**BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION**
**December 14, 2009**
**MINUTES**
**REGULAR MEETING**

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|---|---|---|
| Attendance: | Gary Brochu | |
| | Michael Baczewski | |
| | Kristin Campanelli | |
| | Julie Erickson | |
| | Michelle Hartel | |
| | Irene Matulis | |
| | Kathleen O'Donnell-Moss | |
| | Christopher Puzio | Absent |
| | Anthony Recck | Absent |

Also in attendance: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael Cicchetti; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Rena Klebart; Director of Business Operations Roman Czuchta; Director of Human Resources Denise Bard; Director of Pupil Personnel Services Fayne Molloy; Principal of Griswold School Laurie Gjerpen; Principal of McGee Middle School Brian Benigni; Principal of Willard School Salvatore Urso; Principal of Berlin High School George Synnott; Assistant Principals of Berlin High School Janet Parlato and James Sachs; Assistant Principal of Griswold School Eric Carbone; Instruction Resource Teacher at Berlin High School William Silva; Science Department Chairperson Mary Salerno; and Interim Superintendent of Schools (effective January 1, 2010) Dr. Mark Winzler.

## I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brochu called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Board of Education ("the Board") meeting room at 238 Kensington Road, Berlin, CT. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by student, Dave Campagna. A Moment of Silence was observed.

## II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATAIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Erickson reported on the Leadership, Accountability and Measurement Committee meeting held last week wherein discussions centered around (1) changes to the Berlin High School 2010-2011 Program of Studies; (2) modifications to the Senior Portfolio Process and (3) Title I evaluation report.

Ms. Matulis reported on her attendance at the public forum the Board of Education held on Monday, November 30, 2009, concerning the superintendent search. Ms. Matulis reported on her attendance at the Town Council meeting on Wednesday, December 2, 2009, concerning the Town's purchase of property for Town use. Ms. Matulis reported on her attendance at the Berlin High School opening women's basketball game and congratulated the men's football team for capturing the CIAC Class M State Championship.

Ms. O'Donnell-Moss reported on her attendance at the Town Council meeting on Wednesday, December 2, 2009, concerning the Town's purchase of property for Town use. Ms. O'Donnell-Moss thanked Dr. Cicchetti and his family for hosting the recent holiday party.

Ms. Hartel thanked Ms. Erickson for chairing the recent Leadership, Accountability and Measurement Committee meeting in her absence. Ms. Hartel congratulated the men's football team for capturing the CIAC Class M State Championship. Ms. Hartel reported on her attendance at Willard's fifth grade choral concert on Thursday, December 10, 2009.

Ms. Campanelli reported on her attendance at the CIAC Class M State Championship game on Sunday, December 6, 2009, and the UpBeat Breakfast Expo on Thursday, December 10, 2009.

Ms. Bard reported the newly-appointed Human Resources Coordinator, who will begin tomorrow.

Ms. Molloy reported on the two-day conference, offered by CREC River Street School, Special Education teachers in the middle school and high school will attend in early January. Ms. Molloy reported preschool screenings will take place Friday, January 29, 2010, and Saturday, January 30, 2010, for two, three and four year olds. Mr. Brochu encouraged Board members to drop by the preschool screening.

Ms. Klebart reported, because of the work the district is dong with *Using Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI)*, she, along with Ms. Molloy, was part of the panel conference at the Connecticut Leadership Conference on December 5, 2009. Ms. Klebart reported on her meeting with Director of Adult Education Nancy Testori on Thursday, December 10, 2009, concerning the family literacy program that will be part of Adult Education. Ms. Klebart reported on the training session held on Friday, December 11, 2009, concerning Performance Pathways.

Dr. Cicchetti congratulated the men's football team and coaches for capturing the CIAC Class M State Championship, noting how impressed he was with the three captains at the banquet. Dr. Cicchetti reported the AlertNow Rapid Communication Service was launched twice last week for the snow storm and for correspondence that went home to parents from Director of Health Paul Hutcheon providing an update for the H1N1 vaccination clinics. Dr. Cicchetti reported that Maureen Moylan a PPS-NET teacher at the high school will attend the National Association of Secondary School Principals annual convention in March in Arizona as a result of her article *No Safety Net Required* which appeared in the September 2008 edition of *Principal Leadership*. In response to Mr. Brochu's request, Dr. Cicchetti will provide a copy of the article in the Board's packet. As this was Dr. Cicchetti's final Board meeting, he thanked the Board, the entire administrative team, teachers, support staff, parents and the community for their support, noting it has been a pleasure to have served the last four and one-half years as Superintendent. He especially thanked the students for helping him become a better leader.

Mr. Brochu congratulated all fall sports athletes for receiving the CCC sportsmanship award for the fall season. Mr. Brochu reminded Board members of upcoming CABE leadership academy in the spring. Mr. Brochu reported on the special Board meeting held Monday, December 7, 2009, concerning BVH Integrated's recommendation to the Board concerning the McGee School indoor air quality. Mr. Brochu complimented the work Dr. Cicchetti has accomplished over the last four and one-half years, noting the district is a different place than it was five years ago.

The Board recognized the Berlin High School Football Team for capturing the Class M State Championship. Principal Synnott introduced Defensive Coach Josh Rosek and Head Coach John Capodice as well as the three captains Doug Campbell, Taylor Tavarozzi and Dave Campagna.

## III. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

"Friend of Berlin Schools" Award – Kathy Riccio – Berlin High School

The "Friend of Berlin Schools" awards are awarded annually to those volunteers nominated by each school's administration, PTO or community, and selected by the Board of Education for their outstanding contributions as a volunteer who has devoted time and energy to helping the children and schools of the Berlin Public Schools. Board President Brochu recognized Kathy Riccio, this year's recipient from Berlin High School, who was unable to attend the November Annual Meeting to receive her award with the other award recipients. She was presented with a certificate of appreciation and recognition along with a book store gift card.

## IV. INFORMATION AND REPORTS – PART I

A. Facilities Related Updates

1. Griswold School Relocatable Classrooms

Director of Business Operations Roman Czuchta reported the Certificate of Occupancy was received last week. The custodial staff spent a great part of the weekend cleaning and moving furniture. There remains work that needs to be addressed; however Mr. Czuchta is optimistic to begin moving in by week's end.

2. Code Renovations – Berlin High School

Director of Business Operations Roman Czuchta reported Silver/Petrucelli + Associates will provide preliminary plans and specifications along with cost estimates to the Public Building Commission on Thursday, December 17, 2009. They will then be reviewed by the Board of Education for action by the Town Council. In response to a request from Ms. Erickson, Dr. Cicchetti noted that copies of the preliminary plans and specifications will be sent to the Board on Friday, December 18. Mr. Czuchta provided the Board with a written update concerning the Office of Civil Rights' report, noting all items Superintendent John Pajor was charged with have been completed.

3. Indoor Air Quality – McGee School

Director of Business Operations Roman Czuchta reported the Board did approve the recommendation of BVH Integrated. This item will appear on the Town Council's agenda Tuesday night. The Town Council is expected to act to authorize the Town Manger to begin preparing bond documents for the final plans and specifications.

## V. STUDENT PRESENTATION – BERLIN HIGH SCHOOL

Two students from Mr. Fred Russo's Forensic Science class described for the Board the curriculum for this course and also describe an interdisciplinary capstone project that will be conducted at the conclusion of the course in January. The students who presented were Becky Farr and Vinit Patel. Mr. Russo was also present. The students commented on how meaningful the learning was in this class because of real-life situations that were used to teach the concepts.

## VI. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Mr. Leonard Paez, 85 Meadow Lane, Berlin, Connecticut, addressed the Board concerning the following: (1) the order items appear on the agenda and requested the agenda include old business; (2) official bylaws, regulation, decrees, municipal codes, state statutes, federal codes and any legal authorities over the conduct and business of the Board be provided over the internet so these items may be easily accessible; (3) the NEASC accreditation; (4) posting of Board minutes; (5) the law firm of Shipman & Goodwin and its relationship with Mr. Brochu; (6) annual financial audit reports for the district; and (7) the appointment of Interim Superintendent Mark Winzler.

## VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes
   1. Regular Meeting of November 23, 2009
   2. Special Meeting of November 9, 2009
   3. Revision to the Regular Meeting of September 14, 2009

B. Payment of Bills – Period ending July 31, 2009, August 31, 2009, September 30, 2009, October 31, 2009 and November 30, 2009

**Moved by Ms. Erickson, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, to approve the consent agenda as presented.**

**FAVOR: ALL**
**MOTION CARRIED: 6:0**

## VIII. INFORMATION AND REPORTS – PART II

B. Activity Fund Reports
   1. Berlin High School Enterprise Fund – Period ending Oct. 31, 2009
   2. Berlin Public Schools Activity Fund – Period ending Oct. 31, 2009
   3. Cafeteria Fund – Period ending Oct. 31, 2009

These reports were noted with interest.

C. Student Data Management Systems

District Data Specialist Antoinetta Carmody and members of the District Data Team - Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Rena Klebart, Berlin High School Assistant Principal James Sachs, McGee Middle School Principal Brian Benigni, Willard School Principal Salvatore Urso and Griswold School Assistant Principal Eric Carbone presented information and answered questions from the Board concerning Performance Pathways, which is a student assessment data management system. The presentation focused on the Performance Pathways Tracker module and the utilization of the module by teachers and administrators to assist in the analysis of student performance data and the use of data to make informed decisions concerning instruction. There was also a brief update on the district's recent conversion to the web-based version of MMS, the district's student information management system. The Board was provided with a copy of the Power Point that was used during the presentation.

D. Policy Review – Section I (Instruction) – First Reading
1. Instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)
2. Adult/Continuing Education
3. Homework
4. Weighted Grading for Honors Classes
5. Promotion and Retention
6. Graduation Requirements
7. Graduation
8. Distance Learning and Virtual/Online Courses

The final phase of the Board of Education's policy review and revisions involves Section I (Instruction). Director of Human Resources Denise Bard provided Board members with a grid that summarized recommended policy revisions to this section. The Board was also provided with documents related to revision of the eight policies. The Board of Education's Ad-hoc Policy Committee, comprised of committee chairpersons Gary Brochu, Michelle Hartel, and Kathleen O'Donnell-Moss, met in August and again on November 30, 2009 to review and discuss the policy revisions. In addition, the policy revisions were presented to members of the Administrative Council, Curriculum Council, and Berlin Education Council for their review and discussion.

Three of the policies have undergone extensive revisions: Homework, Promotion and Retention, and Graduation Requirements. The policy on Distance Learning and Virtual/Online Courses is new. Minor revisions have been made to the policies on Instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and Weighted Grading for Honors Classes; the revisions are aligned with the Shipman & Goodwin model policies. Finally, policies on Adult/Continuing Education and Graduation were recommended for deletion. As with all previous policy revisions, the administration has worked closely with Shipman & Goodwin to ensure that the policies are aligned with state statutes. A summary of the recommended changes is presented below.

<u>Adopt the following new policy</u>:
Distance Learning and Virtual/Online Courses (6172.6)

<u>Revise the following policies</u>:
Instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) (6144.1)
Homework (6154 & 6154-R)
Weighted Grading for Honors Classes (6146.11)
Promotion and Retention (6147.1 & 6147.1-R)
Graduation Requirements (6146)

<u>Delete the following policies</u>:
Adult/Continuing Education (IGE)
Graduation (IKFB)

Since this is a first reading of these policies, no action is required; the second reading/approval will take place at the January 11, 2010 Board meeting.

E. Senior Portfolio Process and Senior English Seminar

William Silva, Instructional Resource Teacher at Berlin High School, and Janet Parlato, Assistant Principal at Berlin High School, reviewed the Senior Portfolio program for 2009-10 and responded to questions from the Board. They highlighted the goal, the contents, and the general requirements of the portfolio for this year. Significant changes to the Senior Portfolio include a more direct link to instruction, the application of the school-wide writing rubric, and the inclusion of a self-reflection component. Ms. Parlato also discussed the elements of the new Senior English Seminar, which was instituted during the current school year. The seminar was the result of the high school leadership team's study of 21st century skills and the increasing importance those skills hold in students' education.

F. Status of Changes to the Berlin High School Science Course Sequence

Mary Salerno, Science Department Chairperson, and members of the high school leadership team provided a status report and responded to questions from the Board on the changes that were made to the science course sequence for the 2009-10 school year. Ms. Salerno explained the work of the science department to develop units of instruction and assessment tools aligned with the state standards and the established instructional pacing guide. The Board was provided with a chart that summarized the information highlighted during this presentation.

## IX. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Berlin High School 2010-2011 Program of Studies

Berlin High School Principal George Synnott presented to the Board of Education, for its consideration and approval, new course offerings and changes to the Berlin High School Program of Studies for 2010-11. Mr. Synnott highlighted the changes and responded to questions from Board members. A summary sheet of proposed changes was provided to the Board. The changes were reviewed and discussed by members of the Leadership, Accountability, and Measurement Committee at their December 7th meeting.

**Moved by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, seconded by Ms. Hartel, to approve the new course offerings and revisions to the Berlin High School Program of Studies for the 2010-2011 school year as presented.**

**FAVOR: ALL**
**MOTION CARRIED: 6:0**

## X. ADJOURNMENT

**Moved by Ms. Erickson, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, to adjourn the meeting at 9:49 p.m.**

**FAVOR: ALL**
**MOTION CARRIED: 6:0**

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Matulis, Secretary, Berlin Board of Education