

**REGULAR MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**MONDAY,
OCTOBER 6, 2014**

A Regular Meeting of the East Hartford Board of Education was held on Monday, October 6, 2014, at the Connecticut IB Academy, 857 Forbes Street, East Hartford, CT. The meeting was called to order at 7:12 PM by Chairman Jeffrey Currey.

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

ABSENT Secretary Bryan Hall

ALSO PRESENT Nathan Quesnel, Superintendent of Schools
Cynthia E. Ritchie, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Curriculum
Anne Marie Mancini, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Curriculum
Dr. Sharon Bremner, Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Christopher Wethje, Director of Human Resources
Paul Mainuli, Director of Business Services
Al Costa, Director of Facilities
Natalya Robinson, Student Representative

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

MOTION By Tyron Harris
Seconded by Dorese Roberts
To amend this evening's agenda to refer to Policy & Audit the following policies D3-11 under New Business:
5144.4 (Discipline)
5145.53 (Civility)
6141.311 (Limited English Proficiency Program)
6141.329 (Electronic Reading Devices)
6141.3291 (One-to-One Tablet Program)
6142.101 (Student Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Wellness Policy)
6142.611 (Physical Activity)
6142.63 (Physical Education)
6153 (Field Trips and Excursions)
and
Under New Business, place item D2 Field Trip Request after Public Participation.
Motion unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION By Tyron Harris
Seconded by Dorese Roberts
To approve the following Minutes:
Special Meeting of September 10, 2014
Motion unanimously carried.

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MOTION By Tyron Harris
Seconded by Dorese Roberts
To approve the following Minutes:
Regular Meeting of September 15, 2014
Motion unanimously carried.

MOTION By Dorese Roberts
Seconded by Tyron Harris
To approve the following Minutes:
Special Meeting of September 16, 2014
Motion unanimously carried.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS

Natalya Robinson

- 10/3 – progress reports were given out – parents are encouraged to check grades; report cards will be mailed in a few weeks;
- 10/15 – PSAT testing will take place;
- 10/20-10/24 – Spirit Week
- 10/23 – 6-8 PM – get to know EHHS – 8th graders come to EHHS to familiarize themselves with the school
- 10/25 – Homecoming – celebrating EHHS and showing hornet pride, window painting, penny wars, etc.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None

Overnight Field Trip Request to Southbury, CT

MOTION By Dorese Roberts
Seconded by Tyron Harris
To approve request for overnight field trip to Southbury, CT from November 21-22, 2014 for approximately 25-30 students from CIBA and EHHS to attend the Connecticut Student Leadership Conference sponsored by CAS and The Connecticut Association of Student Councils.
Motion unanimously carried.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Human Resources/No Action Required

Chairman's Report – Jeffrey Currey

- 9/15** – Met in executive session and approved the Superintendent's evaluation and contract extension to June 30, 2017- congratulations;
- 9/16** – Town Council meeting – presented year-end report;

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9/18 - Attended Town Council Ordinance meeting – discussed format for budget in order for Council to better understand;

9/23 – Attended O’Brien PTO/SGC meetings;

9/29 - Mediation for union contract – thanks again to Tyron Harris and Tom Rup;

9/30 - Attended Town Council budget subcommittee meeting with Board Member Valerie Scheer, Blum Shapiro was also present and will be meeting again next month;

- This evening we had a dedication of the Student Assistance Center in the name of Ken Gwozd; thank you to all who attended.
- Thank you to Pratt & Whitney for providing shrubbery to Norris School;
- O’Connell School received the exemplary school climate award. Congratulations to Principal Fox.
- Congratulations to Cara Quinn, Connecticut Teacher of the Year finalist.

Superintendent’s Report – Nathan Quesnel

Superintendent Quesnel echoed many of the Chairman’s remarks – he attended many of the meetings with the Chairman and will not repeat them in this evening’s report.

Status of the Schools: This year across the district, we have implemented both Student Achievement Meetings as well as Academic Walkthroughs at our schools. These two accountability and support systems have shown early results in terms of helping our teachers and leaders to center the discussion on instruction. I am excited to see our principals and teacher leaders looking hard at our Fall STAR data which was completed late in September. While we are still learning the full impact of this data, we continue to be excited at the ability it provides. Thank you to Anne Marie Mancini and Cynthia Ritchie.

Updates from the District: We were notified last week that O’Connell School has been presented by CAS with an Exemplary School Climate Award. We are incredibly proud of O’Connell for all the work that has gone on there over the past few years and thrilled at this state level award.

Dedication of EHHS Student Assistance Center for Ken Gwozd took place prior to the BoE meeting this evening, as reported by Chairman Currey.

Shared Service Task Force Meeting – thanks to Val, Marilyn and Jeff (via phone) for joining us at the first Shared Service Task Force Meeting held on September 30th. Next steps for both the BoE and Town are to consider and identify areas of opportunity and interest in conducting and enhancing shared services.

Head Start Grant: The Head Start Grant was officially released by the federal government last week and Cynthia Ritchie and Paul Mainuli are heading up a team to get this grant in process. The Head Start Grant funds our entire pre-K program at Willowbrook School at over \$1.2 million in addition to over \$500,000 of a district cash match. This is an important step to make our pre-K program a financially sustainable program vs. a financial loss. Due date on the project is 11/24 – lots of work to be done.

Good News Report:

- Thank you again to Pratt & Whitney for the contribution of funds to purchase landscaping materials for Norris School;
- I attended the 2014 STEM Conference with 30 EHPS educators at the **STEM Conference** at the Connecticut Science Center. This marks our third year of leadership at this state level conference. It is great to see EHPS lead the way in this important and extremely relevant teaching trend.
- **Save the Date:** On October 27 from 5-7 we will be hosting a parent forum at Sunset Ridge School for a group of parents to come and share thoughts, feedback and suggestions regarding our shared work. I am looking forward to this event.
- Accolades to Frank Cipolla, Coordinator of Athletics, for assisting Conard High grandparents at the EH vs. Conard football game on 9/27. A beautiful thank you letter was sent to Principal Ryan thanking staff/volunteers at the game for the kindness shown to grandparents of a Conard High varsity football player.

Next Steps:

- District Reconfiguration Study Review/Next Step Planning (10/20 5:30 PM)
- Sunset Ridge-MYP IB Academy Planning;
- Shared Service Task Force Meeting 9/30 5:30 PM

Student Athlete Handbook

Frank Cipolla, Coordinator of Athletics

Mr. Cipolla reviewed with the Board the Student Athlete Handbook. The Athletic Department offers a number of interscholastic athletic activities for students to participate in during their educational experience. It is the goal of East Hartford athletics to continue the tradition of developing responsible and successful student athletes on and off the field of play.

All student-athletes are governed by regulations formulated by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (C.I.A.C.) in which all Connecticut high schools hold membership. Athletic activities in East Hartford High School are further governed by their membership in the Central Connecticut Conference.

(Mr. Cipolla was asked to correct the title of Superintendent listed on Page 3. It should be Superintendent of Schools, not Interim Superintendent).

Coaches Handbook

Frank Cipolla, Coordinator of Athletics

Mr. Cipolla noted East Hartford High School's Athletic Department provides East Hartford's student athletes the best coaches, facilities, and post secondary opportunities in the state. As a coach, it is imperative to serve as a mentor, role model, teacher, and positive influence on students. In order to be successful we must work together to cultivate this environment of cohesiveness, and commit to supporting each other as professionals and leaders.

Board member Tom Rup remarked that athletics bring out the best. Chairman Currey congratulated Mr. Cipolla and his coaches for a job well done. Superintendent Quesnel thanked Mr. Cipolla for his hard work.

Spring Athletic Department Report

Frank Cipolla, Coordinator of Athletics

Mr. Cipolla provided the spring sports participation and grade report. He noted 41 student athletes earned high honors with an overall spring GPA of 2.90. There were four all state athletes and 5 all New England athletes. The report cited two examples of student success and growth; (1) Shawn Murdzek had an overall GPA of 4.0. He was a 4 year cross country and track student athlete and a two year all conference. He is very involved with his senior class; (2) Rose Callahan had an overall GPA of 3.2. She is a 4 year soccer and track student athlete and involved in Connections Plus, Student Leadership, Student Athlete Leadership Team, District Wellness Committee, and participated in numerous community service project. Overall, the spring sports program was extremely successful.

Head Start Grant Application

Paul Mainuli, Director of Business Services

Mr. Mainuli noted the Head Start Grant application was submitted to the Community Renewal Team (CRT) on September 30, 2014. This is an informational report. The East Hartford Head Start program currently serves 180 federally funded children and 36 state funded three and four year old children. Thirty-six of these children are fully funded by state grants and eighteen are funded through state and federal funds. The direct costs total \$1.2 million. There are thirty-one employees in the Head Start program.

The Head Start program collaborates with numerous organizations throughout the area. Social Services staff are available to families as well as translation services to families.

The facility that houses the Head Start program is supported by the district Facilities Department. A Board of Education representative attends Policy Committee meetings and provides a direct Head Start link to the Board of Education. Board Member Rup asked what the overall attendance in the program is. It was noted at 85 percent.

2014 Summer Hiring Report

Christopher Wethje, Director of Human Resources

Mr. Wethje noted our mission is to deliver a high quality learning experience for every child, every day. Further, he noted the single most important fact that influences student performance is the teachers and support staff that work with the students. The hiring process is the beginning of our relationship with employees and not only an opportunity for candidates to show us what they have to offer but to showcase East Hartford Public Schools.

As of September 5, 2014, we have hired three certified administrators and fifty-two certified teachers. There were eight vacancies as of September 5, 2014. All salaries are paid through the Alliance Grant dollars and Commissioner's Network dollars. Regarding non-certified staff, we have hired two Attendance Officers, three Behavior Managers, one Custodian, one Family & Outreach Coordinator, one Paraprofessional (Spec. Ed.), two School Nurses, three Secretaries and twelve Tutors. All salaries are paid through the Alliance Grant dollars.

Mr. Wethje noted we have more work to do regarding Affirmative Action efforts. We will continue to focus diligently in this area.

Elementary, Middle and High School Summer Report

**Program Coordinator Beatrice Corrado, Mary White Curriculum Supervisor
EHMS Assistant Superintendent Anne Marie Mancini, Program Coordinator Anthony Mangiafico**

There were 350 students that attended the summer school program that were recommended by their schools. A 4-week Reading Explorer's program was offered focusing on reading and writing. Weekly themes took place. The entire program focused on literacy instruction to move each child along his/her continuum of learning and to promote positive behavior.

All classes were carefully selected based upon DRA2 data and class size. There were two teaching professionals in each classroom with a ratio of 1:9. Students who scored substantially deficient on the DRA were selected for summer school. Communication took place with guardians and students' home schools. Attendance was excellent. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports were used to create a positive learning environment.

A typical daily schedule was student arrival and breakfast 8:30-9:00 A.M; 9:00-11:00 focused reading instructions; 11:00-12:30 – three lunch waves; and, 11:00-1:30 focused writing instruction and continuation of reading instruction. Breakfast, lunch and transportation were provided daily.

Future goals include continuing and broadening weekly themes, having a parent reading night event at the beginning of the program and increase participation of community partners. Attendance for the program will be put on line.

At the EHHS level, ten students earned the credits they needed to obtain their high school diploma. In the future, Mr. Mangiafico noted he would like to have a full time guidance counselor.

Thank you to all of the summer school instructors and staff members. The program ran smoothly from registration until the last day of classes.

IB Data Report

Caryn Stedman, CIBA Principal

Principal Stedman gave a PowerPoint presentation on CIBA's performance to date. Data included performance for 2014. All CIBA Seniors did well on IB exams. Sixty percent passed for a full diploma. Areas of concern for the future (1) include gender issue; i.e., females in program 65%, males in program 35%. (2) we will continue to work on Theory and Knowledge figures. For a total of 30 students, 26.67% were Below Basic.

AP Data Report

Assistant Superintendent Anne Marie Mancini and Allison Anderson, Vice Principal, EHHS

A comprehensive PowerPoint presentation was given on students' achievement in the Advanced Placement program and focus areas to be implemented in the future. Emphasis will be placed on developing and implementing supportive programs for Honors, AP Cohort and PSAT/SAT. Focus will also be placed on continuing to develop positive parental relationships to improve achievement. The plan for this year is to continue providing intervention after school and on Saturdays.

We will continue to ensure that all classrooms are led by highly competent educators and led by highly competent administrators. Also, we will continue to cultivate relationships with parents and families.

A Celebration of Excellence for 91 AP students was held, sponsored by Pratt & Whitney.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

Resignations

MOTION

By Tyron Harris

Seconded by Dorese Roberts

To approve the following (5) **Resignations**

1. **Alison Pilon, Art Teacher, effective 8/27/14**
2. **Kimberly A. Wheeler, Title 1 Tutor, effective 8/22/14**
3. **Tamara Butler, Behavior Manager, effective 9/18/14**
4. **Christina Russell, P/T Attendance Officer, effective 9/30/14**
5. **Bonnie Krauss, Occupational Therapist, effective 10/17/14**

Motion unanimously carried.

MOTION

By Tyron Harris

Seconded by Christopher Gentile

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Motion unanimously carried.

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Board Member Representative Reports

Marilyn Pet – attended School Governance Council meeting at O’Brien School. Approximately 40 people were in attendance; a “uniform drive” took place to donate uniforms to families.

Stephanie Watkins – attended Silver Lane Open House;

Dorese Roberts – visited Langford School;

Valerie Scheer (1) noted there are students that still need uniforms; (2) attended Pitkin School fundraiser.

Questions and Concerns by Board Members - None

Topics for Future Agendas - None

MOTION

By Tyron Harris

Seconded by Dorese Roberts

To adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board (9:50 PM)

Motion unanimously carried.

Recorded by: Donna Fitzgerald