

**TORRINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
October 1, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Cavagnero at 7:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mr. Cavagnero, Miss Laus, Mr. Lyons, Mr. Mattiello, Mr. Nargi, Mr. Oliver, Ms. Raymond, Prof. Royals, Mr. Rubino, Dr. O'Brien, Dr. Campbell, Ms. Haynes, Mr. Robinson

Members Absent: Mr. Broverman, Mayor Bingham, Miss Cavagnero, Mr. Wright, Miss Davis

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve tonight's agenda

Mr. Oliver moved and Prof. Royals supported the approval of tonight's agenda as amended. The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Lyons moved and Mr. Oliver supported modifying the agenda to move approval of the agenda to follow the roll call. The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Lyons moved and Mr. Mattiello supported tabling the Executive Session – Personnel Matters Related to the Resignation of Dr. John Metallo and the Possible Evaluation of Superintendent O'Brien pending notification of the BOE of a new date indefinitely. Miss Laus, Ms. Raymond, Prof. Royals, Mr. Lyons were in favor. Mr. Oliver, Mr. Mattiello, Mr. Nargi, Mr. Cavagnero, and Mr. Rubino were opposed. The motion did not carry.

Mr. Rubino moved and Mr. Lyons supported tabling the Executive Session – Personnel Matters Related to the Resignation of Dr. John Metallo and the Possible Evaluation of Superintendent O'Brien pending a decision for a future meeting within 30 days. Miss Laus, Ms. Raymond, Mr. Rubino, Prof. Royals, Mr. Lyons were in favor. Mr. Oliver, Mr. Mattiello, Mr. Nargi, and Mr. Cavagnero were opposed. The motion carried.

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY SESSION

Mr. Collin Good, Ms. Brooke Johnson, Ms. Ali Becker, Mr. Devon Young, and Mr. Steven Cancini spoke in support of THS principal, Dr. John Metallo and his contributions to THS.

CELEBRATIONS

CAPT 2008 Distinguished High School Students

****Maura Magistrali** and **David Considine****

Maura Magistrali and David Considine were commended for their accomplishments on the CAPT examination..

CAS Appointment of Brooke Johnson to 2008-2009 State Student Advisory Council on Education

Brooke Johnson was honored for her appointment to the 2008-2009 State Student Advisory Council on Education.

National Merit Scholar Program Commendation - **Brian Nowell**

Brian Nowell was commended for his accomplishments on the PSAT examination.

Susan Pelchat Honoree

Susan Pelchat was honored and spoke to the Board about her achievements and organization “Alpha Delta Kappa.”

INFORMATION SHARING SESSION

Student BOE Representative Reports

Mr. Robinson gave a brief report regarding upcoming THS events.

Superintendent’s Report

Dr. O’Brien reported that in the last few weeks there has been a huge negativity in the community in the press. She noted that she had honored what John Metallo asked her to do to guard his privacy. However, due to legal reasons she was required to give any documents related to his departure to the press because of FOI. Also due to legal reasons, administration monitors the use of emails, cell phones, and telephones within the district and she does not consider this “micromanagement” as was mentioned in the press. Budgetary concerns are another reason this monitoring is done.

Dr. Cavagnero gave the reporter referenced in the superintendent’s comments a chance to respond and he explained his use of the terms “micromanagement” and “Big Red” as words that were used in email discussions.

Mr. Oliver called for a point of order to move on to the remainder of the agenda. He also asked about the filtering system and the monitor to which administration responded in detail.

Mr. Nargi questioned the confidentiality involved in the agreement with Dr. Metallo.

Mr. Cavagnero responded that these issues will be further discussed at the special meeting for an Executive Session concerning Dr. Metallo's resignation, and at that time Dr. Metallo's side of the story will be heard.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Continuation of September 17 BOE Self-Evaluation on BOE Best Practices

Mr. Lyons moved and Miss Laus supported a motion to move into Executive Session to continue discussion of BOE Self-Evaluation on BOE Best Practices. Administration including Dr. O'Brien, Dr. Campbell, and Ms Haynes, and Vic Muschell were invited to attend. Miss Laus, Mrs. Raymond, Prof. Royals, Mr. Lyons, Mr. Cavagnero, and Mr. Mattiello were in favor. Mr. Rubino and Mr. Oliver were opposed. Mr. Nargi abstained. The motion carried.

The Board moved into Executive Session at 8:50 p.m.

The Board returned from Executive Session at 10:00 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Oliver moved and Mr. Rubino supported to table the consent agenda as it pertains to item #1 solely. The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Oliver moved and Mr. Mattiello supported the approval of consent agenda items #2, #3, and #4. The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

1. *Certified Staff Terminations due to Financial Restrictions*

Heidi Casarola, Kindergarten-EA (.5), layoff eff 6/30/08
Hilary Cornish, Literacy Support-VO, layoff eff 6/30/08
Taylor Musselman, Physical Education-EA, layoff eff 6/30/08
Michelle Herbert, Grade 1-EA, layoff eff 6/30/08
Carla Perlotto, Literacy Support, TF, layoff eff 6/30/08
Erin Morytko, Social Studies-HS, layoff eff 6/30/08
Michael Schleer, Social Studies-HS, layoff eff 7/16/08
Melissa Banks, Social Studies-MS, layoff eff 7/11/08

Marissa Bruni, Special Education Resource-DW (ea), resigned eff 7/18/08
Agnes Burns, Literacy Support-FB, resigned eff 7/18/08
Sarah Rhoades, Special Education Resources-FB, resigned eff 7/17/08
Jennifer Freese, Schience-HS, resigned eff 7/23/08
Veronica LeDue, Math-HS, resigned eff 8/1/08
Metallo, Dr. John, Principal-HS, resigned eff 8/15/08
Katherine Hanson, Special Education Resource-FB, resigned eff 8/6/08
Linda Bush, Guidance-HS, resigned eff 6/30/08
Adam Coleman, Biology-HS, resigned eff 8/22/08
Mary G. Buchanan, Media-SW (.5 FTE), resigned eff 7/31/08

Elizabeth White, Grade 3-TF, Childrearing LOA eff 2008-2009

Christine McGrath, Speech-DW(vo), .4 FTE, hired eff 8/21/08

Jocelyn A. Van Buren, Math-MS, hired eff 8/21/08

Kathleen Orr, Core Subjects-MS (.5), hired eff 8/21/08

Hilary Cornish, Teacher-FB, recall from layoff eff 8/21/08

Michelle Herbert, Teacher-VO, recall from layoff eff 8/21/08

Heidi Casarola, Teacher-VO, recall from layoff eff 8/21/08

Carla Perlotto, Literacy Support-TF (.5 FTE), recall from layoff
eff 8/21/08

Cynthia Moniz, Math-HS, hired eff 8/21/08

Cathy L. Driscoll, Special Education Resource-EA, hired eff 8/21/08

Ashlee D. Casko-Lopez, Music-EA/TF, hired eff 8/21/08

Melissa D. Stevenson, Grade 4-EA, hired eff 8/21/08

Joanne K. Arsego, Special Education-FB, hired eff 8/21/08

Stacey J. Deloy, Grade 2-TF, hired eff 8/21/08

Jennifer L. Paprzyca, Substitute Media Specialist-SW (.5 FTE), hired
eff 8/21/08

Daniel Reitenbach, Science-HS, hired eff 8/21/08

Melissa R. Kain, Special Education Resource-FB, hired eff 8/21/08

Theresa A. Vujs, Special Education Resource-FB, hired eff 10/6/08

Susan D. Kraut, Science-HS, hired eff 9/3/08

Laura B. Ramond, Grade 1-FB, hired eff 9/22/08

2. Contract Addenda

Will Siss, Dram Director II, Spring Drama Production-MS, eff 2008-2009

Alan Baio, Classbook Advisor, HS, eff 2008-2009

Lisa Hodgkins, Coordinating Teacher/SPED-MS, (.5 FTE), eff 2008-2009

Henry Marchand, Coordinating Teacher/SPED-MS, (.5 FTE), EFF 2008-
2009

3. Grant Application: Immigrant Children and Youth Program

4. Intent to Home School: HAAJAC09; ROBMAT09; ROBTIM09

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Personnel Matters: Teacher

Ms. Raymond moved and Mr. Nargi supported a motion to move into Executive session for Personnel Matters: Teacher. Dr. O'Brien, Dr. Campbell, Ms. Babcock, the teacher and his attorney, Randy Lovallo, and the Board's attorney, Tom Mooney were invited to attend. The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

Atty. Lovallo requested that the meeting be done in open session and identified Mr. Gerry Carbone, teacher at THS, as the subject of the identified session.

Atty. Lovallo stated that the allegations against his client, Mr. Carbone, were false, and he maintained that his client wanted an open session with the Board to clear his name. He then gave detailed information regarding related emails, letters, documents, and meetings in regards to the case. He asserted that the allegations were unsupported by documentation and that his client was wrongfully accused. He presented the Board with a list of demands that he would like satisfied to remedy the situation.

Atty. Mooney stated that after his investigation he found the case to be one of a mistaken identity. There was in fact an incident, but it did not involve Mr. Carbone.

Dr. O'Brien stated that some of what she had wanted to say could not be disclosed because it involves student's names which cannot be mentioned in public. But in the most recent letter she sent, she included the words "I regret." She considers these words an apology for what had happened. She stated that the meeting she had with Mr. Carbone was not disciplinary and nothing was put in his file and no written documents were produced. The only thing she asked of Gerry Carbone at the end of the meeting in May was to give the district excellent work in terms of case management and a positive attitude in the work place. She also shared the documents that she had regarding the case.

Mr. Nargi moved and Mr. Oliver supported a motion to continue the meeting after 11 p.m. The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

Dr. O'Brien presented her documents in detail and discussed that she had not received a copy of any of the letters that Atty. Lovallo had been sending, so she was not aware that any of this was going on until the end of August.

Dr. O'Brien then presented 3 other items that were concerns in regards to Mr. Carbone at the May 23rd meeting including an incident which occurred under the direction of Tom Jokabaitis, the interim superintendent prior to Dr. O'Brien; mismanagement of a young special ed person's case with a wrongful expulsion; and a meeting with the supervisor of SPED about improving the effectiveness of the program at the high school in which Mr. Carbone and some others were disrespectful.

Dr. O'Brien also revealed some disturbing facts about Gary Lambour which suggest that Mr. Lambour may have covered up information regarding the true culprit involved with pornography at THS.

Atty. Lovallo asserted that there was zero effort undertaken to determine the accuracy of the assertions before Dr. O'Brien called Mr. Carbone in for the meeting, and Mr. Carbone should not have had to come into the meeting not knowing the source of it.

Mr. Nargi questioned Atty. Mooney regarding his role at tonight's meeting to which Atty. Mooney responded he was representing the Board and he was present because he had the most prior knowledge of the situation.

Mr. Mattiello questioned Dr. O'Brien regarding what she meant by "our attorney," if she kept minutes of the May 23rd meeting, if it was unusual for her to have direct involvement in this non-disciplinary matter, and if she did not divulge information because of an ongoing investigation.

Dr. O'Brien responded that the first question she would like to answer in Executive Session. As far as the remaining questions, she did not keep minutes, it was unusual but because of the nature of the incident and she was the person who had the direct information from Mr. Jokubaitis she felt it was her responsibility, and she did not divulge information because of Atty. Mooney's investigation.

Dr. Campbell stated that the investigation took time because there was no paper trail so emails and electronic document files had to be searched.

Mr. Mattiello questioned Atty. Mooney as to scope of his investigation. Atty. Mooney responded his investigation in July at first only involved just reviewing the file which didn't answer the question who was involved. But on Sept. 10th he was asked to discover who was involved because a strong denial and a vivid recollection was what they had and he needed to discover the truth.

Mr. Mattiello questioned Dr. O'Brien asked what triggered the meeting on May 23rd and she responded completion of the budget process.

Mr. Carbone expressed that he wanted to say that he did express strong concerns at the November 7th meeting regarding his concerns for the SPED services for children but he didn't hear anything about his behavior as being "borderline insubordinate" until months later in February.

Mr. Mattiello questioned Dr. O'Brien about this case now being about her and how she handled the situation. Dr. O'Brien responded that she realizes this now, but did not realize this prior to tonight's meeting.

Mr. Mattiello questioned Dr. O'Brien about her awareness of the situation or any conversations with Vic Muschell despite not having any copies of the letters. Dr. O'Brien stated she didn't have any specific knowledge as to the gravity of the situation and the various demands.

Mr. Nargi moved and Miss Laus supported the motion to accept the remedies as proposed by Atty. Lovallo on behalf of his client, Gerry Carbone, with the exclusion of remedy #5. Mr. Nargi and Miss Laus were in favor. Mr. Oliver, Mr. Mattiello, Mr. Lyons, Prof. Royals, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Raymond were opposed. The motion did not carry.

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY SESSION

Victoria Measles, a senior at THS, spoke in support of the students and teachers at THS. She expressed concern over unanswered questions about Dr. Metallo’s resignation and students and teachers being afraid to ask any questions.

ITEMS FOR THE UPCOMING AGENDA

A special meeting will be held for the purpose of an Executive Session on October 7th at 7 p.m. at Migeon Avenue for resolution of the litigation in regards to Mr. Carbone. Mr. Lyons will contact Vic Muschell in regards to his suggestions for this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Cavagnero adjourned the meeting at 12:25 a.m.