

**COVENTRY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
APPROVED MINUTES  
SPECIAL MEETING OF TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2007**

Members Present:                    Larry Pietrantonio, Chairman  
   Kathleen Ryan, Vice Chairman  
   Cheryl Trudon, Secretary  
   John Barrett  
   Mary Kortmann  
   Michael Whitham

Members Absent:                    Richard Williams

Administrators Present:            Dr. Donna Bernard, Superintendent  
   Sherry Holmes, Fiscal Services Director

Also present were Judith Richard, Pupil and Staff Support Services Director; Troy Hopkins, CHS Principal; Michele Mullaly, CNH Interim Principal; Paul Noel, Director of Physical Plant & Facilities; Carla Kennedy, Challenge and Enrichment Teacher; Al Scopino, CNH Teacher; a few Contemporary Issues students; Marjorie Bailey, Retiree; Richard Hartley, Retiree; and a few citizens. The Chronicle newspaper was represented. All motions are directed to the Coventry Board of Education.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

By:    Chairman, L. Pietrantonio                    Time: 7:10 p.m.  
Place: Administration Building Conference Room

**II. RETIREMENT RECOGNITION – Retirees for December 2007**

Dr. Bernard recognized the mid-year retirees: Susan Luichinger, Marjorie Bailey and Richard Hartley. Each retiree was presented with a gift and a Coventry pitcher filled with flowers. L. Pietrantonio congratulated each retiree and shared a memory of each one. He commented that Marge was dependable and took good care of the Board and the Administration Building. He added that Richard took on the head custodian position at the middle school in the midst of the building project and did a great job. He finished by saying both of his daughters had Ms. Luichinger, she was a very lively teacher, and all retirees will be sorely missed.

Once the presentations were over there was a brief break to have cake and socialize.

**III. SALUTE THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by L. Pietrantonio.

**IV. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS**

There were none.

L. Pietrantonio informed Board members that Board of Education policy procedures would be followed for adding items to an agenda. He restated that all requested agenda items be presented to the Superintendent's Office or him by the Wednesday the week before the meeting. He added if a member has something to add the evening of the meeting, there needs to be a vote to add the item and the result has to be in favor by at least five out of the seven members.

## V. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

### A. Information: Recognition of GRIDIRON Club and Donation of Concession Stand

Dr. Bernard introduced Mr. Dan Gagliardi, parent and member of the GRIDIRON football booster club. She stated the district has been under-resourced in providing for the attendees of our outside athletic events. She said the GRIDIRON club was motivated and dedicated to building a concession stand for the football field and surrounding athletic area. She added this was a very nicely executed gift. She presented a plaque stating the Board's appreciation for the gift of the concession building by the GRIDIRON club. She said Mr. Gagliardi is an exemplary advocate for this program and he works collaboratively with a wide variety of community members. She noted our students are very fortunate to have parents such as Mr. Gagliardi working on their behalf. She said, in addition to the building serving as a concession stand, it has added restrooms for use during athletic events. L. Pietrantonio finished by saying that Mr. Gagliardi has worked with the football program since the very beginning and we are grateful for community volunteers such as him.

B. Information: "Coventry Pride" – Challenge & Enrichment Program – Carla Kennedy  
Dr. Bernard introduced Carla Kennedy, the Challenge and Enrichment teacher for grades K-8. She said that this is Ms. Kennedy's first year taking the lead role in the Challenge and Enrichment program. She added that the program was expanded this year, with Ms. Kennedy working four days a week at CNH and alternating one day a week at CGS and GHR.

Ms. Kennedy handed out an overview of the Challenge and Enrichment program at the Coventry Public Schools and began a PowerPoint presentation. She started with topics such as, what is Challenge and Enrichment and what the law requires for districts regarding Challenge and Enrichment. Her PowerPoint had specific bullets of focus for each grade, K-8. She noted the CNH Challenge and Enrichment program activities have not suffered due to the expansion of the program to the lower grades. Ms. Kennedy finished by inviting the Board members to come and see what is happening in this program.

Dr. Bernard asked Ms. Kennedy if there were any trends the Board should know about with regards to Challenge and Enrichment. She added that the law is specific that districts must identify students as "gifted and talented" but it is not specific on serving them.

Ms. Kennedy stated that one of the newer recommendations is for activities to be provided to students in the regular classroom, not just through the special out-of-class Challenge and Enrichment program. Dr. Bernard added "gifted and talented" used to be specific to exceptional verbal or math skills and they now say there are at least thirteen different kinds of "gifted." She said it is the district's role to serve those children who are identified as gifted in a variety of other areas.

C. Trudon asked how many students the district has identified as gifted and talented. Judith Richard stated that the state said we must identify 5% of our students as gifted and 5% as talented and that is about where we are at. A discussion ensued about identifying these students according to state guidelines.

M. Whitham initiated a discussion about the specific programs for the individual students and what the trends are as the student gets older.

Dr. Bernard thanked Ms. Kennedy for coming and presenting at the meeting.

**VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

There was none.

**VII. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN**

L. Pietrantonio had nothing to report at this time.

**VIII. COMMUNICATIONS**

There were none.

**IX. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

VOTE: Approve Minutes of November 29, 2007

K. Ryan asked for the following changes:

Page 2, paragraph 2 should read, "Dr. Bernard commended the parents who are there for their children and for continuously supporting them in all they do."

Page 5, last paragraph, should have added the title of the item number on the CIP for any future reference. #26 should be noted as "Outdoor Bleachers – CHS" and #3 as "Cafeteria Equipment Needs at all Schools."

J. Barrett requested Page 3, paragraph 5 read as follows:

"A discussion ensued about credentials of these magnet school programs and related tuition. R. Williams stated if the magnet school tuition for students is only \$2,000 each, why not send all of the students to magnet schools?"

**MOTION: To Approve the Minutes of November 29, 2007 with noted changes.**

**By: K. Ryan**

**Seconded: M. Whitham**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously.**

**X. OLD BUSINESS**

There were none.

**XI. NEW BUSINESS**

A. VOTE: Accept the Retirement of Edmund Steinnagel, CNH Teacher

**MOTION: To Accept the Retirement of Edmund Steinnagel, CNH Teacher, with appreciation for over three decades of dedicated service to Coventry students.**

**By: K. Ryan**

**Seconded: J. Barrett**

J. Barrett commented he had his first opportunity to meet Mr. Steinnagel recently and that Coventry was losing a good teacher who would be hard to replace.

**Result: Motion passes unanimously.**

B. VOTE: Approve the January 2008 CNH Field Experience to Boston, MA

**MOTION: To Approve the January 2008 CNH Field Experience to Boston, MA**

**By: J. Barrett**

**Seconded: K. Ryan**

K. Ryan stated she was concerned with the tight timeframe for this trip, four hours is so short to see these places in Boston. Dr. Scopino agreed it was tight and one reason was due to the museums' hours.

**Result: Motion passes unanimously.**

C. VOTE: Approve the 2008-2009 Coventry Public Schools Calendar

**MOTION: To Approve the 2008-2009 Coventry Public Schools Calendar**

**By: J. Barrett**

**Seconded: M. Whitham**

J. Barrett said he understood there was discussion with the registrars of voters regarding the elections and there is a possibility of the need to close schools to provide a voting location. Dr. Bernard said she and the town manager are scheduled to meet with the registrars in January to discuss the options available. She added that the Administrative Council has agreed, if there are no other options in town for voting locations, the 6-12 campus could be used for voting without shutting down schools. A discussion ensued about the districts' voting locations and whether the change would be for all elections or just the larger presidential election. L. Pietrantonio recommended approval of the calendar as it stands.

**Result: Motion passes unanimously.**

## **XII. REPORT OF BOARD MEMBERS**

A. Information: Fiscal Committee Report – C. Trudon, S. Holmes

C. Trudon went over the expenditure reports for October and November, which were included in the packets. She also asked Fiscal members to email Sherry Holmes with any questions or concerns about the proposed 2008 Fiscal meeting dates.

B. Information: School Building Committee Report – L. Pietrantonio

L. Pietrantonio stated the Asbestos Abatement project has been all but closed out. He added the water project has hit a snag and the state has notified the committee of this problem, which is specific wording in the contract proposal. He said the state has identified the wording “pumping station” as a flag for them to look at more closely. He noted that this has happened across the state, not just in Coventry. He added this may be better in the long run because it will change the timing of the third bid. He said they hope to have the bid go out sometime in January, which would mean work would be done during warmer weather. He said he would keep the board informed.

## **XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Pursuant to CGS-1-200(c)(6)(A), the Board of Education will go into Executive Session for discussion related to the negotiations for the Cafeteria Workers' Agreement and Nurses' Agreement.

**MOTION: Pursuant to CGS-1-200(c)(6)(A), the Board of Education will go into Executive Session for discussion related to the negotiations for the Cafeteria Workers' Agreement and Nurses' Agreement with the Superintendent and Fiscal Services Director present at 8:37 p.m.**

**By: K. Ryan**

**Seconded: C. Trudon**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously.**

## **XIV. OPEN SESSION**

VOTE: Approve the Agreement between the *Coventry Board of Education and the Cafeteria Workers, July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2010*

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to Open Session at 9:18 p.m.

