

Monday, February 3, 2020

MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held February 3, 2019, at Bridgeport City Hall, 45 Lyon Terrace, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Committee members present were Chair Hernan Illingworth and Joseph Sokolovic. Board member Albert Benejan was present.

Acting Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present.

Mr. Sokolovic moved approval of the minutes of the meeting of November 19, 2018. The motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth and approved by a 1-0 vote. Voting in favor was Mr. Illingworth. Mr. Sokolovic abstained.

The next agenda item was on the committee's goals and agenda. Mr. Illingworth said he believed the Governance Committee was very important because policies needed to be reviewed on a regular basis. He said the committee would meet every month and work on at least half of the board's policies by the end of the school year.

Mr. Sokolovic said he agreed and said it was important that the policies needed to be followed. He said he had experienced board members who were not familiar with the board's policies.

Mr. Illingworth said it was important to keep all the stakeholders involved in the process while creating policies.

Mr. Benejan said he agreed the staff, teachers and parents had to be involved so everyone is on the same page.

The next agenda item was on the 1000 Series policies on community relations. Mr. Illingworth said he would like to charge the administration with reviewing it and bringing forward any suggestions for the next meeting in March.

Mr. Testani suggested, after discussions with the board attorney, that the committee look at Shipman & Goodwin's overarching policies. He said in the end it would cost a fortune to have attorneys review each policy line by line. He said the model policies could be tweaked where needed for Bridgeport in areas such as control transfers.

Mr. Illingworth said if the policies are simple and clear there is a better chance they will get implemented and enforced.

Mr. Sokolovic suggested the building administrators be canvassed for policies they'd like to see changed. Mr. Testani said he believed the dress codes at the high schools would come up.

Mr. Testani said he would present the 1000 Series to the administrators and see what their feelings are.

Mr. Sokolovic noted there was controversy about politicians showing up at schools to engage in politicking.

The next agenda item was Policy 6201 on field trips. Mr. Illingworth said the online versions of the policies contained two versions, one in 2009 and one in 2012. He said it appeared only the 2009 version had the field trip policy.

Mr. Sokolovic said there was a conflict between the form and

the policies. Mr. Testani said the policy indicates all requests for out-of-state and overnight field trips must be submitted at least thirty days in advance.

Mr. Testani said he believed out-of-state trips could be approved at the administrative level, but overnight trips should come to the board.

Mr. Testani said end-of-year trips that were aimed at fun should be allowed even if they were not tied to an educational experience. He said this has not been the case in the district in the last ten to twelve years. He said interacting with classmates is educational in itself.

Mr. Sokolovic moved the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

*Approved by the committee on March 2, 2020*