

East Haddam Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Nathan Hale-Ray High School Cafeteria
September 12, 2006
7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tracey Gionta, Everett Herden, Nick Iacovelli, Robert Mather, Manny Misenti, Mary-Beth Mordecai, Melissa Ziobron, Tom Miatt (arrived 7:05 p.m.)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Pamela Gourlie

STUDENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE: Anne Durfee

OTHERS PRESENT: Dr. Durham and approximately 10 people including staff were present.

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

A. Teacher of the Year Presentation

Dr. Durham announced Ms. Susan Weaver, art teacher at East Haddam Elementary School, as the 2007 East Haddam Public Schools' Teacher of the Year. One teacher from each school was selected as the school's teacher of the year and from those three, Ms. Weaver was chosen as the district-wide Teacher of the Year.

Dr. Durham stated that Ms. Weaver has been teaching for 26 years and has been with East Haddam since 1988. He stated she was a consummate professional and a wonderful human being.

Mr. Iacovelli stated it was both an honor and privilege to present this award to Ms. Weaver. He presented her with a bouquet of roses and called for a brief recess for cake and refreshments. The meeting reconvened at 7:10 p.m.

Mr. Misenti asked to discuss the CAPT test results this evening. Mr. Iacovelli stated the Board would have to vote on this.

III. REPORT OF THE BOARD CHAIR (continued)

MOTION: Misenti, Ziobron; to add discussion of the CAPT test results under New Business, Item X.C. this evening.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION CARRIED**

B. Naming of Athletic Field Request

Mr. Iacovelli stated that a letter was included in the Board's packet. He stated that at this level, the Board should discuss the issue and if members feel it is an appropriate request, then direct Dr. Durham to take action.

Mr. Mather stated he always liked Mr. Lou Milardo. He is a great coach and his record stands for itself. However, he questioned where the line should be drawn. He noted that Charlie Boynton was the A.D. for many years and a field was not named after him. He commented that Policy 7551 states that a person must be deceased before a facility could be named in a person's honor. Nowhere in the policy does it discuss athletic superiority. Mr. Mather stated that Mr. Milardo was a nice guy but he could not support this request.

Mrs. Ziobron stated that Mr. Milardo was not our employee anymore, per the policy. She stated according to the policy, a committee needs to judge the request and report back to the Board.

Dr. Mielt stated this policy was written within the past year. He stated he interpreted it that if any significant request was submitted, a committee would be named to review the request. Dr. Mielt believed this was a significant request and that a committee should be formed.

Mrs. Mordecai stated this was a general policy. She believed there was some leeway and that a person did not have to be deceased before naming could occur.

Mr. Iacovelli suggested Dr. Durham appoint a committee as per the policy and report back to the Board.

Mr. Misenti stated it seemed that the intent of the policy was not to railroad one name, but to have at least three names so that careful consideration could be given.

Mr. Herden believed this request should go forward. He agreed that any request was a legitimate request and should be considered. However, Mr. Herden was concerned about the need for establishing a name for the field. He stated if he had to vote this evening, he would have to vote no. He asked for input on how the Board interprets the need.

III. REPORT OF THE BOARD CHAIR (continued)B. Naming of Athletic Field Request (continued)

Mrs. Ziobron stated she was waiting to hear all of the comments before voicing her own. She stated there was clearly no need to establish a name for the field, but Mr. Milardo has been a role model for the softball players. She questioned if there would be a need to name other facilities such as the gym, etc. She reminded everyone of the precedent that was set with the Nevers field. She questioned where they would stop the need from the want.

Dr. Miett stated sometimes when they write a policy, they do not see all of the nuances until it was being applied. He was not sure the word "need" should be in this policy.

Mr. Iacovelli believed the next step should be to have Dr. Durham convene a committee to review the request. Dr. Durham explained that there was a plan in the works to have testimonial for Mr. Milardo this fall. He hoped to come back to the Board fairly quickly, but he did not know if it would be done by next month's meeting.

Mr. Misenti suggested that the Policy Committee might want to review whether a person needed to be deceased before something was named for him/her. In addition, he suggested the LRP Committee and/or Policy Committee might look at the facility as a whole and determine if it was needed or appropriate to name other fields, facilities, etc.

C. Student Representatives to the Board

Mr. Iacovelli informed the Board that Miss Anne Durfee was back for a second year with the Board. He asked Miss Durfee to report at this time.

Miss Durfee informed the Board that Student Council was looking for a junior as a second representative. She stated the sophomore class was hosting a fundraiser Decades Dance this Friday evening. Various clubs have started for the year. Open House is this Thursday. Auditions were being held this week for the fall play. Freshmen are getting situated in the school and seniors are getting ready to begin college applications.

III. REPORT OF THE BOARD CHAIR (continued)

D. Communications

Mr. Iacovelli stated there was a copy of a letter from Ms. Teresa D'Amelio regarding traffic concerns at the middle school. Mrs. Ziobron asked if this was at the south end near Maus & Sons, to which Dr. Durham responded affirmatively. Dr. Durham stated that Ms. D'Amelio approached him and First Selectman Parker at the First Day celebration about this. Since Mr. Parker is the traffic official, he contacted the State DOT regarding possibly adding a crosswalk. Dr. Durham has contacted Ms. D'Amelio and informed her that they are working on the issue.

Mrs. Ziobron asked if Mr. Parker mentioned the sidewalk project. Dr. Durham stated Mr. Parker had mentioned it, but Dr. Durham did not know when it would happen. Mrs. Gionta asked if the crosswalk would include lights. Dr. Durham explained that the Board put up a sign in hopes of slowing traffic, particularly in the morning.

Mr. Misenti stated that a crosswalk would not be very costly. Dr. Durham explained that it was not the expense, but since it is a State road, they must get permission from the State before they could do anything.

Mr. Misenti asked if the Board felt it was a life threatening issue and if a crosswalk was appropriate. If so, he believed the Board should write letters to Mr. Parker, the DOT, and the Governor.

Mrs. Ziobron believed a letter to the Commissioner of Traffic would be appropriate, but she ultimately felt it was the First Selectman's responsibility and she did not know where the line was drawn.

Mr. Mather stated there was a lot of traffic there. He stated if they could get a crosswalk installed, he believed they should also try to get volunteer crossing guards to help alleviate morning issues.

Mr. Iacovelli inquired what the next step would be. Dr. Durham suggested the Board could direct him to draft a letter; however, he advised that the letter should be written to Mr. Parker with a copy to the State DOT.

MOTION: Misenti, Ziobron; to direct Dr. Durham to send a letter to Mr. Parker requesting a crosswalk near the middle school.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION PASSED**

IV. ACTION ON THE MINUTES

MOTION: Misenti, Herden; to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of August 8, 2006 with the following amendments:

- Page 1, Item IV Motion: Change “Mather” to “Misenti”
- Page 4, Item C, first sentence: Change “Finance” to “Policy”

FAVOR (6): Gionta, Herden, Iacovelli, Misenti, Mordecai, Ziobron
OPPOSED (0)

ABSTENTIONS (2): Mather, Miett
MOTION PASSED

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

Mrs. Ziobron reported that the Town has cleared some trees for well testing. There was a holdup with Chatham Health District regarding permits, but John Sima from Hydro Dynamic Engineering is coordinating this effort.

Mrs. Ziobron indicated that the School Building Committee (SBC) has received a cost analysis. Once the SBC reviews the numbers, Mrs. Ziobron stated she would email the information to Board members. The SBC voted not to pay one KBA invoice, as they believed it should have been part of the contract to get them through the permitting process.

Mrs. Ziobron explained that the Town of Avon had a similar situation with costs during construction. The Town of Avon prepared a packet of information explaining reasons for the overages. Mrs. Ziobron distributed this information to the Board.

Mrs. Ziobron stated she and Ms. Denise Gable put together a list of questions and answers about the new school and this would be sent out in the upcoming Town newsletter. This list of questions and answers was one piece in a series of information that would be put out to the public in an effort to answer many questions before the public meeting.

Mrs. Ziobron stated that Mr. David Wedge of the State School Facilities Unit sent a letter to Ms. Gable. In his letter, Mr. Wedge stated that school districts were now using a cost range of \$375 - \$425 per square foot. She stated if Board members would like this information, she would forward it to them.

Mrs. Ziobron discussed the schedule and acknowledged that there have been some unanticipated delays in the process. She believed there may be a need for the Board of Education to consider some creative scheduling, as right now, they are looking at January 5, 2008 as an opening date.

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

Mrs. Ziobron stated that a few members of the SBC have done a budget analysis and the budget has been broken into divisions. Many areas are higher and they are 52% over their estimate analysis. She would email more information as it is available.

Mrs. Mordecai stated over the last few months, the costs have been increasing every time they receive new information. She stated she felt better after learning that this was happening everywhere in the state and people working in the industry were seeing the same thing happen. Mr. Iacovelli asked if there was any chance some of these numbers might come down. Mrs. Mordecai responded there was not; however, she has heard that gas prices are on a downward trend, which will be helpful as many companies have added a fuel surcharge.

Mr. Misenti stated he has seen a significant softening in the last few weeks. He believed much of the impact was due to energy costs. He believed gas prices will go down. With the numbers the SBC has now, he did not believe anyone would see more major overages. Mrs. Ziobron hoped there would be some changes. She stated she would like to see any savings be returned to the taxpayers.

Mrs. Gionta believed the question/answer sheet was well done. She asked Dr. Durham what the minimum amount of time to move a school would be. Dr. Durham stated it would take a minimum of one month to move and allow teachers some time to set up their classrooms. Dr. Durham voiced concern about the timeline, as it would be very difficult in New England to break ground in the winter. He believed there would likely be delays due to weather.

Mrs. Ziobron stated they have all been very leery about the timelines and they have addressed the issue of building in the winter. So far in the budget, they have prepared for winter building.

B. Middle and Elementary Schools' Capital Improvements

Mr. Mather stated this committee has not met. He informed the Board that the asbestos abatement projects that had been scheduled for the summer were completed; however, he stated that neither the elementary school nor the middle school will ever be completely free of asbestos.

Mr. Mather reported that the fire alarm system at the elementary school was complete. He asked Mrs. Mello if they have had a fire drill yet. Mrs. Mello stated this was in her opening remarks.

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

Mrs. Cindy Mello informed the Board that after a positive meet and greet session on August 29, school opened on August 30 with 551 students. They welcomed five new staff members.

Mrs. Mello stated that the new fire alarm works flawlessly. The sound is very different, so they sounded the alarm to let the children know what it would sound like, and the drill went very well. She stated that Mr. Parkus did a wonderful job preparing the school for opening day, and she was looking forward to a successful year.

Mr. Mather questioned how long it took to exit the building during the fire drill. Mrs. Mello stated it typically takes 2 minutes 30 seconds. Mrs. Mordecai stated the meet and greet was a very good way to begin the school year.

Mrs. Judy DeLeeuw reported on the middle school opening. They welcomed 464 students, and 2 more have just moved here. They had 26 new students enroll this summer. They also welcomed 5 new staff members.

Mrs. DeLeeuw stated that the First Day celebration went very well. The theme was to get involved and stay involved. MPAC bought sheets, which were signed by students, parents, and staff. They hung the banners in the 5th and 6th grade hallways before the Open House. The Open House was well attended and many parents called to say they liked it. Open House for 7th and 8th grade will be held on September 19.

Mrs. Gionta asked how the new schedule was working. Mrs. DeLeeuw stated they have made some changes to the schedule. Grade 5 now has two rotations instead of one. They can now offer students extra help with math, they can offer computer enrichment, special topics, art projects, etc. In addition, all students have Developmental Guidance now. She noted they are in the process of re-writing the Developmental Guidance curriculum. Mrs. DeLeeuw stated that fifth grade now has two physical education classes per week, in addition to their daily 20 minutes of recess.

Mrs. DeLeeuw stated that they tried to rotate the schedule. Due to a glitch, they have gone back to a non-rotating schedule. Research has shown that rotation works well for students, so she hopes to work on the schedule and retry it again mid-year.

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

Mrs. Linda Dadona reported on the opening of the high school. She stated they had a great opening. The students and the teachers were very positive about the 2006-07 school year. Their five new staff members have melded well. Mrs. Dadona informed the Board that they have an enrollment of approximately 396, with 20 new students who registered. Last June, they had 356 students. She stated the classes were a little fuller, and the hallways and lunches were a bit more crowded. The fall sports season gets underway this week.

Mrs. Dadona stated that the meet and greet session went very well. 110 of the 114 enrolled Freshmen and their parents came to the meet and greet. Open House will be on Thursday, September 14, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Mrs. Dadona stated that they are in the home stretch for the NEASC evaluation. The visit is scheduled for October 1, 2006. Board members will get invitations to meet with the NEASC representatives.

Mr. Misenti stated the capacity of the building is listed as 400. Based on her experience, he asked Mrs. Dadona how many more students they could add before the school was too crowded. Mrs. Dadona stated it was beginning to feel a little more crowded. She stated that the Spanish teacher could not teach two classes in her classroom due to the size of the class.

Mrs. Dadona noted that this year's graduating class only had 75 students. She asked what the eighth grade enrollment was, to which Mrs. DeLeeuw stated it was 119. Mrs. Dadona stated they were stretching it. She believed next year's enrollment would be around 434. She stated it would be a little more challenging, but they could do it.

Mr. Misenti suggested the LRP committee should look into this issue. Mr. Iacovelli stated they already have. Mr. Misenti stated he noticed that there were not many books being taken out of the media center. He suggested this area could possibly become class space. Mrs. Dadona stated they would look at all of the areas. She has asked Mr. Carroll to help them do a space analysis. Mr. Iacovelli stated it was positive that we were retaining students.

Mrs. Dadona indicated there was a particular problem in the science labs. Mr. Herden asked what percentage of rooms were actually vacant. Mrs. Dadona stated it varied from block to block. She noted that they were limited as they build the schedule and they build the schedule based on student requests. Mr. Herden asked how many students were enrolled in A.P. courses. Mrs. Dadona stated that there were approximately 20 students in A.P. English, 15 in A.P. Art, none in A.P. Biology, but there were some in the Virtual High School.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (continued)B. Summer School Report

Mr. Scata prepared a report on the summer school program. A copy was included in each Board member's packet. Mrs. Ziobron asked if any consideration had been given to combining the middle school and high school programs. Dr. Durham stated this was the second year that 8th grade students were sent to the high school. He stated the educational needs were different, so he did not believe combining them would help.

Mrs. Ziobron referred to the high school summary and questioned the final grade needed to pass. Mrs. Dadona explained that summer school could not make up for all of the classes during the school year. A grade of 50 was set as a benchmark. Mrs. Ziobron was disturbed by this benchmark. Mrs. Dadona explained that not all students are invited to summer school. However, if a student has a grade of 50-60 during the year, he/she would be invited to summer school to gain skills, focus on what could be found in the CAPT test, etc. Summer school grades are pass/fail only.

Mr. Misenti asked if we were accomplishing anything with the summer school courses, and if those students are better prepared for next year's classes. Dr. Durham responded that they were successful in some areas, but changes were needed in other areas. He believed the elementary school summer program was successful and was helping students. He stated the middle school was struggling due to the enrollment numbers for summer school. The high school numbers speak for themselves.

Mr. Scata stressed that the only concern was low attendance at the middle school summer program, not because of a lack of instruction. He stated the elementary and middle school summer programs were only to maintain skills. The high school summer school program is credit-based, really designed to help students recover credits.

Mr. Misenti questioned if the students in the program were better prepared to take on the challenges of the next year, to which Mr. Scata responded affirmatively.

Mr. Iacovelli suggested there might be a correlation with CAPT scores if a student attended summer school. Dr. Durham explained that students who are poor performers generally do poorly on standardized tests also. He believed the question was about tracking students who go to summer school. Mrs. Dadona stated they watch the students who need more support closely, as does the Guidance department. She felt students were more optimistic of getting their diplomas on time.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (continued)B. Summer School Report (continued)

Dr. Durham asked Mrs. DeLeeuw if there was any evidence that summer school helped students get off to a better start in the next year. Mrs. DeLeeuw stated they had very extensive instruction in the summer school. She stated the teachers and the students in this program formed a bond and they have come back engaged.

Mrs. DeLeeuw stated they invited approximately 75 students to summer school, but it was not mandatory. They had 18 families that had committed to the program, but many students are busy all summer.

Mr. Misenti believed it was important to communicate to the students and the teachers that the real focus is on academic achievement, not punishment. Mrs. DeLeeuw stated she and Mrs. Dadona worked well together on the program. They met with all of the students and their parents.

C. P.A. 06-63 Sale of Beverages on School Grounds

Mr. Carroll informed the Board there were two items on tonight's agenda under New Business. The first related to beverages on school grounds and the second revolved around healthy snacks.

Mr. Carroll stated it was now against the law to sell anything but milk, water, and juice; therefore, all of the vending machine choices have been replaced with 100% juice or water. He stated that the motion tonight could be to allow the Athletic Boosters, PTO, etc. to sell other beverages after normal school hours.

Regarding healthy snacks, Mr. Carroll explained that if the Board voted to sell only the healthy snacks on the 250-page list from the State, we would receive ten cents for each meal sold. In order to be eligible for this reimbursement, they would have to certify that every snack sold was healthy.

Mrs. Gionta asked if it would be permissible for the PTO to pay for ice cream for the Box Tops program. Mr. Carroll stated this would be acceptable. He stated that a teacher could bring in pizza and soda for a special day at school, but they could not ask students to contribute to the cost.

With this program, Mr. Carroll stated the food service would gain approximately \$7,000 per year in revenue, but he was concerned that they would lose money in other areas. Mrs. Mordecai asked if this program was only for one year. Mr. Carroll stated the Board would have to have an annual vote.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (continued)C. P.A. 06-63 Sale of Beverages on School Grounds (continued)

Mrs. Ziobron stated it was unfortunate that the law could prohibit some of the fun activities at school, but it could force cafeterias to think out of the box. She believed it would be good to have local produce, etc. served at school. She stated she would vote to keep the healthy incentives. She did not want anyone to forget the intent of the law. She commented that it was unfortunate that school systems were being forced to take on a more parental role.

Mrs. Mordecai saw the policy on health and wellness. She believed there was more opportunity for change at the elementary school. She stated she could never vote for something so specific as the 250-page document accompanying this incentive.

Mrs. Gionta stated there would be re-interpreting of what is appropriate at school parties, etc. She commented that the State already tells her how to put her children in the car, she did not want them telling her what she could feed them. She believed the incentive was not large enough to be worth it.

Mr. Mather stated that every afternoon, there are children at the Nathan Hale Plaza getting ice cream and candy. Mr. Herden believed this program would be difficult unless parents were on board with healthy breakfasts and dinners. He believed they would have to get the parents involved. Mrs. Mordecai stated that sometimes, children teach parents. She hoped children would begin to read nutrition labels, etc. This might be one way to get parents on board.

Mr. Misenti inquired about the deadline for this decision. Mr. Carroll explained that if they wanted to participate, the Board must take action by October 1, 2006. Dr. Durham stated there was a form he must sign and return to the State. Mr. Carroll indicated this was an annual action to sign this participation form.

Mrs. Ziobron believed it would be helpful to understand what the Policy Committee thinks will happen with the new guidelines. Mrs. Gionta stated this was a draft policy and it would be discussed at the next meeting. Included in this policy are nutrition standards, healthy snack guidelines, celebrations, fundraising, nutrition education, etc. Mrs. Ziobron asked if there was anything specific regarding lunches. Mrs. Gionta responded that school meals will be addressed.

Responsive to inquiry by Mrs. Ziobron, Mr. Iacovelli stated this discussion could continue under New Business Item X.B. tonight.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (continued)D. Tools for Schools

Mr. Carroll explained that Tools for Schools was developed by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency, and it was offered to all schools. They selected committees for each school to include the principal, nurse, teachers, and custodians. They were all given training packets.

Mr. Carroll stated that the committees inspected the schools for water leaks, dust, molds, etc. The main concern in all three schools was dust. A certified Department of Public Health hygienist evaluated the rooms and conducted additional training. In the next phase, each team must go through each room in the buildings. Mr. Carroll indicated this should be completed by November or December.

Mr. Carroll believed there would be some recommendations for the buildings after this process is complete. These recommendations will be incorporated into next year's budget requests.

Mr. Carroll stated the major issue at East Haddam Elementary School was ventilation.

E. Update on High School Roof Problem

Dr. Durham asked Mr. Carroll to discuss the middle and high school roof situations.

Mr. Carroll informed the Board that he received a quote from a local contractor to do work on the middle and high school roofs. He stated the high school engineer's report from DeCarlo and Doll favors louvers in the ducts. The local contractor does not believe that is the case. Therefore, Mr. Carroll stated they would develop an RFP, hopefully by next week, to ask other contractors what they think the problem is and how to correct it. Dr. Durham stated he spoke with Mr. Meade, the BOF liaison, this morning. After this RFP information is collected, the Board will go back to the BOF to determine from where this project will be funded.

Mr. Carroll stated the middle school issue is much more complex. They have a quote to do a lot of patching. The BOF set aside \$50,000 for repairs. Mr. Carroll stated he would put out an RFP for the repairs. Once the proposals are received, they will evaluate them. As long as the project is less than \$50,000, they will proceed with the repairs.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (continued)E. Update on High School Roof Problem (continued)

Mr. Misenti inquired if Mr. Carroll would ask for a guarantee on the work. Mr. Carroll explained that most of the work is patching, not replacing the roof on the middle school. Mr. Misenti asked if the RFPs were out yet, to which Mr. Carroll responded they were not out yet. Mr. Misenti recommended that Mr. Carroll ask what the warranty on the work would be. Mr. Carroll would add this to the RFP.

Dr. Durham was concerned with the timing, and that the projects were done before winter. He stated he would like to move as quickly as possible. The high school project needed to be completed as soon as possible. In addition, every time it rains, there are more leaks at the middle school.

Mrs. Ziobron asked what the reality was of having this work done by winter. Mr. Carroll stated he previously had a roof project run into December. Dr. Durham believed it was more dependent upon the contractors' availability. He believed the high school was a relatively small job for a contractor, but the middle school was much bigger. He stated they would put out the RFPs and then come back to the Board. The BOF was interested in getting this information too.

Dr. Durham formally announced his intention to retire at the end of this school year. He recommended the Board set up a search committee as soon as possible to begin looking for a replacement.

Mr. Iacovelli stated he would ask the Board to enter Executive Session this evening to discuss this.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTSA. Long Range Planning

Mr. Iacovelli stated that the Long Range Planning subcommittee met on September 7, 2006. A copy of the minutes was included in the Board's packet.

Mr. Iacovelli indicated that the committee discussed a long-range maintenance plan on which Mr. Mather has been working. He stated a lot of effort has been put into this plan. Mr. Iacovelli stated the committee was on track too plan ahead for a number of years.

Mr. Iacovelli stated the committee plans to oversee a community survey.

The next meeting was scheduled for October 5, 2006.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued)B. Finance

Mr. Mather reported that this committee has not met.

C. Policy

Mrs. Gionta stated that that the Policy subcommittee met on September 7, 2006. Two policies were being presented as a second reading this evening under the Consent Agenda. The policies were for home-schooled students and field trips.

Mrs. Gionta indicated that the Policy Committee was looking into a cyber-bullying policy relating to threats from both school and outside computers.

Mrs. Gionta stated the Policy Committee discussed the school wellness plan. Mr. Scata explained that the Wellness Committee would establish a policy and plan of action. They are looking at the food service, celebrations, physical education, and education of students, parents, and teachers. The Wellness Committee planned to visit the PTO and MPAC meetings in October to discuss this.

Mr. Scata stated they were in the draft stage of the wellness plan now, but he believed this would provide an avenue for change in the future. There are many different activities in the school and many healthy choices were now available. He believed there was a good representation on this committee, which would work as an advisory committee to the Board.

Mr. Scata stated the Wellness Committee could hold monthly meetings and would provide education throughout the year. He stated that Mary Conway from Chartwells Food Service was on the Committee and she has taken the initiative to offer many alternatives.

Mr. Scata indicated that the Committee did not believe ten cents per meal was worth adhering to the 250-page document. The Wellness Committee believed they could address healthy eating through education rather than mandates.

Mrs. Ziobron thanked Mr. Scata for this information. She believed nutrition was a significant problem at the elementary school. She asked what the Wellness Committee was doing to address peanut allergies. Dr. Durham stated that there was a Board policy regarding food allergies and there are now some peanut-free rooms at the elementary school.

The next Policy meeting was scheduled for October 5, 2006 at 5:30 p.m.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued)D. Transportation

Mr. Mather reported that this subcommittee met. He explained that in the Nichols Bus Service contract, Nichols has the right to request a two-year extension to the existing five-year contract. The Committee asked Mr. Carroll to investigate other schools who are serviced by Nichols. Mr. Mather stated he would provide updates as they become available. He noted that everyone on the Committee strongly supported Nichols, but they wanted to make sure they were getting the most for their money.

E. Personnel and Negotiations

Mr. Misenti stated the arbitration was ongoing; however, he was not pleased with the progress. He did not believe it was necessary to go into Executive Session to discuss this tonight.

F. Ray Board Liaison

Mr. Iacovelli stated the Ray Board has not met.

G. LEARN

Mrs. Gourlie was not present to report.

H. Curriculum Council Liaison

Mr. Herden stated the first meeting was scheduled for September 19 at 2:30 p.m.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS AND AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Mr. Mark Fortier, member of the Board of Finance, addressed the Board. He gave a lengthy speech expressing his concerns about the recent CAPT test scores. He believed this was the responsibility of parents, the schools, the Town, and the State, and that something should be done to improve the scores.

Mr. Fortier asked what the school roof report cost. Dr. Durham believed it was approximately \$7,000.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. Strategic Plan

Dr. Durham stated the administrators looked at specific objectives for the two-year extension to the Strategic Plan. The revisions were included in each Board member's packet. This year, they planned to look at the existing data to determine what is useful within our current data sources. Next fall, they would collect any additional data required.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Acceptance of Consent Agenda

1) Warrant

- a. To approve the warrant for 2005-06 in the amount of \$2,361,150.34.
- b. To approve the warrant for 2006-07 in the amount of \$538,051.07.

2) To accept the resignation of Mrs. Marjorie Veronesi, paraprofessional at East Haddam Elementary School, effective August 28, 2006.

To accept the resignation of Mrs. Jacqueline Russell, special education teacher at Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School, effective September 29, 2006.

3) To approve Policy 5122.3 (Assignment of Former Home-Schooled Students to Classes) as a second reading as presented by the Policy Committee.

4) To approve Policy 6153 (Field Trips) as a second reading as presented by the Policy Committee.

MOTION: Mather, Mordecai; to approve Items 1 through 4 of the Consent Agenda.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION PASSED**

X. NEW BUSINESS (continued)

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

MOTION: Ziobron, Mordecai; 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: ALL PRESENT
MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION: Mordecai, Ziobron; to have the East Haddam Board of Education certify that all food items offered for sale to students in 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.

OPPOSED (7): Gionta, Herden, Iacovelli, Mather, Miatt, Mordecai, Ziobron
FAVOR (1): Misenti
MOTION FAILED

Mrs. Ziobron thanked Mr. Scata for his explanation of this program.

C. CAPT Test Scores

Mr. Misenti asked for input from the Board on the recent CAPT test scores.

Mrs. Mordecai stated she received no feedback on the scores. Mrs. Ziobron stated she received many calls and emails. She stated after reading Dr. Durham’s notice, she had more questions. She stated she would ask questions at the next meeting, after the data was available.

X. NEW BUSINESS (continued)C. CAPT Test Scores (continued)

Mr. Herden believed we fell short of the mark. However, he was not convinced that the CAPT scores were really a measure of success. He stated he was not too upset by these, but he would like to see next year's scores, as there might be a large increase. He reminded everyone that we must look at this from a practical manner. He stated that sometimes a class was identified early and despite our best efforts to improve their performance, they just did not do well. He commented that we should not lose sight of the fact that even if the CAPT scores were low, many students were meeting with success in other ways.

Mrs. Mordecai questioned if years ago, there were poor test scores, and if those students have been successful. Mr. Herden stated one of the major goals was to have students become productive members of society.

Mr. Misenti understood what Mr. Herden was saying, but he believed they were beginning to go over a new horizon. He stated they would be hiring a new superintendent, and the Board needed to give him/her goals. He wrote his thoughts, and asked Mrs. Ziobron to read them for him. Mrs. Ziobron read Mr. Misenti's letter to the Board.

In his letter, Mr. Misenti asked if the Board was comfortable with the CAPT test results. If not, they should take action to improve the results in the future. He stated that the district has moved forward under Dr. Durham's leadership, but we should not be satisfied until we reach a much higher level of achievement.

Also in his letter, Mr. Misenti stated that ensuring that young people are receiving quality education and then applying that knowledge should be the focal point of the Board's efforts, and it was the Board's duty.

Mrs. Ziobron stated she was concerned about the scores also, but she wanted to wait until she had an opportunity to go through the data at the next meeting.

Mr. Misenti stated he was proud of what they had accomplished, but he would like to continue to move forward.

MOTION: Herden, Mather; to enter Executive Session at 9:45 p.m. for the purposes of discussing personnel.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION CARRIED**

The Board returned to Regular Session at 10:21 p.m.

MOTION: Herden, Mather; to adjourn at 10:22 p.m.

**FAVOR: ALL PRESENT
MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Iacovelli
Secretary