

THE BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION

THE BULLETIN BOARD

A SUMMARY OF THE MAY 14, 2018 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

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

Berlin Bravos □ Berlin Bravos is a program whereby the BOE 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 for their accomplishments: Fernando Garajau, a grade two student at Mary E. Griswold School, for working hard to improve and build strategies for success at school and in life; Claire Cloukey, guidance counselor at Mary E. Griswold School, for her positive impact on students and the culture at Griswold School; Will Balicki, a grade four student at Richard D. Hubbard School, for being a hardworking, respectful, and caring student who has excelled in both character and performance in music class; Sarah Swanson, a grade five student at Richard D. Hubbard School, for demonstrating tremendous growth and skill development in physical education over her tenure at Hubbard; Ryan Sambitsky, a kindergarten student at Emma Hart Willard School, for making a wonderful transition to kindergarten; and Dawn Niles, an instructional paraprofessional at Emma Hart Willard School, for supporting students in various grade levels and working closely with them to support individual learning needs.

Student Presentation – Berlin High School □ BHS Student John Silva and Technology Teacher Jennifer Niro presented information to the Board regarding Tech xPerts, a group of independent study students who run a technology help desk for their peers and staff and also complete projects that further their learning in technology.

Personnel □ The Board appointed Eileen H. Eustis to the position of principal of Berlin High School, effective July 1, 2018.

Audience of Citizens □ Mayor Mark Kaczynski addressed the Board concerning the Board of Education and Town budgets and provided a history as to how the budget has materialized. He reported that, after the referendum, the budget went back to the Board of Finance where \$975,000 in reductions were made to the town budget. There were no reductions to the Board's budget. The Town Council will discuss the budgets at their meeting on May 15, 2018.

Facilities Related Updates □ Superintendent of Schools Brian Benigni reported that the pricing for the school security vestibules is higher than what was thought. The Town Council will discuss additional funding at its meeting on May 15, 2018. The Public Building Commission has hired a third-party engineering company to determine whether the ductwork at Berlin High School was installed properly. Drummy Rosane Anderson, Inc., hired to prepare the strategic planning study of the elementary schools, has met with the administrators and staff at each elementary school and has prepared a hardcopy survey to go out to all parents with elementary school children.

2018-2019 Board of Education's Operating Budget □ Board President Matthew Tencza reported that the Board of Finance moved the Board's budget to the Town Council with no cuts; however, there have been a number of cuts to capital requests, such as the installation of cages for athletic equipment at the high school, and electrical changes and the replacement of the phone system at McGee and the elementary schools. Mr. Tencza reported that he issued a letter to the mayor this morning requesting that the Town Council honor the Board's budget as further reductions will impact programs and services. The Town Council will meet on May 15, 2018, and the next referendum is on May 22, 2018.

Summer Reading Program □ Director of Literacy and Social Studies Laurie Gjerpen provided an overview of the 2018 summer reading program. Together with the Berlin-Peck Memorial Library, the schools are encouraging students to

read throughout the summer to expand their knowledge and vocabulary, while continuing to practice reading habits, which have been a big part of their literacy instruction all year.

Textbook Adoptions □ The Board adopted the following textbooks, *The Schwa Was Here*, by Neal Shusterman and published by Puffin Books, copyright 2006; *A Long Walk to Water*, by Linda Sue Park and published by Clarion Books, copyright 2010; *Ghost*, by Jason Reynolds and published by Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books, copyright 2016; *Forget Me Not*, by Ellie Terry and published by Fiewel and Friends, copyright 2017; and *American Politics Today*, by Blanco & Canon and published by W.W. Norton & Co., copyright 2017.

Teacher Work Days After Last Day for Students □ The Board revised the teacher work days on June 20 and 25, 2018. June 20, 2018 will be a full day and June 25, 2018 will be an early release day.

Executive Session □ The Board entered into an executive session to discuss an attorney-client privileged communication regarding legal rights and authority concerning budgetary matters and referendum issues with the superintendent and the Board's legal counsel.

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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, and on the district's website at www.berlinschools.org.