

East Haddam Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Nathan Hale-Ray High School Cafeteria
September 13, 2005
7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pamela Gourlie, Everett Herden, Nick Iacovelli,
Robert Mather, Tom Mielt, Manny Misenti, Melissa Ziobron,
Dora Lyman (arrived 7:10 p.m.)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Steve Quinn

STUDENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES: Justin Christopher

OTHERS PRESENT: Dr. Durham and approximately 20 people including staff
were present.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Mrs. Gourlie.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. REPORT OF THE BOARD CHAIR

Mrs. Gourlie asked Mr. Scata to present the teacher of the year award. Mr. Scata gave a brief overview of the process for teacher of the year selection. He stated that each spring, all students and parents are asked for nominations. Once they are all returned, the selection committee meets to determine the winner. Mr. Scata commented that each year, many teachers are nominated, but the teachers do not apply. He stated that this year's winner was prompted by his daughter to apply.

Mr. Scata announced Mr. Bruce Freeman as the 2005-06 Teacher of the Year. He presented Mr. Freeman with the traditional engraved bell. Mr. Freeman is the technology education teacher at Nathan Hale-Ray High School. He is well known for his and his students' work on the Electrathon.

III. REPORT OF THE BOARD CHAIR (Cont'd)

Mr. Freeman began his speech by expressing his gratitude for the support he was given when he first came to East Haddam, after more than 20 years in the private industry. He stated he uses a real-world approach to teaching, which attracts all types of students. The students then come together in one collective group.

Mr. Freeman stated that his students have won many honors, but he felt the most important attribute was the student learning that took place. He stated he was very proud to be selected, he appreciated the opportunity, and he wished everyone well.

Mrs. Gourlie called for a brief recess in order to congratulate Mr. Freeman and to have refreshments. She reconvened the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Mrs. Gourlie announced that Mr. Justin Christopher would again serve as the Student Council representative to the Board. She asked Mrs. Dadona if there would be another representative as well. Mrs. Dadona indicated that she approached the Student Council earlier today, and they would designate another representative. Mr. Christopher reported that it was good to be back and that the school year started well.

Mrs. Gourlie announced that this year, the Board would have its photograph in the yearbook. She asked all Board members to come to the October meeting 15 minutes early, dressed for photographs.

Mrs. Gourlie informed the Board that she received one piece of correspondence from Mrs. Nancy Mackinnon. She was looking for volunteers to read stories to children at the upcoming East Haddam Fair in order to promote reading as a family and community. They are looking for volunteers to read for 5-10 minute segments and anyone interested could sign up at the fair. The reading hours are Saturday, September 17, from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, September 18, from 11:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

IV. ACTION ON THE MINUTES

MOTION: Misenti, Ziobron; to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 9, 2005 with the following amendments:

- Page 1: Add Melissa Ziobron to the attendance;
- Page 6, paragraph 1: Change the first sentence to read, "Mr. Misenti stated he had hoped for expandability of the septic design for future expansion of the school."

FAVOR (5): Herden, Lyman, Mather, Misenti, Ziobron

OPPOSED: None

ABSTENTIONS (2): Iacovelli, Miatt

ABSENT (1): Quinn

MOTION CARRIED

V. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEESA. 4-8 Middle School

Mrs. Gourlie announced that Mr. Todd Moss, chairman of the 4-8 School Building Committee, would give a status update on the school project.

Mr. Moss informed the Board that they have reached an important milestone with the completion of the schematic design for the 4-8 school. He stated that each Board member should have received a set of plans and an executive summary. He stated there are some areas of the design that are different from the educational specification and a spreadsheet with these details was also included with the information.

Mr. Moss announced that Mr. Dave King, principal, Ms. Jennifer Mangiagli, and Mr. Whitney Talcott, all from Kaestle Boos Associates, were present this evening to review the design and to help answer any questions. Mr. Moss stated that they were requesting approval of the schematic design so they could move forward to the design development phase.

Mrs. Gourlie reminded the Board that it was important to approve this tonight, if possible. If it was not possible to approve this tonight, a Special Meeting must be held in order to let the Building Committee move forward.

Mr. King began by stating the schematic design was the result of a great deal of input from many. He met with the faculty and many of their suggestions were incorporated. He noted that due to budget restrictions, some changes were not made. Mr. King believed they have stayed within the budget with this plan.

V. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEES (Cont'd)A. 4-8 Middle School (Cont'd)

Mr. Whitney Talcott presented a site board. He stated the school entrance would be off 73 Clark Gates Road, through a field, and approximately 3,000 feet in length. Mr. Talcott showed the parking areas and stated there would be two separate entrances. There was a one-story section of the building at the lower end of the parking lot and a two-story wing in the upper lot. The cafeteria and service entrance were located in the back of the building.

Mr. Talcott stated there were 166 parking spaces, which could include some overflow parking. In addition, he noted that there would be adequate places for pull-off parking. There will be emergency access to Sillimanville Road.

Mr. Talcott explained that there would be four fields located on the north and east sides of the building. The septic would be underneath the soccer fields. He noted that most of the stormwater would be pumped in to help dilute the nitrogen from the septic. The soccer field would be cut and filled.

Mr. King inquired about the green areas to the far edges of the plans. Mr. Talcott noted those were wetlands areas. He stated that the building would be outside of the review area. Although the entrance to the school would go through the review area, he did not believe there would be very much disturbance.

Mr. Talcott stated there was one vernal pool found, which might provide an interesting opportunity for students. He did not believe there would be any environmental impacts to the vernal pool.

Mrs. Lyman questioned what a vernal pool was. Mr. Talcott explained that a vernal pool is an area that is wet in the spring, where amphibians lay their eggs. The area is usually dry by May, and all of the amphibians and their young have left. He stated they found a mass of salamander eggs during their inspection.

Ms. Jennifer Mangiagli presented the floor plans. She stated the one-story portion of the school would be used for grades 4 and 5. The two-story wing would be used for grades 6, 7, and 8. The plan included two separate entrances, one for grades 4-5 and one for grades 6-8. She explained that each wing was mostly self-contained. Each wing has immediate support services, toilets, storage, custodial areas, special education rooms, etc.

V. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEES (Cont'd)A. 4-8 Middle School (Cont'd)

Ms. Mangiagli indicated the central front area of the school would house the administration, guidance, and nurse's offices. These areas would be used for all grades, but would have separate entrances. There would also be two conference rooms in this area. Visitors would enter the administration area first before being allowed into the school.

Ms. Mangiagli discussed the media center. She stated they will try to adapt areas of the media center for use by the lower grades while still serving the upper grade needs.

Ms. Mangiagli located the cafeteria and kitchen on the left side of the school, while the gymnasium/multi-purpose room was located on the right side of the building. The music and art rooms were located in the back near the gymnasium.

Ms. Mangiagli stated there were areas shown on the plan for future expansion. There is potential for 2-3 stories off the grades 6-8 wing. She commented that another possibility for expansion was to add an ell from the grades 4-5 corridor and adding classrooms and a courtyard.

Ms. Mangiagli showed the Board the front elevation of the school. She stated they were still in the design phase regarding exterior materials, colors, etc.

Ms. Mangiagli indicated there were some differences between the educational specification and the schematic design. In all cases, the changes were discussed and were desirable by the Building Committee. Examples of some of the changes were the size of the media center, the addition of an extra music class, and the separation of occupational therapy from physical therapy.

Mr. Misenti questioned the number of wings designed for the cafeteria. Mr. King responded that there would be three seatings of 250 students. Ms. Mangiagli suggested that grades 4-5 could eat in one sitting, grades 6-7 in another sitting, and grade 8 by themselves.

Mr. Misenti stated he had not realized there would be multi-stories. He asked how many classrooms were in the design for possible expansion. Mr. Moss stated there would be 11 classrooms in the lower level and 8 in the upper level. Mr. Misenti calculated there could be 380 additional students with the expansion. He asked if there was septic capacity for these students. Mr. Moss stated there was not, as designed. Mr. Misenti questioned the expandability of the septic. Mr. Talcott stated they were simply trying to fit

V. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEES (Cont'd)A. 4-8 Middle School (Cont'd)

the design, and there would be alternate ways to expand. He stated it was possible to change the design in the future. Mr. Misenti clarified that he was not advocating redesign, but it was important for the community to know if the capacity was there. Mr. Talcott stated there was no reason why they could not design the expansion in the future.

Mr. Misenti stated if there was a treatment system, it would cost considerably more to run it. Mr. King noted that technology is constantly changing. Mr. Talcott noted that the DEP has a formula to use, and there were ways to re-plumb the existing system.

Mr. Misenti noted that this community had an ad-hoc committee for the school projects. The biggest concern was that people wanted to be sure that the septic system could be expanded. He noted that this school would be at approximately 95% capacity when it opens, and it is very important to have flexibility.

Mr. Misenti noted that although East Haddam has a lot of wetlands, there are some issues with wells. He asked if it was possible to have preliminary studies to find out if we have the water we need for this school. Mr. Talcott stated there would be 2-3 wells and there was no reason to think that there would be insufficient water. He stated he did plan to drill some preliminary wells to find out what was needed. Mr. Misenti thanked him for his answer.

Mr. Iacovelli responded to Mr. Misenti's earlier comment regarding capacity. He stated that the Cohort system was reliable and it appeared that in the next year or so, the school could be close to maximum capacity; however, then it looked like the numbers would drop. He believed there would be no space issues for approximately the next 15 years. He added that it appeared that there was some room for expansion.

Mr. Iacovelli questioned if there was an elevator to which Mr. King responded there was one elevator. Mrs. Ziobron indicated the elevator was located near the Title 1 room.

Mr. Iacovelli questioned the corridor width. Mr. Moss stated it would be approximately 8-9 feet wide. Mr. Iacovelli asked what the corridor width at the high school was, to which Mr. Moss responded it was 9-feet.

V. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEES (Cont'd)A. 4-8 Middle School (Cont'd)

Mr. Iacovelli asked about the stairwells. Ms. Mangiagli stated the stairwells would be 12-feet wide, with double doors at the top. Mr. Moss commented that the younger children in grades 4-5 would not have to navigate stairs.

Mr. Iacovelli inquired if there would be air conditioning, and if so, where. Mr. Moss stated the air conditioning at this time would be limited to only the media center, computer rooms, administration area, music room, and the art room. He added that the educational specification called for a couple of classes with air conditioning. He stated that he will look into the cost for full air conditioning, but it would come down to cost. Mr. Iacovelli suggested if air conditioning was not added, that the windows be used that would open and close.

Mr. Misenti asked if the gymnasium was air-conditioned. Mr. Moss stated it was not air conditioned, just ventilated.

Mr. Herden asked what the upper school entry markings represented. Mr. Moss stated this area was the vestibule, which had double doors. Mr. Herden was concerned about the circulation should the school need to be evacuated at any time. Mr. King stated these stairs lead directly to the ground level.

Mrs. Gourlie asked if there was anything to prevent a future auditorium. Mr. King stated that based on the slopes, an auditorium could be added.

Mr. Mather was concerned about the lack of windows near the front corner of the school. He did not believe the administration could see who was approaching until the visitor actually entered through the door. Mr. King noted that after the students were in school, all of the doors would be locked, except the entrance at the vestibule door. Once inside, the only place a visitor could go would be to the main office.

Mr. Mather stated it was his pet peeve that the custodial space was cut from 2,700 square-feet to 2,137 square-feet. Ms. Mangiagli referred to the yellow storage building, as shown on the plan. Mr. Mather stated there is a storage unit at the high school also, but there are no custodial supplies in it. Mr. King noted that the 2,137 square feet were dispersed throughout the school. Mr. Mather stated these were the same answers received 10 years ago when the high school was being built.

V. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEES (Cont'd)A. 4-8 Middle School (Cont'd)

Ms. Mangiagli stated that there was excess academic storage planned in the school, above what was outlined in the educational specification. Mrs. Gourlie suggested the Board might outline a plan for the length of time items would be kept. She believed Mr. Mather's concerns could be addressed through Board guidelines.

Mr. Moss agreed with Mr. Mather that the first two places to be cut were mechanical rooms and storage rooms. However, he believed they might have options that they had not yet thought of, such as the possibility of common storage areas once the middle school was abandoned.

Mrs. Gourlie suggested when Mr. Misenti meets with the Building Committee, he could discuss storage options. Mr. Misenti stated he would discuss this with the Building Committee.

Mr. Herden questioned the classroom storage. Ms. Mangiagli stated each classroom would have two upright 3'x7' wardrobe closets, a row of base cabinets, and a sink. She added that some rooms might also have upper cabinets.

Mrs. Lyman questioned the use of personal air conditioners at the existing middle school. Dr. Durham explained that these were not personal air conditioners brought in by the staff, but rather small units purchased because some areas needed to be air-conditioned. Mrs. Lyman stated she was pro-air conditioning, although she did not know the cost associated with it. Mr. Moss stated that this was a very large expenditure. He noted that there were some environmentally friendly units that used groundwater. Initially more expensive, the operating costs could be 10-20% less per year than traditional units.

Mrs. Lyman asked if small air conditioners could be put in the windows. Ms. Mangiagli stated it might be possible. Mr. Moss stated he would explore the available options. If people really wanted air conditioning, he stated he could go back to the necessary boards to see if it could be done.

Mrs. Lyman asked if they could plan for air conditioners in the future. Mr. Moss stated they could. He again stated he would look into the options, but they would be cost-driven.

V. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEES (Cont'd)A. 4-8 Middle School (Cont'd)

Mrs. Lyman stated she liked the green concept for air conditioning. She recalled that the adhoc committee was concerned with conserving energy. She asked if any of the plans employed this concept. Mr. Moss stated one option they could look into was the use of "gray water", whereby sink water would be recirculated for flushing toilets. He stated he must be cognizant of the budget, and although he could not promise this would be done, he could promise to look into it.

Mr. Moss stated the next Building Committee meeting would be held tomorrow evening, September 14, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. in Room 117. Mr. Moss invited any Board member to call him if they had additional questions.

MOTION: Ziobron, Mather; to approve the schematic plan as presented by the Chairman of the Building Committee on September 14, 2005.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION CARRIED**

B. Middle and Elementary Schools' Capital Improvements

Nothing new was reported.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLSA. Update on the Opening of School

Dr. Durham introduced Mrs. Cindy Mello to give a report on the elementary school.

Mrs. Mello indicated that the first day transitioned with ease, although there were slight delays for hugs, kisses, and photographs. They greeted 593 students with the traditional opening ceremony, at which Dr. Durham spoke.

Mrs. Mello informed the Board they have three long-term substitute positions: Lori Yorgensen for physical education; Daphne Miller for remedial reading; and Katherine Decristofaro for the library.

Mrs. Mello stated they were excited about the new reading materials and the new science curriculum.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (Cont'd)A. Update on the Opening of School (Cont'd)

Mrs. Mello reviewed their plans for Constitution Day. They have copies of the Constitution in each classroom, and every class has to build a classroom constitution, which they use as their rules for the year. This connects to the responsive classroom.

Mrs. Ziobron questioned how the new rule for birthday celebrations was discussed as a school. Mrs. Mello explained that there were usually a few extra cupcakes on birthdays, and the birthday girl/boy and a buddy were visiting many classrooms. This was discussed at the building council meeting, and they came up with a new rule that cupcakes were allowed only in the classrooms. Mrs. Ziobron stated she was glad that the teachers also had input on this decision.

Mr. Iacovelli stated he overheard some mothers and children talking about the start of school, and everyone seemed excited.

Mrs. Mello introduced Mrs. Judy DeLeeuw to talk about the middle school. Mrs. DeLeeuw stated that the first day went well. It was wonderful to see the students happy to be back. She stated the staff was asked to create new bulletin boards, and they all looked great. She added the new front landscaping looked lovely.

Mrs. DeLeeuw reported that the MPAC-sponsored First Day America celebration was a success. First Selectman, Brad Parker, and State Representative, Linda Orange, were in attendance. In addition, Youth and Family Services, Parks and Rec, the Library, and the Senior Center all had representatives at this celebration. They also used old books from the library for a free book giveaway. MPAC gave each student a Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School a T-shirt to be worn on several planned spirit days throughout the year. Mrs. DeLeeuw thanked Board members Mrs. Gourlie, Mr. Mather, and Mrs. Ziobron for attending.

Mrs. DeLeeuw stated this year's enrollment was 456, down from last year's 479. She was happy to announce that they had a 90% participation rate in the summer reading program this year. Last year's participation was only 50%.

Mrs. DeLeeuw announced there was one new teacher, Mr. Andrew Riccio, at the middle school this year. He seemed to be having a very easy transition.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (Cont'd)A. Update on the Opening of School (Cont'd)

Mrs. DeLeeuw indicated the grades 5 and 6 Open House was scheduled for tomorrow at 6:30 p.m., with a special presentation at 6:00 for parents of 5th grade students. The Open House for grades 7 and 8 will be held on September 26, 2005 at 6:30 p.m.

For Constitution Day, some students will conduct research and will give a presentation over the intercom on Friday, September 16, 2005.

Mrs. DeLeeuw introduced Mrs. Linda Dadona to discuss the opening of the high school. She thanked Mrs. Dadona for her help since she began.

Mrs. Dadona stated the high school opened their doors to 372 students, up from 342 students last year. This year's freshman class is the largest ever, with 114 students. Mrs. Dadona believed this was good news because it seemed like this is where students want to be.

Mrs. Dadona indicated 109 families attended the freshman orientation night. All but five families came to receive important information for the start of school.

Mrs. Dadona commented that the staff was very impressed with the students, particularly with the freshmen. She stated that the grades 9 and 10 guidance counselor, Ms. Wendy Gavin, conducted a survey, and found that the biggest stressor for freshmen was 1) the workload, and 2) the increased academic workload. Mrs. Dadona recalled that parents wanted their children to be challenged and they are working to increase the rigor and look at ways to improve the curriculum.

Mrs. Dadona stated there was only one new teacher this year. Mrs. Kelly Breymeier-Roberts will teach Spanish I. She will be shared with the middle school. Mrs. Dadona noted that last year, they hired eight new teachers.

Mrs. Dadona stated they added cross-country this year. She indicated that 31% of the student body participate in some type of fall sport.

Mrs. Dadona indicated there are currently 26 students in the virtual high school. In addition, she voiced her appreciation to the Ray Board for donating two wireless laptops. This will allow them to expand their capabilities.

Mrs. Dadona informed the Board that this Thursday, a group of high school students will go to the Senior Center to help with the plantings.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (Cont'd)A. Update on the Opening of School (Cont'd)

For Constitution Day, Mrs. Dadona stated that Mr. Rinaldi would read the 10 Commandments over the intercom, and would give a presentation. In addition, Social Studies teachers will follow up in their individual classrooms.

Dr. Mielt asked what classes were being utilized on the virtual high school. Mrs. Dadona stated there were many different classes for which students were enrolled. Dr. Durham stated he could provide a list to the Board.

Mr. Misenti questioned how many students signed up for cross-country. Mrs. Dadona stated that there were 13 girls and 21 boys. Mr. Misenti commented that this was even higher than anticipated.

Mr. Misenti inquired if he could have a copy of Mr. Rinaldi's preamble for Constitution Day. Mr. Rinaldi stated he did not have anything formally prepared, but he would be happy to provide notes after the presentation. Mrs. Gourlie suggested that Mr. Christopher could give a report at the next meeting.

Mrs. Gourlie stated that it appeared that everything was going well. She stated that all of the buildings looked very good.

Dr. Durham announced that there was new legislation, effective July 1, 2005, which mandated Constitution Day activities. He stated this would be expanded upon next year.

Dr. Durham sensed a high level of excitement during his visits to the schools on opening day. He believed some of this might be the result of the later than usual opening.

B. Summer School Report

Dr. Durham stated a written summary report on the summer school was included in the Board's packet. This year, a high school piece was added. He stated that all three levels were very successful. If anyone had questions on the program, they were encouraged to contact Dr. Durham.

Responsive to inquiry by Mr. Herden, Mrs. Dadona explained that the summer school session for high school students was designed to help students "catch up" to where they needed to be. It was not meant to be the same as a semester during the school year, as was approximately 30% of this time. She stated that Carnegie units were assigned based on

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (Cont'd)B. Summer School Report (Cont'd)

seat time. Mr. Herden questioned if the testing was as rigorous as during the school year. Mrs. Dadona stated that students must have at least a 50% average to be eligible for summer school. Summer school grades were simply Pass/Fail. Dr. Durham added that one advantage of our summer school was that it allows us to control the curriculum, rather than sending students to another district.

Mr. Herden was pleased that students with a 20% or 30% average were not eligible for summer school. He hoped that we were striving to "raise the bar". Dr. Durham noted the summer school was by invitation only.

Mr. Iacovelli asked if the student's transcript would indicate the pass/fail grade, to which Mrs. Dadona confirmed it would.

Mrs. Ziobron asked for an explanation of a Carnegie unit and seat time. Mrs. Dadona explained that one 45-day course that meets for 1.5 hours equaled one-half of a Carnegie unit. Seat time referred to the time a student was physically in the seat receiving instruction. Dr. Durham stated this meant the same as a credit.

Dr. Durham indicated that the Class of 2006 was required to earn 28 credits. This will be the first class to graduate under the new requirements. They will continue to evaluate and improve the process as they move forward.

Mrs. Ziobron asked if there was any possibility for summer school for the gifted and talented students, so it would not just be remedial. Dr. Durham stated that the elementary school held an open summer school to all interested students. A similar program was instituted at the middle school. He stated the only thing that really holds them back from this was the cost of running the schools. Dr. Durham stated he would have to do some preliminary work to determine if there would be enough interest for this at the high school. Mrs. Gourlie indicated that many high school students work, which would also be a deterrent to attend a summer program. Mr. Iacovelli added that many junior and senior high school students get jobs in their areas of interest. This helps them on their resumes.

Mrs. Lyman noted that 25 students failed a summer school course. She asked if this was a high number. Both Dr. Durham and Mrs. Dadona responded that this was not a lot, considering the number of students and the number of courses taken. Mrs. Dadona stated the failures were usually a motivational issue. Mrs. Lyman asked if the students were now more motivated, to which Mrs. Dadona stated she believed they were.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (Cont'd)C. Music Curriculum

Dr. Durham recalled that this curriculum was sent to the Board several weeks ago. He indicated the elementary school music staff was present tonight to answer any questions. Dr. Durham stated that they had done a wonderful job on the curriculum. This was one of the last areas to be approved.

Mrs. Ziobron stated she has seen the music program in all of the schools grow over the years. She wondered if the curriculum would embrace higher numbers as more students became involved. Dr. Durham indicated they have added staff over the last couple of years, they have added new courses at the high school, they restructured the music program at the middle school so all middle school students will take general music, and they increased the numbers for choral and instrumental at the middle school. He explained that this would spill over to the high school as those students progress. In terms of interest, Dr. Durham stated the numbers were above average. He stated that with the changes at the elementary school, it was hard to believe this was students' first experience with music.

Mrs. Gourlie stated there was room for creativity within this curriculum, and this group really brings the program alive. Mrs. Ziobron agreed, and stated it appeared this program was above the cusp. Dr. Durham stated they would attempt to have ensembles in the elementary school, but it would be driven by the budget. He added that all curriculum committees meet regularly to discuss their status, progress, etc. He noted that as the numbers grow, they will come back to the Board for additional staff.

Mr. Herden believed the high school students had many opportunities, and this would encourage elementary school and middle school students to work hard so they could eventually play at the high school. He stressed that the Board should be ready to add staff when the need arose.

Mr. Misenti stated in his own experience, music programs were a good investment. He commented that children who are involved in music seem to do better academically. Dr. Durham stated that students learn to discipline themselves accordingly. They know that their first priority is to the academics so they can participate in the music program. As a general rule, students in leadership areas are involved in many extra-curricular activities.

Mr. Iacovelli agreed with Mr. Herden. He stated that younger students want to be like the high school students. He believed the K through 12 mentality would breed success. He thanked the professional staff for their instruction to our students.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (Cont'd)C. Music Curriculum (Cont'd)

Ms. Alfano, music teacher at the middle school, thanked the Board for its support of the curriculum. She stated it was true that studies show participation in music makes improved brain pathways to learning. She stated 97% of fourth grade students are developing more efficient pathways in their brains through learning to play an instrument.

Ms. Alfano stated as a group, their goal was to integrate the music for grades K-12. She noted there was a tremendous camaraderie. Mrs. Mazzaferro agreed that they have never before had such continuity. Ms. Alfano stated in all of the schools, there is at least a 50% participation rate in music.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTSA. Long Range Planning

Mr. Iacovelli reported that this subcommittee met on September 1, 2005. They discussed many issues, including the expandability of the school. They were concerned about future expansion of the new school; however, he stated that Dr. Durham believed the Cohort system was a good, reliable system to use for planning purposes. Mr. Iacovelli believed the new school would be adequately sized for the next 15 years.

He informed the Board that the Long Range Planning Committee supported the schematic design shown tonight, and that the Cohort numbers were adequate, provided there were no extreme occurrences.

Mr. Iacovelli stated the Long Range Planning Committee supports the request for more time to evaluate the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Iacovelli commented that the Tech Center would have revised hours, and that Dr. Durham would monitor the progress. A total of 187 students, as well as 9 citizens, visited the Tech Center from April through June.

Mr. Iacovelli reported that the school calendar was revised this year to have an after-Labor Day beginning. He noted that Dr. Durham would survey the teachers at the beginning of the year and again at the end of the year. In addition, they planned to get some community surveys.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (Cont'd)A. Long Range Planning (Cont'd)

Mrs. Ziobron stated she was disappointed with the number of community members using the Tech Center. She asked Dr. Durham if he had put a notice in the Fishwrapper paper so senior citizens would learn about the Tech Center. Dr. Durham responded that he had not submitted anything to the Fishwrapper, but he did put a notice in the latest BOE Newsletter. Mrs. Ziobron stated she would forward the website address for the Fishwrapper to Dr. Durham tomorrow.

Dr. Durham noted that there had been a large article on the Tech Center in the Middletown Press, as well as an article in the Regional Standard. He suggested he could also put a banner on the website. Mrs. Ziobron indicated that the new senior center was opening on Friday, September 16, 2005. She stated she would be happy to put some information on their board.

Mr. Herden indicated the senior center will be equipped with 4-5 laptops, docking stations, etc. He believed it would be beneficial to inform seniors about this service, but that it would be better to focus on experiences such as those with Ms. Leslie Corey. He too was disappointed with the number of senior citizens who had visited the Tech Center.

Dr. Durham stated he would welcome anything that would help get the word out.

Mrs. Lyman questioned what the Board did with old computers. Dr. Durham stated the computers are evaluated each year. If a computer no longer meets the minimum standards, it is discarded. He participates with LEARN for this process. The Board discussed other alternatives, such as giving the computers away, or selling them. Dr. Durham stated he would prefer to keep this process in-house, citing licensing issues, but he would do some research into other programs.

Mr. Misenti asked if our computers operate independently, or if they ran off a central system. Dr. Durham stated most were tied into the network, as this was the most cost-effective way. However, there were some older models that stand alone for instructional use.

Dr. Durham concluded that he would do some research, and would report back to the Board at a future meeting.

B. Finance

There was no new information.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (Cont'd)C. Policy

Mrs. Lyman stated this committee met on September 1, 2005. They reviewed several policies, which have been presented to the Board as first readings. These policies include the Transportation policy, the Naming of Facilities policy, which had only minor revisions. The Public Complaints policy was reviewed, and changes were in bold type.

Mr. Iacovelli indicated there was still a question if the Board could discuss items not listed on the agenda, with a majority vote. Dr. Durham stated that the Board could always discuss pertinent items with a majority vote.

Mr. Iacovelli asked about the Naming of Facilities policy. He suggested the Policy subcommittee think about whether a facility could be named after Board members.

Mrs. Ziobron asked why the public complaint policy had other issues addressed under this heading. Mrs. Lyman stated this was the way the policy was originally put together. Mrs. Ziobron suggested the policy be broken into two separate policies, one for public complaints, and the other for materials. Mrs. Gourlie believed the policy was written this way due to State statutes. Dr. Durham also believed this was a statutory requirement. Mrs. Lyman stated that the Policy subcommittee would take Mrs. Ziobron's request into consideration.

Mr. Iacovelli questioned the last item on the public complaints policy. He asked if Board members could be sued, and what action the Board could take if a teacher's action was against a Board policy. Dr. Durham stated if the teacher is negligent in his/her duty, the Board has no responsibility to protect them.

Mrs. Ziobron stated a couple of months ago, they talked about a specific policy for transportation. She asked if this would be on the next agenda for discussion. Dr. Durham stated he had given the Board a sample, and it would be on next month's agenda.

Mrs. Lyman stated the Policy committee was looking for a more efficient way to use the web for research going forward. Dr. Durham stated they had instituted many new projects, such as Edline, which was introduced last year. They are trying to do more. He indicated that all of the policies were on the website, but it was not easy to direct people to the documents.

Mr. Iacovelli noted that some law sites access court searches through the use of key words, etc. He believed this might be helpful.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (Cont'd)C. Policy (Cont'd)

Mrs. Lyman stated that some people do not have computers. If the old computers were given to these people, they could access more information, and less paper could be used.

Mrs. Ziobron stated she spoke with someone who told her that they had received requests for health information three times this year. Dr. Durham stated that it was important to update this information on a yearly basis, but not so many times during the year. He asked Mrs. Ziobron for information on this specific case so he could research it.

Mrs. Lyman stated they were striving for alignment between the policy manual and the student handbook. This would include a disclaimer that policies supercede the handbooks. Dr. Durham acknowledged there had been a great deal of research over the summer about information that should go into the handbooks.

Mrs. Lyman stated a Nutrition and Wellness policy must be developed by the end of the year. Dr. Durham stated he would do some research before they work on the policy itself.

Mrs. Lyman stated the Policy subcommittee discussed the word "facsimile". She recalled that Mr. Misenti asked that this word be changed. She indicated that through the guidance of their counsel, it was appropriate to leave this word as is.

Mr. Misenti asked if any Board member had seen Coach Carter. No one had seen this movie. Mr. Misenti stated it would be beneficial for the Board to watch this movie, as it was based on a real-life instance.

D. Transportation

This committee has not met.

E. Personnel and Negotiations

Mr. Iacovelli reported that this committee has met 2 or 3 times, but there was really nothing significant to report. He stated the Board could move to enter Executive Session at the end of tonight's meeting, if desired.

F. Ray Board Liaison

Mr. Iacovelli reported that this committee has not met.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (Cont'd)G. LEARN

Mrs. Gourlie reported that Attorney McCarthy spoke at the last LEARN meeting. Attorney McCarthy discussed ethics in the state, fees for extra-curricular activities, school nutrition, and school spending. She noted that the government was considering a policy on school spending.

In addition, Mrs. Gourlie noted that Attorney McCarthy informed them that there is a committee working to make college a three year commitment.

Mrs. Gourlie stated the marine school was moved from New London to Groton. The concept of this school has been ten years in the making, and was in jeopardy of losing its funding. A suitable property was found in Groton. It is the Spicer property, consisting of 33 acres with a fresh water pond. It is near Avery Point. The Spicer property was willing to sell the property for \$1.7 Million. They plan to open the school in January, 2008.

H. Curriculum Council Liaison

Mr. Herden stated this committee will meet in October. He stated he has been on this committee for six years, and he has watched the evolution of it. He asked Dr. Durham to comment on the direction of the Curriculum Council for next year.

Dr. Durham stated they would set the schedule in October. They would like to revise the master calendar; however, since they moved the CMT testing to the spring, this would be more difficult.

Dr. Durham hoped to evaluate the teacher evaluation program, since it has been in use for several years. He would like to review it to determine if it promotes teacher growth, which in turn promotes student achievement.

Dr. Durham stated the Council would focus on issues of quality this year.

Mr. Iacovelli stated he had been reading about the NCLB. Not only was there a push for higher standards, there was also a push to have higher standards for teachers. Dr. Durham indicated that over the summer, they spent two days looking at the highly qualified teacher requirement. They developed a procedure, which was shared with the faculty on the first day of school. Administrators will meet with teachers who need to fulfill the highly qualified teacher requirement. Dr. Durham stated that approximately 75% of the faculty meets this requirement, but they would have to look at some elementary school and middle school teachers who hold a general education background. He has asked teachers to provide information for further investigation.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (Cont'd)

H. Curriculum Council Liaison (Cont'd)

Dr. Durham hoped to have more information by the end of the year. He felt they had developed a good, efficient process for this issue.

Mr. Iacovelli asked to see a copy of this process. Dr. Durham stated he would forward this information to the Board.

Mr. Iacovelli voiced concern that this could create a big dilemma, particularly with Special Education teachers. Dr. Durham acknowledged that the State now requires teachers to hold certification as a degree in the subject area for which they teach.

Mr. Herden asked if a minor was allowed. Dr. Durham suspected that the State might eliminate minors altogether.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS AND AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

None

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. NCLB Lawsuit

Mrs. Gourlie announced that the State has dropped the NCLB lawsuit; therefore, the vote planned for tonight is a mute point.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Acceptance of Consent Agenda

1. Warrant
 - a. To approve the warrant for 2004-05 in the amount of \$2,506,700.87.
 - b. To approve the warrant for 2005-06 in the amount of \$606,282.04.
2. To approve the Music Curriculum as presented by the Music Curriculum Committee.
3. To approve Policy 1312 (Public Complaints) as a first reading as presented by the Policy Committee.

X. NEW BUSINESS (Cont'd)

A. Acceptance of Consent Agenda (Cont'd)

4. To approve Policy 3541.31 (Regular Routes and Services) as a first reading as presented by the Policy Committee.
5. To approve Policy 7551 (Naming of Facilities) as a first reading as presented by the Policy Committee.

MOTION: Herden, Ziobron; to approve Items 1 through 5 of the Consent Agenda.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION CARRIED**

Mrs. Gourlie asked if any Board member wished to enter Executive Session for the purposes of discussing personnel and negotiations. No one wished to enter Executive Session this evening.

MOTION: Ziobron, Iacovelli; to adjourn at 9:57 p.m.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted,

Dora Lyman
Secretary