

BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION

August 13, 2018

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

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

Also in attendance: Superintendent of Schools Brian J. Benigni; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Erin McGurk; Director of Pupil Personnel Services Linda Holian; Director of Business Operations Jeffrey Cugno; and Director of Human Resources Denise Parsons.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Tencza called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. in the Board of Education (“the Board”) meeting room at 238 Kensington Road, Berlin, CT. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II. SPECIAL PRESENTATION – DAVID B. ERWIN

The Board of Education presented David B. Erwin with a gift in recognition of his service, not only in Berlin, but the State of Connecticut.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE TO THE BOARD

Superintendent Benigni shared a thank you note received from Arkadiusz Iciak, and Mr. Tencza shared a thank you note received from Sally Grady.

Ms. Dennis reported on her attendance at the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) Summer Leadership Conference.

IV. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Nothing to report.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes
 - 1. Special Meeting of June 18, 2018
 - 2. Special Meeting of July 25, 2018

- B. Payment of Bills
 - 1. Period ending June 30, 2018
 - 2. Period ending July 31, 2018

C. Transfers

Director of Business Operations Jeffrey Cugno provided a listing of transfers that represent year-end adjustments to accounts.

D. Overnight Field Trip Request – BHS – Project Oceanology, Groton & E. Hampton, CT, Sept. 20-21, 2018

Berlin High School Principal Eileen Eustis requested permission for AP-UConn Biology students to travel to Project Oceanology in Groton, CT and Salmon River State Park in East Hampton, CT, on September 20-21, 2018, to investigate the biotic and abiotic aspects of fresh water and marine ecosystems, along with the evolution and adaptation of terrestrial plants. The trip will provide hands-on science in these areas. Students will also observe animal behavior using organisms collected.

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

FAVOR: ALL

MOTION CARRIED: 5:0; including President Tencza

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Superintendent's Report: District's Readiness for the Opening of School

Superintendent Benigni reported the school buildings are in good shape for the opening of school. There remains a vacancy for a Special Education position, and central office is fully staffed to start the school year. The Convocation will be held on August 27, 2018; teachers will participate in professional development on August 28, 2018; and the opening day of school is August 29, 2018. Superintendent Benigni reported administrators will participate in a joint retreat with Avon, Plainville and Vernon at the Connecticut Center for School Change, facilitated by Richard Lemons and Robert Villanova, on August 16 and 17, 2018. The district will hold its own new teacher retreat on August 22 – 23, 2018, and Superintendent Benigni will provide Board members with that agenda.

B. Facilities Related Updates

Director of Business Operations Jeffrey Cugno reported he had a cordial and informative meeting with Doug Solek and the Chairman of the Public Building Commission concerning the high school, and he will receive more information regarding repairs and closeouts moving forward. Mr. Cugno noted the amount of work being done by the Town and its facility staff, to get the schools ready for opening day, is tremendous. In terms of projects that are occurring over the summer, Mr. Cugno reported a new rug is being installed in the McGee auditorium; a new divider wall is being built on the third floor in the high school; the Willard library is being remodeled; and construction started for the school security vestibule at Willard School.

C. Staffing Update

Superintendent Benigni reported seventeen new certified staff have been hired, and there remains a vacancy for a Special Education position.

D. Final Financial Report – 2017-2018 Fiscal Year

Director of Business Operations Jeffrey Cugno provided a final report on the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Mr. Cugno reported the 2017-2018 fiscal year ended with a positive balance of \$443,590.71. Board members were provided with the report for fiscal year 2017-2018. Mr. Tencza reported in December, the Town Council directed a \$400,000 reduction to the 2017-2018 Board of Education budget. The Board held a discussion about the possibility of having \$43,590.71 put into the one percent account to be used for school safety initiatives.

E. Motion to Return Balance of 2017-2018 Fiscal Year to the Town's General Fund

Director of Business Operations Jeffrey Cugno indicated that the unaudited balance of the 2017-2018 fiscal year is \$443,590.71.

Moved by Ms. Dennis, seconded by Mr. Aroian, that the unaudited balance of the 2017-2018 fiscal year Board of Education budget, in the amount of \$400,000.00 be returned to the Town of Berlin General Fund and that the \$43,590.71 be requested to be put into the one percent account for school safety initiatives.

**FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 5:0; including President Tencza**

F. Monthly Budget Report

Director of Business Operations Jeffrey Cugno reported the district is one month into the 2018-2019 budget, and central office is working very efficiently to make sure line items and subparts of the budget are monitored and on track as the budget was adopted.

In response to Mr. Aroian's question concerning the status of the strategic planning study of the elementary schools, Superintendent Benigni reported he is tentatively looking to have a forum on August 27, 2018 to discuss the report. Superintendent Benigni anticipates having a rough draft by the end of the week to share with Board members. Mr. Tencza's goal is to have a special Board meeting on August 27, 2018 with the only item on the agenda a presentation from Drummy Rosane Anderson, Inc. The Board will invite the Town Council and Board of Finance. The Board will also invite the public to hear their presentation to the Board.

G. ED-099 – Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs – Change of Authorized Signers

Action is needed to designate Jeffrey Cugno as an authorized signer of the ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs claims for reimbursement in the absence or incapacity of the Superintendent of Schools.

Moved by Mr. Aroian, seconded by Ms. Sisti, that Jeffrey Cugno, Director of Business Operations, be designated as an authorized signer of the ED099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs claims for reimbursement in the absence or incapacity of the Superintendent of Schools.

FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 5:0; including President Tencza

H. Discuss Berlin Bravos

The Board discussed parameters for the Berlin Bravos that sets students apart from the normal expectations and the format for recognizing students. Superintendent Benigni and Assistant Superintendent McGurk will speak with the administrators and collaborate to put together the parameters for Berlin Bravos and student presentations.

I. Contract Ratification – Paraprofessionals

At 7:24 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Sisti, seconded by Mr. Aroian, to enter into Executive Session for a discussion related to collective bargaining and to invite Superintendent Benigni and Director of Human Resources Denise Parsons.

FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 5:0; including President Tencza

In attendance for Executive Session were Board members Aroian, Dennis, Fisher, Sisti and Tencza. In addition, Superintendent Benigni and Ms. Parsons were present.

At 8:03 p.m., the Board returned to Open Session.

Negotiations with Local 1303-276 of Council 4, AFSCME, AFL-CIO (paraprofessionals), were recently completed and a tentative agreement was reached. It is recommended that the Board approve the tentative agreement.

Moved by Ms. Dennis, seconded by Mr. Fisher, to approve the tentative agreement reached between the Berlin Board of Education and Local 1303-276 of Council 4, AFSCME, AFL-CIO (paraprofessionals).

FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 5:0; including President Tencza

J. Superintendent's Evaluation and Contract

In attendance for Executive Session were Board members Aroian, Dennis, Fisher, Sisti and Tencza. In addition, Mr. Benigni was present.

Moved by Ms. Dennis, seconded by Mr. Fisher, to authorize the President of the Board to execute the Superintendent's contract with revisions.

FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 5:0; including President Tencza

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:05 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Dennis, seconded by Mr. Fisher, to adjourn.

FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 5:0; including President Tencza

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Tencza, President, Berlin Board of Education