

East Haddam Board of Education  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Nathan Hale-Ray High School Cafeteria  
August 14, 2007  
7:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tracey Gionta, Alan Hyla, Nick Iacovelli, Bob Mather, Tom Miett,  
Manny Misenti, Mary Beth Mordecai

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Pamela Gourlie, Everett Herden

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Dr. Ellen Solek, Bob Carroll, Linda Dadona, Cindy Mello,  
Jason Peacock, Bryan Perry, Deb Denette (arrived 7:10 p.m.)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mr. Iacovelli.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. REPORT OF THE BOARD CHAIR

In the absence of Mrs. Gourlie, Mr. Iacovelli welcomed Superintendent, Dr. Solek, to her first Board of Education meeting.

Mr. Iacovelli noted that Student Council representative, Kevin Staehly, will return for a second term on the Board of Education and that Linda Dadona will be recruiting another member of the Student Council to join Kevin on the Board.

IV MINUTES

**MOTION:** Mather, Mordecai; to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 12, 2007 as presented.

**FAVOR (5):** Hyla, Mather, Miett, Misenti, Mordecai  
**OPPOSED (0):** None  
**ABSTENTIONS (2):** Gionta, Iacovelli  
**ABSENT (2):** Gourlie, Herden  
**MOTION PASSED**

IV MINUTES (continued)

**MOTION:** Gionta, Mordecai; to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of June 14, 2007 as presented.

**FAVOR (6): Gionta, Hyla, Mather, Mielt, Misenti, Mordecai**

**OPPOSED (0): None**

**ABSTENTIONS (1): Iacovelli**

**ABSENT (2): Gourlie, Herden**

**MOTION PASSED**

V. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEES

A. 4-8 Middle School

Mrs. Mordecai reported on the progress of the construction. The structure is 65%-75% completed. The foundation and concrete will be done by the end of the week and the entrance is paved. The project is on schedule and on budget. One concern was the fact that copper has been stolen from the site. Mrs. Mordecai noted that it would be 15-18 weeks before the building was completed enough to secure all materials inside. She noted that the gates are locked; however, that measure does not prohibit trespassers on foot. Discussion was held relative to increasing security.

Mrs. Mordecai noted that Mr. Toolin and Mr. Garafalo, the newly appointed alternates to the School Building Committee, have been a welcome addition and are really stepping up. She noted that the first change order presented was for a \$95,000 addition on outdoor lighting. Technical discussion was held relative to the difference between 10 and 2 wire. In summary, East Haddam will enjoy a slight cost savings rather than incur a \$95,000 increase relative to lighting.

B. Middle School and Elementary School Capital Improvement

Mr. Mather reported that this committee had not met.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Solek thanked the Board for its welcome and the opportunity given her to lead the district. She stated that she looked forward to getting to know East Haddam.

A. Professional Development Focus

Dr. Solek reviewed the in-service schedule for professional development for all three schools. She noted that the focus theme will be on differentiated instruction.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (continued)

B. Formation of New School Transition Committee

Dr. Solek stated that she will be soliciting volunteers to serve on a task force regarding the middle school transition. She stated that she would like to organize a diverse group. Volunteers were encouraged.

C. Magnet School

Mr. Carroll noted that this year 16 students have applied and been accepted to the New London Magnet School. He noted that no formal action has ever been taken by the East Haddam Board of Education to establish a cap. The cost of attendance per student is \$2,400. Transportation costs are presently being picked up by the State. Mr. Carroll noted that only 10 students were budgeted for attendance in 2007/2008. In the absence of any limiting policies, he is recommending that all 16 interested students be allowed to participate and that the Board establish a cap going forward. Mr. Carroll was directed to find out the exact number of students signed up to participate as of August 14 and to freeze attendance at this point. Encouraging participation in the magnet schools relieves overcrowding issues in East Haddam and provides additional opportunities to East Haddam students. The Long Range Planning Committee was directed to review the matter and make a recommendation to the Board relative to a cap. Mr. Carroll was directed to identify potential sources to fund the additional students that were not budgeted.

D. Summer School Participation Rates

Dr. Solek noted that Mr. Scata will have an in-depth presentation in September relative to the summer school program. In short she noted that 97% of the students completed the program and response was favorable.

E. P.A. 06-63 – An Act Concerning Healthy Food and Beverages in Schools

Mr. Carroll noted that pursuant to this act the Board of Education must take action on the National School Lunch Authorization. There are two separate motions on for later in the agenda. An affirmative vote on the first motion would permit the sale of drinks such as power-aid at after school activities and sporting events. An affirmative vote on the second motion would prohibit the sale of any food item not on the nutrition standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education. Mr. Carroll advised that if this motion were approved, fundraisers such as butter braids, pies, cookie dough, etc. could not occur. Lengthy discussion was held relative to Mr. Mather and Mr. Hyla's concern that the Board would appear hypocritical by allowing the sale of such foods on school grounds to generate revenue. The national trend on obesity among children was discussed. Mrs. Gionta and Mrs. Mordecai countered that children need to understand and to be taught that there are times and places that snacks and desserts are acceptable.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (continued)

F. 2007/2008 Staffing Update

Dr. Solek advised that the following positions have been filled:

Elementary School

Marielle Hickey – Special Education Teacher  
Kathleen DiCristofaro – Aide  
Lori Holmgren – P/T Aide (one year position)  
Still open – Reading/Language Arts Consultant  
Still open – .5 Special Education Teacher

Middle School

Janet Barrett – P/T Special Education Aide  
Jason Peacock – Principal  
Lisa Plante – World Languages Teacher

High School

Laura Benson – Biology Teacher  
Bridget Dean – English Teacher  
Carly Emery – Special Education Teacher  
Bonnie Tate – Chemistry/Physics Teacher

Central Office

Ellen Solek – Superintendent

District Wide

Christopher Lelyo – Groundskeeper/Maintenance  
Paul Parkus – Maintenance

Responsive to inquiry from the Board, Dr. Solek advised that she anticipated both open positions to be filled prior to the start of school. Mr. Iacovelli cautioned the district against overlooking veteran candidates in favor of cost savings with inexperienced teachers. Dr. Solek stated that she understands the importance of veteran teachers for mentors, advisors, etc. She stated that the district strives to hire the most highly qualified candidate out of each pool of applicants for a position.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Long Range Planning

Mr. Iacovelli reported that the Long Range Planning Committee will meet on September 6, 2007 at 4:00 p.m.

B. Finance

Mr. Mather reported that this Committee has not met.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued)

C. Policy

Dr. Mielt reported that the next meeting is September 6, 2007.

D. Transportation

Mr. Mather advised that there has been no reason for this Committee to meet.

E. Personnel and Negotiations

Mr. Misenti requested that the Board meet briefly for an Executive Session at the end of this meeting.

F. Ray Board Liaison

Mr. Iacovelli stated that this Board is anticipated to meet in the fall.

G. LEARN

Mr. Iacovelli noted that Mrs. Gourlie was not present to report; however, he noted that LEARN had not met.

H. Curriculum Council

Everett Herden was not present to report. Mr. Iacovelli stated that the Council is scheduled to meet on September 10<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Mordecai noted that Mr. Herden had indicated that he did not wish to continue as curriculum council liaison for this school year. She stated that if that is still the case, she would be interested in assuming this role.

I. Open Space

No report.

J. Local Prevention Council

Mr. Hyla reported that the next meeting is September 19, 2007 and that the group will be comparing a 2003 survey with another given in 2007.

VIII. Communications and Audience of Citizens

Opportunity given for public comment, none made.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

None noted.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Acceptance of Consent Agenda

**MOTION:** Miett, Hyla; to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- 1) Warrant
  - a. To approve the warrant for 2006-2007 in the amount of \$1,629,358.96.
  - b. To approve the warrant for 2007-2008 in the amount of \$615,459.21.
- 2) To authorize the Board Secretary, the Superintendent, and the Business Manager to be authorized signatories to the National School Lunch Program paperwork.
- 3) To accept the resignation of Mrs. Margaret Stahl, Reading/Language Arts Consultant at East Haddam Elementary School, effective to the end of the 2006/2007 school year.

To accept the resignation of Mrs. Sheryl McCabe, special education teacher at East Haddam Elementary school, effective July 25, 2007.

**FAVOR (6): Gionta, Hyla, Mather, Miett, Misenti, Mordecai**  
**OPPOSED (0): None**  
**ABSTENTIONS (1): Iacovelli**  
**ABSENT (2): Gourlie, Herden**  
**MOTION PASSED**

B. 2007-08 Tuition Rates

The following tuition rates were noted:

School	Regular	Special Education
Elementary School	\$11,024.69	\$38,356.40
Middle School	\$9,833.48	\$34,417.18
High School	\$12,753.25	\$44,636.37

C. P.A. 06-63 – An Act Concerning Healthy Food and Beverages in Schools

**MOTION:** Mordecai, Gionta; to permit the sale of beverages, other than those that are on the allowable list, at events occurring after the end of the regular school day, on the weekend at the location of the event and under the condition that these beverages are not to be sold from a vending machine or school store, if beverages and foods that meet Connecticut nutrition standards are also sold as an alternative.

**FAVOR (4): Gionta, Miett, Misenti, Mordecai**  
**OPPOSED (2): Hyla, Mather**  
**ABSTENTIONS (1): Iacovelli**  
**ABSENT (2): Gourlie, Herden**  
**MOTION PASSED**

X. NEW BUSINESS (continued)

C. P.A. 06-63 – An Act Concerning Healthy Food and Beverages in Schools (continued)

**MOTION:** Gionta, Mordecai; to have the East Haddam Board of Education certify that all food items offered for sale to student sin the East Haddam Public Schools under our jurisdiction, and not exempted from the nutrition standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education on August 1, 2006 will meet said standards. Such certification shall include food offered for sale to students at all times and from all sources including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fundraising activities on school premises, whether or not school sponsored.

**FAVOR (0): None**

**OPPOSED (6): Gionta, Hyla, Mather, Miett, Misenti, Mordecai**

**ABSTENTIONS (1): Iacovelli**

**ABSENT (2): Gourlie, Herden**

**MOTION FAILED**

**MOTION:** Miett, Gionta; to enter into an Executive Session at @ 8:10 p.m.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT**

**MOTION PASSED**

The Board returned to Regular Session at 8:15 p.m.

**MOTION:** Miett, Mordecai; to adjourn at 8:16 p.m.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT**

**MOTION PASSED**

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Iacovelli  
Board Secretary