

BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION

May 28, 2013

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

Attendance: Gary Brochu
Kristin Campanelli
Jeffrey Cugno
Julie Erickson
Irene Matulis
Timothy Oakes Absent
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; Supervisor of Special Education – Elementary Michelle Zeuschner; Supervisor of Special Education – Secondary Kelly Maio; Principal of Willard School Salvatore Urso; and Assistant Principal of Hubbard School and Math Coordinator Kara Watson.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brochu called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. in the Board of Education (“the Board”) meeting room at 238 Kensington Road, Berlin, CT. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A Moment of Silence was observed.

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Czuchta reported the Willard roof project has gone out to bid and bids are due back the second week of June. Mr. Czuchta reported the state accepted the plans and specifications with the one-quarter inch pitch, which should render the Town substantial savings. Mr. Czuchta reported the kindergarten classroom renovations are also out to bid and bids are due back the middle of June. Mr. Czuchta reported the new band uniforms were worn by band members during the Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 27, 2013, and 50 complete sets of the old band uniforms have been sold.

Ms. Parsons reported the interview process for the Assistant Principal position at Willard has begun. She reported that 33 individuals were screened by phone from the 152 applicants for the position. The field has been reduced to 9 that will be interviewed by a committee tomorrow. Ms. Parsons reported clerical negotiations have been continued to June 12, 2013. Ms. Parsons reported open enrollment is currently underway, and the open enrollment fair was held last week. Ms. Parsons reported the vote for the union for the custodial workers is tomorrow.

Ms. Erickson reported the Student Achievement Committee met prior to tonight’s meeting, and an item discussed, textbook adoption, appears on tonight’s agenda for approval. Ms. Erickson reported on her participation in the Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 27, 2013.

Ms. Matulis reported the Educational Resources Committee met prior to tonight’s meeting and held comments until later in the agenda.

Ms. O'Donnell-Moss reported she participated in the Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 27, 2013, and attended the Student Achievement Committee meeting held prior to tonight's meeting. Ms. O'Donnell-Moss reported on her attendance at the Education Council Committee meeting last week. Ms. O'Donnell-Moss reported the UpBeat town-wide picnic will be held Thursday, May 30, 2013, at the Berlin Fair Grounds.

Ms. Holian reported Kelly Maio and Michelle Zeuschner are at tonight's meeting to share an overview of the special education summer school program. Ms. Holian reported she is in the process of reviewing applications for the paraprofessional positions.

Mr. Benigni reported the administrative group spent a very success day with Richard Lemons last week focusing on climate, school culture and communication. Mr. Benigni reported tomorrow he, along with Mr. Erwin, will attend a session sponsored by the consortium LEAD Connecticut.

Mr. Synnott reported he attended the UpBeat Peer Leadership training for the evening of Saturday, May 18, 2013, at Camp Woodstock. Mr. Synnott reported tomorrow he will participate in the interviews for the position of Assistant Principal at Willard.

Mr. Richards reported he attended the UpBeat Peer Leadership training weekend at Camp Woodstock on Friday, May 17, 2013, through Sunday, May 19, 2013. Mr. Richards reported on his attendance at the Legislative Office Building with the Capitol Region Education Council's (CREC) legislative committee, meeting with three State representatives. Mr. Richards reported he has been elected to CREC's Board of Directors. Mr. Richards reported on Tuesday, May 21, 2013, there was a work session, dealing with the high school renovations. He attended an Advisory Committee meeting on Thursday, May 23, 2013, where the Committee toured the Phase I structure. Mr. Richards reported the Public Building Commission also met on Thursday, May 23, 2013.

Mr. Cugno reported he attended the Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 27, 2013.

Ms. Campanelli reported on her attendance at the Berlin High School Academic Awards Night on Thursday, May 23, 2013.

Mr. Erwin reported the administrative group spent a day last week with Richard Lemons on school culture, change and communication. Mr. Erwin reported on his attendance today at the first day of LEAD CT; he will attend the Tuesday session as well. Mr. Erwin reported on the meeting held last week with the administration of Berlin High School, along with the Technology Education Department teachers, to make sure equipment will be ready in the fall for the occupation of the pre-engineered Building. Mr. Erwin reported on his attendance at the meeting of the University of Connecticut (UCONN) cohort for aspiring superintendents.

Mr. Brochu reported the UpBeat town-wide picnic will be held Thursday, May 30, 2013, at the Berlin Fair Grounds. Mr. Brochu reported the Jazz for Pizzazz Fundraiser will be held on Saturday, June 1, 2013, at Berlin High School. Mr. Brochu reported the National Honor Society Spring Ceremony will be held on Wednesday, June 5, 2013. Mr. Brochu encouraged everyone to go online to the *Hartford Courant* and read Jeff Jacobs's column concerning Berlin's own Anthony Marzi, a pitcher for UConn.

III. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Marilyn Richter, 28 Baxter Avenue, Berlin, Connecticut; Dawn Tubbs, 48 Patterson Way, Berlin, Connecticut; Maria Funk, 46 Wildermere Road, Berlin, Connecticut; and Heidi Michaud, 67 Renn Lane, Berlin, Connecticut, addressed the Board concerning Willard School following a common schedule, beginning at 8:40 a.m. and dismissing at 3:25 p.m.

IV. PERSONNEL

Acceptance of Retirement – Berlin High School – Science Teacher

Mr. Erwin presented Fred Russo's notice of intent to retire as teacher of science at Berlin High School, effective June 30, 2013.

Moved by Mr. Synnott, seconded by Mr. Richards, to accept the retirement of Fred Russo, teacher of science at Berlin High School, effective June 30, 2013, and to thank Mr. Russo for his 37 years of service to the youth of Berlin and to wish him happiness and good health in his retirement.

FAVOR: ALL

MOTION CARRIED: 8:0; including President Brochu

V. CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting of May 13, 2013

Moved by Ms. Erickson, seconded by Mr. Richards, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

FAVOR: ALL

MOTION CARRIED: 7:0

VI. PRESENTATIONS AND ACTIONS

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

D. Discussion Regarding a Common Elementary School Start Time

Based on projected enrollment figures and current bus capacities, the administration recommended that a common elementary school schedule be established beginning with the 2013-2014 school year. The common schedule will allow for better utilization of shared services, including staffing, as well as facilitate more effective staff development programming. It is recommended that all elementary schools shall follow a common schedule beginning at 8:40 a.m. and dismissing at 3:25 p.m. Currently, Griswold and Hubbard Elementary schools follow these times; Willard school is to be moved from a starting time of 8:00 a.m. to be consistent with the other schools.

Mr. Czuchta reported an earlier start time for all three elementary schools was looked at; however, any earlier time would be difficult, if not impossible, without adding more buses to the fleet. The common

schedule will be cost neutral for bus transportation to the district. Mr. Czuchta provided a history of the bus times.

The Superintendent explained that in districts of our size, it is common for the elementary schools to start at the same time. In larger districts, like Hartford and New Haven, a tiered time for school opening occurs. The district's plans for professional development and the ability for the elementary schools to have common meeting time was also cited. In response to Mr. Richards, it was noted that the transportation cost is \$0, but there would be savings by allowing teachers to meet in horizontal teams, without substitutes, and for teachers that are shared by schools.

Peter Agostini from New Britain Transportation was in attendance and responded to the Board's questions. He explained that the afternoon busses would be waiting for students at the close of the day and this would make the trip home more reliable and predictable.

In response to Ms. O'Donnell-Moss's question if this decision can be delayed until next year, Mr. Czuchta responded yes, the decision can be delayed for a year; however, a decision needs to be made quickly to plan the bus routes and inform parents.

Principal Urso discussed the professional development benefits Willard teachers will receive from a common start time.

At President Brochu's request, the administration, specifically Superintendent Erwin, Mr. Czuchta and Principal Urso, will listen to individual concerns in a less formal format of a Board meeting on Monday, June 3, 2013, at 8:30 a.m. in the Board of Education meeting room. The administration will then report back to the Board with its recommendation.

A. Facilities Related Updates – Code Renovations – Berlin High School

Director of Business Operations Roman J. Czuchta reported on Tuesday, May 21, 2013, he, along with representatives of the Public Building Commission, Messrs. Brochu and Richards, as well as representatives from FIP Construction, met for a discussion concerning the bid results that had been submitted on May 15 and 16, 2013. Mr. Czuchta reported the numbers that came in for Phase II, combined with what is committed for Phase I, came within the revised budget figures for the project, received in February, 2013. Mr. Czuchta reported a meeting was held with FIP Construction this morning, along with the architects and Gilbane Building Company, to discuss the schedule at the high school. Mr. Czuchta reported he has requested that FIP Construction have a representative from Fuss & O'Neill meet with the Berlin High School staff to advise them what will happen with the abatement work. Mr. Czuchta reported the abatement work is expected to begin July 1, 2013. Mr. Czuchta reported on tonight's agenda is an item to authorize the Superintendent to file a new ED049R—Revision to Original Project Cost Estimates, with the State of Connecticut. Mr. Richards reported that the combination of anticipated construction costs and the potential for space waivers makes it feasible for the project to be done without additional cost to the Berlin taxpayer.

B. Summer Instructional Program

Supervisors of Special Education Michelle Zeuschner reviewed the extended school-year programs for students with disabilities. Ms. Zeuschner reported there will be two sessions: a six week preschool

program that runs from July 1 – August 9; and a four week program that includes grades preK-grade 12 that runs July 9 – August 1. Ms. Zeuschner reported the tentative numbers reflect 17 preschool students, 30 students in grades 1-5, 23 middle school students and 12 high school students will participate in the extended school-year programs. Ms. Zeuschner reported the program includes 11 teachers and 23 paraprofessionals. Students also will receive all their Special Education services they need over the summer, including occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech therapy. There will be a teacher doing the PE/Movement at the elementary level, a reading teacher will be providing reading instruction and a social worker will be in attendance for the summer.

C. End-of-Year Curriculum Projects

Assistant Superintendent Brian Benigni reviewed curriculum work and professional development scheduled to occur throughout the district on June 21, 24 and 25. After several meetings with principals, PPS administration, K-12 coordinators, the K-12 literacy coordinator, and the K-8 math coordinator, a comprehensive plan was collectively designed for all teachers, special service providers and paraprofessionals. The elementary schools' professional development and curriculum work will focus on developing new curriculum and assessments for the new math program *Investigations in Number, Data and Space*. All elementary teachers will begin to receive training in preparation for implementing of the *Investigations* math program and *Words Their Way* spelling program. All Berlin High and McGee teachers will be working by department to develop common assessments, revise units of instruction to align to the Common Core State Standards and update their curriculum in Atlas Rubicon. McGee and Berlin High School counselors will continue to work on developing Student Success Plans in conjunction with Naviance and Career Cruising software packages. All departments at Berlin High School will be developing curriculum for the numerous new courses that will be offered next year. The McGee physical education curriculum will also be revised to reflect a wellness program that will include health and physical education. All teachers and administrators will be receiving training in the use of the various Google applications, PowerSchool, including the grade book, and Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) as related to the new evaluation plan. In addition to the new curriculum, all curriculum must continue to be revised to align to the Common Core State Standards through the design of common unit assessments for each course offered and focusing on designing lessons which allow for varied instructional delivery methods. All curriculum work that is completed will be documented and uploaded or linked to Atlas Rubicon, the curriculum mapping software, in anticipation of providing parents limited access at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year.

The music department will receive a presentation from Amy Burns Music Workshop regarding using iPads in the music room.

Grid charts for each school, and each department at BHS, illustrating the focus work for each grade level was distributed and reviewed. Mr. Benigni also provided a handout containing the activities the related services staff will work on by their departments.

E. Discussion and Action Regarding Textbook Adoptions

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Brian Benigni and Assistant Principal of Hubbard School and Math Coordinator Kara Watson presented the textbooks recommended for adoption to the members of the Board of Education. Each of the recommended textbooks has been reviewed by the Textbook Adoption Committee and by the Curriculum Council. The textbooks have also been

reviewed by the Student Achievement Committee. Copies of the recommended texts are available in the library conference room.

Ways of the World, Second Edition by Robert W. Strayer, published by Bedford St. Martin's, Boston/NY – This textbook will be the primary text for grade 11 and 12 students in AP World History.

The Musician's Guide to Theory and Analysis & Anthology, Second Edition by J. Clendenning and E. Marvin, published by W. W. Norton & Company, NY – This textbook will be the primary text for grade 11 and 12 students in AP Music Theory.

Wonder by R. J. Palacio, published by Knopf Books for Young Readers, New York, NY – This book will be included on the 2014 Summer Reading list for McGee students. (The request for approval at this time is so the district can plan for the author's visit.)

Investigations in Number, Data and Space by various authors, published by Pearson Education (Boston, MA); curriculum for program developed by TERC – This textbook will be the primary text for K-5 Math.

Environmental Science for AP by Friedland, Relyea and Courard-Hauri, published by W.H. Freeman & Company, New York, NY – This textbook will be the primary text for grade 11 and 12 students in AP Environmental Science.

Omnivore's Dilemma, Young Reader's Ed. by Michael Polan, published by The Penguin Group, New York, NY – This textbook will be required summer reading for AP Environmental Science students entering grades 11 and 12.

Moved by Ms. Erickson, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, to adopt the textbooks *Ways of the World, Second Edition* by Robert W. Strayer, published by Bedford St. Martin's, Boston/NY; *The Musician's Guide to Theory and Analysis & Anthology, Second Edition* by J. Clendenning and E. Marvin, published by W. W. Norton & Company, NY; *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio, published by Knopf Books for Young Readers, New York, NY; *Investigations in Number, Data and Space* by various authors, published by Pearson Education (Boston, MA); *Environmental Science for AP* by Friedland, Relyea and Courard-Hauri, published by W.H. Freeman & Company, New York, NY; and *Omnivore's Dilemma, Young Reader's Ed.* by Michael Polan, published by The Penguin Group, New York, NY.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 7:0**

- F. Discussion and Action Regarding the State Healthy Food Certification Statement for July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014

Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that all Connecticut public school districts that are eligible to participate in the healthy food certification take action to certify whether all food items sold to students will or will not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published pursuant to section 10-215e of the Connecticut General Statutes for the period of July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014.

Over the course of the past seven years, the Board and administration – as well as representatives from parent organizations and booster clubs – have had several discussions regarding the district's participation in the grant program that is part of Public Act 06-63. It is the consensus of the Educational

Resources Committee and administration that the district decline participation in this grant program for the 2013-14 school year.

Director of Business Operations Roman Czuchta and Director of Food Services Timothy Prosinski project that any funding received from the grant will be offset by losses in sales and fundraising efforts due to the restrictions that the grant imposes on districts. Separate and apart from the district's participation in the grant program, changes made over the past seven school years with respect to food services offerings have provided students with more healthy food choices during lunches.

Moved by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, seconded by Mr. Richards, that the Berlin Board of Education will not participate in the optional Healthy Foods Certification Program under Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes for the 2013-14 school year.

FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 7:0

It is recommended that the Board approve the sale of soda during after school events, which are defined by Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes as "an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity." As during the 2012-13 school year, these sales will occur outside of the school day.

Moved by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, seconded by Mr. Richards, that the Berlin Board of Education allow the sale of beverages (to students) in accordance with Section 10-221q, subsection (b), of the Connecticut General Statutes for the 2013-14 school year.

FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 7:0

G. Discussion and Action Regarding a Deposit into the Non-Lapsing Fund

Mr. Czuchta reported earlier this year, the Town Council established a Non-Lapsing account for the Board of Education in accordance with CGS 10-248a. At this time, it is recommended that the Board of Education request the Town Council to deposit \$245,600, from anticipated unexpended funds from the Board's 2012-2013 budget ending June 30, 2013, into the Non-Lapsing Fund.

Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. Campanelli, that the Town Council deposit \$245,600 from account 001-35-3560-0-51000-00000 Board of Education Program 60 into account 500-35-3561-0-54000-01733 Unexpended Education Funds for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2013.

FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 8:0; including President Brochu

H. Discussion and Action Regarding the Berlin High School Renovation Project

Mr. Czuchta reported based on the latest bid results (see item VI. A.), the Board of Education will need to file a new ED049R – Revision to Original Project Cost Estimates, with the State of Connecticut.

Moved by Ms. Matulis, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, to authorize the superintendent to file form ED049R for the Berlin High School renovate as new project based on the latest cost estimates.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 8:0; including President Brochu**

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 9:13 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Matulis, seconded by Ms. Erickson, to go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 7:0**

In attendance for Executive Session were Board members **Brochu, Campanelli**, Cugno, Erickson, Matulis, O'Donnell-Moss, Richards and Synnott. In addition, Mr. Erwin was present.

At 9:36 p.m. returned to regular session.

Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, to add a personnel item to the agenda for action.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 8:0; including President Brochu**

Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. Campanelli, to authorize the Superintendent to extend Joanna Geisler's sick days for the 2012-13 school year as needed.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 8:0; including President Brochu**

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Ms O'Donnell-Moss, seconded by Ms. Erickson, to adjourn the meeting at 9:38 p.m.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 7:0**

Respectfully submitted,

John Richards
Acting for the Board Secretary
Berlin Board of Education