

BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION
February 10, 2021
MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING

Attendance: Julia Dennis
Steven Jenkins
Jaymee Miller
Timothy Oakes
Mark Pruzin
Adam Salina
Kari Sassu, Ph.D.
Tracy Sisti
Stephen Weber
Student Representatives: Ryan McGowan – Absent
Lindsey Leary – Absent

Also in attendance: Superintendent of Schools Brian J. Benigni; Director of Athletics, Health & PE, David Francalanga; Principal of Berlin High School Eileen Eustis; and Principal of McGee Middle School Salvatore Urso.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Dennis called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. via Zoom.

II. SPECTATORS ATTENDING WINTER SPORTING EVENTS

A statement was read by President Dennis:

Tonight’s Board of Education meeting was scheduled to address the Berlin Public School athletics and parent attendance at games during COVID. The state of Connecticut has put forth regulations for the game attendance through the Governor’s Executive Orders, the Department of Economic and Community Development, and it is outlined in the CIAC’s Capacity for Winter Sports Events Guidelines.

The CIAC’s 2020-2021 Winter Sports plan states: “Limit attendance to only the necessary number of adults to hold practices and competitions, including no more than one parent/guardian per youth athlete and no more than 50% capacity.”

On November 24, 2020, Governor Lamont issued Executive Order 9N, granting additional enforcement authority regarding violations of size and capacity restrictions. Executive Order 9N states: “an owner or a person having possession of, or exercising dominion and control over a nonresidential property who violates the size or capacity limitations set forth in the DECD Sector Rules and DECD Gatherings Capacity Limits or others rules issued by the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development (the ‘DECD Rules’), as amended from time to time, shall be subject to a civil penalty in the amount of \$10,000.00 per violation.”

Our intent was to have 2 parents attend and no visitors/spectators at each home event, thus meeting the requirements of 2 spectators and less than 50% capacity. Unfortunately, we have been advised that this proposal is not acceptable because the language within the executive order 9N specifies that only one parent may attend per athlete. At this time, based on the language and criteria, our legal counsel recommended against allowing us to move forward with our proposed plan.

Please know that the Board of Education recognizes the importance of athletics and is committed to our athletic programs, student-athletes, and greater Berlin community. We want you to know that we will continue to hear your concerns and advocate the best we can. Please note that all games are live-streamed and available on the Berlin Public Schools YouTube page.

III. ADJOURNMENT

At 6:10 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Pruzin, seconded by Mr. Weber, to adjourn.

FAVOR: ALL

MOTION CARRIED: 9:0; including President Dennis

Respectfully submitted,

Tracy Sisti, Secretary, Berlin Board of Education