

**SPECIAL MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**FRIDAY
March 26, 2020**

A Special Meeting of the East Hartford Board of Education was held on Friday, March 26, 2020, via Google Hangouts.

The meeting was called to order at 12:06 PM by Chairman Bryan R. Hall.

PRESENT Chairman Bryan R. Hall, Secretary Tyron Harris, Harry Amadasun, Jr., Vanessa Jenkins, Marilyn Pet, Dorese Roberts, Tom Rup, Valerie Scheer, and Stephanie Watkins

ABSENT None

ALSO PRESENT Nathan Quesnel, Superintendent of Schools
Anne Marie Mancini, Deputy Superintendent of Secondary Curriculum
Elsie Torres, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Curriculum
Chris Wethje, Director of Human Resources
Paul Mainuli, Director of Business Services
Dr. Sharon Bremner, Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Roberta J. Pratt, Chief Information Officer of Information Technology
Ben Whittaker, Director of Facilities

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA – None

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION - None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Superintendent's Update

Nathan Quesnel

-Updates from the District

Superintendent Quesnel reviewed the work of the District since closure of the schools on March 13, 2020. On March 16, 2020 the District began building supplemental learning plans to be distributed to elementary students at meal sites and emailing to Middle and High school students. The week of March 16, 2020 also included work on the development of Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) with the unions in the District to keep all hourly employees paid annualized. The Administration buildings and schools were closed at the days end on March 17, 2020. Employees began working from home. East Hartford Public Schools moved quickly to get students and employees home to promote social distancing. This quick action protected our students, our community and our workforce.

On March 23, 2020 our teachers returned to work virtually. Training in technology and various devices was available to teachers and also how to engage students in this new phase of learning.

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Two weeks of curriculum has been written and will be delivered online. We have built a platform to which we can sync communication between our families and our staff. A master plan was developed with our Principals. It is a communication document with what is being sent home to families which is led by Dr. Veronica Marion and what is being sent to staff by Dr. Sarah Brzozowy. The Superintendent oversees the Communication Team. The next communication to families will be information on how to prepare for the Distance Learning Plan (DLP). It will be sent on March 27, 2020. The District has communicated through email, School Messenger, YouTube, various social media, and Twitter page. We look forward to beginning our learning with our students on Monday, March 30, 2020.

Anne Marie Mancini, Deputy Superintendent – Distance Learning Plan (DLP)

Ms. Mancini reviewed all of the Distance Learning Plan resources available online so that our students and families have access to all of the information. The various sections include Student Resources, with tabs for Pre-K through Grade 5, grades 6th through 8th and grades 9 through 12. These sections include the weekly content students will be working on. Content will be uploaded on a weekly basis for the first two weeks and will take students through April 9, 2020. The students will begin with a review of content from when they were in school prior to beginning new content.

Dr. Sharon Bremner, Director of Pupil Personnel mentioned that Districts at this time are not being required to fulfill the full IEP. The District's obligation is for students to have access to the extent possible to learn and to keep current with what is being presented to our general education students. The Special Education team together with the Related Services team are working very diligently to compile resources for the website for families and students to access. Resource teachers will be working very collaboratively with the Related Service staff and the general ed teachers to make accommodations and modifications as needed.

The Family Resources section includes a Communication tab where the communications sent to families in both English and Spanish can be found and another section for Community Resources. The Staff Resources section includes training and professional development resources for our teachers which they participated in this week and will be on-going. Mr. Christopher Wethje, Director, Human Resources offered workshops this week for employees and over 150 employees participated during one of the sessions. Training will be on-going to make sure our teachers needs are being met.

Elsie Torres, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Curriculum -State Testing

On March 20, 2020, the CT State Department of Education (CSDE) announced it had received approval from the United States Department of Education (USDE) allowing students to bypass standardized testing requirements for the school year due to COVID19. The testing waiver includes no summative testing (Smarter, NGSS, CT SAT, CTAA and CTAS). In addition, there will be no Next Generation Accountability for the 2019-20 school year.

Anne Marie Mancini, Deputy Superintendent – SAT

The SAT falls under the umbrella of the State waiver received from the US Department of Education (USDE). Since many students in Grade 11 use the Connecticut SAT School Day for college acceptance/placement, the CSDE will work closely with the College Board to determine

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how best to afford all students the opportunity to take an SAT assessment free either this spring or in the summer.

Anne Marie Mancini, Deputy Superintendent – AP/IB Update

AP students will have an opportunity to take AP tests. The College Board will send an AP test on the content they learned to students at home to be taken on the computer. The test will take approximately 45 minutes. Students who are taking AP art will have the opportunity to upload their work. College Board is offering AP students free online review videos taught by AP teachers across the US.

IB has canceled their IB exams. The only exception to this is that students have to take the language portion of the exam. Students will do the oral language exam from home with the assistance of their teachers. The District is currently working with Information Technology on the logistics and will keep students and teachers informed. The students will still qualify for the IB diploma and the teachers will work with Principal Simoneau on this.

Paul Mainuli, Director of Finance - Fiscal Update

The Finance Department is working a year-end financial report to help project for June 30, 2020. There is \$1.3 million in Woodland revenues to be billed through March 12, 2020. There will be a loss of \$2.8 million for the remaining 3.5 months if schools were to remain closed through the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Mainuli also noted that DATTCO was paid in advance the full year. The Finance Department is reviewing Access and Kelley services contracts in addition to purchase orders that will not be used if we were to remain closed through the end of the fiscal year which will help mitigate the loss of Woodland revenues.

Paul Mainuli, Director of Finance - Meals Update

The District has been working with Sodexo to provide the Free Meal Program, breakfast and lunch from 11:00 to noon each day across 10 locations. In the first seven days of operation, the District distributed 12K meals. The main concern for the District at this time is to be able to maintain staffing given the social distancing requirements and anxiety for those preparing and distributing meals. The health and safety of our employees, volunteers and families is important as is the cost of maintaining the 10 locations with full staffing. The District received a significant donation from Fresh Points this week of fruits and vegetables delivered to Sodexo which will be shared with families at all of the meal sites. In response to inquiries from individuals or organizations wanting to donate, we are also coordinating with our local foodbank as they are able to deliver to residents.

Nathan Quesnel, Superintendent - COVID19 Learn from Home Task Force

The Dalio Foundation and the Partnership for Connecticut has made an approximate \$20 million investment to the State to deliver sixty thousand laptop devices across the Alliance District High Schools for which East Hartford is a part of. Superintendent Quesnel is co-chairing the Task Force along with the Superintendent Freeman of Guilford Public Schools. In addition, Indra and Raj Nooyi who have made a significant donation to Scholastic to provide prekindergarten to 8th grade students 3-4 books for learning from home. Details of the distribution are still being worked out.

Nathan Quesnel, Superintendent - April 6th Board of Education Meeting

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The April 6, 2020 7:00 pm Regular meeting of the Board of Education will be canceled. A Special Board of Education meeting will be scheduled for 6:00 pm. The meeting will be held in an online platform, details to be included on the agenda which will be posted next week.

Bryan Hall, Chairman – Appreciation

Mr. Hall shared his appreciation to his fellow Board members and to the East Hartford Public School District staff for their diligent work on behalf of the East Hartford Public School community.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS - None

Board Member Representative Reports - None

Public Participation – None

Adjournment

MOTION By Dorese Roberts
Seconded by Valerie Jenkins
To adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board (1:14 PM)
Motion unanimously carried.

Approved By Board of Education

Recorded by: Cynthia Hadden