

Monday, May 23, 2022

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held May 23, 2022, at Bridgeport Regional Aquaculture Science & Technology Education Center, 60 Saint Stephens Road, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m.

Present were Vice Chair Bobbi Brown, Secretary Joseph Lombard, Joseph Sokolovic, Christine Baptiste-Perez, Erika Castillo, Michael Maccarone, and Sybil Allen. Albert Benejan joined the meeting subsequently as noted.

Supt. Michael J. Testani was present.

Supt. Testani asked for a moment of silence for the loss of the son of Ms. Connie Doherty. Ms. Doherty is a current employee of the adult education program and a retired teacher

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:**

Cindy Meyers of the Biotech School at Fairchild Wheeler highlighted an upcoming awards assembly; the senior prom on May 12th at the Waterview, which was very successful; and the Rotary Club's recognition of students, including Avery Flechtner.

Avery Flechtner of the IT School at Fairchild Wheeler reported on her school. Among the items she highlighted were student presentations in a technology showcase; a student tour of Bridgeport through an historical lens; a visit

by a physics class to iFly; and volleyball, flag football and soccer tournaments.

Aleena Khan of the Aerospace School at Fairchild Wheeler highlighted the arrival of the plaque received from Magnet Schools of America; the 95 percent participation rate of juniors in NGSS testing; and the May 16th awards ceremony where nearly half of seniors made the honor roll.

Michael Hemmings of the IT School at Fairchild Wheeler said Mr. Reyes and Avery Flechtner are being recognized at this week's Rotary luncheon; John Menendez was a winner of the Beats Unlocked MVP contest; and senior exams begin in the first week of June.

Shermaine Elliott of Harding High School reported on her school. Among the items she highlighted were the health academy's health fair on May 26th, which include Capstone projects; a fair on May 31st on career paths and meetings with colleges; the debate team's competition; and a multicultural event on the same day.

Mr. Benejan arrived at the meeting.

### **APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:**

Mr. Sokolovic moved approval of the minutes of Regular Meeting of May 9, 2022. The motion was seconded by Ms. Baptiste-Perez. A correction was noted. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Sokolovic moved approval of the minutes of Special Meeting of May 18, 2022. The motion was seconded by Mr. Benejan and unanimously approved.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS/REFERRALS:**

Ms. Brown said the Ad Hoc Districtwide Branding Committee had a good meeting. Revisions to the logo are still underway. Another meeting will be held next month.

Mr. Lombard said the Ad Hoc Calendar Committee met for the first time tonight. Future meetings were planned. The school calendar, the city calendar, and the noncertified calendar were looked at. The next meeting will be on June 20th.

Mr. Sokolovic said the Educational Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee will meet on June 20th.

Ms. Benejan said the Students & Families Committee will meet on May 26th. He said the Bassick PTSO held an amazing teacher appreciation.

Ms. Baptiste-Perez said the Teaching & Learning Committee met on May 16th and discussed two of the items that are on the agenda today. She said there was an update on the Tango Flight project at Bassick High, where students are building an airplane. There was also an update on Footsteps 2 Brilliance and the educational leadership work with administrators this year. The committee also received a special education update.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

Supt. Testani congratulated Roosevelt School for being selected to continue for an extra year in the state Commissioner's Network due to their progress.

The superintendent said there was a jobs fair at Central High, with almost one hundred candidates attending, as part of recruiting efforts.

Supt. Testani thanked DIG Soccer, who held a chess tournament yesterday at Central High, and teacher Josephine Thomas, who helped plan and organize the event.

The superintendent congratulated two Discovery Magnet students who participated in the Connecticut Invention Convention and advanced to the state finals.

The National Football Foundation scholar-athletes awards were given out last week to students at Michael Alvarez (Central); Irvin Eaddy (Bassick); and Sebastian Flores (Harding).

Supt. Testani noted the collaboration between the district's facilities department, the City of Bridgeport, Connecticut Climate and Jobs, and other organizations who engaged in a lot of work inside and outside of Curiale School last Saturday. He said the school now looks great.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

The next agenda item was on a Central High overnight field trip to the Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA) conference in Nashville, Tennessee.

Carmen Francisco of Central High and student Tiara Campbell were present.

Ms. Campbell described the educational and certification opportunities that will help her career path in the medical field. She said she aspired to become a travel nurse.

Ms. Francisco said Ms. Campbell will represent all the Connecticut students at the opening ceremony and will also participate in leadership conferences.

Ms. Francisco said the conference is an amazing opportunity for the three students attending. She said the group is already thinking of ways to get the male population at the school to join HOSA, as the organization is about 90 percent female. She said the students attending will participate as voting delegates and on the executive panel of HOSA.

In response to a question, Ms. Francisco said all students will have proof of vaccinations. Supplies of face masks will be carried. Face masks will be worn when in large groups of people. Medical assistance is available if needed.

In response to a question, Ms. Campbell said she was currently a junior and is interesting in attending the nursing program at Fairfield University.

Mr. Lombard moved to “*to accept this trip.*” The motion was seconded by Mr. Maccarone and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on the Discovery Education science contract.

David Henry, director of science, said the PowerPoint shared with the Teaching & Learning Committee was provided to board members. A committee consisting of administrators and teachers was convened and made the initial choice to look at offerings from four different companies. Live

presentations were heard from all four companies. Science teachers across the district received virtual presentations.

Mr. Henry said surveys were completed that rated effectiveness for special needs learners, ELL students, the quality of the online and digital resources, and various other aspects. Discovery Education won ten of the 21 categories, with the next company winning four categories.

Mr. Henry said Discovery Education was a clear winner in the everyday life and special needs categories in every grade band.

Mr. Henry said the negotiations with the company were aimed at aligning the district science in K-12, without overextending fiscally in any one year. At the K-5 level every year there will be printed science workbooks available. The Mystery Science product is also included. He said Meriden and other Connecticut schools also use Discovery Education.

In response to a question, Mr. Henry said he shared a video with the whole board on science kits. He presented a kit to the board on a 4th grade lesson that deals with speed in kinetic energy.

Mr. Benejan moved “*to accept this contract.*” The motion was seconded by Ms. Baptiste-Perez and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on the new Bassick High School project costs/budget.

Larry Schilling, program manager of the Bridgeport school construction office, was present, along with architect Joe Costa from Perkins, Eastman. Mr. Schilling said approval was needed to go to the state to go out to bid on phase II, the construction of the building. Phase I, the demolition, is expected to be finished in two to three weeks.

Mr. Costa said it was exciting to be able to start construction. He displayed a slide with the layout of the site and its location. He said the school would have dramatic views over Long Island Sound.

Mr. Costa displayed the interior plan of the building. He described features on the various floors.

Mr. Benejan noted a parent room could not be said due to the rules of the states. He said the state has to understand that without parents we don't have a board of education, staff or a school.

In response to a question, Mr. Costa said each classroom is designed to accommodate 29 students per room.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said the portion of the building dedicated to Bridgeport Military Academy would be handled similarly to Central Magnet at Central High School.

In response to a question, Mr. Schilling said the grade up to the first floor will be 18 feet, which is two feet above the height of the 500-year flood plain.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said boilers will be installed in the building. An alternative power source will also

be installed, with the ability to switch to boilers immediately if needed.

In response to a question about the 6.5 percent construction contingency being reduced to 2.7 percent, Mr. Schilling said based on what is in the documents there is no concern. He said the budget was presented to the state in connection with the grant. He noted trade costs have gone up for the main construction and the market right now is a little crazy, but we have to go to bid to see where we're at. He said the maximum you can carry is five percent.

In response to a question, Mr. Schilling said the parking lot will accommodate 166 parking spaces. Supt. Testani said he has had discussions with the University of Bridgeport president about the university using some parking spots when the time comes.

Ms. Castillo said she used for work for UB and there are parking issues on the campus. The superintendent said the university was also exploring other locations in the area for more parking.

Mr. Benejan requested to be provided with how many additional classrooms will be in the new school compared to the current Bassick. Mr. Schilling said he could provide that information.

In response to a question, Mr. Schilling said the building is being built for 1,250 students, which is above the current number in Bassick.

Mr. Benejan moved "*to accept the budget project cost for the new Bassick High School.*" The motion was seconded by Ms. Castillo and approved by a 6-0 vote.



Voting in favor were members Brown, Benejan, Sokolovic, Lombard, Castillo, and Allen. Ms. Baptiste-Perez and Mr. Maccarone abstained.

Ms. Castillo moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Benejan and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod