

BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION

September 24, 2018

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

Attendance: Richard Aroian
Julia Dennis
Jake Fisher
Jaymee Miller
Timothy Oakes
Adam Salina Arrived at 7:06 p.m.
Kari Sassu, Ph.D.
Tracy Sisti
Matthew Tencza Absent
Student Representatives: Alexander Halkias
Jenna Smalley

Also in attendance: Superintendent of Schools Brian J. Benigni; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Erin McGurk; Director of Human Resources Denise Parsons; Director of Pupil Personnel Services Linda Holian; Supervisor of Special Education – Elementary Michelle Zeuschner; Supervisor of Special Education – Secondary Cindy Martin; Director of Business Operations Jeffrey Cugno; Principal of Berlin High School Eileen Eustis; Principal of McGee Middle School Salvatore Urso; and Assistant Principals of McGee Middle School Heather Gish and Tim Chiaverini.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Sassu called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the McGee School Auditorium at 899 Norton Road, Berlin, Connecticut. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Dr. Sassu indicated the District Continuous Improvement Plan 2018-2019 is being added to the agenda and will appear as Item E under New Business.

II. STUDENT PRESENTATION – CATHERINE M. MCGEE SCHOOL

Teacher Kevin Cormack and the McGee Morning News Crew spoke about the McGee Morning News, a daily, live, multimedia presentation of the school's daily housekeeping and sports announcements. Students spoke about the roles that they perform to make the daily news happen and how each role fits into the overall production. Students also spoke about how the McGee Morning News fits within the Habits of Mind and how being a part of the McGee Morning News has affected them individually in the areas of self-confidence, self-advocacy and assertiveness. Mr. Cormack also addressed the technology used daily and how students interact with the technology. Student presenters were Andrew Black, Justin Charron, Kevin Corteville, McKenna Dalek, Paris Lange, and Gregory Swan.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE TO THE BOARD

A. Report of Student Representatives

Miss Smalley reported Upbeat and the Interact Club volunteered at the Berlin Fair; local author Mary-Ann Tirone Smith visited the high school today; and on Friday, September 21, 2018, the choruses combined to perform via live stream for United Nations Peace Day.

Mr. Halkias reported an increased number of college admissions representatives have been visiting the high school; the Berlin High School band and chorus will perform at the Hartford Wolf Pack game on Friday, October 5, 2018; and alumni from the Class of 1968 will tour the high school for their 50th class reunion.

B. Committee Report – Student Achievement Committee

Dr. Sassu reported the Student Achievement Committee met prior to tonight’s meeting, and there will be a report later in the agenda concerning the district continuance improvement plan for 2018-2019.

C. Correspondence to the Board

None.

IV. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Nothing to report.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes – Special Meeting of September 12, 2018

B. Overnight Field Trip Request – Berlin High School – Orlando, FL – April 4-10, 2019

Berlin High School Principal Eileen Eustis requested permission for approximately 20 student athletes in the softball program to travel to Orlando, FL, on April 4-10, 2019, to attend Spring Training at the Disney Wide World of Sports complex. This trip provides a unique opportunity for the athletes to compete against athletes from both around the country and internationally at an incredibly safe and secure site that caters to the needs of the various athletes.

C. Request for Leave of Absence – Hubbard School – Special Education Teacher

Michele Prior, teacher of Special Education at Richard D. Hubbard School, requested an unpaid leave of absence, for childrearing purposes, to begin immediately following her maternity leave and continue through the end of the 2018-2019 school year.

D. Monthly Budget Report – Period ending August 31, 2018

At the September 12 Board of Education meeting, a question was raised regarding tuition expenditures, and it was noted that the line item would be reviewed and approval of the budget report for August 2018 would take place at this meeting. Director of Business Operations Jeffrey Cugno reviewed the line item and prepared a revised report for approval, a copy which was provided to Board members.

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

FAVOR: ALL
MOTION CARRIED: 8:0; including Dr. Sassu

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Summer Program Update

Director of Pupil Personnel Services Linda Holian and Supervisors of Special Education Michelle Zeuschner and Cynthia Martin reported on the Extended School Year (ESY) program offered to students qualifying for these services. A handout was provided to Board members. Included in their report was the expanded criteria that must be considered when determining a child's eligibility for the ESY program; recommending extended school year on an IEP; Berlin public school ESY programs; services students may receive during ESY; number of students recommended and number of students who attended ESY; the staff that worked ESY; and the overall purpose of ESY. Ms. Holian reported one hundred twenty-five (125) students were recommended to attend summer school, and a total of one-hundred twelve (112) students actually attended. There were eleven (11) teachers; thirty-two (32) paraprofessionals; one (1) occupational therapist; one (1) physical therapist; three (3) speech and language pathologists; one (1) reading teacher; one (1) school psychologist; one (1) movement teacher was provided for all PreK – 5 students; two (2) nurses; one (1) board certified behavior analyst (BCBA); and two (2) registered behavior technicians (RBT).

B. NEASC Update

Berlin High School Principal Eileen Eustis, along with members of the Berlin High School Steering Committee Patricia Pires and Laura Pieciewicz, provided Board members with an update on the upcoming New England Association of School and Colleges (NEASC) visit, which is scheduled for Sunday, October 28, 2018 through Wednesday, October 31, 2018. Included in their presentation was an explanation of the primary goal of NEASC; why the accreditation process is important; the seven standards: (1) core values, beliefs, and learning expectations, (2) curriculum, (3) instruction, (4) assessment of and for student learning, (5) school culture and leadership, (6) school resources for learning and (7) community resources for learning; the self-study committees; the self-study process; the accreditation visit schedule; and the celebrations. A copy of the self-study report was provided to Board members.

C. Permanent Single Agreement (ED-099) to Participate in the Child Nutrition Programs

Superintendent Benigni indicated that under advisement of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has revised the Permanent Single Agreement (ED-099) to participate in the Child Nutrition Programs. The new agreement is more robust in its language to outline the responsibilities of both the CSDE and the school food authority as they pertain to each USDA Child Nutrition Program currently available. Action is necessary to execute this new agreement and designate the authorized signers for claims.

Moved by Mr. Aroian, seconded by Mr. Oakes, that the Berlin Board of Education enter into a permanent single agreement (ED-099) with the Connecticut State Department of Education to participate in the Child Nutrition Programs and designate Brian J. Benigni, Superintendent of Schools, as the authorized person to

sign claims for reimbursement and designate Jeffrey P. Cugno as the authorized person to sign claims for reimbursement in the absence or incapacity of the Superintendent of Schools.

FAVOR: ALL

MOTION CARRIED: 8:0; including Dr. Sassu

D. Facilities Related Updates

Director of Business Operations Jeffrey Cugno reported this date he sent a letter to Brian Pskowski, Chairman of the Public Building Commission requesting the Commission address the following at their next meeting: the current condition of the roof, air conditioning system and the piping and duct work system that has been installed on the exterior of the building at Berlin High School; punch list items to be completed by the construction manager/contractors before the Public Building Commission will close out the project; a copy of the latest project budget summary reported to the Public Building Commission; and if there is a projected schedule for closeout and audit of the project.

Mr. Cugno requested Board members take note of the new carpet in the McGee auditorium.

E. District Continuous Improvement Plan 2018-2019

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Erin McGurk presented the draft District Continuous Improvement Plan 2018-2019 to the Board, a copy which was provided to Board members. Ms. McGurk provided an overview of the district goals/areas of focus and the four categories of the plan: learning environments, learning partnerships, leveraging digital and pedagogical practices, including the action/strategies, timeline, person(s) responsible and result indicators.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:42 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Dennis, seconded by Ms. Miller, to adjourn.

FAVOR: ALL

MOTION CARRIED: 8:0; including Dr. Sassu

Respectfully submitted,

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