

THE BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION

THE BULLETIN BOARD

A SUMMARY OF THE MAY 27, 2014 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

The Berlin Public Schools □ 238 Kensington Road □ Berlin, CT 06037 □ (860) 828-6581

Audience of Citizens □ Jim Day and Marie Siegal addressed the Board of Education regarding their participation on the Co-curricular/Athletic Survey Committee.

Personnel □ The Board accepted the resignation of Christian Strickland, assistant principal at Mary E. Griswold School, effective June 30, 2014. The Board thanked him for his ten years of service to the youth of Berlin and wished him well in his future endeavors.

Facilities Related Updates □ Director of Business Operations Roman J. Czuchta reported on the status of code renovations at Berlin High School: A representative from Silver/Petrucci + Associates met with the reviewer at the state regarding the furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E) package. There were four items the reviewer requested clarification and additional information on. The representative from Silver/Petrucci + Associates will meet with the reviewer and it is anticipated that the FF&E package will be approved to proceed with bids and/or purchase of furniture and technology. A special meeting of the Public Building Commission is scheduled for May 29 to approve the purchase orders that have been drafted, and once approved, they will be sent out. Most of the furniture, as well as the technology pieces, that will be purchased are on state contract; therefore, the district does not have to go out to bid on those items. Some of the specialized equipment will need to go out to bid and will take some lead time. Another meeting will be scheduled next week concerning the moving process. John Richards has been instrumental in putting together a very useful document as to what items will be kept, what items will be disposed of, and what items can be funneled to other schools in the district. The contractors will be taking classrooms as early as June 19, 2014. A meeting is scheduled for May 30, 2014, to finalize the parking lot and entryways.

Proposed School Calendar for 2015-2016 □ The proposed calendar was reviewed by the Student Achievement Committee at their May 27, 2014 meeting and a suggestion was made to add a specific notation for each school for the early release days for conferences. The Board adopted the 2015-2016 school calendar as proposed.

Summer Instructional Program □ Supervisor of Special Education Michelle Zeuschner reviewed the extended school-year programs for students with disabilities. There will be two sessions: a five-week preschool program that runs from June 30–August 1 and a four-week program that includes grades PK-12 that runs from July 1–24. The tentative numbers reflect that 14 preschool students, 33 students in grades 1-5, 15 middle school students and 15 high school students will participate in the extended school-year programs. The program includes 13 teachers and 28 paraprofessionals. Students also will receive the special education services they need over the summer, including occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech therapy. There will be a teacher providing physical education/movement at the elementary level, a reading teacher will be providing reading instruction, and a school psychologist will be in attendance for the summer.

State Healthy Food Certification Statement for July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015 □ The Board voted to decline participation in the optional Healthy Food Certification Program under Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes for the 2014-15 school year. Over the course of the past eight 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. It was determined that any funding received from the grant would be offset by losses in sales and fundraising efforts due to the restrictions that the grant imposes on districts in those areas. Separate

and apart from our participation in the grant program, changes made over the past eight school years with respect to food service offerings have provided students with more healthy food choices during lunches.

The Board approved 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 in previous years, these sales will occur outside of the school day.

Setting of the 2014-2015 Budget □ The Educational Resources Committee and administration presented information for finalizing the Board of Education’s Operating Budget for 2014-2015, including recommended areas of reduction to meet the Town Council’s approved level of funding. The Board adopted an operating budget for 2014-2015 in the amount of \$40,840,160.

Capstone Update □ Berlin High School Assistant Principal Timothy Grady provided an update of the Capstone Project. His presentation consisted of an overview of the status of the 2013-2014 Capstone Project; the upcoming Capstone exposition, which will take place on June 4 and 5, 2014; the process through which the exemplars will be chosen at the exposition; and the new foundations for the 2014-2015 Capstone.

Survey of Co-curricular Activities including Athletics □ Athletic Director Dan Scavone thanked Co-curricular/Athletic Survey Committee members Jim Barnes, Jeff Cugno, Jim Day, Evelisa Mayette, Marie Siegal, George Synnott, and Angie Zima for their work. The committee met four times and developed surveys for both athletics and co-curricular activities for the high school. The purpose of these surveys is to gather feedback on general aspects of the programs from parents and participants. The surveys focus on communication, values, and overall experience. The information gathered can be used to assist with the formation of future goals and also provide another avenue for parents and participants to communicate with the program leaders. The co-curricular surveys will be sent out at the end of the school year and Principal Kennedy will receive the data from those surveys. The athletic surveys will be sent out seasonally. Mr. Erwin suggested the committee reconvene and develop surveys for both athletics and co-curricular activities at McGee School and report back to the Board in October.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Monday, June 9, 2014, at Catherine M. McGee School, beginning at 7:00 P.M., in the Robert E. Lukens Auditorium, 899 Norton Road. The agenda will be available online at www.berlinschools.org.

The Bulletin Board provides a summary of Board of Education meetings. Official minutes from Board meetings are available at the Board of Education offices, the Town Clerk’s office, the Berlin Public Library, or on the district’s website at www.berlinschools.org.