

Monday, April 5, 2021

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held April 5, 2021, by video conference call, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. Present were members Chair John Weldon, Vice Chair Bobbi Brown, Secretary Joseph Lombard, Albert Benejan, Chris Taylor, Sybil Allen, and Joseph Sokolovic. Sosimo Fabian joined the meeting subsequently as noted.

Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:

Ms. Allen moved to adopt the board's minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 22, 2021. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote. Voting in favor were members Brown, Weldon, Lombard, Sokolovic, Benejan, and Allen. Mr. Taylor abstained.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/REFERRALS:

Ms. Brown said the Ad Hoc Districtwide Branding Initiative Committee would meet this Friday, but in the future would meet on the third Wednesday of every month.

Dr. Fabian joined the meeting.

Dr. Fabian said he was in the process of organizing a meeting and an agenda for the Educational Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee.

Mr. Weldon said the Facilities Committee would meet on May 3rd.

Mr. Sokolovic said the Finance Committee will meet in the week after spring break.

Mr. Benejan referred an item on the Perkins Grant to the committee. Supt. Testani said he could provide information on that.

Mr. Weldon said the Governance Committee would next meet on May 3rd.

Mr. Benejan referred an item about the Bassick High School contract to the Personnel Committee or Governance Committee. Supt. Testani said he could prepare a report on it at the next regular meeting.

Mr. Benejan said the Students & Families Committee meeting received information on PAC and PTSO spending. Supt. Testani said the expenditures deadline was extended from April 1st to April 29th. Mr. Benejan said the next meeting would be on April 22nd.

Mr. Sokolovic said the Teaching & Learning Committee would meet on the Tuesday following spring break.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Supt. Testani said next week was the much-needed spring break. He said he believed families and staff would welcome the break. Following the break, schools will be opened for in-person learning for four days a week for those who wish to attend, with remote learning also available.

The superintendent said summer programs would be expanded dramatically this summer to reach as many kids who would like to take advantage of them. Enrichment, enhancement, and fun activities will also be included.

Supt. Testani said he wanted to remind parents that if children do travel during the April break they must quarantine prior to returning to in-person learning.

The superintendent said the architects have completed their basic rendition of the new Bassick High building. He said he sat along with the Dr Raiola and his team with the architects last week. He said he believed the design was very beautiful and impressive, probably one of the most beautiful buildings he has seen. He said murals and the history of Bridgeport has been incorporated into the building and he would share further details at the next meeting. He said there were still issues to be resolved with the state, including with DEEP, regarding demolition.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani described how remote learners would be treated with the return to full in-person learning. He said teachers may step away from the camera to attend to a child, especially in the lower grades. He said parents do have the right to change from remote learning to in-person.

In response to a question, the superintendent said meal distribution would continue during spring break. He said the district was commended by the Secretary of Education recently for providing internet connectivity and food.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said he has been working on doing something extremely special for this year's graduating class and there would be a big announcement in

the future. He said all students would be able to attend proms whether they are in-person learners or not.

In response to a question, the superintendent said distancing depends on schools. He said some schools have been in-person all the time due to low numbers. He said some classes may grow to 22 or 23 in a classroom, while staying as close to the three-foot recommendation and increasing mitigation strategies. Additional sneeze-guards will be purchased.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said he believed the chaperones and masked children during dances during proms will be within the guidelines. He said he believed many teens are socializing already, and this evening would at least have mitigation strategies.

NEW BUSINESS:

The next agenda item was on a district partnership with FoodCorps Connecticut and the Green Village Initiative for the 2021-22 school year.

Supt. Testani said this is a continuation of what has happened at our school gardens in the past. He said they will work with teachers to get the gardens up and running. Marin School has an excellent garden and other schools are being looked at. There is no cost to the board and he requested board approval for the agreement.

Mr. Taylor left the meeting,

Mr. Sokolovic moved *“to approve/continue the district’s partnership with FoodCorps Connecticut and the Green Village Initiative for the upcoming 2021-22 school year.”* The

motion was seconded by Ms. Allen and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on the Schools and Libraires Universal Services (E-Rate) for the 2021-22 school year. Mr. Weldon noted it was an annual process.

Jeff Postolowski, director of ITS, said E-Rate funding provides the lion's share of the funding for all of the district's interconnections between the buildings and communications for internet and infrastructure. Each year it goes out for review and is bid on, and then goes through a formal E-Rate process. Once the bids are scored, decisions have to be approved by the board. He added that the board pays a share of the cost, but receives the district receives the highest level of reimbursement.

In response to a question, Mr. Postolowski said the district uses the firm Kellogg & Sovereign as a consultant to implement the compliance with the program. He said they did an absolutely amazing job this year and got the district every nickel and dime they possibly could.

In response to a question, Mr. Postolowski said Kellogg & Sovereign was in the third year of its contract with the district.

Mr. Weldon read the proposed resolution as follows: "Be it resolved that the governing board for the Bridgeport school district, (1)authorizes the filing of FCC Form 471, Schools and Libraries Universal Service Program Services Order and Certification Form for the services and/or products as detailed in the attached report entitled, 'E-Rate Requests, FY 2021', for the fiscal year 07/01/2021 to 06/30/2022; and (2) authorizes payment of the applicant's share subject to the

following conditions: (1) approval of funding of the discounted portion by the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) of the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) and (2) receipt of services during the fiscal year starting 07/01/2021, ending 06/30/2022.

Application #	Pre-Discount Amount	E-Rate Amount	Applicant's Share
211037007	\$1,770,090.12	\$1,593,081.11	\$177,009.01
211038729	\$928,916.57	\$789,579.08	\$139,337.49
Totals	\$2,699,006.69	\$2,382,660.19	\$316,346.50

Ms. Allen moved the resolution. The motion was seconded by Ms. Brown and unanimously approved.

Mr. Benejan asked when the board would resume in-person meetings. Mr. Weldon noted the item was not on the agenda and said he would put it on the agenda for the next meeting for further discussion.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod