

**REGULAR MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**MONDAY,
DECEMBER 16, 2013**

A Regular Meeting of the East Hartford Board of Education was held on Monday, December 16, 2013, at the Connecticut IB Academy, 857 Forbes Street, East Hartford, CT. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Jeffrey Currey.

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

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

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA – None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION By Bryan Hall
Seconded by Dorese Roberts
To approve the following Minutes:
Special Meeting of December 2, 2013
Motion unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION By Bryan Hall
Seconded by Tyron Harris
To approve the following Minutes:
Regular Meeting of December 2, 2013
Motion unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION By Bryan Hall
Seconded by Tyron Harris
To approve the following Minutes:
Special Meeting of December 5, 2013
Motion unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION By Bryan Hall
Seconded by Tyron Harris
To approve the following Minutes:
Special Meeting of December 9, 2013
Motion unanimously carried.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD - None

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

Alyssa Crooks Student Representative

- Winter Concert 12/18 -7:00 PM in Auditorium (snow date 12/19),
- January 13, 14 and 15 – Student Council is hosting “Cookies, Cocoa and Cram” during exam week. EHHS students are invited to wear comfortable attire and stay after their last exam on those dates to cram for exams. National Honor Society will be there to assist students and teachers have volunteered to stop by and work with students who may need assistance in study skills.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Human Resources/No Action Required

Chairman’s Report – Jeffrey Currey

- Welcome to our new Board member Valerie Scheer;
- Regarding the budget – this is the Superintendent’s Proposed Budget that we will be acting upon;
- Attended CABA government relations meeting this past week – Board members will be receiving information;
- Last Saturday on Channel 30 – Sunset Ridge was selected to participate in a TV show that showed kindness to 26 kids in remembrance of the Sandy Hook community.

Superintendent’s Report – Nathan Quesnel

Superintendent Quesnel stated he saw many acts of kindness throughout the district in remembrance of the Sandy Hook community. Teachers and staff wore green ribbons. Thank you to all the teachers and parents for faith in us.

Educational Programs: Teaching and Learning:

- **Expect Student Achievement: School Visits:** We are in the implementation phase – core focuses of school visits have included informal walkthroughs of schools. A visit to EHMS left me proud as I saw some of the great work that the leadership team has embarked upon within the classrooms. We are trying to develop universal systems – it is great to see the teachers are adapting and using the strategies that we have invested in as a district;
- **Expect Student Achievement: Commissioner’s Network Meeting(s):** Participated in a series of meetings with the CSDE regarding an opportunity to join the Commissioner’s Network for School Year 2014-2015 at one of our district schools. The opportunity consists of developing a Turnaround Committee at the school with significant decision making ability. In turn, there is a potential for \$750- \$1 million in resource support including over \$500K in Bond money to do facility improvements. We have many layers of issues to work through on this concept and are still in discussion phases only with the CSDE;

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- **Expect Student Achievement: Alliance District Quarterly Report:** I met with a representative from the CSDE and delivered the report that Assistant Superintendent Mancini had developed regarding the progress of our Alliance Plan. This document was shared with the BoE in our third budget session. The State is very pleased with our progress, plan and system.

Community Relations:

- **Build Family and Community Relationships: Innovation in Learning Conference at Goodwin College:** Attended full day conference at Goodwin College to learn more about how the district could benefit from an integration of the magnet school system.
- **Build Family and Community Relationships: STARBASE Meeting:** Met with Assistant Superintendent Kaprove and representatives from STARBASE regarding the opportunity to move into the district on a permanent basis. We are reviewing the proposal and struggling with space issues. I do hope to find a solution, as the program will be forced to relocate to Bradley Field and have more impact on our ability to get our kids there.

Business Matters:

- **Align System and Operational Efforts: CCJEF Annual Meeting:** Attended the annual Coalition of Justice in Education Funding (CCJEF) in Hartford this week with numerous superintendents, mayors, town managers and business directors. The lawsuit against the State of CT is gaining significant momentum and the Yale Law Clinic is pushing for a July 2014 trial date. While the exact outcomes of increased ECS funding to East Hartford is the ultimate goal, it will be interesting to see where this goes. I always remind these advocates that our issue is not Sheff but rather the funding formula that has a significant and damaging impact on the resources 7000 East Hartford kids receive. Several of these top leaders have asked for meetings and I look forward to sitting down and talking.
- **Align System and Operational Efforts: Budget Process:** We gave spent two weeks together as a BOE reviewing the Superintendent's Proposed budget. It has been a great learning session in which we focused the development of our budget around core priorities and in alignment to our strategic plan. The BOE moved to develop a plan that reduced nearly 2% from my proposed budget of 5.7% increase to 2013-14. The cuts were strategic, thoughtful and each made with a measure of understanding for overall impact. Our next meeting will be 12/18 to approve the budget as a Board. After approval, we will create new budget books reflecting these changes and sending to the Mayor and Council for review. Our schedule meeting/presentation to Town Council is 2/26, 7:00 P.M.

Celebration/Recognition:

- We were notified last week that we have received a K-8 Science Improvement grant from the CT State Department of Education (CSDE) in the amount of \$40,248. The grant was written by our Secondary Science Curriculum Supervisor and will be a major support in developing both our STEM work and Science initiatives. Also, we learned we have been awarded a grant of \$3,000 to work on a dinner program at EHHS. Thank you to Paul and Shari at Sodexo;

Superintendent Quesnel reminded parents about the holiday break from December 23rd through January 1st – Back to School on 1/2/2014.

Fall Athletic Department Report

Frank Cipolla, Athletic Coordinator

Mr. Cipolla gave an overview of the fall athletic highlights. The cumulative fall team's GPA=3.14. Twenty percent of the student body participated through the fall season. Forty-four student athletes are on the High Honor role. Service learning hours were earned by our athletes by taking part in many volunteer opportunities such as charity walks and school sponsored activities. The entire program has proven to be very successful.

Mr. Hall has asked for information regarding how many athletes were on academic probation.

Literacy Media Technology Specialist

Ben Upson, K-6 Technology Coach

Mr. Upson gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Literacy Media Technology Specialists and the role they play in K-6. The literacy specialists are: Jaime Prokop, Norris/O'Brien; Andrea Ferreira, Hockanum/Mayberry; Laura Corpora, Langford/Silver Lane. They are there to support the students and teachers.

Benchmark Universe is an on-line literacy program, providing iPad teaching. It is supporting the teachers' technology needs. Increased literacy and technology instruction results in positive student outcomes. Another program is Pebble Go. It is a data base for K-3 students, using animals, social studies, earth and space. Another program is Grolier Online – non-fiction content with up-to-date information and homework targeted to students in Grades 3 and up. There are so many options today for our talented teachers to teach our children.

Thank you to Marcia Huddy for overseeing the programs associated with literacy.

iPads in our Elementary Schools

Ben Upson, K-6 Technology Coach

Mr. Upson noted that members of the EHPS iPad Investigative Team and Professional Learning Network engaged in a very productive investigation of iPads as tools for teaching and learning. Members of the District iPad Investigative Team are: Kerry Liebler, Kindergarten; Michelle Goodwin, Grade 1; Laurie Stock, Grade 2; Jen Breen, Grade 3; Jed Upson, Grade 4; Heather Earley, Grade 5; Brian Douglas, Grade 6 and Kristie Bourdoulous, Reading Intervention.

iPads have enhanced teaching and learning of our culturally diverse learners. It has motivated students and offered support in reading, handwriting, phonics, vocabulary development and language acquisition. A proposal was to be submitted to request grant funds.

The iPad proposal deadline was September 15, 2013 and was submitted; it then went to the District Committee for evaluation on October 2nd. Apple announced a new iPad lineup on October 22nd. Good news: the State technology grant was approved, but funds have not yet been released.

Elementary Choice Program: How to Choose a School

Debbie Kaprove, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Curriculum

A very comprehensive PowerPoint presentation was given by Ms. Kaprove that covered several school choices afforded to our families at the elementary level in East Hartford. Schools are the pride of our community and deliver a high quality learning experience for every child, every day. We offer school choices to families as “one size doesn’t fit all”.

We offer neighborhood schools, STEM theme schools, International Baccalaureate theme schools. For middle school programs, we offer the traditional middle school program, STEM program and Honors/International Baccalaureate. We have EHHS Grade 9 Academy Program; STEM 21 Team Grade 9, Honors/IB Team Grade 9/10; Fine and Performing Arts Team Grade 9, and high school offerings for grades 10-12 that consist of honors programs; advanced placement classes, elective offerings such as STEM and Fine and Performing Arts.

All of our schools offer high quality curriculum and instructional standards to address our common core state standards.

Requests for a particular school are compiled in the order in which they are received. A waitlist is developed if more requests are received than can be accommodated. Our goal is to work in partnership with our families and communities to provide a quality learning experience for our children who are the future of East Hartford.

Chairman Currey requested a copy of this presentation, stating it was outstanding. Board member Tyron Harris suggested this type of overview should be placed on our Web site.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

Resignations/Retirements

MOTION

By Bryan Hall

Seconded by Dorese Roberts

To approve one (1) **Retirement:**

1. Bruce A. Truskowski, Custodian 1, effective 12/27/13
and

To approve one (1) **Resignation:**

1. Melissa S. Hickey, Sped/Para, effective 12/13/13

Motion unanimously carried.

Board Member Committee Assignments

MOTION

By Bryan Hall

Seconded by Tyron Harris

To **table** Board Member Committee assignments to a later date

Motion unanimously carried

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Public Participation – None

Questions and Concerns by Board Members - None

Topics for Future Agendas – None

MOTION

By Christopher Gentile

Seconded by Tyron Harris

To adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board (9:05 PM)

Motion unanimously carried.

Recorded by: Donna Fitzgerald

APPROVED BY BOARD OF EDUCATION