

THE BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION

THE BULLETIN BOARD

A SUMMARY OF THE OCTOBER 11, 2016 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

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

Berlin Bravos □ Berlin Bravos is a program where we recognize 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 acknowledged the following individuals: Hiram Sepulveda, Grade 4 student from Griswold School, for being a good friend and always reaching out to be a friend to students who may be struggling socially; Mia Wilson, Grade 5 student from Griswold School, for her focus on kindness on a daily basis; Krista Blackey, Grade 5 student from Hubbard School, for being a role model for her peers regarding not only what being a good student is all about, but what a good person is all about; Alana Talamona, Grade 5 student from Hubbard School, for always putting the needs of others before her own and displaying exceptional kindness to a new kindergarten student; Kasen Patel, Grade 2 student from Willard School, for doing a fantastic job transitioning into second grade; and Scott Dukett, Grade 5 student from Willard School, for demonstrating significant growth in reading and language arts.

Committee Reports/Correspondence to the Board □ Student Achievement Committee: Ms. Angelico-Stetson reported the Student Achievement Committee met and reviewed the annual assessment report. The results of the annual testing will be reported to the Board at their October 24 meeting. Educational Resources Committee: Mr. Cugno reported the Educational Resources Committee met and had a hearing concerning a transportation issue which will be reported to the Board in due course. Correspondence to the Board: Superintendent Erwin reported that he received several emails and written communications and met with Mrs. Hilbie and three representative parents concerning the high school graduation ceremony.

Audience of Citizens □ Approximately 75-100 students and parents attended the meeting concerning the change in venue for the high school graduation ceremony. Several citizens addressed the Board concerning the change of venue and requested the Board of Education review and revisit its decision in moving the high school graduation ceremony from Welte Hall Auditorium to Berlin High School. Anne Reilly addressed the Board, as a resident and chair of the Republican Town Committee, as a number of parents shared with her their concerns over the change in location of the graduation ceremonies. She commented that this Board is contrary to open government and democracy, and, as chair of the Republican Town Committee, she believes charter revision would help alleviate issues like this. She hopes the board will listen to parents and students tonight and work to find a solution. Jan Zagorski did not address the venue issue but stated she understands having a discussion concerning the change of venue, but is having difficulty with it turning it into a political agenda. In addition, Mr. Lomaglio addressed the Board concerning the Freedom of Information Act request concerning the former Board president and requested the Board release all requested items to the public. In response to comments from Ms. Reilly and Mr. Lomaglio, Ms. Angelico-Stetson responded that their political diatribes are exactly why the Board should remain non-partisan because politics have no place in education. The Board tries to do the best work it can on behalf of the students and parents. Ms. Motte responded that when the change in venue was presented, the Board was truly thinking of what was best for the students and thought they would be proud of and want to show off the new facility. Later in the meeting, the Board voted to review and revisit the decision of the movement of commencement ceremonies for 2017 and beyond. Mr. Oakes anticipates the Board will review and revisit the decision before the next Board meeting. Board members thanked parents for attending and were pleased to have had the opportunity to hear from them.

Facilities Related Updates – Berlin High School – Code Renovations □ Director of Business Operations Eva Gallupe reported the substantial completion date remains October 31, 2016.

Official 2016-2017 District Enrollment Report □ Mr. Erwin highlighted the enrollment as of October 1, 2016. School districts are required each year to report their October 1 enrollment figures to the Connecticut State Department of Education. Mr. Erwin noted enrollment, as of October 1, 2016, is 2,792, down 71 students (2.48%) from last year. Enrollment at the high school, middle school and elementary schools was reviewed. As of October 1, 2016, the district has 96 students in the Open Choice Program (CHOICE). Not included in the enrollment are 141 students that attend magnet, Vo-Ag and technical schools. Superintendent Erwin noted enrollment at the elementary schools is fairly stable and, most likely, the same number of classrooms will be needed next year.

Policy Review/Revision – Second Reading/Adoption □ The Board approved three new policies and revisions to current policies as a result of the 2016 legislative session and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), along with changes based on legal trends and best practices, as recommended by Shipman & Goodwin LLP.

Executive Session □ The Board entered into an executive session to discuss a matter of real estate with Superintendent Erwin.

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The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Monday, October 24, 2016, beginning at 7:00 p.m., in the Board Meeting Room, at the Berlin Board of Education, 238 Kensington Road, Berlin. 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 Office, the Town Clerk's Office, the Berlin-Peck Memorial Library, or on the district's website at www.berlinschools.org.