

# ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

## MINUTES

**PLACE:** ANSONIA CITY HALL

**DATE:** 02 SEPTEMBER 2009

**TIME:** 7:00 P.M.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY: PRESIDENT John Lawlor

### I. OPENING

A. Pledge of Allegiance

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			7:41 P.M.
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY	X		
<b>TOTAL</b>	5	1	1

There was a moment of silence for William J. "Fessy" Evans, Sr., a former Board of Education Member who recently passed away.

**MOTION:** To amend the agenda to add Action Item E, Resignation/Dorri Mendes/Music/Prendergast School, Action Item F, Certified Appointment/Jackie Abelli/Consumer Economics/Ansonia High School, and Certified Appointment/Neill Berggren/Spanish/Ansonia High and Ansonia Middle Schools, and Informational Item G, Human Relations Club Intervention Plan, presented by Mrs. Bennett-Wallick.

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

## **II. Recognition of Ansonia 2009/2010 Teacher of the Year, Fred Borne, Ansonia High School, Math**

**DISCUSSION:** Superintendent Merlone introduced Fred Borne, the Ansonia 2009/2010 Teacher of the Year. She explained that Mr. Borne is an ambitious, caring teacher. He is an important link to Ansonia High School students. Mr. Borne has also been heavily involved with the Human Relations Club. Mrs. Merlone said the administration appreciates and values Mr. Borne's work. It is truly an honor to recognize Fred for making a difference in the lives of our students. Mrs. Merlone thanked Mr. Borne on behalf of the Board of Education. There was applause and a standing ovation from the audience. Mr. Borne thanked the Board for this opportunity to represent Ansonia at the state level in Hartford. He said he has worked diligently with some assistance from various staff members on the Teacher of the Year application. Mr. Lawlor, on behalf of the Board, also congratulated Mr. Borne. He said he has heard tremendous things about him. We are fortunate, as a district, to have him on board and looks forward to working with him for many years. Mr. Lawlor added that he looks forward to helping Mr. Borne in supporting his quest with regard to becoming Connecticut's Teacher of the Year.

## **III. PUBLIC SESSION**

1. Sharon Drewelus of 12 Catalina Drive and Carol Ryan of 15 Catalina Drive addressed the Board. Ms. Drewelus said they were confused on why there was a time change for Mead School. Mrs. Merlone said in working with the restructuring we had to meet with the bus company and it was a decision made by the bus company to change the time. In order for the busses to flow in a timely manner we had to move Mead School into the middle school time slot and move the middle school down to the Mead slot. The middle school children are older and able to board the bus quicker. Mead School now has smaller children and it takes these children longer to board the bus. Mrs. Merlone explained that busses were late that day because of road closures due to construction. She said she spoke to Dawn Brundage, from the bus company, and Dawn thought that the bus runs went well compared to years prior. The last school to dismiss was Prendergast at 1:50 p.m. and all the busses were back in the terminal by 3:00 p.m. The Superintendent said the first two weeks of school busses are not going to be regular. They are charting the times at the schools. Mrs. Merlone said we don't mean to create an inconvenience for anyone but we now have kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students getting on the same bus; that was the reason. Ms. Drewelus asked what determined which school started earlier. The Superintendent said, based on the amount of students going to Mead and Prendergast, it was determined that Mead School, with fewer enrollments, would start school earlier. Prendergast has about 850 students and Mead has 686. You could move 686 students quicker than you can 850. Mrs. Merlone said all the students were put into a database and divided based on ethnicity, gender, CMT or DIBELS scores.

Mrs. Ryan said when she picked up her son from the after school program, he told her there were three police cars at Prendergast School. Mrs. Ryan said she was concerned about that. Mrs. Merlone said it was for the safety of all children and the flow of traffic. Police were at all the schools that morning.

Ms. Drewelus questioned the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). She said she knows we are striding to pass the CMT's, however if a child knows it, what does he learn throughout the year, other than the CMT's? Superintendent Merlone said our learning is changing. It is not just to pass the CMT's; it is to prepare our students to be ready for 21<sup>st</sup> century learning. Diane Conway, Assistant Superintendent, said CMT's are basic concepts. We are making great strides in writing our language arts curriculum. The curriculum is based on state standards which are based on national standards. The grade level expectations are beyond the CMT's. We are shooting far. Ms. Drewelus asked, do we know why we are failing? Mrs. Conway we haven't revisited curriculum for a few years. Ms. Drewelus asked, do we have to shoot for 90% proficient. Mrs. Merlone said it is 79% proficient in reading and 82% in math. Mrs. Conway said we made it in math and that shows us that we can. We are confident we can move students in language arts. We are working to do everything we have been advised to do and everything that we know to do and it has all been based on research-based practices. Ms. Drewelus asked if there was any chance that this information could be publicized so we know what is going on. She said she found out about the time change in a letter. Mrs. Merlone said in April the Board passed the time changes and it was also put on our website. Mrs. Merlone said it they have any more questions to call and they would be more than happy to meet with them to answer those questions. We have an open door policy.

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

## **IV. ACTION ITEMS, CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING . . .**

- A. Ansonia Board of Education meeting minutes dated June 23, 2009 (special), July 1, 2009 (regular), July 9, 2009 (special), July 16, 2009 (special), August 12, 2009 (policy), August 12, 2009 (special), and August 25, 2009 (special)**

**MOTION:** That the minutes dated June 23, 2009,  
(special) be accepted as presented.

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

**MOTION:** That the minutes dated July 1, 2009, (regular)  
be accepted as presented.

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

**MOTION:** That the minutes dated July 9, 2009,  
(special) be accepted as presented.

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

**MOTION:** That the minutes dated July 16, 2009,  
(special) be accepted as presented.

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

**MOTION:** That the minutes dated August 12, 2009,  
(policy) be accepted as presented.

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

**MOTION:** That the minutes dated August 12, 2009,  
(special) be accepted as presented.

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

**MOTION:** That the minutes dated August 25, 2009,  
(special) be accepted as presented.

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

**B. Resignation/Kathryn Imes/Speech and Language Pathologist/Prendergast**

**MOTION:** To accept the resignation of Kathryn Imes,  
speech and language pathologist at Prendergast  
School and send a letter of thanks.

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

**C. Girls' Varsity Basketball Head Coach**

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Lawlor explained that Heather Yoblanski, former girls' varsity basketball head coach, has resigned. There was a committee of nine individuals, consisting of two Board members, Ms. DiGiorgi and himself, two student players, which ended up being the captains for the upcoming season, two parents, the athletic director, the outgoing coach, and a representative from Ansonia High School. Mr. Lawlor said after interviewing eight candidates, over two interviewing sessions, the committee unanimously voted to recommend that Patrick Lynch be named the next Ansonia High School girls' varsity basketball head coach.

**MOTION:** To approve the appointment of Patrick Lynch as Ansonia High School girls' varsity basketball head coach.

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

**D. Approval of Pine Trust Expenditures**

**DISCUSSION:** James Gaskins, business manager, explained that last spring we received notification regarding the Pine Trust. This trust was set up many years ago for Vo-Tech business and technology related needs in our schools. The IRS regulations have changed and as discussed in the earlier Board meetings we are now required to expend a certain amount of the trust on the designated reasons for the trust being established. Mr. Gaskins said Ann Turner, technology coordinator, did a great job meeting with the relative personnel in determining what needs we have in those areas. The total amount of \$48,265 would be used to purchase drafting room computers, drafting software for the AutoCad system, text books to go along with that program, consumer economics computers for A.M.S., and one business lab at the high school would be refurbished. Mr. Gaskins said he is asking for Board approval so they can make the expenditures and with the minutes from the meeting containing the approval and the actual invoices would be submitted to the trust for reimbursement. Mr. Sharkey asked if the business lab has 26 computers. Mr. Gaskins said yes. Mr. Lawlor asked if these computers are replacing current computers. Mrs. Turner said we are replacing the computers we have. I will be replacing computers in the business lab and the current business lab computers will be put into the writing lab. The consumer economics lab will be replaced with new computers and the older computers, which are in good shape, will be put into a new lab for intervention at the middle school. The AutoCad workstations cannot run with the present computers. We are looking to upgrade. Mr. Lawlor asked about enrollment for drafting classes. Mrs. McKernan, principal of Ansonia High School, said this year there are 24-26 students; it is growing. We did hire a new drafting teacher who is bringing new ideas and materials. Mr. Lawlor asked if the \$48,265 is for the 2009-2010 school year. Mr. Gaskins said this money will be booked against the 2009 calendar year and will most likely have to visit this again next year. Mr. Lawlor asked if the money is available at the beginning of the calendar year. Mr. Gaskins said yes it is. Mr. Lawlor asked if the amount would be the same every year. Mr. Gaskins said this is a one-year roll over plus the current year, because of the change of the regulation they gave the extended time. Future years will be less. Mr. Boath said the way the trust is set up, they have to make certain expenditures every year otherwise the purpose of the trust is defeated. The expenditures would be made based on the trust income. Mr. Caruso asked Mrs. Turner about the computers that are being replaced. Are the computers repairable and can they be given to the younger grades? Mrs. Turner said every classroom on the K-8 level has one teacher computer and one student computer. The computers in the consumer economics lab are in good shape, the ones in the business lab are not. Ms. DiGiorgi asked if Mead School has a computer lab. Mrs. Turner said yes, there are about 28 and they are for all students. Superintendent Merlone said the students will be taking assessments on those computers now, so we will be making use of those labs.

**MOTION:** To accept the recommended purchases from the Pine Trust for Vo-Tech, business and technology related student needs.

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

**E. Resignation/Dorri Mendes/Music/Prendergast School**

**MOTION:** To accept the resignation of Dorri Mendes, music teacher at Prendergast School and send a letter of thanks.

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

**F. Certified Appointments of Jackie Abelli/Consumer Economics/Ansonia High School, and Certified Appointment/Neill Berggren/Spanish/Ansonia High and Ansonia Middle Schools**

**MOTION:** To accept the Superintendent's recommendation to hire Jackie Abelli as a consumer economics teacher at Ansonia High School and Neill Berggren as a Spanish teacher at Ansonia High and Ansonia Middle Schools.

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

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Lawlor asked where we are from a vacancy standpoint. Mrs. Merlone said we are looking for two speech and language pathologists and a music teacher at Prendergast School.

## V. INFORMATION ITEMS

### A. Assistant Superintendent's Report

#### ATTACHMENT #1

**DISCUSSION:** Diane Conway, Assistant Superintendent, presented her report. She added that she misrepresented how much the Priority School District Grant pays for. It pays salaries and is also designated for training and onsite assistance for professional development in effective teaching strategies, for a data team facilitator at the high school, for technology professional development, for substitutes to support our data team meetings and curriculum development, and for several initiatives at the high school, including conflict resolution, alternative education, technology software, and remedial and enrichment programs.

*NOTE: Mr. Pitney entered the meeting at 7:41p.m.*

Mrs. Conway explained that the CMT and CAPT scores were released to the public that afternoon. There are causes for celebration as well as some distress. The administration has had this information for a while and has worked to disaggregate the data, look at subgroups, to triangulate the data, and to look at cohorts. Mrs. Conway said our participation rate is excellent and we met AYP for that. We met target and beat the state averages for whole group and every subgroup except for students with disabilities in math. That is enormous. We know we can do it. We put in a solid program with ongoing assessments and directions for teachers. This year we have built a language arts curriculum to bring the teachers together. We didn't make it in the reading scores, but in disaggregating the data, we know that grades 6-8 did do well in reading and every sub group went up, reading, math and writing. Mrs. Conway said CAPT scores however took a dive this year; across the state, CAPT scores took a dive. We know we need to build curriculum and common assessments. Mr. Lawlor said, based on his understanding, it appears that we are obviously strong in math and need improvement in reading and CAPT scores. From what he understands that is the trend across the state. Mrs. Conway said not that it is an excuse, it is a cause for action. We are moving toward that.

#### ATTACHMENT #2

Before Mrs. Conway gave a PowerPoint presentation on the 2008-2009 celebrations and 2009-2012 future journeys, Mr. Lawlor asked if this presentation is going to cover what work has been done in language arts. He said he feels it is important because it is going to address the reading portion of the tests. Mr. Lawlor said from what he saw a tremendous amount of effort went into that. Mrs. Conway said we have hardcopy and on-line curriculum and resources that are awesome. That is because of the collaborative efforts of the administrators and teachers throughout the district. Mrs. Conway then proceeded with the presentation.

Questions from Board members:

- Mr. Sharkey asked about redoing curriculum in other subjects. Mrs. Conway said we will get to them. We have to do language arts first, then math, and we will start science this year. We have assigned curriculum development committees. We will also start looking at social studies curriculum at the high school.
- Mr. Sharkey asked about technology curriculum. Mrs. Conway said we are starting K-3 this year. Mr. Sharkey asked if we should push that quicker. Mrs. Conway said if we finish it quicker like we did with language arts in getting the baseline down, we can. Mr. Sharkey said if this is a three-year program, freshmen this year are going to miss out. Mrs. Conway said right now we have technology in the middle school and the high school. Now we are going to build from the top up. We will do it as fast as we can. Mrs. Conway said she could apply to ACES for a grant to help.

#### ATTACHMENT #3

Mrs. Conway then introduced Mr. Joseph Apicella and Mr. Sherrod McNeill, teachers on special assignment. They gave a PowerPoint presentation entitled Ansonia Public Schools CMT Data Analysis.

Questions from Board members:

- Mr. Lawlor asked how the groups of students are determined. Mr. Apicella said we use the State of CT CMT website which allows us to exclude students who have moved in or out of district. It includes all of the students and the transient students are deleted.
- Mr. Lawlor said you are showing three years of data. Is that all we have? Mr. Apicella said we can go back one more year but the CMT switched its format. It is not fair to compare that data. We now are on the 4<sup>th</sup> Generation CMT. Prior to that, it was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation CMT and they only tested grades 4, 6, and 8. Mrs. Conway said they know something is not happening in grades K-2. We realized that teachers were following the anthology they have rather than the standards. We are making that switch. We are not teaching that story. We are teaching the standards, the skills and the concepts. It doesn't matter what literature you use. Mrs. Conway said we have, across the grade levels, instant sight words that we are requiring students to know, at different points throughout the year. That wasn't a requirement before. Phonics is being taught through the book, pulling it out and assessing it separately. We changed

our focus and instruction. Mr. Lawlor said he is trying to figure out the correlation of all the good things that we are doing now vs. what we were doing previously in this district. It is obvious because of all the strategies put into place over the last 18-36 months are having a profound effect.

- Mr. Lawlor asked if we know why there is such a variable in writing from year to year. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said the 7<sup>th</sup> grade moved from expository writing with persuasive writing. Students in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade are now learning to write in a different way for a different purpose. We are working to get that change and that may be a part of the reason why.
- Mr. Lawlor asked what benchmarks we are using. Mrs. Conway said we are using the state benchmarks. Mr. Apicella said previously we were using assessments we created ourselves. They served us at the time but looking forward we need to make sure that our benchmarks are aligned to the CMTs. They can serve as predictors and allow us to check in to see how our students are doing.
- Mr. Boath spoke about the variation in the cohort data and the grade level data. Mr. Apicella said he attributes the up and down motion to teachers being all over the place. We may have quality instruction going on but if it is only in one classroom, because that teacher can teach that topic well, then you are going to see those ups and downs. Now with our curriculum everyone will be on the same page doing the same quality instruction and we will be assessing how well that instruction is occurring through our benchmark assessments. Mrs. Conway said this doesn't mean there is no room for creativity. It just means that we have a focus. Mrs. Conway said she is very pleased to have the teachers on special assignment. They are bringing a rich level of data analysis and expertise to our district. The assistant superintendent explained that districts get the CMT and CAPT scores earlier so the administration can do this data analysis.
- Mr. Sharkey said he agrees 100% that teachers were teaching by the text. They are doing a fantastic job, but as it turns out that is not what is needed to be taught. There are different standards now.

## **ATTACHMENT #4**

Mrs. Conway said Mrs. Elizabeth Nimons has taken the role of overseeing beginning teacher induction. This year we hired 30 plus teachers. It is critical that we support these teachers for the next two years or they won't grow or we will lose them. Mrs. Conway then introduced Mrs. Elizabeth Nimons, teacher on special assignment. Mrs. Nimons gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Beginning Teacher Induction Program. Mrs. Nimons added that part of the up and down data could be in part because we have a problem with teacher retention.

Questions from the Board:

- Mr. Boath asked are we using this as a model hoping that the State will come up with something. Mrs. Nimons said the State has to come up with something. The BEST program is gone.
- Mr. Sharkey asked about year 2 teachers. Mrs. Nimons said they are going to be in the pilot phase.

Mr. Lawlor said the presentations were terrific and certainly put into perspective that some of the things being put into place as a district, that may not be popular for some people, are working. This is certainly pushing us forward. He congratulated the three teachers on special assignment and for a job well done. Mrs. Merlone said next month we will bring the district improvement plan.

### **B. Special Education Director's Report**

## **ATTACHMENT #5**

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Gabrielson explained the special education director's report to the Board. She said the 3-tiered intervention that has been discussed by Mrs. Conway and the teachers on special assignment is very important. The data that has been accumulated from the interventions that are given will now determine whether a student can be newly identified as having a learning disability or continue to be identified as a student with a learning disability. The 3-tiered intervention approach is very important to both regular and special education.

### **C. Technology Report**

**DISCUSSION:** Mrs. Turner explained that she has replaced all teacher computers at Prendergast and Mead Schools. Nine smartboards have been purchased and installed, six at Prendergast School and three at Mead School. Both schools now have six smartboards. We purchased 2 netbook carts (small laptops) and the technology committee plans to utilize them at Mead and Prendergast Schools. These two schools only have one computer lab. Mrs. Turner said we also purchased an internet filter appliance which separates staff internet use from student internet use. We also purchased a Centio Response System to go with the smartboards. Monitors were installed in the language labs, so not only can you hear the lesson, you can see the lesson. Mrs. Turner said they are in the process of finishing a small computer lab for Alternative Ed. In regard to software we installed Smart Eyes Computer Management System in business lab II. If the teacher wants the student to work on PowerPoint it will restrict the students to work on PowerPoint only. It is a robust management system and Mrs. Turner said she recommends this for most of the labs. Kidspiration was installed throughout the district. Ansonia Tech Services group went

a little green. We purchased a virtualization software for classrooms at the middle school that were designated for intervention. This software is one computer with a daisy chain to three monitors.

Mr. Lawlor said it sounds like we are doing a good job integrating technology in the classrooms.

#### **D. Financial Reports**

### **ATTACHMENT #6**

#### 1. 2009-2010 Year to Date

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Gaskins explained the financial report. He said the 2008-2009 year has been challenging. We are pretty much exactly where we predicted we would be the last week of June. That is good news. We have had communications with the auditors. The audit has started but is not in full force yet. The auditors started with food services this week. We look to be on track with the 2009-2010 budget through the end of the year. Mr. Lawlor said he received an email from CAFE's government liaison and it listed all the final ECS funds for the next few years. It is \$15,031,060 for Ansonia. Mr. Gaskins said it is level funding. The only caveat to that would be the Cambridge reconfiguration money. Mr. Gaskins said we hope to get the 2010-2011 budget development packets out in September and hope to submit a budget to the Board by mid to late November. Mrs. Merlone said we are doing budgeting differently. Mr. Gaskins said the Cambridge Review would like to see the budget development process aligned more with the curriculum goals and district wide goals of the district and to identify how the items and finances in the budget tied into achieving those goals.

#### 2. Athletics

**DISCUSSION:** No questions were asked.

#### 3. Grants

**DISCUSSION:** No questions were asked.

#### 4. Other Income

**DISCUSSION:** No questions were asked.

#### **E. Notes from the Desk of the Superintendent**

### **ATTACHMENT #7**

**DISCUSSION:** The Superintendent presented her notes to the Board members. Mrs. Merlone added that she attended a meeting with the Naugatuck Valley Health District and area superintendents. It was hosted in Seymour and was regarding the H1N1 virus. It is now called the novel flu. She said she met with Bobby Evans, facilities director, and Karen Lisi, head nurse and made sure that a plan was put into place. Mrs. Merlone said she was informed that day by the school nurse that all teachers can go to a website to order free Clorox wipes for their classrooms. Mr. Evans ordered 200 free hand sanitizers and now has to check with the fire marshal regarding the alcohol content in the sanitizing fluid. She added that signs and posters have been put up in the schools to remind students to wash their hands. The administrators have also sent an email to their staff to make sure that students wash their hands before eating, etc. Mrs. Merlone said she will keep the parents informed on the most recent updates on our website.

The Superintendent said it was a daunting task but we made it. She thanked everyone.

#### **F. Additional; Administration or Board of Education**

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Caruso asked about charging a fee for the soccer games. Mr. Lawlor said admission is \$3 for adults and \$2 for senior citizens. Also, on the issue of parking, only handicapped sticker parking will be allowed at the top of the field. All other parking will be down by the baseball diamond.

#### **G. Human Relations Club Intervention Plan**

**DISCUSSION:** Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said the purpose of the Human Relations Club is to allow us to be able to help children to understand and to tolerate each other in a special way. Last year about 50 students were trained in ways and strategies to reduce bullying, harassment, racism, and prejudice in their school environment. We have changed the middle school in offering different programs that can enhance instruction but we are also working on another key item. That is school climate. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick spoke about a program entitled Positive Behavioral Support. This program is being brought into districts across the state. It is being sponsored by SERC. This organization comes into the district and teaches how to respond to the issues of behavior and the climate of the district. It takes one full year to train the district and get district approval. SERC will train teachers on how to respond to behaviors. This will make everything common across the school. She explained that Mr. Lisi and Mr. McNeill are spearheading the committee. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said she is trying to build a foundation at the middle school to prepare for that. In the new program at the middle school we have Ms. Blake teaching a

health program. She sees every child in the school over a week's time. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said along with Mr. Collicelli they would like to expand the human relations club at the middle school. They want them to do extra things this year. They would like to line up programs that would help reduce prejudice and ethnic isolation. This is what the state is asking us to do. It is also in line with our district goals. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said she is proposing and requesting that the Board seriously consider this plan. Every teacher at the middle school teaches five courses. We are proposing that the health teacher now teach four courses and that the fifth course become a human relations intervention course. In this course, what would be taught are things that would help to reduce the amount of prejudice, harassment, bullying, and in turn build positive school environment, by training students to be mentors, peer mediation, and leaders within the school system itself. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said Ms. Blake is state certified to do this and she is asking for Board approval, with the hopes that we will increase the social responsibility and increase parent involvement in the behaviors that are going on in the school building itself. We believe this is a great opportunity to get in on that ground level.

Mr. Collicelli said the students are the heart and soul of the Human Relations Club. The club at the high school has met 14 times since school ended in June. In a short period of time the Human Relations Club in Ansonia has become a model to the whole State of CT. Mr. Collicelli said we are fortunate to have Mr. Borne involved in this. He added that Mr. Goldson and Mrs. Bennett-Wallick have been supportive; everyone has been. We are trying to help students develop their role as citizens. We have a small program at Mead School where our high school students are teaching our Mead students. Ms. Blake can carry this to the next level like peer mediation, where students in the club can help other students. Mr. Collicelli said this is a great way to promote and go to the next level.

Mr. Lawlor asked if every student is going to get take the class. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said every student will not be in on the training but every student will benefit from the training. We will bring forth leaders. Those students who have been involved in the membership last year and any this year will be welcomed into the program. Mr. Lawlor asked if this will be a full year class. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said yes. Mediators are key at the middle school level. Peer mediation is an effective way to reduce the amount of tension that exists.

Ms. DiGiorgi asked if the students will be receiving credit for this class. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said with the academies this year we will be using the pass/fail system based on the rubric that we have designed.

Mr. Lawlor asked if this would fall under the electives. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said yes, she doesn't know if they will call it an elective or membership. The students will be choosing to do this; it will go beyond the classroom. She said we do plan to collect data to see what impact this has had on the climate of the school, suspensions, and office referrals.

Mr. Lawlor asked if there is a plan to do this at the other grade levels. It seems to be just a spot to him. You are filling something at the middle school but there is not integration going into the high school. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said this is going to require a 3-year plan across time. SERC advocates that you make a start somewhere. This HRC program will be the core.

Mr. Lawlor asked when this would be put into place. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said with Board approval she would like to put this in place right away.

Mr. Sharkey asked about the health classes. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said health is being taught to every student once a week. Mr. Sharkey asked about the students who are supposed to be in that fifth class. Mrs. Bennett-Wallick said the fifth class was about a co-teaching model that all unified arts teachers are doing presently with social studies and science teachers.

**MOTION:** To approve the Human Relations Club Intervention plan at Ansonia Middle School.

	<b>MOTION</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>
MR. GEORGE BOATH	1	X		
MR. ROBERT CARUSO		X		
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI	2	X		
MR. JOHN LAWLOR, President		X		
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS				
MR. CARMEN PITNEY		X		
MR. EDWARD SHARKEY		X		
<b>TOTAL</b>		6	0	0

**VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Board of Education members and Supt. Carol Merlone re: Personnel Matter, Superintendent's Evaluation**

*NOTE: Mr. Boath recused himself from the meeting at 9:00 p.m.*

**MOTION:** To enter into executive session at 9:00 p.m. with Board of Education members and Supt. Carol Merlone re: personnel matter, Superintendent's evaluation.

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

**MOTION:** To return to regular meeting at 10:10 p.m.

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

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** To adjourn the meeting at 10:12 p.m.

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

*NOTE: The Board of Education members were given handouts, the Ansonia High School, September 2009 calendar, and the CMT and CAPT scores spreadsheet.*

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Perrotti  
Recording Secretary  
September 8, 2009