

**EAST HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING MINUTES
EAST HAVEN HIGH SCHOOL BOARDROOM
35 WHEELBARROW LANE
EAST HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06513**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 2010
7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mr. DeNuzzo, Mr. Hennessey, Mr. Palladino,
Mr. Pompano and Mr. Scalesse

ARRIVED LATE: Mrs. Kluth (7:05 p.m.), Mrs. DePalma and
Mrs. Maisano (7:06 p.m.)

ABSENT: Mrs. Vineyard

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Anthony Serio, Superintendent
Mr. Frank Meoli, Assistant Supt.
Mrs. Erica Forti, Asst. Supt of Curriculum &
Instruction
Mr. Joseph Travaglino, Dir. of Bldgs. & Grounds
Mrs. Mary Acquarulo, Director of Pupil Services
Mr. Jason Lathrop, Business Administrator

1. OPEN MEETING

Chairman Palladino called the Special Board of Education meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. in the Boardroom at the High School.

Mr. Palladino wanted everyone to know that when there is a point of order, it will come from a Board member and not a staff member or member from the audience. It comes from the Chair as it is in Robert's Rules of Order and the bylaws. If someone has a question, they go through the Chair, not the audience.

Mr. Palladino expressed his concern over some of the things they do at the Board meetings and they have to stop. He stated they were a professional Board and they needed to act professionally. When there is a vote, and it goes the way you wanted it to or it does not go the way you wanted it to, there were to be no comments made because it is very embarrassing. The Board was meeting with professional people and the Board needed to act in a professional manner.

Mrs. Kluth arrived at 7:05 p.m.

The meeting was then turned over to Superintendent Serio.

2. Discussion and Possible Approval of ECA Funding for 2010-11

Mr. Serio explained the process they go through every year for the ECA funding and was asking for discussion and possible approval for 2010-11. They have always contributed a flat number of \$14,000 to help support eight (8) seats. The total tuition for each student was \$8,498. Funding was provided for each student from the CSDE Interdistrict Magnet Schools grant. The Board offered the \$14,000 to be shared between the eight students and the rest was picked up by the parents. Mr. Serio was looking for the Board's approval on this tonight.

Mrs. DePalma and Mrs. Maisano arrived at 7:06 p.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Pompano and seconded by Mr. Scalesse.

Any discussion on the motion? There was none.

There were no objections or abstentions to the motion. Motion carries.

3. Discussion and Possible Approval of O, R & L One-Year Contract Extension (2010-11)

Mr. Serio recommended the approval the one-year contract extension to 2010-11 for O, R & L at the same rate of pay as last year.

There was lengthy conversation regarding the snowplowing of the buildings and who was responsible for each building and the areas they were responsible for. Mr. Travaglino explained they have four trucks and two men to use them. His maintenance staff was down two men. They had mounting overtime so they were looking to see if the cost

outside was less than doing it inside. There was discussion on the cost of snowplowing up here at the high school which was set at \$12,000 in the O, R & L contract.

Mrs. Kluth asked how they can forecast that amount if they don't know how many times a year it is going to snow. It was explained that even if they went over budget, which they had in the last two years, O, R & L did not charge them more. There was discussion on whether this should go out to bid and include the high school in that bid. This contract used to be over \$600,000 and now they were down to \$200,000. Public works does the roads around the buildings, the custodians to the parking lots and sidewalks are done by the custodians at the other buildings and O, R & L does the sidewalks up at the high school.

Mrs. Maisano asked about the rental accounts and if O, R & L was covered for everything under the \$274,316 for facilities. Mr. Lathrop explained that they get paid extra for events. It was billed directly to the vendor and paid out of the rental account. It was contractual for the service they perform. Snowplowing was one of the items that was put out to bid. Mrs. Kluth and Mrs. DePalma thought if it was put out to bid, they should include this school too. They should find out first what the price would be. If they voted on this now, they could not take it back. Mr. Lathrop explained that their contract expires on June 30th and they had gone out to bid last year and awarded it to O, R & L with the right to request a one-year extension. Mrs. Kluth still felt they should rebid everything. Mr. Palladino explained that it was just a continuation of the contract for the same price at no increase. The other plowing had nothing to do with this.

Mr. Scalesse asked Mr. Travaglino if he was comfortable with these numbers and Mr. Travaglino stated absolutely. Mr. Scalesse had faith in what Mr. Travaglino was presenting. Mrs. Maisano asked if they were obligated to pay more if they went over that \$12,000 amount. Mr. Lathrop responded as far as he knew, they were not obligated to pay for this.

Mr. Palladino asked for a motion to approve the contract as it is written.

Motion was made by Mr. Scalesse and seconded by Mr. Pompano.

Mr. Palladino asked for a roll call vote.

Mr. DeNuzzo	-	Yes
Mrs. DePalma	-	Yes
Mr. Hennessey	-	Yes
Mrs. Kluth	-	No
Mrs. Maisano	-	Yes
Mr. Pompano	-	Yes
Mr. Scalesse	-	Yes

Vote was six (6) in favor with one (1) objection. Motion carries.

4. Review of 2010-11 Operating Budget

Mr. Serio explained he had asked Mr. Lathrop to look at the 2010-11 Operating Budget with some figures that were reflective of the Early Retirement package and where it brought them with the Board over the last several workshops. There would be no action taken this evening.

Mr. Lathrop quickly walked the Board through some of the numbers. He had given them a handout which included the revised Object Code Budget, the Potential Savings Analysis for Non-Certified Staffing, and the Potential Savings Analysis for Certified Staffing.

There was discussion on the 28 positions they were losing through retirement. There would be 19 lost and they would be backfilling 9. This page showed how many they wanted to hire back rather than the number that was lost. It was based on what the superintendent and assistant superintendent stated we needed minus 19 teachers.

There was discussion on how the savings from the retirement plan had been discussed in Executive Session back a number of meetings ago and how much it would save the Board. Mr. Pompano stated was it the information that said if they worked until they were 65 years of age that number jumped to about \$9 million or so and at 85 years of age it would be \$3 million with a savings to the Board of \$6 million even if someone was on it for 30 years. Mr. Lathrop stated that was correct.

Mrs. Maisano stated the bottom line was they had asked for this document in advance and it had been held and they get it tonight. Mrs. Maisano stated she was not voting on this because it was strikingly obvious the number comes out to equal what we wanted it to equal. She thought that the salary certified line was a plug number. They had not

even touched non-certified at all. If it was this easy to get to this number, then they should put full-day kindergarten back on the table.

Mrs. DePalma added that a month ago they were devastated that they were going to lose people, lose another school and all of a sudden it was miraculously done. They had asked for something like this a long time ago.

Mr. Hennessey stated that Mr. Thompson had given them some pretty bad news with a \$500,000 difference. Mr. Lathrop explained that the amortization figure was not completed. Mrs. Maisano stated that Mr. Thompson set up a meeting with some of our Board members to discuss worker's comp in general. Mr. Palladino was unaware of that meeting and thought Mr. Thompson was coming back to the Board. Mr. Lathrop stated he thought he was too.

Mr. DeNuzzo asked about whether the 19 positions affected class size or if class size remained the same or did it increase. Mr. Meoli stated they were meeting the guidelines that the Board of Education gave them. Mr. Serio informed the Board that our staffing was just about complete with a few glitches with specialists and a couple of elementary positions. **On June 8th, he may be asking the Board to possibly give out anywhere from 3 to 5 layoff notices to staff that was not currently needed.**

Housing the students in the buildings along with the Special Ed Programs and the Little Jackets Program was discussed. Deer Run was not too bad and they found some room up there for the Little Jackets. D. C. Moore and Overbrook were pretty tight. They were working with the bus company on a regular basis and hoped everything would go according to plan.

Posting for the elementary principal positions was discussed and the posting for those was up on June 14th. The math coach and STEM Technology positions were posted. Randel Osborne was getting them posted on our website. With the purchase of Applitrack System they automatically get posted on some other websites. There were currently 5 elementary principal positions they were looking to fill and 9 teaching positions. There were a few other displaced teachers. Mr. DeNuzzo asked if class size would be affected and Mr. Meoli explained it would increase over last year but not go over the guidelines. Mr. Serio stated right now they had three (3) displaced classroom teachers.

Mrs. DePalma asked were they not qualified to be a math coach or move into a principal's position. Mr. Serio stated if someone moves into one of those positions, it would open up a classroom. He did not know if he would be able to save the specialists jobs. Math coaches share schools and the math coach and technology position were only posted internally. Mrs. Forti explained it was the Superintendent's intent to save everyone's position. Mr. Palladino stated that in the end, they probably would end up keeping everything and not laying anyone off. Mrs. Forti stated that they don't need as many art, PE and music teachers to cover the preps for the 11 classroom teachers that retired. We were overstaffed. Some were only teaching 15-18 periods out of a possible 25.

Mrs. Kluth asked whether there was an interviewing committee for the interviewing process. Mr. Serio stated they needed to be posted for 10 days and they needed to set one up. **Mrs. Kluth stated as Chair of Personnel she would be a part of that selection process and of that committee.** Mr. Palladino stated that through their bylaws, the Chair assigns people to that committee. Mrs. DePalma stated it had never been a committee before and thought he needed to recheck that. **Mr. Palladino stated he would set up a committee and ask for two Board members and at that time they would figure out which Board members will be on that.**

There was some discussion on the number of buses they would need and if they would save more than one bus. Mr. Serio could not give them that information at this time. Full-day kindergarten was also discussed and Mr. Serio stated that he was concerned about it because it was pretty tight. They were meeting with the principals again tomorrow and would go over everything again.

Mrs. DePalma stated she would like to possibly see the mock scheduling for the Middle School and Mr. Serio stated he would like to see both the high school and middle school's schedules. Mr. Pompano asked what the hold up was on the high school. **They were not part of reconfiguration, why can't you put a number on the staffing at the high school. Mr. Serio stated he had the tallies and to let him work on them with the principals one more day.**

There was discussion on the overcrowding in the specials at the Middle School. Mr. Palladino asked that they stick to the agenda; they have another meeting on Tuesday night where they could put that on the agenda. Mrs. DePalma felt that it was all about the budget.

Mrs. Maisano stated that Mr. Pompano brought the scheduling up and now we have to stick to the agenda. Mr. Palladino stated that you women were late and did not hear my opening comments. He informed them that he had said they need to stick to the rules and regulations and that watching these on television was embarrassing. They needed to stay to their agendas and do things the right way. Mrs. DePalma said she was going to ask him to work on being a little more politically correct. Mr. Palladino stated he would try as well as he could. There was further discussion on the way Mr. Palladino had addressed them and Mr. DeNuzzo asked if they could move on.

Mr. Hennessey stated he could not support this budget the way it is. There was a ton of work left. They had only scratched the surface of incidental things. There were things that could seriously impact them in years to come. They could not do another early retirement next year. They needed to talk about the five principal positions and Frank's job was not listed in there. They have lost 45 teachers in the last two years and only three non-certified staff. It just didn't make sense to him. They needed to look at privatizing the café and custodians. They had weeks of subcommittees to come to discuss this. They needed to factor into their thinking things like the teachers' contract negotiations.

There was discussion on how the enrollment appeared to be going up and that was against the grain and what the NESDEC Report had anticipated. Mr. Serio stated the population had fluctuated all year.

Mr. Pompano spoke about the secretarial and custodial contract language and how most of the high school secretarial staff was on throughout the summer such as the Guidance Secretary and there were no counselors there. Why was this position a 12-month position? They did not have an Athletic Director so why did they need a secretary all year. They should be cut from 12-month to 11-month secretaries. That was a month's worth of salaries for those positions. Mr. Hennessey agreed that if you take one month over 20 years it would add up. He did not believe that arbitration would go against them. They should be trying to change things right now. There was conversation on how this year could be worse than next year and how the ARRA funds were at the lowest number it could be at underneath ARRA guidelines. Mrs. Maisano agreed with Mr. Hennessey's assessment.

Mr. Serio stated they had cut deeply into the budget and as much as he wanted them to see the impact of the Early Retirement in the salary line

item, he was showing them \$1.8 million in savings which closes the gap. He did not think there was very much wiggle room in here at all. He was not against looking at non-certified or anything else in the budget that would give them some flexibility. He was not saying to squander money or do things that were unnecessary. There was not a lot of money if something happened to one of their buildings.

Mrs. DePalma stated with all due respect, these numbers got much better over a short period of time. Mr. Serio explained that the retirement package was much larger than they thought. The 35 retirements was big. Each time they add to that number of teachers they bring back, chisels away into that \$1.8 million.

Mr. Hennessey suggested they hire only 3 principals and bring back two of the people who retired on a one-year contract. Then next year when they do the budget, they were not locked into 5 principals next year and could let them go without layoffs or unemployment. It was clean. It was a safety valve if they had to downsize next year and it was cheap and easy. These were the kind of discussions they needed to have.

Mr. Scalesse suggested they look at the monies that were available through their athletic programs. The budget was over \$500,000 with an additional \$175,000 for stipends. A lot of schools across the State are doing “pay for play” or charging some kind of activity fee. There were some Board members who did not agree with this idea. Mrs. Kluth thought there were kids that could not afford \$50. They were coming up with all of this money and everything seemed fine. Mr. Scalesse stated this was one way they could find some money. Mrs. Kluth did not want to touch the kids’ activities while Mr. Scalesse felt they should look at it. **Mr. Serio stated he had some information he had received from Mike Marone from area towns which he could get them copies of.** Mrs. DePalma stated she could not afford \$150 per sport.

Mr. Palladino thought they should hire four (4) principals and have a principal for the K-2 schools cover two buildings. There was discussion on leaving the schools unsupervised. Mrs. DePalma felt someone should be at the helm and that principals take the school and make it a school, a home, a community. There was a lot of supervision needed for these special programs. She liked Mr. Hennessey’s idea. Mr. Hennessey stated they should bring back two people under a one-year contract and then you have flexibility.

There was some discussion on shortage areas and it was stated that in shortage areas you can receive full pay for two years.

Mrs. Maisano was concerned regarding the enrollments and if they had anything to do with St. Vincent's because she had heard that currently there were only 75 students enrolled and they may end up with a big influx from St. Vincent's. She was not suggesting they were closing. **Mr. Serio will contact the principal at St. Vincent's.**

Mr. Scalesse asked for their enrollment guidelines. Mr. Meoli responded that K-2 was 22; 3-5 was 24; and 6-8 was 25.

There was discussion on setting up the next subcommittee meeting and also when they would approve the budget. Mr. Serio responded that he did not believe they had approved it until the summer last year. Mr. Lathrop spoke about what needed to go forward on the Board agendas for June.

The next subcommittee would be held on Thursday, June 3, 2010 at 6 p.m. The food service staff needed to be included. Mrs. Maisano requested a list of non-certified staff including the cafeteria people.

5. ADJOURNMENT OF SPECIAL MEETING

Motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. DePalma and seconded by Mrs. Maisano. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

**MR. NICHOLAS PALLADINO, CHAIRMAN
EAST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION**