

**REGULAR MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**MONDAY,
MARCH 17, 2014**

A Regular Meeting of the East Hartford Board of Education was held on Monday, March 17, 2014, at the Connecticut IB Academy, 857 Forbes Street, East Hartford, CT. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Chairman Jeffrey Currey.

PRESENT Chairman Jeffrey Currey, Secretary Bryan Hall, Tyron Harris, Tom Rup, Marilyn Pet, Dorese Roberts, Valerie Scheer, Stephanie Watkins

ABSENT Christopher Gentile
Brian Calero – Student Representative
Debbie Kaprove, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Curriculum

ALSO PRESENT Nathan Quesnel, Superintendent of Schools
Anne Marie Mancini, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Curriculum
Dr. Sharon Bremner, Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Al Costa, Director of Facilities
Christopher Wethje, Director of Human Resources
Paul Mainuli, Director of Finance
Alyssa Crooks, Student Representative

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA - None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION By Bryan Hall
Seconded by Tyron Harris
To approve the following Minutes:
Regular Meeting of March 4, 2014, as amended
Page 6: insert sentence under second motion: **Performance Bond was removed on advice of Counsel.**
Motion unanimously carried.

MOTION By Tyron Harris
Seconded by Stephanie Watkins
To approve the following Minutes:
Special Meeting of March 11, 2014
Motion unanimously carried.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD - None

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

Alyssa Crooks, Student Representative

- 3/19 – CAPT Science Exam for sophomores
- “Seussical” musical production – 3/19 9:30 AM at EHHS; 3/20 and 3/21 7:00 PM
- 3/24-3/28 - Smarter Balance Testing for Juniors; Freshmen, Sophomores and Seniors with no AP classes come in at 10:30 AM

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- 3/26 – Welcome Wednesday – parents, guardians and families are invited to come to the school from 8:00 AM – 1:30 PM to gather information for accessing the school’s resources;
- 3/26 – Winter Sports Night – 6:00 PM in auditorium and cafeteria;
- 4/1-4/4 – Junior prom tickets on sale - all accountabilities must be paid off first;
- 4/4 – Neon Lights Dance – tickets on sale now.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Superintendent Quesnel thanked Chairman Currey and the Board for Board Appreciation Day and wished everyone a Happy St. Patrick’s Day;

Superintendent Quesnel recognized the family of late Board member, Marcus Oladell, IV. A citation that was to be presented to Marcus for his eight years on the board was presented to his family. Many Board members spoke regarding their appreciation of Marcus while serving on the Board of Education. Former Board member and present Town Council member Anita Morrison related her time with Marcus while serving on the Board. Former Board member and present Town Council member Ram Aberasturia noted the Town Council and Board raised dollars last year and will continue to raise dollars this year and in the future in memory of Marcus Oladell, IV. Esther Clark, Town Council member, commented that Marcus Oladell, IV was an outstanding gentleman and will be remembered for his contributions to the students of East Hartford. Many bus drivers who worked with Marcus spoke of their favorable experiences in knowing Marcus Oladell, IV.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Board of Education Appreciation

Chairman Currey: Thank you to staff and students for putting on a wonderful dinner and exhibiting their musical talents as well. Our students showed their appreciation to the Board and we thank you for that. Also, thank you to the administration for showing their appreciation to the Board of Education.

Human Resources/No Action Required

Chairman’s Report – Jeffrey Currey

- Town Council approved a budget of \$87.2 million, representing a 0% increase – a gap of \$5 million. We are identifying where we can make cuts;
- Magnet School tuitions: testified with Superintendent Quesnel, Mayor Leclerc and our delegates at the Legislative Office Building re: a plan that will amount to \$1.2 million in savings to our district; and cost the state \$2.9 million.
- Project Graduation – we are not doing fundraising but are presenting “Around the Piano” with Orice Jenkins, Saturday, May 17 – 7:00 PM, EHHS Auditorium. Mr. Jenkins is a 2012 graduate of EHHS. As a former participant in Project Graduation, he is honored to perform at this event. Tickets range from \$25 VIP; General Admission \$15 and Students \$10. Send check or money order to EHHS Project Graduation, 869 Forbes St., East Hartford, CT 06118;

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- Congratulations to the EHHS cheerleading squad who won the Northern division of Central CT Conference;
- Re: uniforms – we have a new shirt color – blue, with the EH logo. You can continue to use your current uniform colors as well;
- A parent leadership forum will be held in May. Board member Scheer, myself and the Superintendent will be presenting at this year’s forum. Please contact principals for agenda items;
- Board members – please check your calendars – many things and important dates are coming up;
- Happy belated birthday to D.Fitz who has been our dedicated clerk for over 50 years!
- Thank you to Superintendent Quesnel for his kind words to students, staff and Board members;
- Thank you to Michelle Vigue, Ms. Gay and Mr. Diaz for the excellent dinner and show held in honor of BoE appreciation night. Thank you also to the staff and students for their kind words and gifts. Thank you to the administration for their work so that we’re able to do our job effectively. Thank you to my fellow Board members for their time and work.

Superintendent’s Report – Nathan Quesnel

Educational Programs: Teaching and Learning:

Expect Student Achievement: Assistant Superintendent Mancini will be presenting the rollout of the SBAC Field Test this evening. I continue to be very proud of the work I see going on in the classrooms in the schools during my visits. I visited Norris elementary school last week and was impressed to see the focus being placed on the CK-3LI programs as well as the training that was being delivered to teachers. I also was at Norris this week and continue to be impressed with the teachers working so hard with students. We continue to make progress and work through challenges – we have staff who are willing to rise to the challenge.

Expect Student Achievement: Commissioner’s Network Meeting(s): Commissioner’s Network:

Our Turnaround Committee has been renamed: **Planting Seeds for Achievement (PSA)**. We continue to work together and make progress to develop the plan for O’Brien School. Presently, some of the ideas include the expansion of the STEM model, the addition of key support staff, and a focus on professional job embedded trainings for teachers. Our target date to release a draft of the plan in the first week of April – the concept here is that this will allow all teachers to review the plan and provide the PSA committee input and suggestions. I continue to be hopeful that this process will continue to be a successful process.

Community Relations:

- **Community Communication:** EHPS launched our new website at www.easthartford.org. It has been updated to include new graphics, documents and a wealth of information regarding the great work going on in the district. In addition, we ask our parents to sign up for eNotify which allows parents to receive important communications (alerts, newsletters) from the school both via email and text messaging. Also, EHPS is communicating on Twitter @EastHartfordPS. Please sign up as a follower

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and catch some of the great things going on in our schools. Thank you to Cheryl Looke and Paul Mainuli. On April 7, we will be doing a presentation on our Web Site on Twitter @EastHartfordPS and also on eNotify, email or text.

Business Matters:

Align System and Operational Efforts: Budget Process: We received our budget from the Town Council of \$87.2 million which represents a 0% increase. We will be presenting to you a plan that will take the district from a needed \$93.1 (BoE Proposal + Mayor's recommendation for Health Benefits) to the current funding level (\$4.9 million). As you know, this will be a very difficult process for you as we eliminate programming or staff that we have built and valued over the years. We hope to have a list of potential pathways and a superintendent's recommendation over the next few weeks with a final budget adoption for early April.

Align System and Operational Efforts:

Magnet School Tuitions: Today we had an opportunity to testify to the Education Committee at the Legislative Office Building regarding our continued concern regarding the cost of magnet school tuitions. A huge thanks to our delegates for their effort to push our concern forward. We presented a solution to the committee that is both financially doable on the state level but also provides significant relief of almost \$1.2 million to the district.

Good News Report:

Safe Driving Video: We won the competition – the student group from East Hartford High School has been selected to be honored for its entry in this year's Department of Motor Vehicles-Travelers Teen Safe Driving Video Contest. This team's video will be honored at the contest awards gala hosted by Travelers on April 7 in Windsor. As you know, this year's contest received 137 entries from 46 different schools—we are very proud of our students' efforts.

Next Steps:

- SBAC Testing March 18-June 6;
- Budget Adoption Early April;
- IB Certification Visit – O'Connell School Date TBA (this Spring)

Family Resource Center Report

Mary Beth Kuzoian, Program Supervisor

Ms. Kuzoian gave a PowerPoint presentation on our three Family Resource Centers (FRC's) located at Mayberry, Silver Lane and Hockanum schools. She noted the programs are totally funded by the State Department of Education.

FRC's were established in 1988 as part of a national movement to promote the importance of early childhood and its link to school achievement. Ms. Kuzoian oversees all three FRC's. FRC's embrace the core beliefs of EHPS as well as the Mission Statement; i.e., to deliver a high quality learning experience for every child, every day.

Each FRC receives approximately \$104,500 in grant funds requiring that the following seven components be met: (1) school age child care; (2) families in training; (home visits are provided) (3) early care and education; (playgroups are offered four times weekly) (4) positive youth

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development;(collaboration with Crossroads Programs; also staff members teach after school activities) (5) support/training for family daycare providers; (certified parent educators visit East Hartford home daycare providers to provide a story, craft and development screenings to all children enrolled in the program) (6) adult education/family literacy (parenting workshops offered monthly – focus is to provide parents with information and guidance); (7) resource and referral (FRC's have wide variety of toys, games, parent resources that can be borrowed for one to two weeks). We believe healthy development and good education begins at birth. We strive to provide support and positive programming to support parents in their roles as their child's first and most important teachers. Stimulating experiences in the first three years of a child's life are key to future success in school and in life. Results Matter.

SBAC Assessments

Assistant Superintendent Anne Marie Mancini

Ms. Mancini thanked the Board for all they do on Board Appreciation Night. She gave a PowerPoint overview describing the SBAC Assessments that all students in Grades 3-8 and Grade 11 will be taking.

This is a very complex challenge. Our goal is to develop a general understanding of the SBAC. We are part of a national consortium of 26 states, representing 39% of K-12 students. Our teachers will be given professional development at the district and state level. New assessment systems (STAR) will feature computer-adaptive technology and is aligned to Common Core State Standards.

Field testing will be done on line by students, hopefully March 25-June 6, 2014. A live test will take place in 2015. Students will be tested on Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening and Research/Inquiry. Teachers and schools have information and tools they need to improve instruction upon teaching and learning. All students should leave high school ready for college or career ready.

Update on EHMS Window Wall Renovation

Al Costa, Director of Facilities

Mr. Costa noted the project design is 80% complete. Many challenges took place during this renovation. The remaining tasks and schedule are being addressed. At this juncture we plan to continue to finish plans and specifications so that the state can review and approve construction plans. Once approval is obtained we will place the project out to bid to obtain actual bid costs with a plan to begin construction summer of 2015 or possibly sooner, if the strategic plans we are considering are viable.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

Retirements and Resignations

MOTION By Bryan Hall
Seconded by Tyron Harris
To approve(1) One **Retirement:**
1. Emil S. Kopcha, Principal, effective 6/30/14
and
To approve (3) Three **Resignations:**
1. John C. Hinton, Behavior Manager, effective 3/4/14
2. Galilee D. Simmons, Tutor, effective 3/18/14
3. Jamia L. Hackel, Teacher, effective 3/14/14
Motion unanimously carried.

Referral to Curriculum Subcommittee – Math Textbooks

MOTION By Dorese Roberts
Seconded by Tyron Harris
To **refer** to Curriculum Committee a request for the adoption of a new Elementary Math textbook.
Motion unanimously carried.

Board Member Representative Reports

Dorese Roberts – (1) Attended Willowbrook Policy Committee; (2) Silva’s Daycare training program for parents will take place March 26th, 5:30-8:00 PM A free dinner and daycare will be provided; (3) April 8 & 9, at Waters Edge in Westbrook, CT – New England Head Start Conference will be held.

Marilyn Pet – Attended a Sodexo sponsored contest for students.

Valerie Scheer – attended Pitkin School – first graders will have the opportunity to attend baseball at the RockCats.

Questions and Concerns by Board Members

Bryan Hall – requested a breakdown of what kids are going out of district.

Chairman Currey thanked Bryan Hall and Marilyn Pet for providing testimony at the public hearing.

Topics for Future Agendas

MOTION By Dorese Roberts
Seconded by Valerie Scheer
To adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board (9:20 PM)
Motion unanimously carried.