported that Mr. Lyons chaired a wonderful Cabe legislative breakfast at the new Torrington School on January 11<sup>th</sup>. There was a wonderful participation by more than 50 Board members and Superintendents, and both Republican and Democrat representatives. Mr. Lyons and our region were complimented as having the very best legislative breakfast in the State, and the most highly attended. She thanked our

representatives and senators for being there. At the breakfast, she was able to say a few words about the difficulties with special education, and she feels that voices were heard. Our own senators and representatives all stepped forward and expressed their deep understanding of the dilemma, and the fact that they are always on the receiving end of significant changes in the budget over which they have no control. They pledged to help us during this legislative season to get a higher reimbursement for special ed and to address the longstanding difficulties. Also, she and Mrs. Babcock hope to testify before a legislative hearing demonstrating their need using Torrington as their example. She thanked Mr. Lyons and Cabe for giving them the platform to address these concerns. She also thanked the Board for their attendance. Mrs. Carbone, Prof. Royals, Mr. Cavagnero, and Mr. Broverman were there.

Dr. O'Brien also reported that last year, the school district participated in the United Way drive Food for your Neighbors. Once again, in the month of February, they are going to participate, and all of the schools will be raising food for their neighbors. She reminded the Board that last year, their district raised over 5000 food items for the food pantries. She and Dr. Metallo will once again challenge students, teachers, and support staff to support this program and make this a success this year.

Mrs. Carbone added that in regards to minutes, Ms. Silva has asked the Board to say their name before making a motion which will makes it easier for the transcriptionist. Dr. Oliver said he would like to discuss the length of the Board minutes. Mrs. Carbone suggested he bring that up at the February 12<sup>th</sup> retreat, as the theme of the retreat is communication.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

*Notices for Home Schooling: WHEMIR07*

*In a motion by Mr. Oliver, with a second by Mr. Lyons , the Board moved to approve the consent agenda. All were in favor.*

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **Multiple Year Plan: Curriculum Development/Implementation**

*In a motion by Mr. Broverman , with a second by Mrs. Traub, the Board moved to discuss the 7.1 Multiple Year Plan, Curriculum Development/Implementation.*

Dr. O'Brien mentioned that this was a request from the Board, and they felt it would be better served as a more formal presentation to the Board as opposed to an email.

Dr. Campbell stated she has given the Board a text document that starts with an assessment that she made as the new Assistant Superintendent to Dr. O'Brien in the late spring/early summer of her first year here. As the new Assistant Superintendent, she wanted to find out how the curriculum infrastructure was working. She divided the Board's report on this into 3 areas. She looked at the infrastructure in terms of the

culture, the resources, and the capacity. At the end, she said they had bits and pieces of things on which they could build on, but by and large they really didn't have an existing curriculum infrastructure in Torrington Public Schools. They discussed the next steps because she was committed to taking the pieces to build on and laying a foundation. This was going to be a new approach, because she was braiding together bits and pieces so that the pieces wouldn't be lost. They laid a plan, but didn't get started at full speed on that plan because they had a number of staffing changes which at one point had her wearing the hats of Assistant Superintendent, Director of Technology, and Director of Business Services. Therefore, she found it hard to focus on curriculum during that time. When that passed, they discovered other issues such as the NEASC accreditation that they had to factor into the plan. So now the Board has the plan that they will use in going forward.

On page 4, when she talks about the new curriculum development process, it is subdivided into the planning steps, the development steps, the 1<sup>st</sup> year implementation, and the implementation. She thinks the request to the Superintendent was for a curriculum evaluation cycle, and she stated she has to have a curriculum to evaluate before an evaluation cycle can be setup. So this is a development cycle. She also explained the contingencies that may cause revision. There are things from the State Dept. and the NEASC recommendations, and then always the resource issue. She did not go into details so as to not anticipate the Board's question. The format in the curriculum development cycle is one that some Board veterans may recall. As she and her secretary were doing some research for the NEASC standards committees, and they needed some years ago data for their reports, they found this format in some of the documentation they looked at. She guesses this format was Dr. Lois Lanning's, and since their chart looked so much like it, they simply imported their data into that one.

Dr. Lutka asked what type of challenges she expects if they lack a curriculum and they are going into NEASC. How does she plan on explaining to the NEASC committee the lack of a curriculum? Dr. Campbell responded that the consultants that they have working with them have NEASC background and have been trained by NEASC. When they were brought on board, she presented her idea of doing blueprints to define the outcomes, the overarching instructional strategies, and then moving that into curriculum and outlining that process for the NEASC visitation team. They felt that was a much better approach than putting documents out there that didn't align with the State framework, and a much better approach than hastily throwing words on paper that hadn't been carefully discussed. In her conversations with Dr. Elaine Bessette who chairs these committees, Dr. Bascette said it was much better to say that they recognize that they have this challenge, and that these are the steps they are taking, and this is the direction they are going in. It would be better if they had full-blown, articulated curriculum documents, but this is a good faith effort and shows their commitment to going forward.

Dr. Lutka asked if Dr. Bascette anticipated any type of negative to the lack of a curriculum as far as the overall evaluation goes. Dr. Campbell responded it is hard to predict how a visitation committee will look at what is presented to them. She doesn't

think they will get gold stars on this, but she thinks they will be credited with recognizing what they need to do and with taking the first steps.

Dr. O'Brien stated that Mr Lutka is right on target with his comments and concerns. When Dr. Campbell spoke to her about this, she was mortified because when you don't have a good solid foundation, you have nothing on which to build and to advance achievement and accelerate learning. They decided that with the support of the Board, the Mayor, and the Board of Finance, their budget last year was so filled with good faith investments toward doing the right thing, that NEASC couldn't help but recognize the proactive statements of the Board. Not only in talking about NEASC, but in putting their money where their mouth was. Like when the Board approved the instructional area leaders that administration was able to get board. That was a very positive step that NEASC will recognize. When Dr. O'Brien brings her budget forward on February 21<sup>st</sup>, NEASC are going to see 2 more people brought forward in as cost neutral a way as possible. The administration trusts that people of the quality of Elaine Bessette will recognize that in good faith, they are doing the right thing in the right way. They are going to show that their faculty, their instructional area leaders, their administrators, and Dr. Metallo are all moving the high school in the right direction. But Dr. O'Brien stated they are not out of the forest yet, they still have a lot of work to do to be where they wish to be as a lighthouse school district and to earn those gold stars.

Mr. Broverman noted that on page 1, she mentioned time as a critical resource for the improvement of student achievement. That was also a comment that was amplified in the SSP about elementary school. He asked if they have a plan to address that particular concern. He knows they mentioned it is a contractual issue, but are they talking about something 2 or 3 years away. He sees this as a concern.

Dr. Campbell stated that it is 2 years away before the teacher contract is renegotiated. She also thinks that when you lengthen the school day, there is an impact on busing and what that might cost. She does not know when the bus contract is up for renewal. What they are trying to do with those constraints, and what she has asked the principals because it is also in their AYP plan, is to conserve time. They have set aside and blocked off 90 minutes for literacy instruction. They have asked them to look at the special schedule, so that they get every single minute for instruction that they can get. Until they can renegotiate contracts, they are just trying to make the best use of the time they have.

Mr. Broverman stated it was pretty evident in the SSP, that they are out of sync with where they ought to be. He asked in reference to page 4, is that all teachers, groups of teachers, committees of teachers. Who are the they?

Dr. Campbell stated it varies by grade level and buildings. As a NEASC example, at the high school they started with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade core courses, and post-curriculum writing responsibilities. She directed Dr. Lambour to request people who are currently teaching English I or have taught it in the recent past, have them apply, and then look at the composition of the committee and select those people. It is usually 3 to 4 teachers because they have so much blueprint work to do. That is a different process than they

have used at the elementary level, where they have involved content teachers led by either their math or language teachers.

Dr. Broverman asked if that means that the teachers are volunteers who come forward to work on curriculum, and then are paid for the time needed to write this curriculum. Dr. Campbell responded yes, and she prefers to have people who have taught the subject area. For example, she does not want somebody who has never taught 1<sup>st</sup> grade reading writing the 1<sup>st</sup> grade portion of the language arts curriculum. But they do have the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers look at what the 1<sup>st</sup> grade teachers write. The process involves several people, and that is why she was not more specific.

Dr. Broverman asked if the writing of this curriculum will be done in the summertime and paid for by budgeted funds from the Board. Dr. Campbell responded that right now because they have so much work to do, if teachers wish to write during the school year on Saturdays, she will compensate for them to write on Saturdays. But most of the serious curriculum writing occurs in the summer, because after teaching an entire week sometimes it is a stretch to write curriculum. Mr. Broverman asked if this would then be a budgetary item to plan for. Dr. Campbell responded yes, this will be part of her budget presentation.

Mr. Lyons commented that on page 2, he found it interesting that the review of CEUs of professional development comes out with what is listed there. He states that the Board has heard of the professional development workshops that the administration will be having for the teachers, and he is sure they will address those particular issues, but he found that eye opening. Dr. Campbell stated he should have been there when her secretary presented her with the data, she felt the same way.

Mr. O'Connell said he found the report very helpful, particularly the chart at the very end that lays out the time frame for how it all fits together. He asked if Dr. Campbell had any information to offer as to the costs associated with this, in the years in this plan as it is presented.

Dr. Campbell responded that it would be hard to do that, as the costs would be for the writers, and she never knows how many writers will come forward or how many hours it will take to write it. She does not feel comfortable giving him an estimate, because of where they are and where they are starting from, because they are literally starting at ground zero.

Mr. O'Connell stated he could appreciate that, but he was wondering if it would be comparable to the math curriculum costs which he thought was \$500,000 or in that neighborhood. He is wondering if they are looking at those kind of dollars for each of these core areas.

Dr. Campbell stated she inherited this, but her style is that she likes to adopt in increments. So the next thing coming will likely be a K5 Language Arts adoption. She said she believes from her experience that this is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a million dollars. Her

preferred way to do that would be, when she is ready to bring that to the Board, to say this is going to cost  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a million; here is the 3 year plan. As an example, the first year doing K1, year 2, doing 2-3, then doing 3-4. But she wants to assure them that, unless it is something beyond her control, she prefers to be sensitive to the Board's goal of using resources effectively and efficiently. She will give the Board plenty of lead time.

Mr. O'Connell asked about the 1<sup>st</sup> year implementation. He stated that it looks like the Board would not approve anything until after the 1<sup>st</sup> year implementation. As he understands it, the Board has to approve new curriculum or changes in curriculum, so he is confused about implementing a curriculum in year 1, and then coming to the Board afterwards to ask for approval.

Dr. Campbell stated he is probably confused by the term she used. When a group of teachers has worked on the curriculum document and it is ready for peer review, she likes to test drive it. This way they don't find out after the Board approves it, that what they need for 4<sup>th</sup> grade, they really should have put at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. She stated she probably could come up with another term that is less confusing. She just wants it tried out in the classroom, so that when the document is brought to the Board, they know it is solid and has been test driven.

Mr. O'Connell responded that he fully understands that she wants to test drive it, but he thinks that then there should be a 2 step approval process. First approving the test drive because it is a change in curriculum, and then if it needs to be modified, bringing that back to the Board. He states that is just his opinion, as he thinks that is one of the few areas that is truly a Board responsibility, and he would rather see that come to the Board first.

Mrs. Carbone asked if she would consider that test drive a pilot, and did she focus on just a small segment. Dr. Campbell stated that it is more like a draft. The document is a draft that teachers have given eyeball approval and they think it is good. But until they try it out with students in the classroom, they are not sure. In her experience the quality is much better with a test drive. She has talked to her colleagues who are Assistant Superintendents, and they tend to do test drives too.

Mrs. Carbone asked if the Board policy states that they need to approve curriculum or program changes. The Board responded that it is a statute that they approve the curriculum. Mrs. Carbone thinks that warrants a little more discussion. How can the Board remain prudent in its statutory requirements or obligations, and yet honor the space and time needed to test drive these?

Dr. Campbell stated that she would like to remind the Board that she is literally building the teacher's capacity to write curriculum. She thinks their initial products would be different if they had a district model, but a lot of times she has to go back and meet with the teachers, review whole sections, but sometimes they don't see what she sees until they try it out. And that professional development is better than giving them curriculum development workshops. She would really like the flexibility in the first round, to use the

draft work to build the teacher capacity. Once they have full-blown curriculum documents, after that she thinks she would be more comfortable with the more traditional approach. She stated that she was able to do that in other districts where she has worked, and the quality of the documents is so much better.

Mrs. Carbone stated that she thinks the plan is great, looking out over 5 years, but she is not sure where the Board stands on it. She especially appreciated reading about the discrepancy between the Board goals and the legacy initiatives. That helps her as a Board member, as she can look and say what are our goals here, and where should we be focusing our attention and resources. She is sensitive to what Mr. O'Connell raised about the Board's statutory obligation, and she thinks that perhaps the Board needs to think about that a little bit more, and perhaps leadership can discuss it too.

Mr. Broverman stated one idea might be to give it to the Board as a draft, and have them approve it as a draft, knowing full well that it is not a final implementation. It has got to come back as a 2-step policy, so some draft form might be a way to deal with it.

Mrs. Carbone stated that she thinks that they are heading full steam into the budget season, so perhaps this is something they can talk about again later in the spring. Dr. Campbell and Dr. O'Brien agreed.

Mr. Broverman stated that they have done an amazing amount of work to go out as many years as they have, and to look at K through 12 is a huge job. He is very impressed in seeing the chart and what they have done.

### **Summer School Report 2006**

Dr. Lambour reported that last spring they presented to the Board a plan for how they were going to present and conduct Summer School, as well as a plan for how they would evaluate that. This fall they presented a report on the 2006 Summer School results regarding student performance. Tonight, he wished to add to the Summer School report by also presenting post-Summer School student result performance after the first marking period. These results are in keeping with their original evaluation plan given last spring. He also wanted to remind the Board the data was collected multiple times, but they didn't have a control group, so this was not designed to draw immediate conclusions of cause and effect based on 1 year's data. When similar data is gotten over multiple years, using multiple baseline designs, it is possible to start drawing some conclusions by similar results over time. He then overviewed the documents in the packet. The data-based observations were put together based on the data sheets. The anecdotal observations were obtained from the administrators involved in last year's Summer School. There are then data sheets on THS, TMS, and the Elementary Summer School that Dr. Campbell will talk about. There is also an extra sheet regarding what A, B, C represents at the middle school. If you are looking at the THS Summer data, the grade levels of the students attending are listed, whether or not they attended, and the numerical grades they received in each one of the courses they took in the summer. If you scroll down on that page, you will see grade 9 totals, the number of students, and when you see 6 Y 1 N, that

means 6 earned credit, 1 did not. If you go over to the part which says THS school year 2006-2007, there is a similar format with the grade the student earned the first marking period, whether they earned credit or not, and that is for each one of the 3 courses that parallel the summer courses. Then there are some DRP scores. The high school put those in there for their own purposes, because they wanted to track that, but he is not sure how they are going to use that. What still needs to be put in will be the scores this spring, the CAPT scores for the high school students, and the CMT scores for the middle school students. That will finish this baseline document for the Summer School 2006 students. Also down a little farther under grade 9, it says 2 better, 0 better, 8 better. That refers to the fact that out of the students in each one of those subjects, 2 scored better the first marking period grades, than they did for Summer School grades. That was looking at if they did better after the first marking period than they did in Summer School. A lot of factors go into that. One of the next steps is that the middle and high school need to take this data, talk with their teachers about it, and get into it a little bit more to see if they can draw some conclusions or observations. In particular, if some of the teachers that taught Summer School are also teaching within the schools now, they might be able to draw some conclusions beyond those which will be cited tonight.

Dr. Lambour stated in regards to the data-based observations, if you like numbers these are exciting. Probably everyone is familiar with the term statistical significance, but there is also a term called social significance. Social significance is used in different research dealing with not medicines, not animals, but change in human beings, and is based on the fact of what a reasonable group of people looking at the data say was important. One of the first observations that he felt he could make along with his colleagues was that a social and statistical number of students passed versus those who failed Summer School, and that is important. He thinks they need to keep looking at that as that means students earned credit, and that students had success in a Summer School program. A higher ratio of students in the area of science received a higher first marking period grade over that of Summer School compared to students in math and language. Now taken by itself, that is a singular statement. The ratio of students who attended Summer School and who passed versus failing their first marking period was higher for science compared to math and language arts. Now there are 2 observations relating to science. When looking at all students who attended Summer School across grades 9, 10, and 11, a higher ratio of students received a higher marking period grade and passed science for the marking period than did math and language. Lastly, when comparing the scores of students across grades 9, 10, and 11 who did not attend Summer School versus those who did, nonattenders had a higher pass ratio in math and language arts than attenders. In science, however, attenders had a higher pass ratio than nonattenders. Something is going on in science here, and that deserves being looked into, and what happened in math and language arts. Is it the Summer School, is it the winter, is it a combination of both, or what? The numbers can tell you something, but they tell you to look further.

In the TMS, there is a different story, but not totally different. The ratio of students who attended Summer School and received a higher first marking period was higher in math than in language arts. When comparing students who attended versus those who were

recommended to attend and did not, students in both grades 6 and 7 who attended Summer School had a higher ratio of passing math than those who did not. The same was true for language arts to a lesser degree. Lastly, a larger number of 7<sup>th</sup> graders scored higher the first marking period compared to Summer School grades than 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

So as Dr. Lambour looked at some of these aspects of the high school and the middle school, one of his personal conclusions was that Summer School worked in terms of successfully passing and earning grades. Secondly, he feels there is reason to believe it did assist students during the first marking period, especially in science at the high school. Third, as he mentioned before, he thinks they need to further explore what is going on in science to see if they can replicate that, if there is something in terms of the process or whatever.

Dr. Campbell reported that she has summarized the DRA Growth Units of students who attended Elementary Summer School. She stated that the principals and the teachers knew ahead of time that they wanted to identify students who were at risk using the benchmark criteria. They extended 100 invitations, and 49 students attended at least 1 day, 44 students did not attend at all, and some of those were children whose parents who said their children were going to attend, so they were a little disappointed at the turnout. When they probed on this, the biggest significant factor was that by the time they knew there was going to be Summer School, families had made their vacation plans, and traditionally Summer School was earlier in the summer. They had moved Summer School closer to the start of the school year. For the students who did attend, if they did not attend, the home was called.

Dr. Campbell stated that in looking at the data, it was very hard to filter out the recidivism factor. The teachers and the principals said that the literature tells time and time again that if the intervention is sooner, they will not only see more achievement, but they see more for their money on recidivism. Currently, they identify 80 students exiting grade 2, because of the Board's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade literacy goal. One of the proposals that they are making is to take the same 80 students, but split the seats into 40 students exiting 1<sup>st</sup> grade and 40 students exiting 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Then they can take a look and see if they are getting more for their money for the time and resources that they invest.

Mrs. Traub asked a question about the supervision of Summer School students who attend only part-time Summer School. Was that regarding the students who weren't showing up?

Dr. Lambour stated they asked for observations on the part of the people involved in Summer School. One of the observations was that the length of the Summer School needs to be 4 days for 4 weeks. When they had it for 5 days for 3 weeks, there were concerns in terms of how the kids at that point in the summer are going 5 days in a row versus stretching it out a little longer. There were also requests on the part of parents who wanted some longer weekends. Those concerns seemed to run across the elementary, middle, and high school. When they made plans for this summer, they took those concerns into consideration. The lengths of the days, however, seemed to be

appropriate. Scheduling the Summer School later in the summer appeared to work. Dr. O'Brien felt that by then students would have had some summer vacation and would be ready to go back to school, and that held true. The parents felt it was a good time for the kids to go back as the kids were bored. The zero tolerance attendance policy for Summer School needed to be defined and applied more consistently. The entrance criteria needs to be reviewed and adjusted. He and Dr. Campbell met with the principals involved, and they did make some adjustments, and they are continuing to work on this.

In terms of the Summer School students who only attended part-time, the middle school students were taking all the courses, but in the high school some only took one or two, and since they don't drive cars, since they are younger kids for the most part, there was a concern about what to do with them when their classes are over and they have a down period.

Dr. Campbell reported that what Dr. Lambour has said was also fairly true for the elementary Summer School, so they tried to summarize it.

Mrs. Traub stated she loves numbers so the data is great for her. She thinks the report is fabulous as far as being able to track data. But some of it she is not too familiar with, such as the DRP scores for this grade level. Also the CAPT scores, the P in that column, she wasn't sure what that stands for. Dr. Lambour responded that those are some of the things the high school is tracking. Dr. Campbell guessed that those are the scale scores for math, science, reading, and writing, and she is guessing that the P meant proficient.

Mrs. Traub asked if the students who did not pass in Summer School were taking the same math course again. Dr. Lambour stated that there are some differences in Summer School math. Mrs. Traub stated the reason she asked was because if you look just specifically at grade 11, there is someone who didn't pass math, and then in the first marking period didn't score, didn't pass again. Her concern is if that is a retake of the course they already took and they are still not passing having gone to Summer School. Those are the ones she is concerned about.

Dr. O'Brien commented that as a math teacher herself at high school level, it is probably the same course. The young person probably didn't pass Algebra or didn't pass Geometry or whatever it was. They tried to fill in the gaps in Summer School, were unsuccessful, and they can't go to that next level of math without passing the previous one as a building block. This student is a prime candidate for the alternative high school program, because that young person is trying, but for whatever reason, is not able to learn the content. So either the young person is misplaced, the methodology is wrong, or the young person is just not succeeding within a large high school context. This is exactly the kinds of things they need to look at behaviorly. Young people who demonstrate failure in the same domain over and over.

Mrs. Traub stated that obviously she is looking at quite a few of these in 10<sup>th</sup> grade who did not pass. But as this is the 1<sup>st</sup> semester, that is not to say that this grade cannot improve over the year. There are quite a few of them who didn't pass the 1<sup>st</sup> semester, but there is a long way to go in school to make up that. There are also a lot of positive

stories here, too. If they get a better grade the second time around, that is great. She is more concerned about the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. This information doesn't look as promising. Also the 8<sup>th</sup> grade is not being addressed. Do they have something for the 8<sup>th</sup> graders who are struggling?

Dr. O'Brien stated that their approach for the young people who became freshman this year was to provide many more sections for 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 10<sup>th</sup> graders. When Dr. Olson and Dr. Metallo worked on the schedule for this year, they did many runs of that schedule. She saw many of those herself, and she went over every single class in this building with special care to make sure that 9<sup>th</sup> grade and 10<sup>th</sup> grade classes had the lowest class sizes they could possibly run. For example, many of the lower level math classes, lower level English, social studies classes, and the like had very low class sizes, so that those young people going from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to 9<sup>th</sup> grade could have a smaller learning environment and more personal attention. So that was the way they were trying to bridge the gap there. This past Summer School was really focused once again on the Board's goal of dropout prevention, and they noted that the dropout piece that is really important is the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade, because that is where they check out. So with the resources they had, they focused on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade. If they had some empty seats, they did allow for some 11<sup>th</sup> grade participation, but basically it was a dropout prevention initiative focused on the freshman and sophomores.

Mrs. Traub asked about the pages titled Students Who Did Not Attend. Were the ones highlighted the classes they didn't pass? Dr. Lambour stated the ones that are highlighted were high school students who didn't attend Summer School.

Mrs. Traub asked about their final grade as opposed to what their grade is the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. Dr. Lambour responded they knew what their 1<sup>st</sup> semester grade was, but they didn't have a Summer School grade to compare it to because those students didn't attend.

Mrs. Traub asked if there was a correlation between attendance and nonattendance and their grades now. Dr. Lambour stated that this is one of those things they can keep adding to, and as they draw other conclusions, he can pass those on to the Board.

Mrs. Traub stated she was also very concerned with the middle school in seeing so many Fs in the 1<sup>st</sup> marking period still. She hopes this can be worked on. As far as the elementary school, even though there is not a direct correlation between those who attended Summer School and those who did not, at least they can know that 80 something of them stayed on level or above, so that is a positive.

Mr. Lutka asked if they can assume that the students in grades 9, 10, and 11 who took Summer School, were students who had failed the course. Dr. Lambour stated they were students who didn't receive credit. Mr. Lutka stated so in other words, there were 38 sophomores, grade 10 students, who took Summer School and took 1 of the 3 courses that are listed. Did those 38 students receive an F in the course that they took? Dr. Lambour stated yes, they would have gotten an F and not have earned credit. They were attending Summer School in part to restore that score. Dr. Lutka said, therefore, when

looking at grade 10 at the 38 students, they had 13 students fail 10<sup>th</sup> grade math which he assumes would probably would be Geometry or Algebra 1, and 11 of those students then received their credit and moved on to the next higher math course, but 2 did not. So this is a significant number of students who did get their credits, and who would be far behind for graduation if Summer School wasn't offered. Dr. Lambour stated that is why one observation he made was that Summer School was successful in the sense that students did pass and earn credits. Also, they are trying to address the dropout rate. Students who are now keeping up with their class, earning credits, having positive results, are reducing one factor that might be contributing to them dropping out.

Mr. Lyons commented that the school community and relations committee has been discussing having a parent workshop in reference to Summer School sometime, to inform the parents about Summer School. This data would be excellent information about the value of Summer School for parents.

Mr. O'Connell stated that for the Elementary Summer School program, if that continues to be in place, if they continue to call parents for students who do not attend, maybe they could think about having a chart that would give the reason for nonattendance so they could have that data. Dr. Campbell stated that they probably do have that data. Mr. O'Connell stated that it would be interesting to see that data to see why those students did not attend.

Mr. Lutka commented about the timing of Summer School and students who did not attend because people had made their plans. Since this would be another year, giving those dates as early as possible might mitigate that, so maybe they can cut that number significantly. Dr. Lambour stated they have those dates, and they will be able to do that. Funding is a factor, but anticipated dates could be announced.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **Receive Monthly Financial Statements – December 2006**

*In a motion by Mr. O'Connell, with a second by Mrs. Traub, the Board moved to receive monthly financial statements – December 2006. All were in favor.*

The budget committee recommended receipt of the financial statement. In Ms. Haynes' memorandum, there is a projected shortfall at this point in time that is rarely significant. Also included in the agenda packet is the year-end projection that the budget committee requested be produced. The budget committee is monitoring this situation very carefully.

Mr. O'Connell stated that the agenda does not include anything on the budget transfers, and he made a motion to amend the agenda to include approval of the budget transfers 2006, 012, and 2007, 013.

*In a motion by Mr. O’Connell, with a second by Mr. Oliver, the Board moved to amend the agenda to include approval of the budget transfers 2007, 012, and 2007, 013. All were in favor.*

*In a motion by Mr. O’Connell, with a second by Mr. Lyons, the Board moved to approve the budget transfer 2007, 012. All were in favor.*

Mr. O’Connell stated that the budget committee recommends the approval of this budget transfer.

*In a motion by Mr. O’Connell, with a second by Mrs. Traub , the Board moved to approve the budget transfer 2007, 013. All were in favor.*

Mr. O’Connell stated that the budget committee recommends the approval of this budget transfer.

### **Receive Summer School Proposals 2007**

*In a motion by Mr. Lyons, with a second by Mrs. Traub, the Board moved to receive Summer School proposals 2007. All were in favor.*

Dr. O’Brien commented that right on the heels of the Summer School 2006 information, they would like to bring forward Summer School 2007 in the proposal stage. As it is the wish of the Board to always take a look at these programmatic pieces before they appear in the budget, Dr. Campbell and Dr. Lambour worked diligently with the principals to put together their proposal for this coming summer of 2007.

Dr. Campbell reported that included in the Board packet, they have the slides to a Power Point presentation that Dr. Lambour created. This was a collaborative effort. They get input from their principals and any people involved in the Summer School process. They have embedded in the slides the recommendations they are making to the Board for this coming summer. They would like to continue to have Summer School at the elementary level , because they would like to continue combating recidivism and backsliding, and continue to promote learning growth and addressing the factors that contribute to dropouts. To highlight the changes of what Summer School will look like, they are going to keep the same focus for Elementary Summer School. They are going to improve literacy skills at an early grade level. They are proposing to act on the recommendation made by their principals and staff, and allow them to admit approximately 40 students exiting 1<sup>st</sup> grade and approximately 40 exiting 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. The criteria for 1<sup>st</sup> grade will be those students not scoring a solid level 18, and those exiting 2<sup>nd</sup> grade not scoring a solid DRA level of 28. Dr. O’Brien asked that when they put the proposal together, that they try to keep it within the funding allotment that they had last year. So they have not increased the number of students, but they have changed what populations they are proposing to serve. This is the first look at the 4 weeks, 4 days. They are proposing to start Summer School on July 23<sup>rd</sup> and go through August 17<sup>th</sup>, holding Summer School Monday through Thursday, 8:30 to 11:30. This will give young people and their parents

Fridays to do long weekends. They are planning in their budget proposal to provide transportation and not to charge for any of the Summer Schools.

Dr. Lambour reported that for the secondary level, they wish to continue the Summer School to provide learning support and dropout prevention efforts over the summer. Again, students grades 6 and 7, and 9 and 10, as last summer. If they have additional space, the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders may enter Summer School as well. A failing grade between 50 and 69 in math or language arts, along with a good attendance history and teacher recommendation for Summer School are criteria. Middle school is to continue with math, reading, and writing. High school is to continue with math, science, reading, and writing. For the number of students, they are still shooting for 90, course enrollments 180, with a ratio of 1 to 10, paralleling the dates for the elementary school. The time is a little different because they go a little later in keeping with being older students. Also, with the buses, they run a different run. Again, there will be no charge to parents. The program will be evaluated with the current evaluation process. Any additional bits of data they need to collect will be added to it with the instruments expanded. An administrator, again, will continue to monitor all 3 Summer School programs, to provide day to day supervision and to assist with the data collection that occurs over the summer.

Dr. Campbell added that at the elementary level they are still going to pursue the question if summer reading instruction improves literacy achievement for struggling readers. They are going to continue the model of taking the 1<sup>st</sup> semester DRA and comparing it.

Dr. Lambour added that at the secondary level, they are going to continue to monitor what impact a student's Summer School performance has on a student's academic performance the following quarter.

Mrs. Haynes discussed the financing portion of the Summer School. The increases in Summer School in the budget amount are directly related to 3 separate things. First of all, the contractual increases in the hourly rate for their instructors, and the contractual increases in the buses. They will have the same number of teachers, and the same number of buses, and support staff that they had last year, with the exception of the secondary level where they would like to add 1 art and 1 PE teacher. Those are new this year. There is also an additional day. Last year, they had 15 days of Summer School. This year they have 16 days of Summer School. So they are looking at about a \$16,000 increase in the cost of Summer School over last year.

Mr. Lutka asked why they are adding art and PE at the high school level. Dr. O'Brien responded this is why they sent her to Columbia in the summer. In one of the seminars that she attended at Columbia University, one of the topic areas was helping struggling high school students, and she is trying to have those students connect better with the schooling experience. One of the experts who presided at the seminar said that oftentimes in their zeal to help young people in the core areas, their reading, writing, and math, they totally forget the arts and phys ed and music. Many times the disconnected students from school really need that kind of extra instruction and opportunity to express themselves. It not only helps them connect with school, it makes something like Summer

School more fun and creative, and not just Algebra for the third time, for example. When you think about brain research, the more active these students are, the more well developed their brains become. There have been MRI studies that show how the dendrites become more dense. There are more connections made in the brain, the more physical activity that goes on, especially in the adolescent stage. They are already concerned with obesity and wellness, so the PE piece is really grounded in research. The other piece with art, they know from their enrollments here at THS, that the art classes are very fully enrolled. They are very popular, and young people really benefit from those art classes. They would like this to be kind of a hook and draw to bring young people to Summer School, who have failed to not only improve academically, but to also become more connected with the school, to enjoy their school experience and to expand their intelligences in different ways simply beyond the basic core offerings.

Mr. Lutka asked about the lead teacher at the elementary level. Was that a supervisory role, or was that a teaching position? Dr. Campbell responded that was the person who makes the telephone calls and checks the attendance. It was not really administrative. It was sort of the organizational piece, so that the teachers weren't diverted because their instructional time is so precious. They don't do any teaching, but they could. Dr. Lambour stated that once they get into more of the specifics of the structuring, they could well teach also. Ms. Haynes stated that last year it was their desire to have 1 of those 8 teachers perform that function before or after the scheduled student time. She is not sure if that is the way it ended up, but that is how it was designed last year.

Mrs. Traub commented on the elementary school level. She sees how they invited approximately 80 students, but almost half of them did not attend. Have they budgeted these teachers assuming they are going to have 80 students? What happens if they only end up with 40 again? Are they already contractually obligated? Dr. Lambour stated no, they are on an as-need basis, and all the Summer Schools are like that.

Mrs. Traub stated she would definitely stress the importance to these parents, that if their children are invited to do this it is a serious commitment, and that for every child who says they are going to go and doesn't, that is another child who misses out on the opportunity. Ms. Haynes said that is exactly right. Last year, they had less enrollment at the elementary level, but they had such great enrollment at the high school, that they were able to slide those teachers to the high school level. The high school was really great at identifying students who were in need of Summer School.

Mr. Lyons asked about the Monday through Thursday versus the Monday through Friday schedule, the reasoning being the long weekend. Are the parents in favor of that extra week they are dealing with in terms of the Summer School? Dr. Lambour responded that historically Summer School was longer here in Torrington. So the feedback he got from the administrators from their conversations with the parents, was that extra day and going an extra week wasn't going to impact things. The parents' concern was knowing about it ahead of time, which they will know this year, and having an opportunity to do some family events over the course of the summer.

Mr. Lyons also commented that August 17<sup>th</sup> is a Friday, so that needs to be changed to August 16<sup>th</sup>.

Dr. O'Brien commented that Mrs. Traub had asked a very good question regarding the supervision at the high school level. That was another reason why the art and the PE are in there, because when they have the opportunity to have high school students for 3 hours in the morning, she wants it to be a saturated scheduled so they are not sitting in study hall for an hour or two, especially if they are just taking one course. This is a constructive, really positive kind of thing the young person can do if they are not taking a full load of 3 classes.

### **Receive Proposed Changes to Policy No. 6095, Graduation Requirements**

*In a motion by Mr. Broverman, with a second by Mr. Lyons, the Board moved to receive proposed changes to Policy No. 6095, Graduation Requirements. All were in favor.*

Mrs. Carbone reported that when the policy committee met to discuss this, some of the things they thought they should be looking at were if this should be a separate policy or if they should be looking at a letter assignment to the grade items. They were not strictly concerned about whether or not to change that pass/fail grade from 70 to 65. But Dr. Campbell explained the urgency of changing this passing grade from the 70 to the 65. This would allow the staff to start running schedules through the SASI program, and to look at how this will impact the scheduling for next year. It is something that needs to be run a couple of times to make sure it is working, and that all the student's needs are being met. Based on that, Dr. Campbell suggested that instead of looking to create a new policy and modifying existing policy, they could do a quick fix by simply taking the existing current passing grade of 70 as it appears in Policy No. 6095, and changing it to a 65.

The committee then discussed the rationale for changing the grade, and essentially it was the consensus of the committee that the 70 was not a real representation of what other schools in the State of Connecticut are doing. By bringing us more in line with the other districts in the State, they would be more attuned to what the students are getting elsewhere in the State. The 70 represents an inequity that results in more failures, and equates to poor motivation, poor attendance, and exacerbates an already excessive dropout rate. Given that rationale, coupled with a verbal report from Dr. Campbell, the teachers overwhelmingly agreed that the 65 was a more reasonable grade, and the 70 was almost an unreasonable expectation. Based on that information, the committee unanimously agreed that this was what they would like to recommend to the Board.

Mr. Broverman added that he doesn't have any hard data, but from what he knows around the State, 60 is a passing grade in some of the finest high schools. So they still have a high standard at 65, and he feels that it remains a rigorous challenge for their students. He thinks 70 crosses the line.

Mr. Lyons stated that even though going backwards is not one of his favorite things, in a sense lowering the bar, he can understand the reasoning behind this. Hopefully, with the things that they are putting into place like the Summer School, the THS GOAL program, and specifically identifying at risk students, though they may have a 65 passing grade, they will see most of their students passing at 70.

Mr. Lutka stated that he agrees with everything that has been said, and he would like to make a motion to amend the agenda to change this from receipt to approve. Mr. Oliver stated he would second that. Mr. Lutka stated that he doesn't think that what they have done represents something that needs further study. He thinks it is something that they can approve now because it is a prudent thing to do. He thinks it is something that needs to be put in place so they can help the high school administration get the ball rolling with SASI. So by expediting this, he is going to try and see whether or not he can move things along.

Mr. O'Connell asked if there was a way to get data from other districts across the State, in terms of what their graduation requirements are, their passing grade. Is there a list that Dr. O'Brien has which she could just quickly send out? Dr. O'Brien responded that they are mostly 60 from her experience, and she believes Mr. Broverman's comments to be exactly on target.

Mrs. Carbone stated that the committee recognized that this policy needs to be looked at again in the next couple of months, because there is another issue with regard to the essential skills. They did talk to Dr. Campbell about some of these other matters, such as grade assignment, and whether that would be incorporated in regulations. So they are still looking at this, but changing to 65 would allow the administration to start its scheduling. But the matters would be coming back to the Board again.

Mr. O'Connell stated he would not be in favor of approving the 65 until he had the data he described. In this age of computers, he thinks sending out an email concerning that data is not a major undertaking. He would prefer that, so he could be assured that they are not out of line with what is going on across the State.

*In a motion by Mr. Lutka, with a second by Mr. Oliver, the Board moved to revise the agenda to accept the proposed changes to Policy No. 6095, Graduation Requirements. All were in favor.*

*In a motion by Mr. Lutka, with a second by Mr. Oliver, the Board moved to approve the proposed changes to Policy No. 6095, Graduation Requirements. All were in favor except for Mr. O'Connell who opposed.*

## **SCHOOL/COMMUNITY SESSION**

No one was present.

## **COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Mr. Broverman stated that one of the comments made by one of their visitors today had to do with handicapped accessibility, and he was unaware of that. As long as the building is open on the nights of their meetings, why aren't the elevators just operating? Mrs. Haynes reported that they never are, even during the day. A key is needed. The primary reasons for that is vandalism and supervision. Mr. Broverman said he thinks there should be some way for people who want to attend the meetings to get a key or meet a custodian or something. He thinks it should be made easier for all people who want to attend the Board meetings.

Mr. Lyons suggested that as there is a phone on that desk there, maybe they could call the custodial person to come down and escort a person up. **Dr. O'Brien said they will figure out a solution and report it back in the Friday Board notes.**

Mrs. Traub stated that she thought the Board had already approved an increase in the rate in the fall to accommodate the preschool. She was aware that there were comments made regarding the fact that the enrollment wasn't that high, and they needed to address advertising. She is in strong favor of advertising now. She doesn't think they should be waiting until March or April. There are other advertisements for preschools up all over town. If they wait until they discuss revenues or whatever for preschool, they could be back again for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year saying the enrollment isn't high enough. The parents are telling them now that they have to enroll in January.

Mr. O'Connell said he echoes that concern. He thinks, in December, the Board overwhelmingly voted in favor of the program. There were a number of comments made by members that night, saying that they needed to do more to promote the program. To the extent that they are not out there advertising and promoting the program, he thinks that is not consistent with where the Board is at. He hopes the administration takes another look at this and schedules open houses to show people what their program is all about. He would like to see that happen.

**Dr. O'Brien stated they will coordinate that with Dr. Metallo.** She also stated that the amount the Board agreed to for the preschool was for this year only, 2006-2007. So as they go through the entire budget process, the Board may come back and say that fee, in order to move more towards self-supporting, needs to be raised \$10, \$15, or \$20. She thinks it is premature for any advertising with figures attached to it, until the Board decides what those figures are.

Mr. O'Connell stated he thinks the advertising could say that the figures are subject to change secondary to budgetary reasons. Dr. O'Brien responded that she thinks people find that confusing. But she will talk with Dr. Metallo and bring back information for the Board.

Mr. Oliver stated that he thought the Board's position was that this was part of the curriculum. It wasn't necessarily their intent to make it self-supporting as it served a multitude of purposes. He feels the Board was overwhelmingly willing to support it. Dr.

O'Brien responded it was not about supporting it, but about how much they want to charge for it. The preschool was not self sufficient. If it was self sufficient, these parents would be paying \$3000 a year, and they are paying just over \$1000 a year right now. The administration knows that self-sufficiency is not the goal of the Board. She thinks the administration would argue that, in tight budgetary times, perhaps they should move a little bit more towards self-sufficiency in something like this, and really make sure that the program being provided is the true market value of these services.

Ms. Haynes stated she agrees with Dr. O'Brien. She stated she doesn't feel they can advertise something if they don't know how much it is going to cost. If parents are looking at 2 or 3 different preschool programs, they want to know what the costs are up front.

Mrs. Carbone suggested that the Board have this as a future agenda item, so that it is shorter than the budget process, and they can be a little bit more expedient. The Board and administration were in agreement.

Mr. Lutka commended Mrs. Carbone for a very efficient and effective meeting, and he thinks she has done an excellent job. Dr. O'Brien stated that the administrators feel the same way.

Dr. O'Brien stated that she would like to announce that Dr. Lambour is planning to retire as of June 30, 2007, and as is characteristic of Dr. Lambour, they already have a plan in place for recruitment and posting of this anticipated opening. She will be happy to share copies of this proposed timeline with the Board, and once again, in the final stages of this endeavor, they would be happy to have a Board rep or two interview the 2 or 3 finalists with she and Dr. Campbell. That has worked very nicely in the past. That particular activity wouldn't occur until late March, but certainly the Board is welcome to send some reps to participate in that final step of the selection process. She sincerely thanked Dr. Lambour for all his outstanding work and for being such an exemplary human being.

**Mrs. Carbone suggested that Dr. O'Brien include that timeline in their next Board discussion.**

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mr. O'Connell reported that next Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup> at 6 p.m. at Migeon Avenue, the budget committee will be reviewing the 5-year capital plan. Those who want to get a leg up on it, prior to its presentation hopefully at the first meeting in February, might want to attend. Secondly, sometime soon they will be getting the audit for last year, and there are a couple of comments in it. The administration has developed plans of corrective actions for those items, and the budget meeting will be reviewing that progress probably in April. Lastly, the current projection of a deficit for year end is a little over \$700,000, which is obviously a lot of money. He stated what is largely driving that is out of district placements, and it also will likely result in significant additional revenue that is not budgeted to the City. If they were able to receive that additional revenue, that is

directly related to that expense, and the deficit could be reduced to somewhere closer to \$250,000. The budget committee feels that it would be very appropriate to commence a dialogue with the Board of Finance as soon as possible about that. If the Board of Finance says no to that request, and they have to deal with a \$700,000 deficit, which they might have to do between now and year end, it is likely to be quite different than if it was a \$250,000 deficit. He thinks that there is some strong understanding, perhaps even support in the Board of Finance, for that thought of sharing that revenue with us. But it is the budget committee's recommendation to the Board, that they get in front of the Board of Finance as soon as possible to have that dialogue, and to lock up an understanding on that increased revenue. It was also a recommendation that the budget committee play a lead role in that discussion with the Board of Finance. The administration will soon be meeting to look at how best to address the deficit, and certainly it will be easier for them to best address it if they know better what that deficit is likely to be. The next Board of Finance meeting is February 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mrs. Carbone recommended bringing this item forward at the next Board meeting as an action item. The Board agreed.

#### **ITEMS FOR UPCOMING AGENDA**

Dr. O'Brien reported that under discussion items, the Board had requested a report on the parent meetings at the various schools, regarding their new attendances areas. There will be parent meetings from Torrington and Southwest. She knows their principals and PTO leaders are planning those, so they will have a report on those.

As a discussion item, they would like to discuss the Language Arts 2 class offering at TMS. As an action item, they would ask the Board to receive the schedule modification for Language Arts 2 at TMS. They would like the Board to approve the schedule modification for Language Arts 2 at TMS.

They would ask the Board to please approve the Summer School proposal for 2007. They would like to address the tabled item regarding the alternative high school proposal, THS GOAL, as well as information about 3 other sites that they are currently investigating. They will bring back any information regarding changes in fees at the preschool lab at THS for their consideration. They also will take a look at the Human Resources Director timeline, and then the way the Board would care to address the projected deficit and the meeting with the Board of the Finance. They will also receive the 5-year capital plan.

Ms. Haynes reported the budget committee talked about the lack of information they will have about the alternative high school, but felt that they could certainly take this plan as it was and revise the plan between the day it is received and approved.

Prof. Royal mentioned that the high school yearbook has requested a picture of the Board of Education, so they would like to have the Board here about 15 minutes early next time so that they can get a picture taken for the yearbook. Mr. O'Connell stated he would be

unable to attend as he has parent conferences. Prof. Royals responded that they could cut and paste him in.

Mr. Lyons voiced concerns in reference to the THS GOAL program. If it is decided that they can't get this going in the fall of 2007, he wants to know if there are some ideas or thoughts of what will happen to students during that time period. If the sites are not ready for the fall of 2007, he hates to throw the baby out with the bath water. He would like some thoughts in terms of what will happen with those students at risk. **Dr. O'Brien stated they would try to have a Plan B for him.**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

In a motion by Dr. Lutka, with a second by Mrs. Traub, the Board moved to adjourn at 9:30 p.m. All were in favor.