

**Thomaston Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Thomaston Town Hall
Teen Center
November 9, 2009
7:00 p.m.**



Minutes

Present: Laurie Barrett, Laura Rieley, Steve Catania, Lucy Santopietro, Deborah April, Joanne Gilland, Beth Yaffe, Holly Herbert

Absent: George Counter; Student Board Representative, Leah Miller

Also Present: Superintendent, Lynda Mitchell; Business Manager, Susan Laone; Board Clerk, Patricia George; High School Principal, John Perrucci; Thomaston Center School Principal, James Diorio; Pupil Services Director, Nancy Schnyer; Black Rock School Principal, Paul Johnson; and School Board Representative, Alexander Lee

I. Establishment of a quorum and call to order:

Chairperson, Laurie Barrett established a quorum and called to order the Regular Meeting of the Thomaston Board of Education at 7:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance:

Student Representative, Alex Lee, led the pledge of allegiance.

III. Approval of Agenda:

On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Deborah April to approve/accept the agenda with the following amendment:

Under Section VII., Communications, subsection G, Correspondence, add an item #4 to include correspondence from the Dale Gangloff family.

No further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes:

Regular Meeting of the Board of Education dated October 19, 2009

On a motion made by Deborah April and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to approve/accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education dated October 19, 2009; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

V. Recognition:

Teacher of the Year, Tammy Dayton and departing Board Member, Deborah April were recognized for their service to the Thomaston Public School district and their commitment to education. A light reception was held in their honor prior to the meeting during which time the Board Chair, Laurie Barrett and Superintendent, Lynda Mitchell expressed their sentiments.

VI. Public Participation: n/a

VII. Communications:

A. New Hires:

On a motion made by Beth Yaffe and seconded by Deborah April to approve/accept the new hires as presented; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

B. Resignations: n/a

C. Athletics: n/a

D. Transfers: n/a

E. Leave of Absence: n/a

F. Field Trips:

On a motion made by Joanne Gilland and seconded by Lucy Santopietro to approve/accept the field trip application as presented; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

G. Correspondence:

Items 1 and 2: Informational

Item 3: Superintendent, Lynda Mitchell deferred to Pupil Services Director, Nancy Schnyer for comment. Simply stated, she said the document addressed changes in the way the district will recognize learning disabled children. The letter was copied and made available to all parents.

Item 4: Board Member, Joanne Gilland read a letter from the Gangloff family which stated that they had donated monies to create an enrichment fund for the arts to benefit young arts students. The distribution of monies would have to be approved by the Gangloff family or their designee. Additionally, the fund could be sustained through fundraising activities by the school district if there was a desire to do so.

H. Meeting Dates for 2010

1. On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Holly Herbert to approve/accept the Regular Meeting dates for 2010; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.
2. The establishment of meeting dates between the Board, Superintendent and Administrators will be established.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

A. Student of the month, Stephanie Keith: Reading from Stephanie's resume, Superintendent Mitchell highlighted Stephanie's achievements, leadership roles and extra-curricular activities. Ms. Mitchell stated that "Stephanie follows suit with all the impressive students that have preceded her and continues the successful student saga with her resume."

B. Each year, the district honors two students, based on specific criteria, to receive the CAPSS/LCSA Student Recognition Award. The awards presentation will be held at the Cornucopia in Torrington on Thursday, November 19, 2009. This year, Stephanie Keith and Matthew Dwan will be honored at the banquet.

- C. Wellness Policy: As a state directive, it is the responsibility of the district to monitor the policy which includes what was implemented in the schools and how was it was put into action.
- D. Strategic School Profile: Superintendent Mitchell asked the Board members to review the material in the profile. Plans are to include the report again on December's Board agenda.
- E. Change in 2009/2010 calendar: The January 4th, 2010 professional development day for staff and a non-school day for students was changed to a non-school day for both. The day was omitted for teachers due to a miscalculation in the number of days teachers would be actually working. According to contract, teachers are required to work 184 days. The calendar, prior to the adjustment, had the teachers working 185 days.
- F. Medical Update: The Central office continues to monitor H1N1 in the district. Data is collected weekly depicting the number of absences and the % of those absences as they would relate to the H1N1 flu.
- G. Biographic Information from Board members: Superintendent Mitchell reminded Board members to submit their bio material to her for the district webpage.

IX. Business Manager's Report:

- A. Snow Removal Contract Award
On a motion made by Beth Yaffe and seconded by Deborah April to approve/accept low bid snow removal contract submitted by Henry Osowiecki and Sons; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

X. Administrators' Reports:

- A. High School Principal, John Perrucci
- Mr. Perrucci distributed flash drives to each of the Board members in attendance which housed the science curriculum. Mr. Perrucci asked the board members to review the information so he could field questions at December's Board meeting. Once approved, the curriculum will be implemented and also placed on the district's webpage.
 - Mr. Perrucci shared that former Principal, James Wenker, donated several televisions and carts to the high school with an approximate cost of \$600 to \$700 each. The items were obsolete inventory at Newington School where he is now an Administrator.
- B. Thomaston Center School Principal, James Diorio
Principal Diorio publicly thanked the Enrichment Fund Council for the grant monies donated to the Drama Club, Wellness Assembly and Technology. He also added comments on data teams and Red Ribbon week.
- C. Black Rock School Principal, Paul Johnson
- Mr. Johnson shared his sentiments on teacher of the year, Tammy Dayton. He also thanked Lynda Petersen and Patricia Henderson for a job well done in his absence.
 - With regards to the recent awarding of the Education Enrichment Fund grants he, too, wished to thank the committee for their contribution of monies to the school, specifically mentioning a projector for the computer lab.
- D. Pupil Services Director, Nancy Schnyer
Ms. Schnyer highlighted the first paragraph of her written report which addressed the recent visit of NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children).

XI. Student Representatives' Reports:

Student Representative, Alex Lee took a moment to congratulate teacher of the year, Ms. Tammy Dayton. Alex continued by highlighting several upcoming high school events, the homecoming dance and Veterans' Assembly.

XII. Standing Committee Reports:

A. Budget:

On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Steve Catania to approve/accept the budget expenditures and transfers as presented; no further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

B. Curriculum/Instruction:

No report

C. Maintenance/Facilities:

No Report

D. Technology:

Principal, Paul Johnson extended an invitation to Board Members to attend the Technology Committee meetings. The committee meets the last Thursday of every month at 7:30 a.m. for approximately 40 minutes at Black Rock School.

E. Personnel:

No Report

F. Transportation:

Business Manager, Sue Laone met with Worhunsky Bus Representative, Lori Foley, Superintendent Mitchell and the driver of bus #71 to discuss concerns from parents relating to the driver. During the meeting, Ms. Mitchell expressed her expectations. Subsequently, another issue occurred with the same bus driver and she was reassigned to another route, and currently it is believed, that she is no longer with the company.

G. Athletics:

No report

H. Long Range Task Force/Building Committee:

No report

I. Policy:

No report

J. Government Relations:

No report

K. Affiliations:

No report

XIII. Old Business:

A. Honor Roll Protocol update: At the October 19, 2009 Board meeting, Board Member, Deborah April asked for an update of the honor roll protocol.

After some research, Principal Perrucci noted that at the January 12, 2009 Regular Meeting of the Board of Education, the Board approved Principal Wenker's proposed changes to the Honor Roll as set forth below:

- Highest Honors: All A's / 4.0 (No change)
- High Honors: All A's and B's / 3.5 (No change)
- Honors: All A's and B's / 3.0 (**change: No C's**)

Mr. Perrucci felt it was a good move to exclude C's, however he feels it is necessary to address the population of AP students. He continued by stating that AP courses are college level courses, not high school courses, and therefore he felt they should be excluded in some sense or amended so that the level of difficulty of the courses would be recognized.

For example, if a student took three AP courses, which is very challenging in and of itself, it could be very possible that the student would not achieve a B but did the work of a college level course. Given this, Mr. Perrucci met with the guidance counselors, discussing several options including a weighted system. They concluded that this system would require an enormous amount of tracking by the guidance department at the very minimum.

He recommends to add an exclusion which states that students may achieve C's in AP courses and achieve the lowest level of the honor roll as long as they maintained a 3.0 average. He feels that this would still be a challenge but also recognize the difficulty of the AP course.

Some questions brought forth by members included: The number of students that would fall in this category and is it fair to those students who are not in AP courses, yet are trying their hardest and achieving C's?

In conclusion, Mr. Perrucci was asked to provide the current guidelines and what he proposes to use for further discussion.

XIV. New Business:

None

XV: Items for Future Agendas:

A. Superintendent Mitchell noted two items that she will address on future agendas. One of the items relates to further discussion on the Strategic School Profiles which were included in this month's agenda and the second item will address "TEAM" – Teacher Education and mentoring Program Public Act No. 09-6.

XVI. Executive Session:

XVII. Adjournment:

On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Deborah April to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education at 8:00 p.m.; no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.