

BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION

April 28, 2008

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

Attendance: Gary Brochu
Julie Erickson
Michelle Hartel Absent
Gary Lukens
William Lutz

Kathleen O'Donnell-Moss
Christopher Puzio
Anthony Recck Absent
John Richards

Also in attendance: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael Cicchetti; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Rena Klebart; Director of Business Operations Roman Czuchta; Director of Pupil Personnel Services Margaret Butler; Director of Human Resources Joseph Costa; Principal of Griswold School Laurie Gjerpen; Principal of Hubbard School Alfred Souza; and Principal of McGee Middle School Brian Benigni.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brochu called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Cafeteria at the Richard D. Hubbard Elementary School, 139 Grove Street, East Berlin, CT. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A moment of silence was observed.

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Lutz congratulated the Berlin High School for its performance of the musical *Annie* indicating the students did an excellent job. Mr. Lutz was impressed with the talent and energy of the students. He asked that his comments be communicated to Mr. Kelly and the students, which Dr. Cicchetti said he would do.

Mr. Richards reported on his attendance at the Public Building Commission's meeting last Thursday, noting they continue to work on a RFP (request for proposal) for the educational specifications for the new high school.

Ms. Butler reported on the support she has offered to the West Hartford school district through Berlin's school psychologist and social worker as a result of the two recent suicides that took place in that town.

Mr. Costa updated the Board regarding the ongoing recruitment efforts to fill current and anticipated job openings for the 2008-09 academic school year and his attendance at two recent job fairs in Boston, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Mr. Costa reminded the Board of the upcoming Dean of Students search process of which they are invited to participate.

Mr. Czuchta updated the Board with regard to the shared software program with the Town and Board of Education, reporting a unanimous decision was reached with one company and is in the process of negotiating final figures.

Ms. Klebart reported on her discussions with the teachers regarding the summer curriculum proposals. Ms. Klebart reported that Mr. Benigni and she will be attending a seminar on Atlas Rubicon.

Dr. Cicchetti reported on recruitment efforts to fill current and anticipated job openings for the 2008-09 academic school year and his attendance at the recent job fair in Boston, Massachusetts. Dr. Cicchetti reminded those in attendance that Tuesday is Referendum Day. Dr. Cicchetti reported that Mark Benigni, Assistant Principal at Berlin High School, has been named Principal at Cromwell High School.

Mr. Brochu reported on the recruitment standards the District sets in filling current and anticipated job openings. Mr. Brochu asked that any Board member interested in participating in the Dean of Students recruitment process contact Dr. Cicchetti or himself. Mr. Brochu noted the upcoming CABE workshops: Legislative Wrap-Up of the 2008 General Assembly on May 14, 2008 and Collective Bargaining—Health Issues and Legal Issues on June 3, 2008. Mr. Brochu reminded all in attendance that Tuesday is Referendum Day and encourages everyone to go out and vote.

III. STUDENT PRESENTATION – HUBBARD SCHOOL

The special area teachers at Hubbard have been doing exceptional work in their respective areas, i.e. art, music, physical education, and library/media. The fundamental underpinnings of rigor, relevance, and respect are consistently reflected in their planning/delivery of instruction with continued focus on interdisciplinary units and continuous improvement goals. Sue Kaczynski (Music), Debbie Lamond (Library Media), Mary Smeallie (Art), and Nancy DeBlasio (Physical Education) shared some of the exemplary work that has been taking place in their classrooms. Student representatives shared their work and insights during this presentation. Student representatives included grade two students Julia Sisti, Brianna Lennehan, Michelle Cohen, Madison Cusick-Howat, Michael McCarthy, Erika Gilleran, Cailin Barnes, Kaylin Degroff, and Vanessa Clement; grade three students Danielle Skates, Mark Bosse and Steven Bordonaro; and grade five students Davis Bordonaro and Anthony Sisti.

IV. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Nothing to report.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes
 1. Regular Meeting of April 14, 2008
 2. Special Meeting of April 10, 2008
 3. Special Meeting of April 3, 2008 – Revised

The following revisions were made by Mr. Richards after the minutes were approved at the April 14, 2008 meeting. The “present in executive session” was amended to indicate Mr. Recck was present. The motion to return to regular session was seconded by Mr. Recck. (Mr. Puzio was not present, as shown in the original minutes.)

B. Action Regarding Non-renewal Notice

Due to a resignation, a teaching position exists that allows the extension of Kara Langan’s employment as a teacher in the Berlin Public Schools. It is, therefore, recommended to rescind the non-renewal notice issued to Kara Langan and offer her a contract for the 2008-09 academic year.

Moved by Mr. Lukens, seconded by Mr. Puzio, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

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

VI. INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. Status of the Board of Education’s Adopted Budget for 2008-09

Board members were provided with an update on the status of the Board’s Adopted Budget for 2008-09 as it heads to the Town referendum on Tuesday, April 29, 2008.

B. Math Program, K-8

Kara Watson, District Math Coordinator for K-8, and math instructional support teachers Tom Collis and Susan Dizenzo provided Board members with information about (1) the remedial and enrichment support they provide to elementary and middle school students; (2) the role they play on the district-wide math vertical team; and (3) their priorities for 2008-09 and beyond. As part of their presentation, they included information about the Blue Ribbon software program that is currently being used to assess student understanding of math objectives and to track student progress in meeting those objectives and also provided a PowerPoint presentation of the M.I.S.C. (Math Instructional Support and Curriculum) program. They also responded to questions from the Board concerning the presentation. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation will be provided to the Board in their weekly Update.

C. Educational Specifications for New High School – Status Report

Resources and Capacity-building Committee Chairperson John Richards reported on his attendance at the Public Building Commission’s meeting last Thursday, noting they continue to work on a RFP for the educational specifications for the new high school. Mr. Richards indicated the main focus is the hiring of an architect. The Public Building Commission has been presented with a calendar outlining what needs to be accomplished for submission to the State by June 30, 2009.

D. Technology Bond – Status Report

Director of Business Operations Roman Czuchta reported the Town-Wide Technology Committee met on April 17, 2008 and two RFPs (Request for Proposals) were developed: One, for the rewiring at Willard; and the other for the end product to be properly tested and installed. The bid procedure for the fiber and the canopy system for the police department will be on the Town Council's agenda May 6, 2008.

- E. Policy Revision – First Reading
 - 1. Curriculum Development – Policy IF
 - 2. Textbook Selection and Adoption – Policy IIAA

Curriculum Development - The revised policy for curriculum development was created with significant involvement from the District's Council for Curriculum Development and Coordination, the high school department chairpersons, and members of the Administrative Council. It was also discussed at meetings of the Leadership, Accountability and Measurement Committee during the past several months. The revised policy defines the role of the Assistant Superintendent and the vertical teams in the development of District curriculum. The revised policy also highlights the commitment of the District to a standards-based curriculum that is articulated and coordinated across all grade levels, kindergarten through grade 12.

Textbook Selection and Adoption - As with the revised curriculum development policy, the revised policy for textbook selection was created with significant involvement from the District's Council for Curriculum Development and Coordination, the high school department chairpersons, and members of the Administrative Council. It was also discussed at meetings of the Leadership, Accountability and Measurement Committee during the past several months. One of the more significant changes to this policy is the inclusion and consideration of required summer reading books as "textbooks" that would require adoption by the Board of Education. The policy also defines the role of the vertical teams in the textbook review and selection process.

Since these are first readings, action was not requested at this time. Board action will be requested at the May 12 Board of Education meeting. Board members should contact Mrs. Klebart or Dr. Cicchetti prior to the next Board meeting should they have any questions or concerns about these two proposed policies.

VII. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- A. Policy Revision – Second Reading/Adoption – Personnel Policies
 - 1. Policy GBA – Non-Discrimination*
 - 2. Policy GBAB – Fingerprinting, Criminal History Records and Employment Reference Checks
 - 3. Policy GBAC – Plan for Minority Staff Recruitment
 - 4. Policy GBCBA – Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace
 - 5. Policy GBEB – Family and Medical Leave*
 - 6. Policy GBCB – Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace
 - 7. Policy GCC – Hiring of Certified Staff
 - 8. Policy GDD – Hiring of Non-Certified Staff
 - 9. Policy GDQAB – Athletic Coaches*

A first reading of the policies listed above was conducted at the April 14, 2008 Board of Education meeting. The three policies marked with an asterisk (*) have been revised since the April 14th meeting to be consistent with updated policies received from Shipman & Goodwin. The revisions were provided and shown in boldface while deleted text was shown as strikethrough. All other policies were the same as presented in the first reading on April 14th.

Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Mr. Lukens, to adopt revised Policies GBA – Non-Discrimination, Policy GBEB – Family and Medical Leave, Policy GBCB – Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace, Policy GCC – Hiring of Certified Staff and Policy GDQAB – Athletic Coaches and new Policies GBAB – Fingerprinting, Criminal History Records and Employment Reference Checks, Policy GBAC – Plan for Minority Staff Recruitment, Policy GBCBA – Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace and GDD – Hiring of Non-Certified Staff as presented.

FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 6:0

B. Policies to be Deleted

The following policies were identified to be deleted: GBB, GBB-R, GCC-R, GCD, GBCB-R, GCBD, GBL, GCA, GBEA, GCAA-R, GCAB-R, GCB, and GCPC as outlined in the summary grids.

Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Mr. Lukens, to delete policies GBB, GBB-R, GCC-R, GCD, GBCB-R, GCB, GBL, GCA, GBEA, GCAA-R, GCAB-R, GCB, and GCPC as presented.

FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 6:0

C. School Calendar 2008-2009

Dr. Cicchetti reported that members of the Leadership, Accountability, and Measurement Committee have asked that the approved 2008-09 school calendar be placed on tonight's agenda for discussion and possible action by the full Board as a result of meetings with school groups concerning school being in session on Columbus Day. It is the recommendation of the Committee that the Board modify only next year's calendar so that school will not be in session on Columbus Day.

Moved by Mr. Lukens, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, to modify the 2008-09 school calendar, previously approved by the Board of Education on February 25, 2008, so that school will not be in session on Monday, October 13, 2008 (Columbus Day).

Mr. Lukens reported his understanding that this request to not have school in session on Columbus Day extends the last student day from June 16 to June 17. Therefore, the motion should be amended to include the change to the last student day.

Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, to modify the 2008-09 school calendar, previously approved by the Board of Education on February 25, 2008, so that school will not be in session on Monday, October 13, 2008 (Columbus Day). The calendar will be adjusted accordingly so that the last student day will be June 17, 2009.

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

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Lutz, seconded by Ms. Erickson, to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

John Richards, Berlin Board of Education