

ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES

PLACE: ANSONIA CITY HALL

DATE: 7 JULY 2010

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY: VICE PRESIDENT Carmen Pitney

I. OPENING

A. Pledge of Allegiance

There was a moment of silence for William Pedevillano, a former Ansonia teacher, who recently passed away.

B. Roll Call

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	PRESENT	ABSENT	LATE (time)
MR. GEORGE BOATH	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO	X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI	X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President		X	
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS	X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY	X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY		X	
TOTAL	5	2	0

II. PUBLIC SESSION

After asking three times if anyone wished to speak, Mr. Pitney closed the public session.

III. ACTION ITEMS, CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING . . .

A. Ansonia Board of Education meeting minutes dated May 25, 2010 (finance) and June 2, 2010 (regular)

MOTION: That the minutes dated May 25, 2010, (finance) be accepted as submitted.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO				X
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI	2	X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS				X
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		3	0	2

MOTION: That the minutes dated June 2, 2010, (regular) be accepted as presented.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO				X
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI	2	X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS				X
MR. CARMEN PITNEY				X
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		2	0	3

DISCUSSION: Mr. Pitney said the June 2, 2010 meeting minutes will have to be taken up at the next meeting.

B. Retirements

1. Marvin Franks/Grade 8 Social Studies/Ansonia Middle School

MOTION: To accept the retirement of Marvin Franks, grade 8 social studies teacher at Ansonia Middle School, and send a very special letter of thanks for his 40 years of service.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO		X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI		X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS	2	X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

2. Sandra Qerim/Social Worker/Mead School

MOTION: To accept the retirement of Sandra Qerim, social worker at Mead School, and send a letter of thanks.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO	2	X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI		X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS		X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

C. Resignations

1. Sara Chicoine/Grade 4/Mead School

MOTION: To accept the resignation of Sara Chicoine, grade 4 teacher at Mead School, and send a letter of thanks.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO		X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI		X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS	2	X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

2. Elaine Hashemian/Spanish/Ansonia High School

MOTION: To accept the resignation of Elaine Hashemian, Spanish teacher at Ansonia High School, and send a letter of thanks.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO	2	X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI		X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS		X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

3. Jennifer Lund/Special Education/Mead School

MOTION: To accept the resignation of Jennifer Lund, special education teacher at Mead School, and send a letter of thanks.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO		X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI		X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS	2	X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

D. A.H.S. Summer School Director/Christopher Affie

MOTION: To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Christopher Affie as A.H.S. summer school director.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO		X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI		X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS	2	X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

E. Certified Appointment/Sharon Wrzosek/Spanish/Ansonia High School

DISCUSSION: Superintendent Merlone explained that Mrs. Wrzosek has 11 years experience teaching Spanish in public schools and many years in private schools.

MOTION: To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Sharon Wrzosek as a Spanish teacher at Ansonia High School.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Nimons asked what the salary level is compared to the Spanish teacher that resigned. Mrs. Merlone said it is very comparable. We always try to hire on the low end.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO		X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI	2	X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS		X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

F. Superintendent's Recommendation of Assistant Superintendent

DISCUSSION: Superintendent Merlone explained that we had nine candidates apply. We looked to interview six, two decided not to come to Ansonia, and we interviewed four. We brought the top two candidates to the committee, which was comprised of teachers, administrators, BOE members, and community members. Dr. Gasper was by far the number one candidate. Mr. Pitney said he and Ms. DiGiorgi were on that committee and Dr. Gasper was an outstanding candidate. Mr. Caruso asked about the salary for the assistant superintendent. Mrs. Merlone said the salary is \$1,000 more than what the former assistant superintendent was receiving. Mr. Boath asked if this was attributable to his commute. Mrs. Merlone said he will be commuting from East Hampton. All other benefits are the same. Mr. Boath said he reviewed Dr. Gasper's extensive resume and said we would be hard pressed to find someone of that caliber. Mrs. Merlone said the salary for a principal in Newtown is \$144,000 and Dr. Gasper's salary in Ansonia will be \$126,000. Ms. DiGiorgi said Dr. Gasper also has experience in Ansonia. The Superintendent said he was our external facilitator when Cambridge and the State Department of Education visited Ansonia. He did a marvelous job helping us with the District Improvement Plan. He really is an outstanding candidate. When I called to ask his Superintendent to release him she said she will be holding him for 30 days. So, he will be starting sometime in the end of August.

MOTION: To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Tony Gaspar as Assistant Superintendent for Ansonia Public Schools.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO	2	X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI		X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS		X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

G. ECMC Scholarship Grant for Ansonia High School

DISCUSSION: Superintendent Merlone said she received a letter from Eileen Ehman, grants manager, asking for Board approval for the ECMC Scholarship Grant for Ansonia High school. We submitted this grant with the State Dept. in June and this is for a new scholarship program for A.H.S. Our students could use this.

MOTION: To approve the filing of the ECMC Scholarship Grant for Ansonia High School.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO		X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI	2	X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS		X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

H. Permission for Superintendent to Hire Certified Staff During the Summer

DISCUSSION: Superintendent Merlone requested that the Board give her permission to hire certified staff during the months of July and August. She added that the past two years they have lost good candidates because by the time we convene a meeting the candidate has accepted a position elsewhere.

MOTION: To grant the Superintendent permission to hire certified staff during the summer.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH				
MR. ROBERT CARUSO				
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI	1			
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS				
MR. CARMEN PITNEY				
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		0	0	0

MOTION: To grant the Superintendent permission to hire certified staff during the summer and send the candidates packets to the Board members.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH		X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO	2	X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI		X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS	1	X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

I. MOU between BOE and AFT re: Overage of Course Load

DISCUSSION: Superintendent Merlone said that in the budget for the high school there are two positions, one for a math teacher and one for a reading specialist. With the budget amount received we cannot accommodate all the students' needs, so we had to become creative. Instead of paying for a math position, just for this year, we would offer a stipend of \$5,000 to the teachers for teaching an extra class, this way we could offer 10 additional courses. A teacher teaches five courses and we would have to pay overages anyway. With this we wouldn't have to pay benefits either. Just for this year, during tough economic times, we are trying to be creative so we could furnish the needs of our students. Mrs. Merlone said the AFT said they would agree to this for one year only. This is the year we have to start writing the narrative for NEASC. Dr. Gasper chaired that committee and is very familiar with this. We will have his expertise but we do not have the teachers necessary to fill the positions at the high school. This will be a real concern for NEASC because they audit our coursework. Mr. Nimons asked according to the contract, how many classes do the high school teachers teach? Superintendent Merlone said she believes the sixth class is the overload. Teachers will be giving up their prep times and preparing lessons at home. These are the areas in need or we can't make it work for our students. When we were faced with this it was a panic and Mrs. Merlone said she has to credit Mr. Lisi for his creative thinking because he came up with this plan. Mr. Boath asked, the \$65,000 is the worse case scenario? Mrs. Merlone said the ten classes times \$5,000 comes out to \$50,000, the remainder of \$15,000 are regular stipend teachers due to the over loads we have every year. This year it is an unusual situation because we can't afford the teachers needed in order to make the high school schedule work. The creative way to do that was to work with the union and they said they will agree to this only for one year. Mr. Nimons asked if this is in our budget. Mrs. Merlone said it is because we are not going to fund the math position. We will be using that salary and splitting it to pay the stipends. Mr. Nimons asked if the teachers will be receiving this stipend in one lump sum. Mrs. Merlone said it will be based on contract language which is two payments.

MOTION: To approve the MOU between the BOE and AFT re: overage of course load.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO	2	X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI		X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS		X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

J. Superintendent's Recommendations for Non-Union 2010/2011 Salaries and Specified Contract Extensions

Salaries

DISCUSSION: Superintendent Merlone said the non-union employees took a 0% increase last year; they were not presented an option because I told them they were getting 0%. Other unions did not take a 0% increase and this group felt that everything should be equal for everyone. The Superintendent said she is supporting the non-union staff. Also, the PreK School Readiness personnel is totally funded by the grant and not from BOE funds at all. Mr. Pitney said he

and Ms. DiGiorgi have been negotiating the contracts for the custodians and food service and they are negotiating 0%, 1%, 1.5%, 2%, and personally he wouldn't go over 2%. Mr. Nimons asked if he would accept 1.5% every six months off the base number. This will come out to 2.25% and is a fair compromise.

MOTION: To grant raises for non-union staff July 1, 2010 at 1.5% of their base salary and January 1, 2011 another 1.5% but it doesn't compound, it goes off their base salary.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH			X	
MR. ROBERT CARUSO	2	X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI		X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS	1	X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		4	1	0

DISCUSSION: Superintendent Merlone said at this time she would like to thank the Board for generously awarding the non-union staff members a raise during this tough economic time and she would like to contribute her raise back to the Board of Education and put that towards student programs.

Contract Extensions

DISCUSSION: Mr. Pitney explained that the contract extensions are:

- Superintendent – 06/30/2013
- Business Manager – 06/30/2012
- Secretary to the Superintendent – 06/30/2012
- Grants Manager – 06/30/2012
- Director of Facilities – 06/30/2012
- Technology Coordinator – 06/30/2012
- School Readiness Coordinator – 06/30/2012
- Payroll/HR – 06/30/2011

Mr. Nimons asked why the Payroll/HR's contract is only a one year extension to 2011. Mr. Gaskins, business manager, said it is a one year extension of the contract that she has. Mr. Pitney said the rest are also one year extensions from 2011. Superintendent Merlone said this was her first year. Mr. Gaskins said she has been here less than one year.

MOTION: To accept the contract extensions of non-union staff as presented.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH		X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO		X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI	1	X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS	2	X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

DISCUSSION: Ms. DiGiorgi noted that it is very generous of Superintendent Merlone to give her raise back to the students in our district.

K. K-3 Math IRC/Grant Funded/1 Year Position

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Merlone said with respect to the K-3 Math Instructional Coach (IRC) we did not put that in our original budget, we put a math coordinator that we had to cut before we even brought it to the BOE because we had to make budget cuts. This math IRC is one that we never filled. In reviewing the grant funding we have one grant left that has X amount of dollars that we could put a teacher in for one year. Given that we can no longer fund a part-time math coordinator, this individual will probably be working at the K-3 level and would be helping to roll out the math curriculum. It is definitely a need and is only for one year. The way it will be posted is that it is a one year teaching position. After this year the money runs out and the person goes back to the classroom. This will be the best use to support teachers in the classroom with the curriculum. Mr. Boath said having to support 29 teachers is quite a task.

MOTION: To approve the grant funded K-3 Math IRC position for 1 year.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH		X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO		X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI	2	X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS	1	X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Assistant Superintendent’s Report/District Improvement Plan (DIP)

ATTACHMENT #1

DISCUSSION: Superintendent Merlone said the last State monitoring visit on June 10th went very well. We successfully met most areas. We do have a plan for next year for the areas we did not meet. This DIP holds us accountable for what we are doing, how we are doing it, and who is going to monitor it. Mr. Boath said it seems that the areas in which we haven’t met aren’t critical issues, everything needs to be addressed but these areas are not critical. Mrs. Merlone said hats off to the staff, they are doing a great job.

B. Special Education Director’s Report

ATTACHMENT #2

DISCUSSION: Ms. Gabrielson explained her report to the Board. All certified vacancies will be filled. Ms Gabrielson said she doesn’t have candidates for non-certified positions. Mr. Boath asked what if we don’t fill those positions. Ms. Gabrielson said we get creative with the numerous people we have on staff.

C. Technology Report

ATTACHMENT #3

DISCUSSION: Superintendent Merlone said we will be implementing TEMS over the summer. Ms. DiGiorgi asked if everyone has been trained. The key people have been trained.

D. Financial Reports

ATTACHMENT #4

1. 2009-2010 Year to Date

DISCUSSION: Mr. Gaskins explained the financial report. The year end report will be modified or adjusted at audit time and for the ED001 report for no other reason that we have to monitor the remaining encumbrances and invoices that come in. It is projected to be expended with a balance of \$282 and he would expect that to go up as encumbrance balances are returned to the budget for backorders for substitutions or items not shipped in a timely fashion. That is a safe number. As requested at the last meeting, all the requisitions were approved by the Superintendent and signed for by the Board Chair. The vast majority of those are in the textbooks, library books, and technology and equipment. Mr. Gaskins said from here we have

to process and monitor any outstanding items from last year's budget as we prepare for the ED001, which is due September 1st and the audit which is based on the ED001 reporting. In addition we will be working over the summer to make sure all reconciliations are done with the City because that had been a prior write-up. We have gotten very good at that, we submit to the City our information and we are to the point where we need to send them the final couple of months information. Once that is reconciled we will double check to make sure all the entries are made on both sides. In addition there are the ARRA SFSF Grants, the BOE side will need to make those journal entries over the summer now that the fiscal year has ended; they are all salaries and benefits. We will pull them out of the BOE general appropriation and apply them to the grant. We have all the supporting documentation down to the person and their amount paid in the fiscal year and benefits. We will be supporting documentation for the auditors. That will be fully audited as all the other grants are.

Mr. Gaskins said the end of the year is incredibly crazy. He thanked the central office staff, Pam Dickson, accounts payable, Lori Henry and Eileen Ehman, grants, and Korri Verderame, payroll. The ladies did a tremendous job and he wanted to bring that to the Board's attention.

Mr. Gaskins said the 2010-2011 budget has been entered into the system. At this time, the way the budget is set up, he doesn't foresee any issues with next year's budget. It will be tight but as always he will update to the BOE on a monthly basis. Mr. Nimons asked if he is comfortable with the projected balance of \$282. Mr. Gaskins said absolutely. Some of the projections are conservative and gave an example such as utilities.

2. Athletics

DISCUSSION: Superintendent Merlone said there will be an Athletic Committee meeting July 15th. We are inviting coaches and principals to be on committee.

3. Food Services

DISCUSSION: No questions were asked.

4. Grants

DISCUSSION: No questions were asked.

5. Other Income

DISCUSSION: No questions were asked.

E. Teacher Absences

DISCUSSION: Superintendent Merlone said there are many absences at the end of the year due to field trips and coverage by floaters due to work with the State Dept. and our ongoing data teams. That is why there was a large amount in sub money.

F. Notes from the Desk of the Superintendent

ATTACHMENT #5

DISCUSSION: The Superintendent presented her notes to the Board members. She thanked everyone, parents, community, staff and Boe members for supporting all of our initiatives this year. Without it we would not be able to turn the district. Mrs. Merlone, while speaking of the Intergenerational Dinner with the senior citizens, said Mr. Nimons' granddaughter Catherine did a wonderful job orchestrating the dinner.

The Superintendent said she only received one complaint from a parent for having the AMS Commencement Program during the day. It was much more organized.

Mrs. Merlone said in September she will be calling on all building administrators to present their school plan to the BOE. We have to hold everyone accountable and it has to be aligned with our District Improvement Plan.

G. Additional; Administration or Board of Education

DISCUSSION: Mr. Pitney said there will be no August BOE meeting. Mr. Caruso thanked the Superintendent for giving back her raise to the school system.

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO	2	X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI		X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President				
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS		X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY				
TOTAL		5	0	0

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Perrotti
Recording Secretary
July 12, 2010