

BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION

March 26, 2007

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

Attendance: Gary Brochu
Julie Erickson
Diane Mancini
Kathleen O'Donnell-Moss
Christopher Puzio
Anthony Recck Absent
John Richards
Rachel Rochette

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 Pupil Personnel Services Margaret Butler; Principal of Griswold School Laurie Gjerpen; Principal of McGee Middle School Brian Benigni; Principal of Willard School Robert J. Sullivan II; Assistant Principal of Willard School Jennifer Derick; and Principal of Berlin High School George Synnott.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brochu called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. in the cafeteria of Emma Hart Willard School at 1088 Norton Road, Berlin, CT. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by student, Mary Lattarulo. A moment of silence was observed.

II. STUDENT PRESENTATION – WILLARD SCHOOL

Second grade students Nina D'Amato, Marc D'Amore, Paulina Chorzepa, Katie Garrison, Zachary Spencer, Macey Paradis, Mary Lattarulo, Brett Myskowski and Hannah Schulz presented sample project activities and journal entries from their experiences participating in the "Many Faces, Many Voices" inter-district cooperative grant with Dwight School in Hartford. Second grade teachers Karen Schroder and Mariann Collis provided an overview of the grant and the benefits of participation for Berlin's students and classrooms.

III. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Erickson reported on her attendance Tuesday night at Berlin High School's musical, *Once Upon a Mattress*, congratulating the cast and crew as well as Director Robert Kelly.

Ms. Rochette reported on her attendance Tuesday night at the Town Council meeting wherein the Technology Audit was discussed and a bonding proposal passed by the Council.

Ms. O'Donnell-Moss reported the Berlin High School band will be leaving on April 11 for New Orleans, participating in a musical exchange as well as community service. Ms. O'Donnell-Moss indicated, as a part of the community service, collection boxes have been placed in each of the schools for donations of teaching supplies to be brought to New Orleans.

Mr. Puzio reported on his attendance this date at a workshop concerning Blue Ribbon Connecticut Mastery Test Diagnostic Software Testing.

Ms. Mancini reported on the recent Leadership, Accountability and Measurement Committee meeting.

Mr. Richards reported on the site visit to Griswold, Connecticut concerning the candidate for the principal position at Hubbard School. Mr. Richards reported on the second meeting held with teachers regarding the health savings program. Mr. Richards reported on his attendance at UpBeat's Advanced Peer Leadership Training weekend held this past Saturday and Sunday in the Berlin High School Media Center as the trip to Camp Woodstock was canceled due to the snow.

Ms. Butler reported the work that is being done this year at McGee Middle School regarding reading in the content area for students who scored below basic on the Connecticut Mastery Test. This initiative was the result of McGee's AYP status. Ms. Butler will report back to the Board next month as to how that initiative is proceeding.

Mr. Czuchta updated the Board on the educational specifications for the new high school building. Mr. Czuchta reported the position of Data Specialist has been re-advertised.

Ms. Klebart reported on a demonstration/training session conducted for the administrators concerning the on-line application system. Ms. Klebart reported on the agenda for the professional development day on March 30, 2007. Ms. Klebart reported she will be meeting with department heads in order to prepare for the Perkins Grant.

Dr. Cicchetti reported Jack Tomascak, a McGee Middle School student, will be participating in the National Geographic Spelling Bee. Dr. Cicchetti reported James Bryers has been recognized as the state's 2007 Boys' Golf Coach of the Year. Dr. Cicchetti reported Christina Archer, Supervisor for Art Education, presented a workshop at the National Art Education Association Conference in New York on the use of sketchbook and "free draw."

Mr. Brochu congratulated Matt Cavedon as Governor of the YMCA Statewide Government. Mr. Brochu reported that he attended the town-wide spelling bee, sponsored by the Junior Women's Club, serving as the Bee Master. Mr. Brochu reported on the Technology Bond. Mr. Brochu reported the Town's budget hearing is scheduled for April 10, 2007. Mr. Brochu reported on his attendance at Willard's PTO meeting at which he discussed the budget and facilities plan and the recent Leadership, Accountability and Measurement Committee meeting. Mr. Brochu reported on the vacancy on the Board of Education.

IV. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Nothing to report.

V. PERSONNEL

A. Non-renewal of Contracts for Non-tenured Teachers

Dr. Cicchetti indicated that these non-renewals of non-tenured teachers were due to the fact that the teachers were appointed to one-year positions, resulting from leaves of absences for the

2006-07 school year. Dr. Cicchetti thanked Ms. Addamo and Ms. Spinella for their work this year.

Moved by Mr. Puzio, seconded by Ms. Mancini, that the contracts of employment for the following non-tenured teachers not be renewed for the 2007-2008 school year upon their expiration at the end of the current school year: Lynn Addamo, teacher of social studies at Berlin High School, and Elizabeth Spinella, teacher of grade 5 at Griswold School.

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

B. Retirement

Dr. Cicchetti presented the notice of Mrs. Mariann Collis's intention to retire as teacher of grade 2 at Emma Hart Willard School, effective June 30, 2007.

Moved by Ms. Erickson, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, to accept the retirement of Mrs. Mariann Collis, teacher of grade 2 at Emma Hart Willard School, effective June 30, 2007. Also to thank her for the twenty-seven years of service she has provided to educating the youth of Berlin and to wish her good health and happiness in her retirement years.

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

C. Anticipated Appointment of Hubbard School Principal

Dr. Cicchetti recommended Alfred Souza, III as the candidate for Principal of Hubbard School.

Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Mr. Puzio, that the Board of Education appoint Alfred Souza, III to the position of Principal of Richard D. Hubbard School, on or about July 1, 2007 with salary and starting date to be arranged by Superintendent.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 7:0, including President Gary Brochu**

A short recess was taken from 7:55 p.m. to 8:14 p.m.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes
 - 1. Regular Meeting of March 12, 2007
- B. Resignations

Ms. Marcia Lechowicz, teacher of grade 2 at Emma Hart Willard School, has submitted a letter of resignation to be effective June 30, 2007.

Ms. Yvonne Parenteau, psychologist at Griswold School, has submitted a letter of resignation to be effective June 30, 2007.

- C. Overnight Field Trip Requests – Berlin High School – Camp Woodstock
 - 1. Junior/Senior Peer Leadership Training, Sept. 15-16, 2007
 - 2. Advanced Peer Leadership Training, March 14-16, 2008
 - 3. Peer Leadership Training, May 9-11, 2008
 - 4. “Great Escape” Training, June 5-6, 2008

Moved by Ms. O’Donnell-Moss, seconded by Mr. Puzio, to approve the consent agenda as presented, minus the minutes from March 12.

FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 6:0

Mr. Richards reported a few minor changes need to be made to the March 12, 2007 minutes.

VII. INFORMATION AND REPORTS

- A. Status of the Board of Education’s Adopted Budget for 2007-08

Mr. John Richards, Chairperson of the Resources and Capacity-Building Committee, provided Board members with an update regarding the status of the Board’s Adopted Budget for 2007-08, including action that was taken by the Town Council at their March 13, 2007 meeting. Mr. Richards updated the Board on the status of the Operational Budget, Capital Budget, and Building and Site Budget.

- B. Project CHOICE Participation for 2007-2008

Dr. Cicchetti provided the Board with a document reflecting, by grade and school, his recommended number of CHOICE students for 2007-08. In addition to the twelve (12) currently-enrolled students, who will advance one grade next year, Dr. Cicchetti recommended an additional ten (10) students, four (4) who would be placed in first grade classes and six (6) who would be place in second grade classes. CREC is asking districts to consider making additional seats available to CHOICE students for 2007-08. Dr. Cicchetti reported that there would be minimum impact on the first and second grade class sizes, as shown in the average class size data provided in the document.

- C. Administrative Presentation on Rigor in the Classroom

In response to a request from the Board, members from the administrative team, Rena Klebart, Brian Benigni, George Synnott and Laurie Gjerpen, presented the rigor presentation that was given to staff at each of the five schools. The administrative team answered questions from the Board as well as the audience of citizens in attendance.

- D. Re-Posting of K-12 Literacy Coordinator Position

Ms. Klebart provided an update to Board members regarding the re-posting of the K-12 Literacy Coordinator as the first posting for this position, last summer, proved unsuccessful as several candidates withdrew their application when they learned that the position was not an administrative one. Ms. Klebart elaborated on the job duties for the position, which in addition to supervising the reading/language arts consultants and the literacy program, will include program and staff supervision for English Language Learners and Library/Media. Mr. Czuchta reported that the current budget still contains the funds for the position; however, the proposed budget will recognize the position as a supervisory position; therefore the funding level has increased.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Ms. Rochette, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

John M. Richards, Secretary, Berlin Board of Education