

April 25, 2012

The Brooklyn Board of Education held its regular monthly meeting on April 25, 2012 in the middle school library. In attendance were: Jo Ann Gerardi-Vocio, Joan Trivella, Mae Lyons, Robert Rossi, Sheila Johnson, Alan Yanku and Frances Rotella, Middle School and Elementary School Principals, respectively, and Louise Berry, Superintendent. Members of the teaching staff and public were also in the audience.

1. Call to Order

Jo Ann Gerardi-Voccio called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

2. Public Comments

None

3. Minutes of Board Meetings held on March 28, 2012 and April 2, 2012.

Motion to approve the Minutes of March 28, 2012.

(Johnson/Lyons) Unanimous vote to approve

Motion to approve the Minutes of April 2, 2012.

(Johnson/Rossi) Unanimous vote to approve

4. Correspondence:

a. Bureau of School Facilities – Project 019-0027

Dr. Berry informed the Board members that the wall project in the middle school gym was moving ahead. There is a meeting Monday, April 30, 2012 at the Town Hall to finalize action on the issue of flooring material.

She also commented on the meeting held today with a representative from the state concerning this project.

5. Consent Agenda

Members discussed whether or not to remove this item from future agendas. They decided to leave the item on the agenda so discussion could take place if needed. If discussion was not needed, it could be bypassed.

6. Administrative Reports

a. & b. Elementary and Middle School Report

Ms. Rotella presented a power point presentation on Common Core State Standards. She informed the Board the staff members are in the process of transitioning to CCSS. Incorporating the similar goals at both the elementary and middle school levels is a major undertaking. She informed Board members that she and Mr. Yanku have been working collaboratively on bringing both levels together to ensure continuity. They have been working with EastConn by sending groups of teachers to workshops to gain information on CCSS. Those teachers then meet with curriculum teams within buildings to help them understand CCSS concepts and how they will impact students starting in 2014-2015.

In English Language Arts, the shift is going to be toward a more rigorous curriculum and grade level expectations. At the elementary level, students will be reading both literature and informational pieces to incorporate into persuasive writing.

In reading, foundational skills for reading literature, informational selections, science, and social studies will be the initial focus. Text complexity is a concept that will grow with the student. Certain literary pieces may have an easy reading level but a deep meaning. Students will begin by reading the selection and understanding it at a surface level. As the students move up in grade level, the same selection will be used again to obtain a deeper meaning. Ms. Rotella explained that grade level progression is when higher order, more complex thinking occurs as grade levels increase when reading both literary and informational pieces.

She also spoke to the changes in the writing process. Up until this time, the focus has been on narrative writing. The CCSS changes are incorporating fact, opinion, and arguments to move toward persuasive writing.

Students will also be expected to speak and listen effectively in a variety of settings, both formal and informal.

Vocabulary expectations have changed from using slang and euphemisms to using technical terminology.

Ms. Rotella stated she was pleased to inform that she has seen implementation of CCSS in the classroom.

Mr. Yanku informed the Board that there are greater mathematics expectations. Information is broken down into domains

overreaching big ideas. For example, geometry will be taught in grades kindergarten through grade 8. Concepts will be taught in smaller amounts, but in greater depths, concentrating on various aspects with the different grade levels. Teachers will teach through the standards so they work as building blocks for student understanding.

Mrs. Johnson asked about baseline testing and the possibility of forming a committee to assess the success of CCSS. She inquired as to how teaching staff will identify and deal with a student at risk. Ms. Rotella informed her that, SRBI and MyRtl data teams and student intervention teams will take steps to intervene before the child enters the investigative piece of special education. A discussion ensued.

Mr. Yanku informed the Board members that CCSS supports the combination of standards of learning in all areas: analyzing, evaluating, and higher order thinking. He spoke about the next steps that will be taken: specifically curriculum development and implementation, inventory resources, identifying gaps in resources, and developing units.

A discuss of success and concerns of the same ensued.

Building principals excused at 8:20 pm.

c. Assistant Principal Report

None

d. Superintendent:

- Teacher Appreciation Week

Dr. Berry reminded the Board that in the past the Board has made a monetary donation to the BEA Scholarship Fund in the amount of \$500.00.

Motion to donate \$500..00 the BEA Scholarship Fund in honor of Teacher Appreciation Day.

(Lyons/Rossi) Unanimous vote to accept

- Capital Projects

Dr. Berry was pleased to inform the members that the technology report was well received by the Board of Finance. She stated that the \$120,000.00 requested for technology upgrades has been added to the Capital Budget. The funds requested by Mr. Kowolenko for repairs to the Rosewing roof in the amount of \$30,200.00 were also added to the Capital Budget, and approval for both is anticipated.

- Senate Bill #24 An Act Concerning Educational Competitiveness

Dr. Berry presented the Board members with information on Senate Bill #24. She informed members that the governor did not sign the bill, and has stated that he does not plan to sign it in its current form. If the bill is not approved, we could lose \$80,000.00 in state aid.

Discussion ensued.

- Special Education Enrollment

Dr. Berry informed the Board that there are currently 170 special education students. That number is the highest it ever been.

- Enrollment Report

Presented - Nothing new to report

- Cafeteria Report

Presented - Nothing new to report

- Proposed 2012 – 2013 Budget – Update on Board of Finance Review

Dr. Berry presented the members with the proposed budget. She noted changes in insurance premium costs from 2.8% to 2.5% and a decrease in worker's compensation costs. There is also a decrease due to the technology equipment and Killingly High School capital costs being taken out of the school budget and put into the town's budget. The total increase in next year's budget is \$440,267.00. Dr. Berry asked the Board to take action on the budget.

Motion to accept the changes to the proposed 2012-2013 Budget and approve the 2012-2013 Budget at \$16,236.130.00.

(Rossi/Trivella) Unanimous vote to accept.

- Other

Dr. Berry informed the Board that CAFE Excellence in Leadership Awards will be presented to three eighth grade students at this year's Honor's Night which will take place on May 24th. The students receiving the awards have been recommended to CAFE by the eighth grade teachers and the final review and action was taken by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education.

7. Public Comments

None

8. Committee Reports

- a. Budget – Nothing to report
- b. Policy – Nothing to report
- c. Curriculum – No meeting to report on. The next meeting is May 14th at Brooklyn Middle School.
- d. Negotiations – No meeting to report on
- e. Capital – already discussed earlier
- f. EastConn – The budget passed with a 2% increase for employees.
- g. High School Relations – No meeting to report on
- h. Recreation Committee – No meeting to report on

9. Request for a Hearing on Residency

Dr. Berry informed the Board that the individual who requested the hearing was not present. She also informed the Board that she had a copy of the residency form acquired from the Plainfield Public Schools system which documents residence in Plainfield. The members of the board agreed that a hearing was not necessary in that there was no question as to the residence of individual.

10. Old Business – None

11. New Business

Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio stated that the members would go into executive session at the next meeting to approve Dr. Berry's evaluation.

Joan Trivella stated that looking into Norwich Free Academy as a designated high school choice would be a good idea. She has spoken to John Iovino from NFA and he has expressed interest in Brooklyn being a sending school. Dr. Berry informed the Board that she would do some research concerning the same and report back to the Board.

12. Public Comments – None

13. Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 pm.

(Trivella/Rossi) Unanimous vote to accept.

Joann Engel

Recording Secretary