



**Columbia Board of Education**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**December 13, 2010**  
**7:30 P.M.**  
**Horace W. Porter School Library Media Center**

Board Members Present: Paula Belekewicz, Lisa Jurovaty, William Mulcahy, Lauren Perrotti-Verboven, Nelson Petrone, John Schroder, James Thorn

Administration Present: Francine Coss-Superintendent, Jackie Middleton-Director of Student Services, Jean Trask-Principal

Staff Present: Marian Lowry

Citizens Present: The Dylan DelMastro, Shaina Cooper and Sebastian Ruffino families, Kerry Hoffman, Karin Coughlin

**I. Call to Order by the Superintendent of Schools**

Superintendent Coss called the December 13, 2010 regular meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Election of Board of Education Officers**

L. Jurovaty **MOVED** and P. Belekewicz **SECONDED** to nominate Lauren Perrotti-Verboven as Board of Education Chairperson.

W. Mulcahy **MOVED** and J. Thorn **SECONDED** to nominate Nelson Petrone as Board of Education Chairperson.

Discussion followed:

- Mrs. Jurovaty said Mrs. Perrotti-Verboven has done a nice job as the head of the policy subcommittee. The Board has reviewed a large number of policies with Mrs. Perrotti-Verboven's leadership.
- Mrs. Belekewicz said it is a pleasure to have Mrs. Perrotti-Verboven's leadership and commended her on the good job she has done working on the district mission statement.
- Mr. Mulcahy supports Mr. Petrone for all his good experience and the time he has devoted to the position of Board Chairman.
- Mr. Thorn said Mr. Petrone has the experience the Board needs right now coming into the budget season.
- Mrs. Perrotti-Verboven said Mr. Petrone has done a nice job and thanked Mrs. Jurovaty and Mrs. Belekewicz for their kind words. She feels she has the energy and team to do the job.
- Mr. Petrone has been chairman for 3 years; through difficult times, the superintendent search and teacher contract negotiations. He will not run for re-election and would like to serve as chairman for the transition of the new chairperson.

P. Belekewicz, L. Jurovaty, L. Perrotti-Verboven J. Schroder VOTED in favor of appointing Lauren Perrotti-Verboven as Board of Education Chairperson.

**MOTION CARRIES: 4-0**

W. Mulcahy, N. Petrone, J. Thorn VOTED in favor of appointing Nelson Petrone as Board of Education Chairperson.

**MOTION FAILS: 3-0**

P. Belekewicz **MOVED** and L. Perrotti-Verboven **SECONDED** to nominate Lisa Jurovaty as Board of Education Vice Chairperson.

**MOTION CARRIES: 7-0**

**IV. Proclamation**

- **2010/2011 Superintendent Award Winners:**  
*Dylan DelMastro* and *Abigail Rockefeller*, Grade 6 students  
*Shaina Cooper* and *Sebastian Ruffino*, Grade 8 students

Mrs. Perrotti-Verboven introduced the Superintendent Award winners and explained why each student was selected. She presented each student with a Barnes & Noble gift card.

**V. Approval of November 15, 2010 Regular Meeting Minutes - Take Action**

P. Belekewicz **MOVED** and J. Thorn **SECONDED** to approve the November 15, 2010 regular meeting minutes as presented.  
**MOTION CARRIES: 7-0**

**VI. Comments from the Audience (Bylaws of the Board #9300)**

*Time allotted for public participation--30 minutes, time allotted for an individual speaker--3 minutes*

**VII. Correspondence/Communications/Information**

- A. Superintendent to Grade 8 Parents – High School Choice Update-November 30, 2010**
- B. Mr. Allen Smith to Columbia Board of Education – FOI Request of Schedule Self Help Guide**
- C. Mrs. Janet Stice-Middle School Music Teacher – Request for Grant for Stage Drapery, Motor and Rigging-**  
Mrs. Coss informed the Board that this grant has been approved and the work will be completed during February break.
- D. Horace W. Porter School December 1, 2010 Enrollment**
- E. Mr. Brian Coughlin to Chairman Nelson Petron – RE: School Choice For Columbia-12/03/2010**

**VIII. Financial Review**

- A. Payment of Bills**
- B. Actual & Budgeted Expenses and Encumbrances** – There are 2 factors that impact the % remaining: salaries are paid through August and grant funding has been inputted into the budget.

**IX. Reports/Discussion**

- A. Board of Education Chairperson**
- B. Board of Education Subcommittees**
  - 1. December 21, 2010 – Negotiations 6:00 p.m. @ E.O. Smith High School
  - 2. January 19, 2011 – Tri-Board Meeting 7:30 p.m. in the Adella G. Urban Offices Conference Room
- C. Superintendent's Report**
  - 1. CBE Leadership Institute
  - 2. Grade 8 Field Trip – Per policy. the superintendent has approved this field trip. The trip connects to the curriculum and a list of chaperones/ages has been submitted to the superintendent.
  - 3. CBE's Honorable Mention Award of Excellence for Educational Communications – Mrs. Perrotti-Verboven congratulated Mrs. Coss on the honorable mention award and the impressive district budget document.
  - 4. State of CT Service Inspection Report – Mrs. Coss reported that Mr. Urban takes these inspections very seriously as shown in the high rating of the results. Nice job to Mr. Urban and his hot lunch staff!

**X. Action Items/Discussion**

- A. Porter PTO Food and Beverage Fundraiser Approval**
- B. 2011/2012 Budget Calendar Approval**
- C. 2010/2011 Unified Sports Coach Appointment – Mr. Steven Piro, H.W.P. Physical Education Teacher**
- D. Policy 1112.3 Access to Information-Procedures for Accessing Information – First Reading**
- E. Policy 3541.357 Safety – Walking Distance – First Reading**
- F. Policy 6145.2 Interscholastic/Intramural Athletics – First Reading**
- G. Policy 5117 School Attendance: Designated High Schools and Tuition for Non-Designated Public High Schools – 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading**

Mrs. Perrotti-Verboven explained the Board of Education has explored the current high school choice policy through multiple subcommittee and regular meeting discussions. The Board has taken into consideration parent concerns (Bolton having a specific number of seats and the need for a public lottery, Windham High School being in need of improvement, adding E.O. Smith as an option for Columbia students and Lyman High School's contract which will be expiring next year). The BOE has discussed offering designated and non-designated high school options, providing tuition for a non-designated high school if it does not exceed the highest rate of tuition for a designated high school, and not providing transportation for students attending non-designated high schools. The Board will begin negotiations with Lebanon - Lyman and Region 19 - E.O. Smith High School. The Board has revamped lottery procedures and the lottery will not be in a public forum. In addition, Bolton High School will accept up to 26 grade 9 students for the 2011/2012 school year.

**Consent Agenda Items:**

P. Belekewicz **MOVED** and L. Jurovaty **SECONDED** to approve consent agenda action items X.A. – X.F. as presented. **MOTION CARRIES: 7-0**

P. Belekewicz **MOVED** and J. Schroder **SECONDED** to remove indefinitely item X.G. Policy 5117 School Attendance: Designated High Schools and Tuition for Non-Designated Public High Schools from the listing of consent agenda items.

Discussion followed:

Mr. Petrone would like to move forward and not table this motion. He remembers what people said at the October 4<sup>th</sup> meeting where there was a lot of support for E.O. Smith and open choice. He has supported open choice for all seven of the years he has served on the Board. This is not in his own best interest. One of his children attended and graduated from a private high school and he will decide what school is best for his daughter whether or not open choice is an option.

Mrs. Jurovaty is concerned with the tight budget. To move forward will impact predicting tuition costs. She is also concerned that students will have to re-apply annually to open choice high schools.

Mrs. Belekewicz suggests taking time to make this decision. The Town cannot afford to pay legal lawsuit costs as we did last year. A solid decision needs to be made.

Mr. Schroder would like to take into consideration all general and special education expenses.

Mr. Mulcahy would like to focus on getting E.O. Smith as a designated high school for Columbia students ASAP.

P. Belekewicz **MOVED** and J. Thorn **SECONDED** to amend the motion and table policy 5117 School Attendance: Designated High Schools and Tuition for Non-Designated Public High Schools until after the December 21, 2010 meeting with E.O. Smith High School and contract negotiations are complete.

**MOTION CARRIES: 6-1-0**

P. Belekewicz, L. Jurovaty, W. Mulcahy, L. Perrotti-Verboven, J. Schroder, J. Thorn **VOTED FOR THE MOTION**  
N. Petrone **VOTED AGAINST THE MOTION**

**XI. Future Agenda Items**

- Math text book samples

**XII. Board of Education Member Comments**

**XIII. Adjournment**

W. Mulcahy **MOVED** and P. Belekewicz **SECONDED** to adjourn the December 13, 2010 meeting at 8:40 p.m.

**MOTION CARRIES: 7-0**

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Jurovaty  
Columbia Board of Education Vice-Chairperson