

BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION

June 9, 2008

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

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

Kathleen O'Donnell-Moss
Christopher Puzio Absent
Anthony Recck Arrived at 7:10 p.m.
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 Hubbard School Alfred Souza; and Principal of Berlin High School George Synnott.

IA. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brochu called the meeting to order at 7: 04 p.m. in the Berlin High School Media Center, at 139 Patterson Way, Berlin, Connecticut. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Senior Class President Andrew Zelek. A Moment of Silence was observed.

IB. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Cicchetti announced Megan Sirois as Berlin Public Schools' 2009 Teacher of the Year.

Mr. Synnott recognized the following Berlin High School students:

Berlin High School Recognition – Valedictorian and Salutatorian

Valedictorian – Kelly J. Foy

Salutatorian – Casey Barr Murphy

CAS Scholar Athletes – Jaime Rasmussen & Matthew DelConte

CABE Student Leadership Awards – Casey Murphy & Patrick King

Student Council 2008:

President – Mari Rauseo

Vice President – Kelly Foy

Corresponding Secretary – Rupali Patel

Recording Secretary – Elizabeth Hogan

Treasurer – Bethany Horbal

Class of 2008 Officers:

President – Andrew Zelek

Vice Presidents – Michael Baczewski and Anet Czyzewski

Secretary – Lisa Marzi

Treasurer – Alyssa Mazzarella

Rena Klebart, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction recognized the following students as distinguished senior writing portfolio authors: Kelly Foy, Michael Imundo, John Mattie, Rupali Patel, Lauren Pucci, Garrison Schmitt and Peter Smith. The following students were recognized as commended authors:

Danielle Berube, Molly Clarke, Meghan Conway, Christina DeSimone, Alexander DiMitrucek, Catherine Heslin, Hilary Little, Haley Nemeth, Medha Patel, Adrian Riley, Nicholas Rubinowski, Marisa Savic, Kaley Skoglund, Krista Sullivan, Allison Thurston, Kimberly Tynik and Fan Zhou. Authors Danielle Berube, Alexander DeMitrucek, John Mattie and Medha Patel read their portfolio pieces to the Board and audience.

At this time, item IV. Personnel was moved up in the agenda. Hearing no objection, the item was addressed.

IV. PERSONNEL

Appointment – Berlin High School Assistant Principal

Dr. Cicchetti recommended Janet Parlato as the candidate for the Assistant Principal position at Berlin High School.

Moved by Ms. Erickson, seconded by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, that the Board of Education appoint Janet Parlato to the position of Assistant Principal of Berlin High School, effective August 1, 2008.

FAVOR: ALL

MOTION CARRIED: 7:0; including President Gary Brochu

From 7:41 p.m. to 8:06 p.m. a short recess was held for refreshments and to informally meet the award recipients, and their family and friends.

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Erickson, on behalf of the Board, announced that Board member Christopher Puzio and his wife have become parents to a baby boy, Cody Christopher Puzio.

Ms. O'Donnell-Moss reported on her attendance at the Pops Concert on Wednesday, June 4, 2008, at the Berlin High School. Ms. O'Donnell-Moss reported on her attendance at the UpBeat town-wide picnic on Thursday, May 29, 2008, noting the students did a fabulous job setting up, cleaning up and serving.

Mr. Richards reported on his attendance, along with Dr. Cicchetti and Mr. Czuchta, at the Town Council's meeting on June 3, 2008 wherein they went into Executive Session. Mr. Richards reported at the recent Public Building Commission meeting the RFQ (Requests for Qualifications) and RFP (Requests for Proposals) for architectural services were approved. Mr. Richards reported on the Resources and Capacity-building Committee meeting held this evening, which will be addressed later in the agenda.

Ms. Butler reported on the professional development program that will be held on June 24, 2008 wherein John M. Hintze, Assistant Professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, will present to staff members on Response to Intervention (RTI).

Mr. Czuchta updated the Board with regard to the shared software program with the Town and Board of Education, reporting the software program BudgetSense developed by UniFund, LLC has been approved by the Town Council.

Ms. Klebart reported on her attendance, along with Sean Cavanaugh, at CREC's Assessment Data Council Workshop on June 4, 2008.

Dr. Cicchetti reported on his attendance at the Pops Concert on Wednesday, June 4, 2008, at the Berlin High School. Dr. Cicchetti reported on the reception held to honor retirees in the District, acknowledging the years of service they have provided to the District in educating the youth of Berlin. Dr. Cicchetti shared with the Board a letter received from The Connecticut Association of Schools wherein on June 5, 2008 Brian Plona was recognized as the state-wide winner for his March Madness 2008 Challenge at McGee Middle School. Dr. Cicchetti updated the Board with regard to the heat situation at the high school and plans for a possible early closing on Tuesday, June 10.

Mr. Brochu reported on his attendance at the reception held to honor retirees in the District and thanked Mr. Richards and Ms. Erickson for also attending. Mr. Brochu reminded the Board a member is needed for the Elementary Principal position search at Willard School. Mr. Brochu reminded the Board that Sunday, June 22, 2008, is the high school graduation and Monday, June 23, 2008, is the McGee eighth grade promotion ceremonies. Mr. Brochu reported this Thursday is the last session of the three evening work sessions that CAFE, along with the Connecticut State Department of Education, put together as a result of the work completed by an individual consultant who reviewed twelve at-risk schools in the state. Mr. Brochu congratulated Dr. Cicchetti's daughter on graduating from high school last Friday.

III. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Dr. David Roccapiore of 58 Summit Wood Drive, Berlin, Connecticut, reported he was in attendance at this evening's Board meeting along with three scouts who are working on the Citizenship in the Community merit badge.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes
 - 1. Regular Meeting of May 27, 2008
 - 2. Special Meeting of May 27, 2008
- B. Resignations

Abby Hall, teacher of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and K-12 department head at Berlin High School, has submitted her letter of resignation to be effective June 30, 2008.

Joshua Richards, school psychologist at Berlin High School, has submitted his letter of resignation to be effective June 30, 2008.

Hannah Ruede, teacher of science at Catherine M. McGee Middle School, has submitted her letter of resignation to be effective June 30, 2008.

Kimberly Waldron, teacher of grade 4 at Richard D. Hubbard School, has submitted her letter of resignation to be effective June 30, 2008.

- C. Payment of Bills – Period ending May 31, 2008
- D. Transfers

Roman Czuchta, Director of Business Operations, provided a sheet of transfers that represent year end adjustments to accounts.

- E. Overnight Field Trip Requests – UpBeat – Camp Woodstock
 - 1. Junior/Senior Peer Leadership Weekend, September 13-14, 2008
 - 2. Advanced Peer Leadership Training Weekend, March 13-15, 2009
 - 3. Peer Leadership Training Weekend, May 15-17, 2009
 - 4. Great Escape Training Workshop, June 4-5, 2009

Moved by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, seconded by Mr. Lukens, to accept the consent agenda as presented.

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

VI. INFORMATION AND REPORTS

- A. Activity Fund Reports
 - 1. Berlin High School Enterprise Fund – Period ending April 30, 2008
 - 2. Berlin Public Schools Activity Fund – Period ending April 30, 2008
 - 3. Cafeteria Fund – Period ending April 30, 2008

These reports were noted with interest.

- B. Educational Specifications for the New High School – Status Report

Director of Business Operations Roman Czuchta reported at the recent Public Building Commission meeting the RFQ (Requests for Qualifications) and RFP (Requests for Proposals) for architectural services were referred to the Town Attorney for review. Mr. Czuchta reported he received an email this date advising an advertisement will go out tomorrow for the RFQ and RFP.

- C. Technology Bond – Status Report

Director of Business Operations Roman Czuchta reported the contract with Fiber Tech has been signed and sent for processing through on Fiber Tech's end. Mr. Czuchta updated the Board on the rewiring project at Willard School.

- D. Policy Revision – First Reading

Presented for the Board's review and consideration are six policies, some of which have accompanying regulations. While the regulations do not require Board approval, they were included so that Board members have a better understanding of how the policies will be administered. The policies were reviewed and discussed by the Leadership, Accountability, and Measurement Committee and by the Resources and Capacity-building Committee.

- 1. Policy EEA/EEAA – Transportation

Presented for Board review was a recommended revision for the transportation policy. The revised policy replaces the old EEA/EEAA, EEAG and Operational Guidelines for Student Transportation. There are no substantive changes in the policy. Some of the items in the old policy were more administrative and were moved to the policy regulations, which are presented for informational purposes only and do not require Board approval. The policy has been reviewed by the Board's attorney and by the Resources and Capacity-building Committee.

2. Policy GBH - Prohibition on Recommendations for Psychotropic Drugs

In accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. 10-212b, the Board of Education prohibits school personnel from recommending or requiring the use of psychotropic drugs for any student. This new policy provides definitions and procedures for guidance on how to comply with the statute. The policy has been reviewed by the Board's attorney and by the Leadership, Accountability, and Measurement Committee.

3. Policy GCEA - Employee Use of the District's Computer Systems

The revisions to this policy, and its accompanying regulations, update our previous policy and regulations which were adopted in 2000. The material change includes language which will give guidance to the Board of Education on restricting approved "incidental personal use" of the District's computer systems by our employees. The policy has been reviewed by the Board's attorney and by the Leadership, Accountability, and Measurement Committee.

4. Policy GCQAB - Private Tutoring

Presented for Board review was a recommended policy regarding private tutoring by staff members of the Berlin Public Schools. The policy clearly defines private tutoring as a business arrangement between the tutor and the client. The policy also establishes provisions for Berlin Public Schools certified staff members who work privately as academic tutors. The policy was developed with significant input from Cabinet members and the Administrative Council. The policy was also discussed in detail at the June 3 meeting of the Leadership, Accountability, and Measurement Committee.

5. Policy GCEB - Retention of Electronic Records and Information

As boards of education increasingly rely on the use of computer networks and electronic communication to conduct school operations, questions continue to arise governing the obligations of boards of education to maintain and preserve electronic data. This new policy and its accompanying regulations were drafted to assist the District in managing issues related to the use and retention of electronic records. These documents are intended to supplement the existing Student Records policy with respect to these issues. The policy has been reviewed by the Board's attorney and by the Leadership, Accountability, and Measurement Committee.

6. Policy GCEBA - Holds on the Destruction of Electronic Information and Paper Records

This new policy and accompanying regulations are intended to provide guidance to boards of education facing litigation. Specifically, these documents outline the obligations of a school district to preserve all relevant documents, including electronically stored information, pertaining to pending litigation. Included with the policy, and regulations, is a sample memorandum to relevant employees placing a "hold" on all relevant

information documents in the event of litigations. The policy has been reviewed by the Board's attorney and by the Leadership, Accountability, and Measurement Committee.

E. Administrative Regulations: Restraint and Seclusion of Persons at Risk – JFH-R

Public Act 07-147 requires that school districts follow specific procedures regarding restraint and seclusion of students in order to comply with Connecticut State Statutes Sections 46a-150 through 46a-153, 10-76b, and 10-76d. Regulations have been developed that define "person at risk, physical restraint, life threatening physical restraint, and seclusion." Ms. Margaret Butler, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, submitted these regulations for the Board's consideration. At this first reading, Ms. Butler provided the Board with a revised copy of the regulations, concerning the following section: II. Procedures for Physical Restraint of Persons at Risk Item D (page 2). The original language read, "Providers and assistants must explore all less restrictive alternatives prior to using physical restraint for a person at risk." In response to a Board member's concern over this wording when discussed at the Leadership, Accountability, and Measurement Committee, the Board's attorney suggested the following revised language: "Providers and assistants must explore all less restrictive alternatives that are reasonably appropriate under the circumstances prior to using physical restraint for a person at risk." Ms. Butler is requesting the Board consider approving the later. Forms contained within the regulations will provide a systematic way for teachers and administrators to document necessary restraints and seclusions within the school setting and for the director of pupil personnel services to prepare required state reports concerning these actions. Since these are regulations, and not policy, there is no formal Board action required; however, these regulations will come back to the Board on June 23, 2008 for a further discussion, specifically surrounding the language in Section II.

VII. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Textbook Adoptions for 2008-09

Accompanying the agenda was a summary list of those textbooks recommended for adoption for the 2008-09 school year. Also enclosed was a textbook recommendation form for each of the textbooks. Ms. Klebart provided the Board with a revised Textbook Adoption Form for the textbook *Chemistry: Principles and Reactions*; this revised form had a more current copyright date of 2008. Members of the Leadership, Accountability, and Measurement Committee reviewed the textbook recommendations at their June 3 meeting. The textbook recommendations were also reviewed and discussed by the department chairpersons at the Council for Curriculum Development and Implementation meeting on May 27. Ms. Klebart also provided an overview of the comprehensive process that was used for adoption of summer reading textbooks. The books were available for review by Board members in the library conference room at central office.

Moved by Ms. O'Donnell-Moss, seconded by Mr. Lukens, that the recommended textbooks, as presented, be adopted for use effective with the 2008-09 school year.

FAVOR: ALL

MOTION CARRIED: 7:0; including President Gary Brochu

Ms. Hartel commented that she loves every single textbook recommended for adoption for summer reading for the 2008-09 school year. In response to Ms. Hartel's question if the administration is prepared for parents coming back to the Board concerning the recommendations i.e. *The Kite Runner*, which Ms. Hartel deems totally appropriate, Ms. Klebart responded students and parents will be provided with the rationale for the

book's selection and its link to the course curriculum objectives, which will be an informative piece for parents whose first step will be to contact Principal George Synnott.

VIII. ADD ITEM TO THE AGENDA CONCERNING PERSONNEL

Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. Erickson, to add an agenda item regarding personnel in regards to staffing for the fall in particular the Math Instructional Support position.

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

A discussion took place regarding the hiring of an additional 0.6 FTE Math Instructional Support Teacher. Mr. Richards noted that at the time the Board approved the operating budget for the 2008-2009 school year, retirements savings were estimated at \$180,000. This amount has, in fact, exceeded the Resources and Capacity-building Committee's estimate, and at this point, is approximately \$240,000; therefore, the Committee is at a position to recommend that the administration move forward with the hiring of an additional 0.6 FTE Math Instructional Support Teacher as well as fulfilling the two athletic stipend positions.

Dr. Cicchetti indicated that while the original budget request was for a 1.0 FTE Math Instructional Support Teacher, the addition of a 0.6 FTE teacher would allow the District to provide full-time math instruction support at McGee and 0.8 FTE math instructional support at both Willard and Griswold. Hubbard School will continue to be supported by Kara Watson, District Math Coordinator for K-8, who spends approximately 0.4 FTE of her time providing math support.

Moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Mr. Lukens, to authorize the Superintendent to hire an additional Math Instructional Support Teacher at the 0.6 FTE level and the Assistant Men's Swim Coach and Assistant Cross Country Coach at Berlin High School.

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

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Recck, seconded by Mr. Lukens, to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Hartel, Secretary, Berlin Board of Education