

STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING February 8, 2018 - Page | 1

Frank Todisco, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Stonington High School Commons. Members present were Alexa Garvey, Board Secretary, Candace Anderson, Deborah Downie, Jack Morehouse, Alisa Morrison, and Craig Esposito.

Also, present were Dr. Van Riley, Superintendent of Schools, Ana de Oliveira, Recording Secretary, Madison Geiger, Student Government Representative, members of the staff, and interested citizens.

Board Presentations - A Year of Growth Mindset - Jenn McCurdy, Deans Mill Principal, gave an overview of what growth mindsets are and then introduced teachers and students from grades 2, 3, and 4 who shared information on growth mindsets. Ms. McCurdy thanked the Stonington Education Fund for a \$3,000 grant that allowed the school to purchase library books about growth mindsets. The students were called to give examples of growth mindsets and explained the difference between fixed and growth mindsets. Mr. Tom Bousquet explained how parents could be partners in growth mindsets at home. He also added that Deans Mill School would be having book chats in three different sessions using the book "Mindsets for Parents". He also noted that the school would be providing resources that speak on growth mindsets through the Deans Mill News Flash. A PowerPoint presentation was presented giving examples of growth mindsets. (see attached)

The Great Kindness Challenge - Mr. Bousquet explained they had an initiative put on by the student senate, which was the Great Kindness Challenge; the purpose of the challenge was to promote kindness through various acts the students did throughout the week. He offered a special thanks to student senators and their teacher advisors. The students were asked to give an overview of the Great Kindness Challenge that took place January 22-26. The students were given a kindness checklist to keep track of their kind deeds. There were also different spirit days for each day of the week and events to show acts of kindness. A PowerPoint presentation was presented. (see attached)

Middle School Steering Committee Report

Principals Mr. Smith and Mr. Keith shared an informational summary on the first steering committee meeting held on February 5. They spoke about how the members were chosen for the committee using a balance of staff from different content areas. They also explained the process of creating sub-committees and the timeline of next steps. Mr. Keith reported on what was discussed at the first steering committee meeting, such as functions, norms were derived and established, importance on participation, communication, and collaboration. An organizational chart of the project was shared to show relationship between the management team, steering committee, and sub committees. Mr. Smith reported that the next two scheduled meetings are on Friday, February 16th and Wednesday, February 21st. He shared some agenda items that will be part of the next two meetings, such as communication venues for more information, formal gathering information, and name and mascot of the new middle school, colors, and establishing sub committees.

Alisa Morrison asked if there are public meetings scheduled into the timeline. Mr. Smith said yes, there would be public meetings and events for students of both middle schools to come together. Alexa Garvey reported that the Communications Sub Committee discussed adding a link to the front page of the district website connecting to all the social media information related to the middle school consolidation information. Mr. Smith added they would be adding the link to the main page of the middle schools website page.

Communications and Recognitions

Mr. Friese recognized the following top ten percent of the Stonington High School scholars; Regan Anderson, Sarah Beverly, Lily Bockowski, Madison-Rose Britto, Riley Casadei, Blake Edwards, Madison Geiger, Jessie Gentilella, Adam Gibbs (Salutatorian), Charlotte Johnstone, Jason Kilcoyne, Trinity Lennon, Laura Marseglia, Samuel Snediker, Abby Wang (Valedictorian), Jessica Weber, Hallie Wiltshire, and Nicola Wood. Mr. Friese also recognized a junior, Carolyn Morehouse, for the 2018 Governor Scholar nominee.

Jack Morehouse communicated he has been trying to go to the school PTO meetings and has attended Mystic Middle School's meeting, and added they are doing many great things. He also reported that he attended the SEF meeting, and reminded everyone of the March 3rd fundraiser event. Mr. Morehouse spoke on his student's experience with the Guidance Department at the high school; commended and thanked them for doing a great job. Alisa Morrison communicated there was a great article in the paper about Stonington High School. Deborah Downie thanked Jenn McCurdy, Alicia Dawe and Gilbane for the great tour of the buildings, it was very informative, a great job and very knowledgeable. She added it was nice to see what has actually been done. Alexa Garvey shared it was fun to see both middle school basketball teams play together on Monday evening and also see the unified team play during half time.

Comments from Citizens

Sue Jones commented on the 18-19 school year calendar and suggested adding both snow make-up days throughout the calendar and at the end in June, and possibly putting graduation day on a Friday night. She suggested using the snow days in June first so that we build up towards the graduation date and then use the ones throughout the calendar if needed. She feels moving the graduation date continuously is a hardship for some families that are traveling, and would like to see it stay on a Friday night. She asked the Board to revisit the 18-19 school calendar.