The regular meeting of the Groton Board of Education was held on December 12, 2011, in the Cafetorium of Northeast Academy School.

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Kristen Hoyt, Board Chairperson, at 8:36 p.m.

The first order of business was the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Mrs. Gardner.

PRESENT

Dr. Kirsten Hoyt, Chairperson
Mrs. Elizabeth Gianacoplos, Vice Chairperson
Mrs. Patricia Doyle
Ms. Shelley Gardner
Mr. Robert Peruzzotti
Mrs. Kim Shepardson Watson
Mrs. Rita Volkmann
Mrs. Beverly Washington
Mr. Chaz Zezulka

Mr. Paul J. Kadri, Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Mary Anne Butler, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Mrs. Carolyn Dickey, Business Manager
Mrs. Denise Doolittle, Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Mr. Wesley Greenleaf, Director of Buildings and Grounds
Ms. Amy Semerjian, Principal Analyst & Grants Investigator

ABSENT

Mrs. Laurie LePine, Director of Human Resource Services

Mr. Matthew Buechel, Student Representative

Mr. Jaryn Burgis, Student Representative

B. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

1. Mrs. Lisa Tess, addressed:
   - SRBI – She stated that it needs to be planned better and asked why a substitute teacher is teaching a SRBI Enrichment class. She also asked who is supposed to provide supplies for Enrichment classes.
   - Survey – She stated that both parents in a family are not allowed to take the survey. She asked who created the survey and why 2 or more things can be selected as not important instead of selected as important.
B. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS – cont.

- She stated that she was very upset by Mr. Shirvell’s comments. She noted that she moved to the Cutler area so that her children could attend Cutler.
- She asked the Board to think about rescinding their vote to close a middle school.

2. Rosanne Kotowski, 24 Ann Avenue, stated that she has been trying to get information from the last meeting regarding Mr. Shirvell’s comments. In particular, the documents to support his statements. She is looking for an accounting of the 1.4 million dollar stimulus money and budget shortfall amounts that were mentioned.

3. Mr. Andrew Parrella, 790 Eastern Point Road, stated:
   - that there needs to be a concrete development of a Plan. He noted that the Phase II Plan required the closing of a middle school and the transporting of students back and forth and suggested that the Board look at making that work.
   - Grants Position – He asked what are the plans for getting funds back if there is a 3 million dollar shortfall and what would be cut as well what would be the savings? He further asked if salaries can be juggled?
   - He asked if the PAC could tour the schools?

4. Ms. Nancy Gilly, 34 North Road, congratulated the newly elected Board members. She asked if everyone could agree that all middle schools are good school and if one is closed, it is not because it is a bad school or a poor school. She also noted a commentary in Education Week regarding concerns that the common core is not being implemented correctly.

C. RECOGNITION AND PARTICIPATION AND DELEGATIONS

NONE

D. STUDENT LIAISON REPORT

NONE

II. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

1. Mrs. Washington stated that she would like to publicly apologize to the Cutler Middle School community for the comments that were made by Mr. Shirvell

2. Mrs. Volkmann stated that she too would like to publicly apologize to the Cutler Middle School community for the comments that were made by Mr. Shirvell.

3. Mr. Zezulka stated that he would like to add his apology and requested that the Chair send a letter to the Cutler staff that the Board had confidence in them. He also requested that questions from citizens be answered.

4. Mrs. Gianacoplos echoed Mr. Zezulka’s suggested that the Chair send a letter to the Cutler staff that the Board had confidence in them.
II. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS – cont.

5. Mrs. Washington urged the Board to establish a committee for long-term facilities planning and to determine why Phase II did not pass.
6. Mr. Zezulka stated that he agreed with the second part of Mrs. Washington’s request and that a Facilities Committee should consist of more than just the Board.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A. REPORTS AND INFORMATION FROM STAFF

1. Conceptual Ideas for Long-Term Facilities

   Mr. Greenleaf gave an overview of conceptual ideas for long-term facilities [ATTACHMENTS #1, 2] and a review of the CIP Projects [ATTACHMENT #3].

B. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

1. Good News

   Mr. Kadri noted that Fitch High School had received their accreditation from the Commissioner of Public Secondary Schools.

   CB Success – Mr. Kadri noted that NBC News was coming on Wednesday when a submarine will be coming into Groton and the news crew will also be interviewing staff at CB.

   CONNCAN – This is a watchdog group who recognized CC as the 6th most improved school in Connecticut.

   United Way Campaign Contribution – Mr. Kadri noted that as of Friday, contribution was over $26,000.

   Consolidation of Middle School – Mr. Kadri noted that the following questions needs to be answered – How do we best allocate our resources? Can we effectively service our students with two middle schools?

   Education Transformation Report – Mr. Kadri gave an overview of his participation in the report. He noted that Groton was one of sixteen schools to be selected to work on this project. A more in-depth report will be given at a later date. He highlighted recommendations for transformation:
   - Raise the bar
   - Make it personal
   - Start with Early Childhood
   - Retool assessments and accountability
   - Offer more options and choices
   - Reform leadership
   - Boost quality
B. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT – cont.

- Involve students and parents
- Leverage technology
- Continue transformation

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. District Quality Council: There was no report.

2. Finance Committee:

   Mr. Zezulka stated that the Finance Committee met tonight and reviewed the auditors management letter. He also noted three areas for corrections: Retirement Incentive/Encumbrance/Grants.

3. Communications Committee:

   Mrs. Doyle stated that the Communications Committee met tonight and discussed the plan for closing a middle school and the improvement of communications with shareholders.

4. Negotiations Committee:

   There was no report.

5. LEARN:

   Mrs. Volkmann stated that LEARN met last Thursday and received a report from Dr. Seccombe on the finances of the Marine Science Magnet School. She stated that there were seventy openings with 370 applications. She stated that the CAPT report was highlighted; the school calendar was discussed relative to the PD at the end of March and she noted this is a concern for her.

6. Wellness Committee:

   There was no report.

7. Policy Committee:

   Mrs. Gianacoplos stated that the Policy Committee met tonight and discussed the Non-Discrimination Policy, Minority Recruitment Policy and the Tuition reduction. She noted that the Minority Recruitment Policy and the Tuition Reduction Policy would be on the January Policy Committee agenda.
IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS – cont.

8. Curriculum Committee: There was no report.

9. Facilities Committee: Mr. Peruzzotti stated that the Facilities Committee met tonight and discussed the CIP report.

10. Groton Parent Council: Dr. Hoyt stated that the Groton Parent Council would meet on December 13, 2011.

11. Town & City Councils/RTM/BOE Liaison Committee: It was noted that the Town & City Councils/RTM/BOE Liaison Committee would meet December 19, 2011, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

12. GEA/AGSA Liaison Committee: Mrs. Volkmann noted that the GEA/AGSA Liaison Committee would meet on Thursday at the Administration Building.

13. Committee of the Whole: Dr. Hoyt stated that the Committee of the Whole met and discussed a presentation of the CAPT students, the Vision Committee Report and the temporary Board schedule.

14. CABE: There was no report.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. RESOLUTION ACCEPTING BOARD MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 28, 2011, are hereby accepted and approved.

2. RESOLUTION ACCEPTING WARRANTS

RESOLVED, that the Warrants dated December 12, 2011 are hereby accepted and approved.
3. RESOLUTION ACCEPTING GIFTS

RESOLVED, that the Board hereby accepts gifts to the Groton Public Schools as follows:

- Charter Oak Federal Credit Union made a $100.00 donation for a “Bronze” sponsorship and to aid the Fitch High Robotics Club.
- The City of Groton made a Groton Utilities/Thames Valley Communication donation of a Platinum Sponsorship in the amount of $1000.00 to the Fitch High Robotics Club.
- The Birdies for Charity Fundraiser made a donation in the amount of $203.73 to the Fitch High School Robotics Club.
- The Spicer’s Marinas made a donation in the amount of $100.00 to the Fitch High School Robotics Team.
- Mr. Wayne S. Lunder made a donation of $50.00 to the Fitch High School Robotics Team.
- SEA CORP made a donation in the amount of $250.00 to the Fitch High School Robotics Team.
- Electric Boat made a donation of 12 laptop computers for Pamela Neidig at Fitch High School at a value of $1,200.00 and 15 desktop computers for Adam Diskin at Fitch High School at a value of $1,125.00.
- Densmore Oil Company made a donation of $100.00 to the Fitch High School Robotics Team.
- An anonymous donor made a donation of $1,000.00 to the Fitch High School Robotics Team.
- Mr. and Mrs. Edward Dieckerhoff made a donation $140.00 to the Fitch High School Robotics Team.
- Mr. and Mrs. Michael Doyle made a donation of $190.00 to the Fitch High School Robotics Team.

A motion was made by Mr. Peruzzotti and seconded by Mr. Zezulka.

Mr. Peruzzotti was out of the room for this vote.

PASSED

B. OLD BUSINESS


WHEREAS, the Policy Committee has reviewed the Equal Employment/Non-Discrimination Policy P4111.1, and recommends modifying language to mirror the district handbooks and State definitions; therefore be it
B. OLD BUSINESS – cont.

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Policy Committee and the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education, approves as a second reading, the Equal Employment/Non-Discrimination Policy P4111.1.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gianacoplos and seconded by Mr. Zezulka.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gianacoplos and seconded by Mrs. Volkmann to amend the motion by not deleting “sexual orientation.”

VOTE ON AMENDMENT: PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED: PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

2. Second Reading – Students: Non-Discrimination P5145.4 [ATTACHMENT #5]

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee has reviewed the Non-Discrimination Policy P5145.4 and recommends modifying language to mirror the district handbooks and State definitions; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Policy Committee and the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education, approves as a second reading, the Non-Discrimination Policy P5145.4.

A motion was made by Mr. Zezulka and seconded by Mrs. Doyle.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gianacoplos and seconded by Mr. Zezulka to amend the motion by not deleting “sexual orientation.”

VOTE ON AMENDMENT: PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED: PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

3. Second Reading – Bullying Policy [ATTACHMENT #6]

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee has reviewed the Bullying Policy after sweeping regulations passed by the State, and

WHEREAS, the proposed language aligns with the State requirements; therefore be it
B. OLD BUSINESS – cont.

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Policy Committee and the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education, approves as a second reading, the Bullying Policy, to be distributed at the meeting.

A motion was made by Mrs. Volkmann and seconded by Mrs. Washington.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

4. Approval of Board of Education Meeting Schedule 2011-2012
[ATTACHMENT #7]

WHEREAS, the Board of Education establishes a meeting schedule for every fourth Monday of each month during the school year, and

WHEREAS, if holidays occur on Mondays, the Board meets on Tuesday, and

WHEREAS, approval of this schedule is necessary by January of each year; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the schedule of Board of Education meetings for the 2011-2012 school year as presented.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gianacoplos and seconded by Mr. Zezulka to table this item.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

C. NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of the Building Technology Support Position
[ATTACHMENT #5]

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has previously voted to establish the Building Technology Support position, and changes to the job description require a new stipend rate to be established, and

WHEREAS, a recommendation is being made to establish the Building Technology Support position at a stipend of $900.00; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the Building Technology Support position at a stipend of $900.00.
C. NEW BUSINESS – cont.

A motion was made by Mrs. Washington and seconded by Mrs. Doyle.

YES – Gianacoplos, Doyle, Hoyt, Peruzzotti
NO - Zezulka, Volkmann, Washington
ABSTAINED – Gardiner, Shepardson Watson

DEFEATED

2. Approval of the Teacher Retirement Early Notification Incentive
   [ATTACHMENT #6]

WHEREAS, the Groton Board of Education desires to have teachers who are planning to retire on or before July 1, 2012 notify the Board of their intent to retire prior to January 20, 2012 to allow the Board of Education sufficient time to engage in meaningful and productive recruitment of professional staff for the 2012-2013 school year, and

WHEREAS, the Groton Education Association has agreed to the terms of the Retirement Early Notification Incentive; therefore be it

RESOLVED that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education agrees to pay teachers a Retirement Early Notification Incentive award of $1,000.00 upon receipt of their letter of retirement on or before January 20, 2012.

A motion was made by Mrs. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Zezulka.

YES – Doyle, Zezulka, Shepardson Watson, Hoyt, Washington, Volkmann, Gianazoplos
NO - Peruzzotti
ABSTAINED - Gardiner

PASSED

3. Approval of Groton Public Schools Vision Committee Report

WHEREAS, the Groton Public Schools Vision Committee was formed during the fall of the 2011-2012 school year and charged with determining the needs of the Groton educational system, grades 6 through 8, as part of the next phase of the school district construction project; and
C. NEW BUSINESS – cont.

WHEREAS, the charge of said Vision Committee was to develop the Educational Specifications for grades 6 through 8 to foster 21st Century teaching and learning skills; and

WHEREAS, said Vision Committee has completed its analysis and Final Report of the Educational Specifications for grades 6 through 8; and

WHEREAS, the Vision Committee Report was reviewed by the Committee of the Whole on December 12, 2011; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education adopts the Groton Public Schools Vision Committee Report, dated December 12, 2011, as submitted.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gianacoplos and seconded by Mrs. Washington to table this item.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

VI. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

A. LETTERS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND COMMENTS

1. Mrs. Gardner noted various e-mails with concerns regarding the ball field expenditure.
2. Mr. Peruzzotti noted the communications on the middle schools.
3. Mrs. Volkman noted:
   - That FMS has an urgent need due to overcrowding and stated that she would like them addressed.
   - That she was pleased to hear from Paul Esposito that the second grade had received help in the form of two paraprofessionals.
   - Numerous communication regarding comments made at the last meeting about Cutler Middle School.
   - Communication from a parent regarding the closing of a middle school
4. Mrs. Washington noted the e-mails regarding the consolidation of middle school and the survey.
5. Mrs. Doyle stated that she received e-mails regarding the middle schools.
6. Mrs. Shepardson Watson noted the same e-mails.
7. Mr. Zezulka noted the same e-mails as his colleagues. He stated that his role as a Board member is not to micro manage the administration and the teachers.
8. Mrs. Gianacoplos noted e-mails regarding the middle school consolidation; that she spoke at CB about the possibility of their being on TV; that she had a chat regarding the Board reinstating the purchase of library books during budget time; and she attended the State Committee on Compact for Military Children in Connecticut last week regarding entry age for Kindergarten.
9. Dr. Hoyt noted e-mails on the survey and the middle school closure.
A. LETTERS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND COMMENTS – cont.

10. Mrs. Washington noted that Ann Brian, Executive Director of the National School Board of Education, is retiring at the end of January and that Mary Broderich was in charge of the search committee for her replacement.

Dr. Hoyt stated that Gail Cancellieri, the Nurse at Fitch Middle School, had passed away and her services were held today.

VII. ADVANCE PLANNING

A. Future Meeting Dates and Calendar Items

As noted in the agenda.

B. Suggested Agenda Items

Mrs. Washington asked for discussion regarding the Catherine Kolnaski Magnet School. Is it working as a Magnet School? She asked that this topic be referred to the COW.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Peruzzotti and seconded by Mr. Zezulka to adjourn at 10:36 p.m.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY