

The North Canaan Board of Education meeting was held on Thursday, October 13, 2016.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 P.M.

Board members present: Karen Riccardelli, Chairperson, Claudia Callinan, Dorothy Cecchinato, Amy Dodge, Erin Drislane, Michael Ellington, and Edwin Gow

Patricia Chamberlain, Superintendent; Rosemary Keilty, Principal

Evangeline Bouchard, Brian Davis, Renee Fleming, Doug Humes, First Selectman

Mr. Ellington made a motion to adopt the agenda as written. Mrs. Cecchinato seconded. Vote: Unanimous

Mrs. Cecchinato made a motion to approve the minutes dated September 7, 2016 with one change (bought to brought). Mrs. Dodge seconded. Vote: Unanimous

Building Project Proposal

Mr. Humes presented to the Board an updated, modified building plan proposal that began more than 10 years ago. He reported that Miss Keilty and he met with Mr. Johannesen, local civil engineer, and the construction manager, Rod Oneglia, to work on the proposal, much of which is a modification of the earlier plan mentioned. Highlights of his building proposal presentation are listed below:

- A new regulation size gym, placed on the current middle school playground and attached to the middle school wing.
- Bleachers on both sides of the gym for spectators.
- Locker rooms and restrooms with showers are included in the gym addition.
- A new, Olympic size, heated swimming pool to replace the aging, existing pool.
- Replacement of the existing pool house.
- A new, inclusive school playground for all ages and all abilities (ADA compliant)
- Cost: approximately 10-11 million dollars
- Financing: loan from USDA.
- Payments would be spread over forty years.
- Completion: 18 months from the start of the building.

Mr. Humes reported that a final plan and drawings will be brought to the Board of Education again after changes and updates are completed. The proposal has been presented to the Board of Selectmen and the town's Recreation Committee. He stated that after the drawings are finalized, he will set a town meeting date for citizens to vote on the plan.

Region I Report

Mr. Gow reported that school board members throughout Region One were invited to a presentation by nationally known author, Cathy Vatterott on grading practices. This informative evening was held on October 5, 2016 at the high school. Ms. Chamberlain added that grading practices will change in Region One to provide better feedback to students, in order for them to understand the skills that need improvement. Teachers received training from Ms. Vatterott during the October professional development days; they are examining current practices and planning various refinements.

Teacher Presentation

Ms. Bouchard and Mrs. Fleming made a presentation to the Board on "Rethinking Grading." Some of the items they discussed are listed below:

- Instead of traditional conferences between a parent and a teacher, the grade 5/6 team of teachers will pilot student led conferences this year.
- These conferences will help increase communication among students, parents, and the school.
- Students will become more engaged learners and take greater responsibility for their learning.
- Students will show parents samples of what they are learning and what progress they are making.
- Students will set goals and talk with their parents about how they are working to achieve them. Various assessments will be used to demonstrate progress.
- Student led conferences will involve the student, family, and the teacher.

The Board also viewed a video of student led conferences by Kathy Wright as part of the teacher presentation.

Principal's Report

Miss Keilty reviewed with the Board a booklet about invasive plants that was given to her by Tom Zetterstrom. Invasives such as Japanese Barberry draw and harbor ticks. There is a significant patch of invasives growing near a playground and various options for eradicating the plants are being explored. For the time being, aggressive weed whacking of the area will cut down on the growth.

Miss Keilty also reported that the enrollment is 278 students.

Superintendent's Report

Ms. Chamberlain reported that the Professional Development Days went well.

Miss Keilty reviewed with the Board the Smarter Balanced Assessment results for the school. Some of the items she discussed concerning the test and results are listed below:

- The test is required by federal and state law to be given annually in Connecticut public schools.
- The test is taken in the spring and the scores are received in the fall.

- This test is only one snapshot of student achievement. It is not the sole measure or a substitute for a variety of other ways to assess learning.
- The test is taken on a computer in grades 3-8 and involves math and English language arts.
- The test is adaptive as students work; therefore, each test may look different as the program adjusts the level of difficulty throughout the test.
- The State overall in math for grades 3-8 was 41% and North Canaan was 49%.
- The State overall in English language arts was 55% and North Canaan was 59%.
- 2016 was the second time that students took the test.

Old Business

Miss Keilty updated the Board on the following staff changes:

- Marilyn Schneider unexpectedly sold her house and is planning to move. She will be leaving the Middle School science position in November.
- Interventions in math and reading are taking place in the classroom this year. This is a shift, especially in reading. Early Literacy Groups have formed and each child in early kindergarten through grade two is grouped for a special instructional period every day. Therefore, David Peppe is no longer working. If the need for after school tutoring becomes apparent, he may be called for that work. The America Reads volunteer program has recruited several community members who will be used during the WIN (What I Need) period each day.

New Business

Board members had the first reading of policy #5141.2 Administration of Medication by School Personnel. All Board members agreed that the policy should be compared with the present North Canaan policy and brought back next month for a second reading.

Ms. Chamberlain received a report from George Johannesen, local civil engineer concerning the playground complaint. She stated that the report contained a list of the cited items and how they can be fixed. She explained that she forwarded the report to the attorney, Craig Meuser, and that the next step will be to get the cost of the project. She also reported that the town will pay the engineer's expenses.

Ms. Chamberlain reviewed the C.A.B.E. Nutmeg article with Board members concerning whether the Nutmeg Board violated FOIA by discussing the *CCJEF* decision.

Mrs. Callinan made a motion to adjourn at 9:16 P.M. Mrs. Dodge seconded. Vote: Unanimous

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie Gandolfo

Approved: November 10, 2016