

**SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**WEDNESDAY,
APRIL 23, 2014**

A Special Meeting of the East Hartford Board of Education was held on Wednesday, April 23, 2014 at the Board of Education Administrative Offices, 1110 Main Street East Hartford, CT. The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM by Chairman Jeffrey Currey.

PRESENT Chairman Jeffrey Currey, Tyron Harris, Tom Rup, Dorese Roberts (left at 7:50 PM), Valerie Scheer and Stephanie Watkins

ABSENT Secretary Bryan Hall, Christopher Gentile, Marilyn Pet

ALSO PRESENT Nathan Quesnel, Superintendent of Schools
Debbie Kaprove, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Curriculum
Christopher Wethje, Director of Human Resources
Dr. Lesley Morgan-Thompson, Principal O'Brien School
O'Brien Parents and Teachers

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None

To Approve the Commissioners Network Turnaround Plan Application

Superintendent Quesnel thanked Dr. Lesley Morgan-Thompson, Principal, O'Brien School and the teachers from O'Brien School for their participation. He stated he is really proud of them. He also thanked the Board of Education for their participation as well as the bargaining units.

Superintendent Quesnel noted our participation brings \$1.35 million in resources to the school as well as an additional \$536,500 in bond money for low performing schools. The District will cover the cost of all benefits for all persons.

Principal Lesley Morgan-Thompson defined the Commissioner's Network between the CSDE and O'Brien School. It offers new resources and authorities to empower teachers and school leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner. Schools participate in the Network for a period of 3-5 years. We have a three-year commitment. After being selected to participate in the Network, a Turnaround Committee was established by the Board of Education.

Turnaround Plan and its expectations from the SDE follow:

1. To provide a rigorous needs analysis informed by the operations and instruction audit;
2. Identify an evidence-based turnaround model, aligned to school needs and growth areas;
3. Provide robust strategies to secure, support, develop, evaluate and retain top talent;
4. Summarize the school's academic model, including curricula, assessments, and data-driven instruction;
5. Outline a comprehensive approach to build a positive school culture and climate;
6. Develop operational structures to effectively utilize time and resources.

Principal Morgan-Thompson stated the process used was incredible and aligns with our strengths and needs. She also reviewed the budget, noting the Alliance Grant and other grants will cover the first year of approximately \$650,000. The budget request to be submitted is for \$536,500.

This will also allow additional school-based professional development. There will be increased teacher training. We will need one additional teacher and a full time social worker to work with teachers and students. We will also propose to hire a family outreach coordinator for after school programs, similar to the Family Resource Center, with a focus on bi-lingual. Improvements will be made to the facility, possibly the addition of portable classrooms which could be used for reading rooms, or many other purposes.

Year 1 focus areas will include building a strong literacy foundation in Grades K-3; preparing for STEM implementation in Grades K-3; deepening math inquiry programming in Grades 4-6; increasing technology in teaching and learning in Grades K-6 supported by a full time literacy, media and technology specialist.

Year 2 focus areas will include implementing the science/engineering/math inquiry program in Grades K-3; and continuing to build on the foundations laid in Year 1 in K-3 literacy and more rigorous math programming in Grades 4-6.

Year 3 – O'Brien will continue to build on the accelerated academics of the first two years, further increasing rigor and embedding inquiry and literacy into student learning.

We are hoping to add additional family events, as well as a possible math program for parents. One parent, Jasmine Rivera-McNeill, who was absent this evening, submitted a letter to Principal Morgan-Thompson, to be read this evening, commending the staff at O'Brien School for developing this plan.

The SDE must approve the Turnaround Plan before the school may implement it. Once approved by the State, the O'Brien School data team will oversee its implementation.

Chairman Currey thanked Principal Morgan-Thompson and committee for all the work they have done and further stated that our parents should be thrilled.

Superintendent Quesnel stated Principal Morgan-Thompson is an incredible educator and teacher.

To Approve the Commissioners Network Turnaround Plan Application

MOTION By Tom Rup
Seconded by Tyron Harris
To approve the Commissioners Network Turnaround Plan Application and Submit the 2013-2014 Application to the State Board of Education.
Motion unanimously carried.

MOTION By Tyron Harris
Seconded by Tom Rup
To adjourn the Special Meeting of the Board (8:25 PM)
Motion unanimously carried.