

**BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**October 9, 2018**

**MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING**

Attendance:	Richard Aroian	Absent
	Julia Dennis	
	Jake Fisher	Absent
	Jaymee Miller	Absent
	Timothy Oakes	
	Adam Salina	
	Kari Sassu, Ph.D.	
	Tracy Sisti	
	Matthew Tencza	
	Student Representatives: Alexander Halkias	
	Jenna Smalley	Absent

Also in attendance: Superintendent of Schools Brian J. Benigni; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Erin McGurk; Director of Human Resources Denise Parsons; Principal of Berlin High School Eileen Eustis; and Assistant Principal of Berlin High School Barbara Ventura.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Tencza called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. in the Berlin High School Auditorium at 139 Patterson Way, Berlin, Connecticut. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**II. STUDENT PRESENTATION – BERLIN HIGH SCHOOL**

Interact Club Advisor Lisa Downey and Interact Club members Siobhan Dornfried, Matthew Lavoie, Onariya (Cherry) Manomaiphan, Gabriella Pattavina, and Camila (Cami) Villagran provided a presentation on the activities of the Interact Club as well as their experiences traveling to the World Affairs Seminar in Wisconsin and abroad. Interact is Rotary International’s service club for students at Berlin High. It was founded in 2012 and is sponsored through the New Britain-Berlin and Kensington-Berlin Rotary clubs. Interact allows members to expand their international understanding and goodwill beyond the borders of Berlin, CT. The Rotary Youth Exchange Program allows members to travel abroad and experience other cultures. Currently, Interact has a member studying in Finland for the 2018-2019 school year. Over the summer, Interact also sent a member to Italy for a short-term exchange. Members who cannot travel can host exchange students in their home. Recently, five Berlin families have generously hosted exchange students from Chile and Thailand. Members can also participate in the annual World Affairs Seminar in Wisconsin to develop leadership skills and network with students from around the globe on real-world issues. Eleven members have flown to the World Affairs Seminar at no cost and were hosted by Carrol University over the past four years.

**III. COMMITTEE REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE TO THE BOARD**

**A. Report of Student Representatives**

Mr. Halkias shared a statement from Hannah Smolitz, President of the Internship Program and reported next week is spirit week at Berlin High School, with the fall pep rally held at the end of the week and the homecoming game against RHAM; PSAT testing will occur tomorrow for all students except seniors who can attend the optional career workshop; and the all-night graduation committee has opened an apparel store for Berlin High School attire.

B. Correspondence to the Board

None.

**IV. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS**

Nothing to report.

**V. PERSONNEL**

Retirements

1. Berlin High School – Teacher of Science

Superintendent Benigni presented Mary Salerno’s letter of intent to retire as teacher of science at Berlin High School at the end of the 2018-2019 school year.

**Moved by Ms. Dennis, seconded by Dr. Sassu, to accept the retirement of Mary Salerno, teacher of science at Berlin High School, effective June 30, 2019. Also to thank her for the eighteen years of service she has provided to the youth of Berlin and to wish her good health and happiness in her retirement years.**

**FAVOR: ALL**

**MOTION CARRIED: 6:0; including President Tencza**

2. Catherine M. McGee School – Teacher of Health

Superintendent Benigni presented Jean Petroski’s letter of intent to retire as teacher of health at Catherine M. McGee School at the end of the 2018-2019 school year.

**Moved by Dr. Sassu, seconded by Ms. Dennis, to accept the retirement of Jean Petroski, teacher of health at Catherine M. McGee School, effective June 30, 2019. Also to thank her for the eighteen years of service she has provided to the youth of Berlin and to wish her good health and happiness in her retirement years.**

**FAVOR: ALL**

**MOTION CARRIED: 6:0; including President Tencza**

3. Emma Hart Willard School – Physical Therapist

Superintendent Benigni presented Sharon Anderson’s letter of intent to retire as physical therapist at Emma Hart Willard School at the end of the 2018-2019 school year.

**Moved by Mr. Oakes, seconded by Dr. Sassu, to accept the retirement of Sharon Anderson, physical therapist at Emma Hart Willard School, effective June 30, 2019.**

**Also to thank her for the thirty years of service she has provided to the youth of Berlin and to wish her good health and happiness in her retirement years.**

**FAVOR: ALL**  
**MOTION CARRIED: 6:0; including President Tencza**

**VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting of September 24, 2018
- B. Monthly Budget Report – Period ending September 30, 2018
- C. Overnight Field Trip Request – Catherine M. McGee School – Washington, DC – April 2-5, 2019

McGee School Principal Salvatore Urso requested permission for Grade 8 students to travel to Washington, DC, on April 2-5, 2019. This annual trip is designed for students to visit sites of historical, cultural, and civic importance in order to deepen their knowledge of those studied and researched in Grade 8 history.

**Moved by Ms. Dennis, seconded by Mr. Oakes, to approve the consent agenda as presented.**

**FAVOR: ALL**  
**MOTION CARRIED: 6:0; including President Tencza**

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Facilities Related Updates

Superintendent Benigni reported, other than an acknowledgment that Director of Business Operations Jeffrey Cugno's correspondence to the Chairman of the Public Building Commission Brian Pskowski was received, there has been no other response.

- B. Official 2018-2019 District Enrollment Report

Superintendent Benigni highlighted the district enrollment as of October 1, 2018, which was included in the Board's packet of material. School districts are required each year to report their October 1 enrollment figures to the Connecticut State Department of Education. Superintendent Benigni reported enrollment as of October 1, 2018 is 2,787 students, an increase of six students from last year and, included in the enrollment, as of October 1, 2018, are students in the Open Choice Program. Superintendent Benigni noted enrollment at the elementary schools remains consistently favorable. In response to Ms. Dennis's request, Superintendent Benigni will provide Board members with a list of course offerings and the number of students enrolled in each course at the high school.

C. Approval of District Continuous Improvement Plan 2018-2019

A draft of the District Continuous Improvement Plan 2018-2019 was presented to the Board at the September 24 Board meeting. Action is needed for approval of the plan, a copy of which was provided to Board members.

**Moved by Ms. Dennis, seconded by Dr. Sassu, to approve the District Continuous Improvement Plan 2018-2019 as presented.**

**FAVOR: ALL**

**MOTION CARRIED: 6:0; including President Tencza**

D. Discussion – Completion of Berlin High School Renovation Project

Mr. Tencza indicated the Board continues to have discussions concerning the status of the high school and continues to hear there remain outstanding issues with the condition of the roof, the wrapping of the duct work and a potential mold issue at the top of the list. Mr. Tencza has also heard there are some plumbing joints, leaking in the ceiling. Although a letter was sent to the Public Building Commission (PBC), there has been no response. Mr. Tencza reported it is his understanding that the PBC requested a report from Consulting Engineering Services concerning the duct work; however, the Board has not seen the report. The Board discussed hiring a third party to determine if the duct work was installed properly. Superintendent Benigni noted that if the duct work, outside the building, is acceptable, based on the plans and specifications the Board signed off on, then the liability rests with the Board of Education. The Board will await the response from the PBC to Mr. Cugno's correspondence as well as receipt of the report prepared by Consulting Engineering Services before moving forward with a third party review.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Prior to adjournment, Mr. Tencza noted the invitation to meet with the team from New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) on Sunday, October 18, 2018, and indicated it is important that the Board be present.

**At 7:56 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Salina, seconded by Dr. Sassu, to adjourn.**

**FAVOR: ALL**

**MOTION CARRIED: 6:0; including President Tencza**

Respectfully submitted,

Kari Sassu, Ph.D., Secretary, Berlin Board of Education