

WILLIAM M. DAVIES, JR. CAREER AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL
50 Jenckes Hill Road, Lincoln, RI 02865

Board of Trustees

Minutes of the Regular Meeting

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Minutes were approved at the Apr. 10th meeting.

I. Routine

A. **Call Meeting to Order**

At 8:09 am, Dr. Segovis called the meeting to order.

B. **Roll Call of the Board**

Davies' Executive Assistant called the roll of the Board.

Members Present: Richard Beaupre; Raymond Chartier; John Nardolillo;
Dr. James Segovis, *Chairperson*; Robin Smith

Members Absent: James Bone; V. Michael Ferdinandi; Larry Gemma; Robert Halkyard;
John Gregory; Carolyn Kyle, *Vice-Chairperson*; John Quinn

Others Present: Victoria A. Gailliard-Garrick, Cheryl Carroll, Bernie Blumenthal, Susan
Paquin, Joanne Andrews, Judy Valentine, Adrienne Noelte, Frank
Barcellos

C. **Approval of Minutes** – February 14, 2008 Regular Session Minutes

Approval of minutes was deferred until the April meeting because a quorum was not present.

D. **Recess to Executive Session Pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42.46-5 (A) (1) and (2) to Discuss Pending Litigation and Personnel Issues**

Recess into Executive Session was moved to the end of the agenda.

E. **Opportunity for Audience to Comment**

No comments were made.

II. Business Agenda

A. **Finance Report** –Cheryl Carroll, *Business Office Coordinator*

We have yet to hear anything on the status of the Governor's proposed furlough days for state employees. We are unapprised to what is going on with the proposal, but we are hopeful they will understand the teachers can't be taken out of the classroom without there being some ramifications that they may not want to undertake. The budget is due end of June so we should see some action from the legislators by the end of May.

Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick attended a hearing on Mar. 6th to speak on behalf of the school as an opponent of the bill that was proposed to the Health, Education, and

Welfare Committee to include the Town of Johnston as one of Davies sending districts. The hearing went very well. They had representatives there from Johnston, as well as a number of students from Cranston Career and Tech. Center, and parents from Johnston opposing the bill. The students and parents were unbelievably impressive. She submitted and reviewed with the Committee an impact statement. The committee didn't have any questions, but what they did say was that everyone was in the same position statewide; and this would just be a domino effect throughout the state if they in fact started shuffling students around based on trying to save money within their own budgets. Johnston pays tuition to Cranston Career and Technical Center for any of their students who want a technical education where Davies sending districts do not because we are state funded. The committee didn't want to address any financial woes at all. The following morning the bill stayed in committee. It will not go out of committee.

There are now three bills floating in the House Finance Committee looking at a couple scenarios: 1) to have the state completely finance career and technical education 100%. Representatives from the Chariho region, Newport region and Cranston are sponsoring the bill to be rolled out immediately in 2008-2009. 2) The same as Number One but to be rolled out over "x" number of years. She has no idea what is going on with these bills, but the comment made by the chair was that the likelihood of anything of this happening with the financial position the State is in, probably won't happen 100%.

B. **Human Resources Report** - *Joanne Andrews, Human Resources Coordinator*
There is one opening, School-to-Career Coordinator position, and interviews will begin next week. We are very fortunate in that the state hasn't frozen any positions in education.

C. **Nominating Committee** – *James Segovis, Chair*
The committee did not meet. They have some recommendations for parents and he, Mrs. Kyle, Mr. Blumenthal and Mr. Gregory will be reviewing them with Mr. Halkyard and hopefully will have a recommendation to the rest of the Board by the next meeting. The two nominations, Mr. Ortiz and Mr. Boisselle, were invited to go before the Board of Regents the day after this meeting. Mr. Boisselle confirmed he would attend. However, Mr. Ortiz has rescinded his desire to sit on the board. Since it has been three months he decided to go with another organization. Dr. Segovis will try to change his mind, but he is very busy. It looks like he would have had to carve out time for us, but very influential in the Hispanic community.

The committee will have to go back and look for another person in the Hispanic community and Mrs. Smith has a recommendation from Johnson and Wales, a pastry chef. The committee will decide if that would be a good way to go or should we be looking higher. Maybe look for someone from New England Tech and other businesses in the community that would be beneficial to us in a strategic way, so if anyone has any recommendations to forward them to the committee.

III. Informational Time/Program Updates

A. **Director's Report**

1) **Teachers' Association** – *Frank Barcellos, President of the Davies Teachers' Association*
No report given.

2) **Teacher Assistants' Association**–*Lynn Tait-Romano, President*
No report was given.

3) **08-09 Admissions** – *Victoria A. Gailliard-Garrick, Director*

Over the last two months, the Guidance and Special Education Departments have been reviewing the entrance test scores, Standard Diagnostic Test in Reading and Mathematics. We had 632 students from the six districts that we serve come in on a Saturday testing. After the first round of testing, we have 307 students eligible for admission into Grade 9. After the second round, we are looking at an additional 100 students, a pool of over 400 students that are interested in attending Davies. Based on the 8th Grade population in each sending district, with the exception of Providence, there is a formula we use that determines how many students we accept from each district. Of course, Pawtucket always has the largest total students interested, at 357 applications. The admissions should be finalized in the month of April.

For Grade 10, there were 53 applications and out of that 30 are eligible to enter. Grade 10 is an open enrollment. We take in 10th graders up until the end of August. If they missed the scheduled Saturday testings, then they come for an interview in the shop areas based on the vacancies.

The problem every single year is retaining the 9th graders. Luckily, there is a group of teachers working very diligently with the 9th Grade Houses working towards moving our current 9th graders to the 10th grade. It looks like there will be a decreased number of students who will actually repeat the grade so that we can take in more 9th graders. In our academic enhancement program, we have students defined as most difficult, troublesome students. A number of them have transitioned into the regular school program. Thus far it has been very successful. There are about four or five left in the program. Hopefully, both programs will continue to be successful so that we can retain those enrollment numbers.

Mr. Nardolillo asked how do these numbers compare to previous years and she answered, “much higher and we have a much larger pool of special education applications mainly from Smithfield and North Providence.” Out of the 632 student tested, 575 were for Grade 9 and 57 were for Grade 10. Starting off the school year, we always have an over enrollment of 250 9th graders and hopefully 230 will be new students. For Grade 10, we take in whoever based on qualifications and vacancies in the shop areas. Dr. Segovis asked if it looks like technical education is increasing. Mrs. Garrick-Gailliard said, “absolutely, enrollment is increasing across the state.” Hanley in Providence is building a new facility and it is going to be a high school. They initially planned to open in 2008, but after touring Davies and seeing the Davies model, they are moving that opening date. Now they are doing a comprehensive technical and academic high school in Providence which will now open in 2009. They currently have programs at Hanley but they are in different locations throughout Providence. When they open up in 2009, they will have 10-11 programs.

It is very expensive to attend schools like New England Technical Institute. Mr. Blumenthal suggested students start applying for funding that is going to disappear pretty soon. The trend down the road is really disturbing when it comes to the financing aspect because the home mortgage loans have seeped into the higher education loan programs. Already states are pulling out.

- 4) **NECAP State Assessment Testing**– *Victoria A. Gailliard-Garrick, Director* NECAP is the New England Common Assessment Program and Vermont, New Hampshire and Rhode Island are a part of this exam. About a month ago, there was a Commissioner’s Forum and they talked about the NECAP testing and RI did not do well. In the Math portion particularly, only 25% of all students in all three states were proficient in Mathematics and out of that RI had the lowest percentage.

Davies did not do well on the test this first time out. Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick thinks that with a new test there is always a transition to the testing. The design of the test is much different than the old New Stanford Reference Examination. There is a change going on in the classrooms in instruction strategies as well that are addressing these Grade Span Expectations.

In Reading, 165 Grade 11 students were tested in October 2007. Out of that 79 students were proficient at 48%. In Math, out of 165 students, 11 were proficient at 6.6 %. In writing, 28 were proficient at 16.9%. The makeup of our students is different than the affluent areas who have students with the skills that prepare them for whatever they are asked to do to show proficiency. Remember our admission requirements are 6th grade reading level and 5th grade mathematics level; we have some work to do. She has no doubt in her mind that once we all get past these GSEs embedding them into our curriculums, and when our primary focus becomes “instruction,” we will once again prevail and move into the classification that we are used to and comfortable with.

There has been a lot of discussion across the state because they changed the timing of the test from March to October; she does not know why. The math portion of the test is primarily focused on Algebra II and Geometry and most of our students in those tracks don’t start taking those courses until their junior year. The state is being a little stubborn in saying that we need to go back and take a look at what we are teaching. We have. The Math Dept. is working on changing the textbooks in the 9th and 10th to concentrate more on Geometry and Algebra. They are redoing their curriculum so hopefully next year when they are tested in October we will see a change in the test scores across the board.

The English Dept.’s primary focus needs to be on writing which it has not over the last number of years. Last year and this year have been the first time they have focused on writing vs. a literature based curriculum.

With that said, we are working towards improving these proficiency percentages. In the High School Regulations, the state is now looking at NECAP being a 1/3 of the graduation requirements. Initially it was 0%; then

it went to 10%; now with the new chair of the Board of Regents and the Governor, they are looking at a 1/3 of graduation requirements based on this test. Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick's thinks sooner or later we will be moving toward what Massachusetts is doing which is high stake testing. If it is a 1/3 now, she is sure it will increase later.

Mr. Beaupre asked what the norm score in Mathematics on the NECAP was across the state. Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick was not able to answer that question at this time. RIDE is having a workshop at the time of this meeting on how to interpret these test scores. Chairs of the English, Math, and Guidance Dept. are there right now. The state is looking at two different yard sticks. One is the NECAP and she has no idea how they are going to interpret it to determine proficiency. The profiles are new and she is trying to decipher the one for the school as opposed to individual student profile so that she can interpret the data in order to make the changes needed within our curriculum and instructional program. They usually give you the norms in the state profile and the district profile.

Mr. Beaupre then asked when she said that Davies did poorly, compared to what? She looked at the five districts that we service and Davies scores were lower including Central Falls.

Lincoln:	Reading: 75% proficient Mathematics: 34% Writing: 49%	Central Falls:	Reading: 35% Mathematics: 33% Writing: 21%
Pawtucket:		Davies:	Reading: 48% Mathematics: 6.6 Writing: 16.9%
—Shea:	Reading: 35% proficient Mathematics: 7.2% Writing: 20%		
—Tolman:	Reading: 54% proficient Mathematics: 15% Writing: 33%		

In most cases in the Reading, we were higher than those schools. In the math, they were all higher other than Central Falls and we were the lowest in the writing.

Mr. Beaupre asked what contributes to our low scores in Mathematics. Changes in the test itself and what the current curriculum looks like here at Davies and across the state. Algebra II and Geometry is being measured on that test and our juniors who are taking the test in October, do not start taking those courses until the month before. They have no instruction, no prior knowledge, maybe a little bit in Algebra, but they have only a month's worth of information.

Mr. Beaupre then said that it is a timing problem then and something needs to be done about it. This is a major concern with all principals across the state. There was the Commissioner's Forum which was a battle on a number

of issues and this was just one of them, and they are not going to change it. They told us to make the changes on our end.

Dr. Segovis mentioned that this is really a curriculum change. We are testing the curriculum change not the students so; therefore, we failed as well as other school districts that didn't do as well. Why did they do that; what are the political issues around it? Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick isn't privy to all that information, but this is a test that has been used in, she believes, New Hampshire. Then Vermont and RI came on board. As it relates to the timing, that is when New Hampshire and Vermont do their testing so RI followed suit. What they did was they switched the ELA and the Math to October and introducing Science in May.

Mr. Beaupre asked if we can introduce those math courses at least a semester earlier? Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick is going to be sitting with the Math and English depts. based on the information they bring back from the NECAP interpretation workshop. We have to begin strategizing. What are we going to do? Is it curriculum; is it the timing of the course offerings; are we offering the right courses? We are finally going to get some information. Plus the state is going to give us some examples of the test items so that we can review them. At this point, we are all in the same boat in trying to figure out how to do better.

Mr. Blumenthal added that part of it is a structural thing on the kinds of students we get and the other is incentive. Structurally, if we look at a lot of students that come up through the ranks through their middle schools, there is a small core of students that are high achievers that are probably taking Algebra I. At Bryant with the GE Math Grant, they were targeting Calculus students. Those are the ones taking Algebra I in 8th Grade so by the time they move up into high school, there's a core group taking Geometry in 9th Grade and Algebra II in 10th Grade. They are ready to take that test. They are the high achievers. Then you have the middle group that slow down a little bit but they have had some of that. Davies isn't getting a significant number of students in that core group. Already we are behind the eight ball so we need to start looking at some strategies for at least our high achieving students and do something over the summer with them so that the minute they come in begin testing for the test.

Regarding incentive, what is it that students really get out of this? The school wins and the school loses, but how does the student win or lose? They don't because they don't care. There is no impact and there are no ramifications. We have to start looking at an incentive program as well. He has confidence that our math group can elevate the scores, but elevating what; what is the core group? This is a structural thing that we need to take a look at. Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick added that they are looking at changing the grading system, A, B, C, ... vs. another system. With this new proficiency model, it will have to change.

Dr. Segovis asked if there is expertise on the Board on TQM. This is a total quality approach. You attack the problem and what type of resources do we have on the board that would help the higher achievers. The model is the GE

program where we use faculty and students from the colleges (this could be a service learning project for the schools) where we work with the kids and show them what is exciting in business about using the math. We use live examples from actual work experiences to get them more involve and make it more relevant. Mr. Beaupre said the ISO9000 is very, very entrenched in his company, which is very similar to TQM. Mr. Gemma has some resources. He offers seminars in TQM, etc. They have an excellent educational program in his company. Get some of our key faculty and administrators through it, Dr Segovis can help with it also, because it will mean funding, reputation and outreach in the future once we get the curriculum set. No one does very well in October.

Dr. Segovis asked if the reason for the 28% proficiency in writing is curriculum related as well? Yes. The curriculum in the English Dept. was more literature based at one time. Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick took a look at it two years ago and decided it wasn't going to work for the testing because writing wasn't the primary focus. The English Dept purchased a textbook, Writing Inc., which is a research based textbook. They started using it last year in Grade 9 so we aren't going to see the outcomes of that for a couple more years. The current juniors didn't have actual instruction on the writing process. Everything was just literature based with a little bit of writing. Now the curriculum calls for a textbook, teaching and learning process, more assessments. Hopefully there will be change because the instruction has changed.

Mr. Chartier asked with more special populations students coming in and he knows some of these children have difficulties with writing, math, etc., how are they being taken care of? We have an inclusion model. Mr. Chartier is talking about the targets. Earlier Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick mentioned there were two yard sticks. The targets are the other yard stick. The school had to meet certain targets for proficiency with the other state assessment test, and she doesn't know if it still applies with the NECAP. With that said, with the ELL and Special Ed. students, we have ramp up programs for students who are extremely low with a reading teacher and English teacher team teaching. Then we have remedial classes in math and reading. In a regular class, we have gone to a complete inclusion model. Our teachers are currently being trained by a professor from Rhode Island College, on strategies to work together as a team and make the modifications and accommodations for the students in the class. There are also regular students, not just Spec. Ed. and ELL, who need the same types of accommodations because it is just the nature of the population that we get. This is the first year we have gone full inclusion model.

Mr. Nardolillo asked as the test was being rolled out and implemented, did the schools get an opportunity to take a look at the test to see what it was testing for so that they could prepare for it? It almost seems like they were setting up the schools and students up for failure. We did not have an opportunity. Actually the state asked for volunteers to be a part of this NECAP group and from across the stat, they might have gotten a handful of math teachers, reading teachers, English teachers who sat and reviewed the actual test as they were putting it together, but the rest of the teachers

throughout the state did not see it. The first time we saw it was in October while it was being administered, but what is happening now is, after they have seen the scores, they have decided to release some test items. The Director looked through the entire test after it was administered and thought it was unbelievable. The math teachers thought it was so difficult and they were not even teaching some of the stuff.

Mrs. Smith mentioned that Peter McWalters, the Commissioner, gave a presentation to the Board of Governors on the NECAP. It was very informative and very interesting when he talked about the reason for it. She can ask him if he would give her a copy of it. Dr. Segovis would like to see it at the next meeting. Maybe Mary Ann Synder can present it to the Board. Mrs. Smith added coming from Massachusetts where they have high stake testing, the first couple of years they experienced what you are experiencing, but once they tied it to graduation and phased it in, they are now having success and the percentages are going up higher and higher, but do you want to teach to the test. With your philosophy of education, you want these students to be able to be employed, learn different trades, but does the competency in this test align to what our mission is. Initially when this whole reform initiative started at the high school level, Mr. McWalters stated that he wasn't interested in high stake testing. He was interested in the whole student, why we have the senior project and the mentorship for community service, so he looked at 0% of the state testing for graduation. The Board of Regents is pushing toward high stake testing. He said to the principals that they wanted 50% and he negotiated it down to 33.3. His thoughts for what these graduation requirements should look like is still there, but Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick thinks he is being forced toward the high stake testing.

Dr. Segovis added that we need to sit down as a school and say what is the "N" product that we are looking for which includes state testing, but the test should be the minimum and the maximum should be what our mission is. No doubt about it, the students need to know Algebra, but there is no incentive for parents and students to push that issue unless you are already a high achieving family who wants their kids to go to "X" school and you are going to demand that. We need to put our own improvement plan together once we know how to interpret this NECAP test.

Dr. Segovis liked Mr. Blumenthal's idea about getting a team together to help our high achievers and others. There have to be some resources out there. The idea of the GE program was to get minorities and women in mathematics earlier (starting in 9th grade) but what they wanted were more engineers for GE. The schools they worked with were Shea, Tolman, Central Falls and Woonsocket over a period of four years with curriculum applications, mentoring, student projects. It worked extremely well; get attention, nurture it, and put in a lot of resources, lo and behold, a miracle. In New York, they begin immediately teaching to the Regents' test.

Davies disadvantage is, and it is no excuse, but students are coming from six different districts that are doing six different things. The NECAP pretty much says that you are supposed to be doing this from grades K -12, but a lot of the districts are not doing that. Plus they are supposed to be sending us

what they call an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), which is basically a blueprint where these kids have been. There's the ILP, PLP, testing, and it's like pulling teeth trying to get this information. We deal with 22 different middle schools. .

Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick will ask Mary Ann Synder if she would present the NECAP Testing to the Board and she will ask Roy Seitsinger if he could get a copy of the Commissioner's post secondary PowerPoint presentation. Dr. Segovis will call Mr. Gemma. He has seen his program and it is very good. He will talk to him about running the program with key faculty and administrators from the school on TQM, and then he will look at other Board resources. This should be on the agenda for next time.

5) **Other**

—Mr. Blumenthal thanked Mr. Bone for his wonderful presentation to our Business Technology students at the end of the February Board meeting. It was wonderful to see how he shared his background and how Fidelity operates. It motivated the students to look forward towards perhaps looking for employment there or other inspirations into the field. Mr. Blumenthal invited other trustees to present to the students as well. The students really enjoy listening to the professionals in their field. It backs up what the teachers are teaching.

—Mr. Blumenthal is exploring a partnership with the aircraft carrier, Saratoga. He had a chance to see it based in Middletown with other Dept. of Ed. personnel. He hopes they can get the regulatory approvals to move it over to Quonset Point. They are looking at making it a museum, an educational facility, and some outreach. They are looking through some workforce development funds to share some of those resources with career and technical schools.

Mr. Blumenthal hosted the group here at Davies and they got a tour of the school and saw some wonderful partnerships, i.e, Electrical with Mr. Barcellos and Mr. Lowell. They were really intrigued by our solar panels. They also looked at the Machine Shop and Culinary.

Mrs. Smith added that the president of CCRI got a tour of their facilities because it is right across from CCRI's Newport campus. They are talking about partnering with a lot of different agencies, the technical schools and the Community College. They have an industrial kitchen, shops, and some other facilities that none of us can afford to have, if it ever happens. Mr. Blumenthal is optimistic that it will. It will be a great partnership for both of us and it will be a great opportunity. Mrs. Smith suggested talking with Mr. Blumenthal so there isn't any duplicate of effort and maybe it is an opportunity for 2 + 2 programs and an articulation agreement between Davies culinary and CCRI's culinary certificate program. The problem frankly is with Johnson & Wales credit program where students prefer to go.

—A group from Bermuda will be coming on April 1st to tour a few places in RI. This is their fourth visit to Davies. They are revamping their career

and technical education program modeling it after Davies. The high level officials are coming this time.

Recess to Executive Session Pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42.46-5 (A) (1) and (2) to Discuss Pending Litigation and Personnel Issues

At 9:15 am, Mr. Beaupre made a motion to recess into Executive Session pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42.46-5 (A) (1) and (2) to discuss pending litigation and personnel issues for informational purposes only. Mrs. Smith seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Return to Regular Session

At 9:30 am, Mr. Beaupre made a motion to recess out of Executive Session pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42.46-5 (A) (1) and (2) to discuss pending litigation and personnel issues. Mr. Chartier seconded the motion and all were in favor.

The Board agreed the April meeting will be held in the morning, on the second Thursday, and the May meeting will be held in the evening to give the parents and opportunity to attend. Maybe we can tie it into Davies Community Showcase.

IV. Adjournment:

At 9:32 Dr. Segovis asked for a motion to adjourn; Mrs. Smith made the motion; Mr. Chartier seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

V. Next Meeting:

April 10, 2008, at 8:00 am