

**BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**March 11, 2013**  
**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

Attendance: Gary Brochu  
Kristin Campanelli  
Jeffrey Cugno Arrived at 8:23 p.m.  
Julie Erickson Absent  
Irene Matulis Absent  
Timothy Oakes  
Kathleen O'Donnell-Moss  
John Richards  
George Synnott

Also in attendance: Superintendent of Schools David B. Erwin; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Brian Benigni; Director of Business Operations Roman Czuchta; Director of Human Resources Denise Parsons; Director of Pupil Personnel Services Linda Holian; Assistant Principal of Griswold School Christian Strickland; Principal of Hubbard School Alfred Souza; Principal of Willard School Salvatore Urso; and Assistant Principal of Willard School Lauren Feltz.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Brochu called the meeting to order at 7:02 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 Audrey David. A Moment of Silence was observed.

**II. SPECIAL RECOGNITION – Board Member Appreciation**

Mr. Erwin noted that March is Board of Education Appreciation month. He recognized the Board of Education for all the work the Board does on behalf of the staff, students and community.

**III. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Czuchta reported he spoke with the Town Manager this afternoon, and the Board’s request that a sinking fund be set up is due to be addressed and voted on at the Town Council’s meeting on Tuesday, March 19, 2013. Mr. Czuchta reported the Town Council, at its meeting on Tuesday, March 5, 2013, moved the Willard roof project forward, and it is scheduled to be presented at a public hearing on Tuesday, March 19, 2013, prior to the Town Council’s regular meeting. Mr. Czuchta reported he has been meeting with the Public Works Department and will be advertising for architects this Sunday to conduct a facilities study of all school and town buildings. The architects will be interviewed at the end of April with the study starting sometime in May.

Ms. Parsons reported, in response to the custodial staff filing a petition to change their union, one of the three unions requested a hearing in front of the State regarding paper filing, which has been postponed until sometime after April 25, 2013. Negotiations will begin with the union issue is resolved

Mr. Benigni reported the Professional Growth and Evaluation Committee continues to meet and develop the district’s evaluation plan for next year, which will be presented to the State on April 15, 2013.

Mr. Oakes encouraged citizens to vote for Griswold School at [www.follettchallenge.com](http://www.follettchallenge.com).

Ms. O'Donnell-Moss reported she was a judge at the town-wide spelling bee, sponsored by the Junior Woman's Club, on Saturday, March 9, 2013. Ms. O'Donnell-Moss reported on her attendance at Connecticut Association of Boards of Education's (CABE) *A Day on the Hill* on Wednesday, March 6, 2013.

Mr. Richards reported on his participation at the town-wide spelling bee, sponsored by the Junior Woman's Club, on Saturday, March 9, 2013, serving as the Bee Master. Mr. Richards reported the Public Building Commission and the Advisory Committee met on Thursday, February 28, 2013, and held his comments until facilities related updates are to be presented, later in the meeting. Mr. Richards reported on his attendance at CABE's *A Day on the Hill* on Wednesday, March 6, 2013, at which he and Ms. O'Donnell-Moss were able to speak with Berlin's local representatives Catherine Abercrombie and Joe Aresimowicz.

Mr. Erwin reported the Board met with the Town Council's Budget Committee on Monday, March 4, 2013, regarding the Board's proposed budget and encouraged Berlin's citizens to attend the public hearing on Tuesday, April 9, 2013. Mr. Erwin reported the district had another snow day on Friday, March 8, 2013. Mr. Erwin reported the final meeting was held today with the new teachers. Mr. Erwin shared an invitation with the Board to attend the Berlin High School AP Studio Art class art show at Sandman Gallery & Frame Shoppe in Meriden on Friday, March 15, 2013. Mr. Erwin shared correspondences received from the Benigni Family; Kelly Votino; board member Julie Erickson; and provided Board members with a copy of the correspondence received from the family of a recent Bravo recipient. Mr. Erwin reported on the information he received today from Mathew Recore and Laura Kulpa concerning the BHS spring play *Harry's Hotter at Twilight*.

Mr. Brochu thanked Mr. Richards for serving, in his absence, as the Bee Master at the town-wide spelling bee, sponsored by the Junior Woman's Club, on Saturday, March 9, 2013. Mr. Brochu reported the Board presented its budget to the Town Council's Budget Committee on Monday, March 4, 2013, and thanked the administrators and parents for attending, encouraging attendance at the public hearing on April 9, 2013 at McGee Middle School. Mr. Brochu reported last week he attended the State quarterfinals for both the boys' and girls' basketball teams and tomorrow evening the boys' hockey team will compete in the semifinals at Ingalls Rink.

#### **IV. INFORMATION AND REPORTS – PART I**

##### **A. Berlin Bravos**

Berlin Bravos is a program where the district recognizes students, staff, parents, and volunteers who have had a significant achievement, gone well above and beyond, or have overcome a significant challenge or obstacle. The Board of Education acknowledged the following individuals:

##### **1. Mary E. Griswold School**

Assistant Principal Strickland presented the following individuals from Mary E. Griswold School:

Pam Lemelin and Gina Munch, Griswold parents.

2. Richard D. Hubbard School

Principal Souza presented the following individuals from Richard D. Hubbard School:

Lisa Daddario and Diane Yoder, CAS Parent Volunteer Award recipients.

3. Emma Hart Willard School

Principal Urso, along with Assistant Principal Feltz, presented the following individuals from Emma Hart Willard School:

Audrey David, grade three student and Jacob Morris, grade five student.

A short recess was taken from 7:28 p.m. to 7:40 p.m. A cake was shared as part of the Board of Education appreciation and to honor the Berlin Bravo recipients.

**V. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS**

Nothing to report.

**VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting of February 25, 2013
- B. Payment of Bills – Period ending February 28, 2013
- C. Overnight Field Trip Request – Berlin High School – April 2-4, 2013

Berlin High School Principal Francis Kennedy requested permission for three students to participate in the Connecticut Music Educators Association All State Band/Chorus/Orchestra/Jazz Festival at the Connecticut Convention Center, April 2-4, 2013. The festival is held over a three-day period and consists of rehearsals with nationally recognized clinicians and a culminating performance. (Students participating in the festival will be housed at The Crowne Plaza in Cromwell for two nights and will be under 24-hour supervision by CMEA chaperones.) Selection to one of these prestigious ensembles is earned through a series of competitive auditions. Each audition is progressively more challenging and requires proficiency in multiple musical skills. If a student earns a place in All State, they are considered to be one of the finest high school musicians that Connecticut has to offer.

Mr. Brochu indicated he received a request that the Overnight Field Trip Request – Berlin High School – April 2-4, 2013 be removed from the consent agenda.

**Moved by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, seconded by Mr. Oakes, to approve the consent agenda as amended.**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED: 5:0**

Mr. Richards indicated he received two copies of the overnight field trip request form and inquired if there was anything different between the two. Mr. Richards also inquired if students will be attending school during the morning of April 2, 2013, with registration for the event being 2-4 pm; of the three students attending, the number participating in All State Band and All State Chorus; whether the BHS faculty listed as chaperones will be part of the CMEA chaperones, or would otherwise be staying overnight at The Crowne Plaza; and the method of transportation of the students, as there was no mention of this or any associated cost. Mr. Erwin will provide responses to Mr. Richards' questions.

**Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. Campanelli, to approve the field trip request for Berlin High School for the All State Band and Chorus.**

**FAVOR: ALL**  
**MOTION CARRIED: 5:0**

## **VII. INFORMATION AND REPORTS – PART II**

### **B. Facilities Related Updates – Code Renovations – Berlin High School**

Director of Business Operations Roman J. Czuchta reported the third-party reviewer, Chris Laux, had completed his review of the plans and specifications that had been prepared by Silver Petrucelli + Associates, and he returned them to Silver Petrucelli + Associates with 308 items that need to be addressed. This pushes back the schedule to meet with the State and getting out to bid in preparation for beginning work this summer. Mr. Czuchta reported he spoke, this date, with Tom Smith, and as of this afternoon, Silver Petrucelli + Associates had delivered the plans and specifications, with corrections, to Mr. Laux. Mr. Czuchta anticipates getting back to the State sometime next week; however, it will depend on Mr. Laux signing off on the response from Silver Petrucelli + Associates. Mr. Czuchta reported there was a job meeting last week, and there will be a meeting tomorrow with the high school staff and cafeteria staff concerning what cafeteria services will be available as the cafeteria and kitchen will be one of the first phases being worked on.

Mr. Richards reported Planning and Zoning (P&Z) is requesting that the roof color for the new building not be bright white, the high performance standard, which would cost a point in meeting the high performance points standard for state reimbursement. In response, Mr. Brochu asked what specific objection P&Z was making reference to, and whether P&Z should have an opinion on the color of the roof. Mr. Richards responded that Mr. Simonian, Town Public Works supervisor, was working with the P&Z to resolve the situation. Mr. Richards reported Tom Smith is to coordinate with Principal Kennedy as to how many classrooms in the Butler Building need to be provided with compressed air. Mr. Richards added that in regards to the architect's response to the PCT review being conducted by Mr. Laux, they have delivered the response 4 days ahead of their reported time needed. This, plus Mr. Laux having delivered the comments 2 days early are positive signs of the 100% CD drawings being perfected for the approval when the drawings are returned to the State.

## **VIII. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

This agenda item concerns the presentation by the administration of proposed school calendars for the rest of this year, and the next two school years. At this time Item VIII. B. was moved up in the agenda. Hearing no objection, this item was addressed.

B. Amendments to the 2012-2013 School Calendar

The Board was provided with amendments to the 2012-2013 school calendar. The Student Achievement Committee met on March 11, 2013 to discuss amending the 2012-2013 school calendar due to the seven days school was not in session to date. Mr. Erwin reported the committee recommended reducing the number of student days from 183 to 181 and moving the professional development day scheduled for April 1 to the end of the school year. This would make the tentative last student day June 20. Teachers would work through June 25. Obviously, any additional closings would alter this calendar. Mr. Benigni discussed the professional development that would take place on June 21, 24 and 25, 2013. In response to Mr. Richards' question, graduation is planned for Sunday, June 23, 2013 and has been reserved at CCSU for that date. Mr. Brochu said that the Board would take action after April 1, to solidify this date, regardless of any further adjustments to the school calendar.

**Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, to approve the calendar for 2012-2013 as proposed by Superintendent Erwin.**

**FAVOR: ALL**

**MOTION CARRIED: 6:0; including President Brochu**

At this time Item VIII. C. was moved up in the agenda. Hearing no objection, this item was addressed.

C. Early Dismissal Days – 2013-2014 School Calendar

The Student Achievement Committee met on January 23, 2013 to discuss additional early release days for the 2013-2014 school year. In the past, there have been four early dismissal days for professional development. The Student Achievement Committee has recommended eight early dismissal days for 2013-2014. The Board was provided with the revised calendar showing the early dismissal days for afternoon professional development. It was noted that all early dismissals, including those related to parent/teacher conferences, would be targeted for Wednesdays.

**Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, to approve the revised 2013-2014 Berlin Public Schools calendar as presented.**

**FAVOR: ALL**

**MOTION CARRIED: 6:0; including President Brochu**

At this time, Mr. Cugno arrived.

A. Proposed School Calendar for 2014-2015

The Board was provided with the proposed school calendar for 2014-2015. The proposed calendar was reviewed and discussed by the Board's Student Achievement Committee at their March 11, 2013 meeting. Mr. Erwin indicated this proposed calendar allows for eleven early dismissal days for 2014-2015 for professional development. There is an additional four early dismissal days to allow for school conferences. The majority of professional development will occur on Wednesdays with exceptions for the months of November and February.

**Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, to adopt the 2014-2015 Berlin Public Schools calendar as proposed.**

**FAVOR: ALL**  
**MOTION CARRIED: 7:0; including President Brochu**

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by Ms. Campanelli, seconded by Mr. Cugno, to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m.**

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

Respectfully submitted,  
John Richards  
Acting for the Board Secretary  
Berlin Board of Education