

**SPECIAL MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**MONDAY,
MARCH 29, 2010**

A Special Meeting of the East Hartford Board of Education was held on Monday, March 29, 2010, at East Hartford Public Schools Administration Building, 1110 Main Street, East Hartford, CT. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by Chairperson Mary Alice Dwyer Hughes.

PRESENT Chairperson Mary Alice Dwyer Hughes, Secretary Ram Aberasturia, Robert Damaschi, Anita Morrison, Marcus Oladell, IV, Dorese Roberts, Tyron Harris, Jeffrey Currey

ABSENT Bryan Hall

ALSO PRESENT Mark Zito, Superintendent of Schools
Paul Mainuli, Director of Business Services
Joanne Zatarain, CPA, Business Services
Al Costa, Director of Facilities
Guy Collins, Supervisor, IT Department
Dr. Sharon Bremner, Director of Pupil Personnel
Christopher Wethje, Director of Human Resources
Emil Kopcha, Department Head, Fine Arts

Informational Reports

Cost/Benefit Report on Leasing Desktop and Laptop Computers

(Paul Mainuli, Director of Business Services)

Mr. Mainuli stated the Town is in the process of putting out an RFP for the lease of desktop and laptop computers. We will work with the Town on the RFP should the Board decide to approve our moving forward with a lease. Three lease options were presented to the Board for consideration/discussion.

Mr. Mainuli noted that the district was projecting a year end balance of approximately \$500,000. We have several different spending priorities earmarked for these dollars; i.e., library books, fixing of roofs, technology, etc. If we elect to go with a computer lease, this will require a commitment to fund the debt service account over a three-year period. We must consider the amount of the debt service payments over this time as well as the need for additional equipment over the life of the lease. Mr. Collins would like to see a definite amount of funds set aside each year for technology. Superintendent Zito stated the advantage of purchasing computers is you own them. Mr. Mainuli would prefer purchasing computers. If we lease them, we are committing funds in future budget for payments that must be made. He was also concerned with the process and cost of returning leased computers.

Regarding locations for computers, it was noted Sunset will need 25 laptops for the World Language Lab – we will also need to do the 6th grade. Mr. Mainuli will (1) share locations for computers, (2) what other districts are doing, (3) make available to Board members the latest technology plan and also the previous one done in 1980 (to show how far we have come). Mr. Mainuli also noted we may receive a Title II technology grant for \$53,000. We are always looking for grants for technology. The grants help to build our technology infrastructure.

Regarding disposal of old computers, Mr. Costa stated it is required that we go to a registered land fill for disposal.

Superintendent Zito stated this is an informational report on leasing that the Board had requested. We will bring forward the additional information requested by Board Members.

**Discussion with possible action regarding School District Reconfiguration
Recommendations**

Superintendent Zito states that we must continue to offer families options. If we are going to move in this direction, we need the Board to make a decision soon.

Mr. Damaschi asked Superintendent Zito the status of Willowbrook School. Superintendent Zito responded that we have proposed a lease to allow the district to keep the program at that location for a minimum of the next ten years. Also, Barnes School will come back to us in 2011 once the new magnet school opens in Glastonbury. There's a possibility CREC may also think about leasing Barnes School to use as additional space for their magnet school programs. In the future, we may have other options to consider for Willowbrook School. The disposition of Willowbrook School is not part of the reconfiguration we are presently addressing.

Superintendent Zito stated regarding instruction in languages/arts at a theme based school, he would like interest and excitement of both students and parents to determine enrollment. He further noted he is not in favor of pre-screening kids in different subject areas for a theme based school.

MOTION

By Ram Aberasturia

Seconded by Anita Morrison

To accept the recommendation of reconfiguration as follows:

K-6 elementary schools

4-6 theme based school at Sunset Ridge

6-8 Middle School

Motion carried. Nay: Robert Damaschi

Superintendent Zito stated our next steps would be as follows:

- We have scheduled dates for open houses on April 8th;
- We have prepared a letter to parents asking for their choice of options; we will need them by April 16th. If we do not get responses by that date, we will contact parents. We will honor, in order of preference, parent requests.
- We will notify all teachers by letter of the Board's decision. We will give them the option of transferring to another school. We will also have ten open teaching positions for next year.

NEW BUSINESS

Approve Proposed Fleet and Other Equipment Procurement

(Al Costa, Director of Facilities)

MOTION By Jeff Currey
Seconded by Marcus Oladell, IV
To **table** approval of proposed fleet and other equipment procurement
Motion unanimously carried.

Chairperson Mary Alice Dwyer Hughes suggested we wait until mid-April to see where we stand with our year end spending plan. Superintendent Zito asked Mr. Mainuli to provide a priority list of what we will be able to do at year-end. The bid responses for the replacement roofs project for Goodwin School and O'Connell School will be brought to Facilities on April 14th.

Approve Bid 1644-10 Re-Roof Mayberry School

(Al Costa, Director of Facilities)

MOTION By Jeff Currey
Seconded by Ram Aberasturia
To approve Bid 1644-10 Re-Roof Mayberry School
Motion carried. Nay: Robert Damaschi

MOTION By Tyron Harris
Seconded by Jeff Currey
To adjourn the Special Meeting of the Board (7:45 P.M.)
Motion unanimously carried.

Recorded by:
Donna Fitzgerald.