

**REGULAR MEETING
EAST HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**MONDAY,
AUGUST 17, 2015**

A Regular Meeting of the East Hartford Board of Education was held on Monday, August 17, 2015, in the Lecture Hall of the Connecticut IB Academy, 857 Forbes Street, East Hartford, CT. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Bryan Hall

PRESENT Chairman Bryan Hall, Secretary Tyron Harris, Christopher Gentile, Dorese Roberts, Valerie Scheer, Marilyn Pet, Stephanie Watkins, Shelby Brown

ABSENT Tom Rup

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

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

MOTION By Tyron Harris
Valerie Scheer
Under Informational Reports – place item 2 under New Business
(Overnight Field Trip Request to the Discovery Center in Woodstock, CT
to Item 4 under Informational Reports
Motion unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION By Valerie Scheer
Seconded by Marilyn Pet
To approve the following Minutes:
Special Board Meeting, June 23, 2015
Motion unanimously carried.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD

— To register your child for the upcoming school year, Central Registration is located at 734 Tolland Street, open 12 months a year. Beginning August 11th – September 11th Central Registration is open to the public, Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 9:00 – 3:00, Tuesdays 9:00 – 5:00 and CLOSED on Fridays.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS - None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Human Resources/No Action Required

Chairman's Report – Bryan Hall

- Welcome back Board of Education members, we are looking forward to the start of the 2015-2016 school year.

Superintendent's Report – Nathan Quesnel

Status of the Schools:

Welcome back to our Board of Education from summer vacation—I hope your summer was restful, rejuvenating and filled with family and friends. We have been extremely busy since our last meeting on June 23 and are very excited to officially launch SY15-16. Our district launches into a new school year around the theme, “**ALL IN**” and we are excited to share this theme with you. We launched this theme at our leadership advance this summer during which our administrators worked together to develop and shape new district and school improvement plans. The theme “**ALL IN**” speaks to shared expectations, efforts and actions of adults who understand the power of their work together. It speaks to the principal, the teacher, the paraprofessional who is willing to engage and pull deeply on the oars to move our system forward. It speaks to a mindset, an action and reinvigoration around what truly is important in East Hartford.

We can't wait to get started!

Updates from the District: Highlights from the Summer

Family and Community Engagement Conference, Harvard University: As you know, a team of 10 district administrators attended a national conference in Boston regarding Family Engagement in Education. Funded by the Hartford Foundation, this conference was an incredibly valuable experience for our team where we both learned many new strategies for engagement as well as were affirmed regarding the direction we are going. As a result of the conference, we worked together to integrate our learning into our 15-16 DIP and formed a Family Engagement Task Force.

Teacher Contract Negotiation We have reached a tentative agreement with our Teacher Bargaining Group which will be ratified next week. We look forward to the union ratification of a contract that we believe is fair, responsible and future focused. I look forward to presenting this contract to the Board in greater detail following ratification.

New Teacher Orientation/EHPS Staff Leadership Hires: Today officially kicked off our year with New Teacher Orientation and a welcome to the 25 newly hired teachers that were hired over the summer. This hiring class is another talented and committed group of teachers that will continue to be the future for our schools. I am thrilled at the types of candidates we continue to attract as a district and look forward to this group meeting our students. In addition we have successfully filled the SPED Supervisor position with a long time EH SPED teacher, Danielle Singleton. I am extremely happy to have Danielle in this position focusing on our Pre-K needs

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and look forward to the great work I know she will do. In addition, we filled the EL Supervisor position with an out of district candidate after an extremely competitive final interview. Liz Peczuh is a product of the EL/Bilingual program and brings an energy, a can do attitude and a professionalism to our EL/World Language department that will make some significant and necessary changes.

Reconfiguration Project: As approved in our final June meeting, we have been hard at work working with our Reconfiguration Consultants and in process on a feasibility study in terms of cost and ability to develop an Early Childhood Center at an existing Elementary school. Over the next few months, our team will present a series of recommendations to the BoE for approval that will allow the district to move the existing Head Start Program at Willowbrook into an existing elementary school and reconfigure the current students into neighboring schools. In this study, design experts and an architect will work with our facilities team to determine sizing, facility improvements mandated etc. to make this project work. In addition, Maloon and McBroom will study the impacts of reconfiguration across the district as students are move to maximize effective use of district facilities. We will continue to work hard to keep both you and our community informed.

Head Start Program: We hosted several important meetings and conference calls with representatives from Head Start as we learn the parameters of managing this grant directly. Tonight, you will be asked to vote to hire a Head Start Director position that is funded by the grant and will oversee the financial and programmatic aspects of the grant. I am personally very excited about this candidate and the experience and credibility she will bring to our program. As a requirement of HS, we will be rewriting the competitive grant for 11/1 that will give a clear scope of the ECC and our plan moving forward.

Facility Projects: Al and his team have been around the clock with several large and important projects this summer. At O'Brien, students on the first day of school may be confused when they come to school as O'Brien has a whole new look. In typical Al fashion, the changes at O'Brien are startling and impressive. This work, funded by the Commissioner's Network grant is the first phase of facility improvements that we have been able to accomplish. Equally impressive, we have completely gutted and redone two Smart Start Classrooms at Hockanum School.

Commissioner's Network EHMS: We have reached an informal approval on our Commissioner's Network grant for year one of over \$900,000. (O'Brien received \$437K in year 1). This funding is already moving to action as Chris, Anthony and Anne Marie are hard at working bringing in both the resources and staff that this supports. In addition, we have finalized our bond proposal of over \$500,000 but due to the Governor canceling the August Bond Commission, this work will be postponed until potentially next summer. (The same process/delay happened at O'Brien). These are the types of good things we are willing to wait for. The bond proposal at the Middle School entails significant improvements to student bathrooms and massive technology upgrades.

Transportation: Our district transportation division has completed bus routes for the district and beginning to communicate these routes both through the local newspapers but also notifying parents via school messenger. Using our district website parents can log onto the Trapeze Software and pinpoint their child's stop and bus times. This summer we have continued to review routes and work to find efficiencies with a mindset of equity across the district. While these changes do create concerns for those impacted, we do these thoughtfully, carefully and with a commitment to meeting the needs of roughly 7200 students. The following information may be helpful to parents.

- **Contact Numbers: BOE Transportation Coordinator (860) 622-5139; Dattco Bus Yard (860) 904-9783.**
- **Letters were sent to all parents of elementary students on June 5, 2014 notifying them that day care transportation requests were due by August 1, 2014. All requests received after that date will be reviewed in mid-September.**
- **Dattco will have school buses on site for all kindergarten student orientations. Please check the school calendar for your school.**
- **EHPS will create a link to the Dattco routing system web site for parents. The on-line routing system is expected to "go live" by August 18th. Parents will be able to look up bus routes on line.**
- **Wristbands will be placed by school staff on all kindergarten students at dismissal. This will help bus drivers identify students who must have a parent, guardian and/or older sibling meet them at the afternoon bus stop.**
- **Parents are reminded to have their child at the designated bus stops at least (10) minutes before his/her scheduled pick-up.**
- **All bus routes will be published in The Gazette before the start of school at the end of August.**
- **EHPS will have staff available to respond to parent phone calls until 6:00p.m., Monday - Friday, the first two weeks of school.**

Good News Report:

- **EHPS Alliance and PSD Grant Officially Approved:** We were notified today by the SDE that our Alliance and Priority School Grant were approved. These extensive plans slotted towards funding important district programming bring in \$7,852,667 and \$1,111,577. Congrats to you for your support of these grants.

Next Steps:

- 8/24/15—District Administrative Advance
- 8/24/15—District Convocation EHMS
- 8/26/15—First Day of a Great New Year
- School Year 2015—ALL IN

Annual Review of the EHHS Student Athlete and Coaches Handbook
Jill Piedescalzo, Athletic Director

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Overnight Field Trip to the Discovery Center

Greg Fox, Principal, O'Connell School

MOTION

By Stephanie Watkins

Seconded by Dorese Roberts

To approve Overnight Field Trip to the Discovery Center, Woodstock, CT
from October 19 – 21, 2015.

Motion unanimously carried.

Year End Financial Report

Paul Mainuli, Director of Business Services

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

Retirements and Resignations:

MOTION

By Dorese Roberts

Seconded by Valerie Scheer

To approve thirty two (32) Resignations

Motion unanimously carried.

Head Start Program Coordinator Position

Christopher Wethje, Director of Human Resources

MOTION

By Tyron Harris

Seconded by Christopher Gentile

To approve the Head Start Program Coordinator Position

Motion unanimously carried.

Board Member Representative Reports

Christopher Gentile – Thanks to the community for supporting him over the years and thanks to the Board of Education for their hard work, looking forward to the success of East Hartford Public Schools.

MOTION

By Stephanie Watkins

Seconded by Marilyn Pet

To adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board (8:50 PM)

Motion unanimously carried.

Recorded by: Tyron Harris