

**COVENTRY BOARD OF EDUCATION
APPROVED MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2009**

Members Present: Larry Pietrantonio, Chairman
Kathleen Ryan, Vice Chairman
Cheryl Trudon, Secretary
John Barrett
Mary Kortmann
Michael Whitham (arrived 8:20 p.m.)

Member Absent: Richard Williams

Also Present: Robert Joyce, Student Representative

Administrators Present: Dr. Donna Bernard, Superintendent
Judith Richard, Pupil and Staff Support Services Director

Also present were David Petrone, GHR Principal; Troy Hopkins, CHS Principal; Michele Mullaly, CNH Principal; Marybeth Moyer, CGS Principal; Sean Tomany, CHS Assistant Principal; a few Coventry High School students; and several citizens. All motions are directed to the Coventry Board of Education.

I. CALL TO ORDER

By: Chairman, L. Pietrantonio at 7:30 p.m.
Place: Town Hall Annex

II. SALUTE THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by L. Pietrantonio

III. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

There were none.

IV. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

A. Information: School/Department Goals for 2009-2010

Dr. Bernard began by mentioning district-wide objective 4.6 – “Provide more program alternatives for students, including online coursework and distance learning opportunities.” She said the district had a very successful visit of educators from Coventry’s Chinese sister-school last week. Coventry staff members were very hospitable and both Coventry and Shandong are looking forward to exchanging students as the next step.

1. G. H. Robertson School – D. Petrone

Mr. Petrone handed out updated copies of his goal document (updated numbers only). He said he always looks forward to highlighting what is going on in the school. He wants to be sure everyone knows that there is so much going on beyond what is written on the goal sheet. He invited the Board to come and visit or call if they have any questions. Mr. Petrone reviewed his goal document, which is attached to these minutes.

Mr. Petrone and Dr. Bernard talked about RtI and the components of that program.

M. Kortmann asked how RtI will work with the students on the upper-end. Mr. Petrone said the program works for all student levels and will challenge the students who are performing at a higher level. Dr. Bernard said the Challenge and Enrichment Program has worked on procedures for identifying the higher performing students and that information will come to the Board this winter.

Dr. Bernard said GHR is making distinguished progress with the data teams. She said the teaching of teachers to micro-analyze the data is happening.

J. Barrett asked how it works in a classroom setting when you have different students at different levels in one class. Mr. Petrone said there was some leveling done in the classes. He said in addition, every math and reading class is supported with a para-educator or another certified teacher. He said some pacing is increased and some is decreased. J. Barrett asked why you wouldn't do homogeneous classes. Mr. Petrone said you want to give the lower-end students the chance to rise to the occasion and meet the level of the other students in their classes.

J. Barrett asked if the leveling was only happening in fifth grade. Mr. Petrone said yes this is the first year for fifth grade and in addition, this is the pilot year third grade is rotating during the math block. Mr. Petrone said age is a big factor and it works better with the older children.

L. Pietrantonio asked when the Study Island implementation was happening. Mr. Petrone said it is being piloted at the moment by three teachers at both GHR and CNH. L. Pietrantonio asked about the cost factors. Mr. Petrone said it is stimulus funded; there is a cost for the web-based program yearly. L. Pietrantonio wanted to be sure there was a plan in place to make the Board aware of future use and costs. Dr. Bernard said there is huge accountability when using stimulus funds. L. Pietrantonio asked if this would be implemented next year. Mr. Petrone said the hope is the pilot goes well and we'll review it and put it into place this year. L. Pietrantonio asked that it be brought back to the Board again.

J. Barrett noted objective 3.6 "Expand before and after-school academic programs and opportunities serving as resources to parents and teachers." He said there are current parent-paid programs. He asked if there are any opportunities for parents to obtain scholarships. Mr. Petrone said yes, he does not want any child excluded; he noted there were several students who attended who did not pay at all.

J. Barrett asked if there are late busses used at Robertson. Mr. Petrone said yes, they are piggybacked through the late busses at the middle school on Tuesdays and Thursdays. He said there are parent requests for late busses on other days too. J. Barrett asked if this is being expanded, how is it going to affect the transportation and rider-level. Mr. Petrone said at GHR most parents pick up their students; he does not expect ridership to increase.

C. Trudon asked about Study Island and it being for Connecticut only. Mr. Petrone said it is nationwide, but each program is geared for each state's standards.

2. Coventry High School – T. Hopkins

Mr. Hopkins handed out his updated goal document (updated numbers only). Mr. Hopkins noted that the goal development is a collaborative process including parents and teachers. Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Tomany reviewed the CHS goal document, which is attached to these minutes.

Mr. Whitham arrived (8:20 p.m.).

Under objective 3.6 “Create CHS pride and respect among staff, students, and parents through effective communication, increased involvement and recognition of student achievement” there was a conversation about the new Mygradebook.com program. M. Kortmann asked if teachers are being required to use it. Mr. Hopkins said the majority of teachers are using it, there a few for which the logistics need to be worked out.

Under objective 4.1 “Utilize student achievement data as a basis for the development of practices and programs that enhance and support student learning” there was discussion about testing scores. M. Kortmann also mentioned MCC’s Coventry students having to take remedial English and remedial math classes when they reach MCC. She suggested finding out who these students are and possibly offering another class to similar students before they graduate; proactively address this with these students.

R. Joyce noted objective 4.8 “Fully implement and evaluate our responses to the New England Association of Schools and Colleges including curriculum implementation, the wide-spread use of school-wide rubrics, the analysis of student work, and the implementation of effective instructional strategies” and asked if there is any collaboration with the Advanced Placement program or UCONN regarding scoring, he said they all differ. Mr. Tomany said he was addressing this with teachers this week. He said it is a difficult situation, because they have to answer to individual masters.

VI. REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

Mr. Pietrantonio noted the next two meetings will take place on October 8 and October 29.

L. Pietrantonio said the Town Council Finance Committee will meet jointly with the Board of Education Fiscal Committee after the November elections. This will enable new members on both committees to be present when brought up to date and discussing plans for the year.

L. Pietrantonio said he was brought up on ethic violations by Mr. Tom Pope at a recent Town Council meeting. L. Pietrantonio explained he printed the *Feed Your Head* literary magazine for the high school. He said he was approached a couple of years back by the English Department to clean up the publication, instead of having it just be stapled. He said he was interested in helping students who wanted to use the publication for college applications. He said the \$275 charge to the district from his company was for supplies and no profit was made on his end. He noted that the Town got an opinion from the Town attorney and he was absolved and found of no wrong doing.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

VOTE: Approve minutes of September 10, 2009

MOTION: To approve the minutes of September 10, 2009

By: K. Ryan

Seconded: M. Kortmann

J. Barrett asked that on page 4, third full paragraph, the word “commented” be changed to “suggested.”

J. Barrett asked for clarification on page 5, under Report of Board Members, third paragraph, regarding the consensus. The group agreed the

third sentence would read, "L. Pietrantonio asked if there was a consensus; the group gave consensus."

Result: Motion to approve the minutes with noted changes passes 5-0-1 (M. Whitham abstained).

X. NEW BUSINESS

VOTE: Accept Resignation of Linda Campbell, CNH Teacher

MOTION: Accept Resignation of Linda Campbell, CNH Teacher

By: M. Kortmann Second: K. Ryan

Result: Motion passes unanimously.

XI. REPORT OF BOARD MEMBERS

Information: Fiscal Committee Report – C. Trudon and S. Holmes

C. Trudon reiterated that there will not be a joint Fiscal /Town Finance meeting until later in the fall, due to the election and the Board's Position Statement availability.

C. Trudon noted that all members received the Fiscal information. She said there are unanticipated expenses due to the new wind turbine approved by the Town Council and that the new BOE Fiscal and Town Finance Committees can discuss solutions to that issue.

C. Trudon reviewed the issue of the minutes from the spring Board meeting when the Food Service accounts were being discussed. She said it is the hope that the Food Service accounts will be able to pay for their own propane and telephone. She said the pension costs may be too much for Food Services to absorb this year; it is the hope that that department will get to full self-sufficiency eventually. Dr. Bernard said Food Service has made good progress and propane and telephone should not be a problem for them to cover. M. Whitham asked if the propane and telephone expense will stay allocated in the regular education budget and then a transfer will happen, if necessary. M. Kortmann said it will stay in regular education and be charged if necessary.

J. Barrett said he agrees the Food Service department should be taking on this responsibility. He said he was told at the last meeting that they have worked this into their operating budget to pay for these items. Dr. Bernard said that was an error; the wrong answer was given at that meeting. She said the Food Service staff have not prepared or have not incorporated into their budget these items. She continued, the budget that was developed with the Town and the district business office did not include those items. J. Barrett asked if the administration is requesting that Food Service try to meet those obligations and not have to draw money from the regular education budget. Dr. Bernard said, should we continue to have regular education budget challenges and we find it is possible for Food Service to pick up \$6K of their costs propane and telephone, we would talk about it in Fiscal and we would hope the Board would allow that to happen. C. Trudon said it would be brought to the full Board.

M. Whitham said ideally, the Food Service group should have all of its expenses in one bucket; to show their true cost of ownership. He said what he is hearing now is that it sounds like we are hoping they will start making money to be able to pick up those costs. M. Whitham said if they can't, we may have to do some adjustments. He continued, for accounting purposes you want to show all the expenditures together, not

spread out. He said at this point they are spread out; if they can make enough money to cover it themselves that is great and it becomes theirs and all is in one place. He said if they can't, we may want to have the discussion at some point about moving the money out of the regular education budget and into the Food Service's budget.

J. Barrett asked if those costs could be shown as a negative expense for Food Service; could it be shown separately like the ECS grant money. M. Kortmann said that was her suggestion originally; to put the Food Service "supplementary" as its own line. She said that should be addressed before next year's budget is developed.

L. Pietrantonio asked about the wind turbine program and how much money we are talking about. Dr. Bernard said Mr. Noel has the information and can address this when he comes to present his goals. J. Barrett said this was not supposed to cost the Board a dime. L. Pietrantonio said it was received through a grant. C. Trudon said it was developed through the Town. Dr. Bernard reiterated that Mr. Noel would talk about this when he presents his goals.

M. Whitham said there was a transfer for \$85K for cafeteria equipment at the end of the 08-09 school year. He asked for breakdown of what was purchased. L. Pietrantonio said the Board received that information previously. Dr. Bernard said she would reissue that information to the Board.

M. Whitham asked for an update on the roofs. L. Pietrantonio said that was discussed at the last meeting; the RFQ is out. M. Whitham asked for a realistic timeline. L. Pietrantonio said it all depends on if it can pass a referendum and do we do four roofs instead of three. J. Barrett asked what happens if it fails at referendum. L. Pietrantonio said it has to go through many mandatory stages before anything can happen.

J. Barrett said it is October and cold weather is coming and there are problems with the roofs. L. Pietrantonio said the study needs to be done first and we will have more information then. The group discussed the processes of referendums, studies, and state regulations.

J. Barrett said the Board should make a recommendation to the Town Council at their next meeting to have some remediation done to these roofs. He asked to make a motion. L. Pietrantonio said a motion cannot be made as tonight's meeting is a special meeting. L. Pietrantonio said a letter can be written to the Town Manager asking him to address the urgency with the Town Council. L. Pietrantonio said it is a town expenditure. He said the Board has no authority to expend money to fix the roofs when the vote was taken to spend the \$15K for the study; we are on a treadmill. J. Barrett said he is very concerned about the condition of the roofs. L. Pietrantonio said the letter will be written to the Town Manager asking what the Town's responsibility is if there is a roof failure. Dr. Bernard said the RFQ has been let and the Town Council is going to want to see what the study says.

J. Barrett noted two invoices that went out to L. Pietrantonio's printing company; one of the checks received by him was returned and signed back over to the schools. J. Barrett said those funds were sent to the student activity fund and he asked who, if it originally came out of the regular budget, redirected it to the student activity fund. L. Pietrantonio said he didn't direct it to go anywhere. Dr. Bernard said she would find out and get that answer back in writing.

J. Barrett asked regarding the second invoice, which was from two years ago (Fiscal year 07-08), why it was held out of getting paid until June 2009. L. Pietrantonio said it could be because the invoice was sent to the attention of a staff member and possibly got

lost in the shuffle. He continued he had considered it a loss. J. Barrett said it has nothing to do with the name on the invoice; this is a Fiscal issue. Dr. Bernard said she would check into the delay in paying. J. Barrett said it should be posted to 2007-08 school year and it doesn't make sense it was paid in 2008-09. Dr. Bernard said our accounts payable department pays bills on time; she would get an answer back in writing.

J. Barrett said regarding the Fiscal meeting timing, it is a problem getting the minutes a month later. He said this is a big disconnect of information. He said he believes the fiscal meetings should be held off-cycle of the Board meetings so the minutes are received in time for review, before the Fiscal report at the regular Board meeting. C. Trudon said the current Fiscal committee discussed this and could not coordinate their schedules to get a quorum to meet off-cycle. M. Whitham said it is a good idea and the next Fiscal Committee can decide how to do it.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

By: K. Ryan

Seconded: M. Whitham

Result: Motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Kimberlee Michaud
Board Clerk

October 29, 2009

Approved



Coventry Public Schools

SubSystem/Department Goals for the 2009 - 2010 School Year

**David Petrone – G. H. Robertson Intermediate School
September 24, 2009**

- 1.0 Improve outside resources, partnerships, and revenues, consistent with district goals.
 - 1.2 Collaborate with Police, Fire and Town agencies to improve our emergency responsiveness
 - 1.3 With the assistance of the EASTCONN staff, the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALD) will be implemented
- 2.0 Promote efficient functioning and consistent refinement of subsystems within the larger organization.
 - 2.5 Use data from the school-wide Data Team to establish processes and practices that further increase academic achievement
 - 2.6 Establish processes and practices using RtI Direct as an instrument to make programmatic improvements as connected to SREI
- 3.0 Provide clear and regular communication to all constituencies, building a support base for school programs.
 - 3.6 Expand before and after-school academic programs and opportunities serving as resources to parents and teachers
 - 3.10 Collaborate with CGS and CNH to provide family seminars to assist with child development
 - 3.5 Further the process of advancing our school's website to provide a more informative and user friendly site
- 4.0 Implement programs and practices that improve student educational performance, ensuring that such practices align with state standards.
 - 4.3 Continue to analyze data related to student performance on standardized tests to refine and modify current *special education* programs as outlined in our school improvement plan to address concerns surrounding Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Main Goal Items 1.0 – 5.0 Adopted by the Board of Education
December 9, 2004

- 4.3 Launch a school-wide data team to modify programs as connected to student results
- 4.8 Continue to facilitate curriculum alignment between classroom offerings and state standards, through A.Balanced Curriculum program, with a focus on alignments and assessments for all subject areas
- 5.0 Improve the implementation and use of educational and administrative technology systems.
 - 5.6 Implement school-wide use of Study Island to assist students in mastering the content specified in the Connecticut Curriculum Frameworks
 - 5.9 Pilot the use of RtI Direct technology to support effective data collection

Main Goal Items 1.0 – 5.0 Adopted by the Board of Education
December 9, 2004



Coventry Public Schools

SubSystem/Department Goals for the 2009 - 2010 School Year

**Troy Hopkins, Principal
COVENTRY HIGH SCHOOL
September 24, 2009**

- 1.0 Improve outside resources, partnerships, and revenues, consistent with district goals.
 - 1.1 Implement the second year of five of the Project Opening Doors grant including training for staff and review sessions for students, and continue to develop partnerships that prepare students for success in the increasingly interdependent global society
 - 1.2 Continue to refine our crisis plan procedures in collaboration with Police and Fire personnel
- 2.0 Promote efficient functioning and consistent refinement of subsystems within the larger organization.
 - 2.4 Implement and evaluate the common CHS/CNH schedule and continue to identify ways to maximize its advantages to increase student learning including opportunities for teachers to collaborate on curriculum design and implementation
 - 2.1 Increase student ownership and pride in Coventry High School by providing choice and relevance in their academic work and expanding opportunities for students to assume responsibility in school functions
- 3.0 Provide clear and regular communication to all constituencies, building a support base for school programs.
 - 3.6 (3.8) Create CHS pride and respect among staff, students, and parents through effective communication, increased involvement, and recognition of student achievement
 - 3.5 Enhance and maintain the welcoming and helpful atmosphere at Coventry High School by responding to parent, student, and staff feedback

Main Goal Items 1.0 – 5.0 Adopted by the Board of Education
December 9, 2004

- 4.0 Implement programs and practices that improve student educational performance, ensuring that such practices align with state standards.
 - 4.8 Fully implement and evaluate our responses to the New England Association of Schools and Colleges including curriculum implementation, the wide-spread use of school-wide rubrics, the analysis of student work, and the implementation of effective instructional strategies
 - 4.1 (4.6) Utilize student achievement data as a basis for the development of practices and programs that enhance and support student learning
- 5.0 Improve the implementation and use of educational and administrative technology systems.
 - 5.6 Train staff for further implementation of technology into teaching practices
 - 5.8 Design and implement practices that use technology to increase efficient functioning of the school

Main Goal Items 1.0 – 5.0 Adopted by the Board of Education
December 9, 2004