

# BOARD OF EDUCATION

City Hall - 45 Lyon Terrace  
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD cont.

## MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

**MICHAEL J. TESTANI**  
Superintendent of Schools

**JOHN R. WELDON**  
Chairman

**HERNAN ILLINGWORTH**  
Vice-Chairman

**BOBBI BROWN**  
Secretary



"Changing Futures and Achieving Excellence Together"

**SYBIL ALLEN**

**ALBERT BENEJAN**

**JOSEPH J. LOMBARD**

**JESSICA MARTINEZ**

**JOSEPH SOKOLOVIC**

**CHRIS TAYLOR**

Bridgeport, Connecticut

August 21, 2020

Board Members:

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Monday, August 24, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. at Bridgeport Regional Aquaculture Science & Technology Education Center, 60 St. Stephens Road, Bridgeport, Connecticut 06605 and available via Video Conference Call.

Due to social distancing protocols members of the public will not be allowed in the meeting space, but will be able to view the meeting through live stream on <https://www.bridgeportedu.net/stream>.

---

Bobbi Brown  
Board of Education Secretary

**BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION  
AGENDA OF REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING**

---

**Monday, August 24, 2020 – 6:30 P.M.  
Bridgeport Regional Vocational Aquaculture School  
60 St. Stephens Rd., Bridgeport, CT 06605  
Microsoft Teams Live Broadcast Event**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Roll Call**
- 4. Public Comment (Agenda Items Only)**
- 5. Approval of Board Minutes**
  - a) Special Meeting August 19, 2020
  - b) Special Meeting August 13, 2020
  - c) Special Meeting July 23, 2020
  - d) Special Meeting July 1, 2020
  - e) Regular Meeting June 22, 2020
  - f) Special Meeting June 22, 2020
  - g) Special Meeting May 20, 2020
- 6. Chairman's Report**
- 7. Committee Reports/Referrals**
  - a) Facilities
  - b) Finance
  - c) Governance
  - d) Teaching and Learning
  - e) Personnel
  - f) Students & Families
  - g) Contracts
  - h) Ad-Hoc Committee: GCS Males of Color
- 8. Superintendent's Report**
  - a) General Report
  - b) Public Q&A Regarding District Re-Opening
- 9. Old Business – None to be Transacted**
- 10. New Business**
- 11. Adjourn**

Wednesday, August 19, 2020

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held August 19, 2020, at Bridgeport Regional Vocational Aquaculture School and by video call, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. Present were members Chair John Weldon, Vice Chair Hernan Illingworth, Secretary Bobbi Brown, Joseph Sokolovic, Sybil Allen, and Chris Taylor. Albert Benejan and Joe Lombard arrived subsequently as noted.

Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present.

Mr. Weldon said he agreed to hold a special meeting on an item submitted by Mr. Taylor for closing the district in favor of a full distance model. He said he subsequently was informed by counsel that it was his opinion that such an action would be against the law, and that was confirmed by the state Department of Education.

Mr. Benejan arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Weldon said he advised Mr. Taylor that he and two other members had the right to compel a special meeting of the board and that was done.

Mr. Taylor thanked the chair for scheduling the meeting and his board colleagues. He said he did not feel comfortable with reopening the schools at this point. He said he has talked to bus drivers, paras, teachers, and security officers. He noted many businesses and 999 Broad Street are closed, while the public was not present at this meeting. He

said New Haven and Chicago were not going to open their public schools. He admitted he did not have the votes to accomplish the closure, but he suggested Bridgeport not be the guinea pig for a state that does not fund us. He said he hoped the board could make a collaborative effort that works for everybody.

Mr. Benejan said he agreed with Mr. Taylor. He said this was nothing personal, but caring about kids. He said he lost a relative from the virus

Ms. Martinez said she supported both the school opening and those who want their children to learn remotely. She said the voice of staff members does matter. She said the district had created a safe plan to reopen and she agreed to the meeting so there would be information and to have voices heard that have particular concerns.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said he did not conduct a survey of teachers because he did not feel it necessary to them on whether they would be willing to come back to their jobs.

Ana Batista, the BEA president, said she received about 700 responses to the union's teacher survey.

Ms. Martinez said the voice of the teachers outside the building still matter to her. She had concerns about teachers with low immune systems or who take care of a handicapped child or family member at home. Ms. Batista said teacher safety is key. She said those with safety concerns have to go through a process with human resources depending on their health condition.

The superintendent said health accommodations have to go through human resources. He said as of yesterday about twenty teachers had requested accommodations and they will be looked at individually. He said caring for someone at home does not qualify under the Americans with Disability Act. He noted employees on FMLA are not paid.

In response to a question, Supt, Testani said the district is looking at how many school-aged children of teachers who are on remote learning can be accommodated somewhere in the district, with supervision, at a small fee.

Ms. Batista said the union was in the process of negotiating an MOU. She expressed concern that in a school like Batalla, which is close to capacity, if the number of attending students was over fifty percent. She said with the hybrid plan a lot of teachers don't have a place to bring their own children, which is why Mr. Testani is trying to develop a plan in this area. The superintendent said he is working with Lighthouse to provide the child care services for the teachers.

Mr. Taylor said he believed the superintendent had put together a fabulous plan.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said the claim that Batalla and Marin Schools were at 80 percent capacity for in-person attendance was totally inaccurate. As of today, Batalla had 366 students opting for in-person learning. He said he understood New Haven was late in ordering PPE, unlike Bridgeport, and they presented that argument at the state level.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said the district was still waiting for answers from parents as to whether they wish to have their children use bus transportation.

Mr. Sokolovic said student safety was not black and white/yes or no. He said children who are not allowed to attend to school are also in danger, including by suicide. He said more children are at risk of child abuse by not attending school. He said she believed the reopening plan would be safe for children.

Mr. Sokolovic said the safety of teachers was very important. He said the superintendent had described all the PPE and products that have been purchased. He said he is afraid every day he goes to work at the New York City Transit Authority, where many employees have died. He noted he was sending his son to school and he expected teachers to enforce mask wearing. He said he believed some of the teachers outside are legitimately afraid because they don't have all the information. He said some teachers are under the impression they're going to have twenty or thirty kids in a classroom, which is not the case.

In response to a a question, Supt. Testani said a COVID test is a snapshot in time. He said the rapid test – the antigen test – is not accurate and is given to people who are sick, so doctors know how to treat them. He said there is a twenty to thirty percent chance there will be a false negative or false positive. The PCR molecular test results take several days up to a week to be received. You could be negative the day of the test and the positive the day you get the results and not even know. He said unlike the NBA, which operates in a bubble, we do not have the capacity to test everybody, every day, nor the ability to force people to take tests.

Supt. Testani said phone calls are being made every day to determine the choices of parents. It is unknown exactly how many students are in the district currently. He said there are zero classes that have as many as twenty students scheduled to attend in person.

In response to a question, the superintendent said building subs were being assigned, as well as a pool of substitute teachers exclusively for the district. A substitute might monitor a class with a teacher at home participating remotely if they're available to do it.

Ms. Brown said we still don't know all the answers about the COVID virus. She said she understood both sides of the issue. She noted the board was not the experts on the virus. She said she supported the teachers outside. She added no one person had the answer to what we were facing as a team.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said filters in HVAC systems are changed frequently, more that what is recommended.

Mr. Illingworth said we had to rely on information from professionals. He noted the data shows the rate is under one percent and the city's health director supports the reopening. He said he has seen the PPE that has been stockpiled by the district. He said the administration had put a lot of work into getting ready.

Mr. Illingworth said he appreciated staff and parents who had reached out about the issue. He said the governor has put us in a spot to reopen the schools. He said the superintendent would not be able to convince the Commissioner of Education to keep the district closed to in-

person learning, particularly after losing 30 percent of last year. He said the district had a good plan and keeping students home had a negative impact. He added that the health director will be monitoring the situation in regard to outbreaks.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said there will be a nurse in every school, every day. Every school has to designate an isolation room for any student or staff member that exhibits symptoms. He said work on the bus routes is delayed based on survey responses. There will be conversations with the bus company to discuss the need to add or reduce routes or add different tiers. He said high school busing should be fine given the hybrid model, which will allow adding more buses to elementary routes to keep social distancing.

Supt. Testani said the district was one of the first in March that closed schools. He said the district was very proactive as Fairfield County numbers started to grow.

Mr. Weldon said the purchase of PPE and the reopening task force shows the proactive approach in the district. He said the reopening plan was extensive and he thanked everyone who worked on it. He said the plan is nimble enough to be switched on a dime if we have to.

Mr. Lombard joined the meeting.

Mr. Lombard said he had been listening to the meeting while he was working. He said he wanted to echo Mr. Illingworth's comments about the position of the governor and the commissioner about safely reopening schools. He said not reopening the schools would involve requesting a waiver from the state based on specific reasons, not just fear.



In response to a question, Supt. Testani said a requirement to sign a waiver to attend to school was a fabrication often seen on social media. He said the only thing parents had to sign for was a copy of the remote learning expectations document.

Mr. Taylor apologized to the superintendent and his colleagues for any indication that he did not have the utmost faith in the board and the superintendent. He said he believed we had the best plan in the state and the best supplies of PPE. However, he said he initially thought the disease was a joke until he spoke with people who lost loved ones.

Mr. Taylor said he didn't think there would be any impact whether we start in September or October. He said he was not prepared to take the chance on a catastrophic situation if school reopens in September. He said he represents a very ethnic community, including undocumented people, who did not fill out the survey. He said Stanley Lord of the NAACP indicated people in the black community do not want to return to school. He said everyone he had talked told them they would be willing to wait until late September or October. He said this would allow the board to see how the districts that opened up do.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said he believed anyone who contracts the virus is covered by some specific legislation, but he would need a more detailed answer from human resources.

In response to questions, Supt. Testani said there are no cops in schools as the SROs patrol the areas around schools. He said sick children who come to school will be

taken to the isolation area immediately for evaluation. He said reports are made to the superintendent and the health director about students in isolation. He said most parents did not submit comments when they submitted survey responses.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said he believed the district would have to go before the review panel at the state if it chose to start the year fully digital. He said he would like to know what metric would be used if October was chosen as the opening date. He said the infection rate in the state and in Bridgeport was under one percent.

Mr. Weldon said the data we have indicates the district is ready to open. The superintendent said he had received inquiries about teachers who were traveling to other states. He said basketball courts in the city are full and Marin's football field is packed. He said other parents are objecting to canceling sports.

Mr. Weldon said if with all this activity the infection rate is below one percent, how will opening school change that.

Mr. Taylor said Mr. Testani could tell the state board that the board told him not to reopen the schools and that is all he would have to tell them. He said this was not personal and he would make sure the superintendent had the backup of Bridgeport people. He said if there were no episodes in thirty days, he would personally schedule a meeting to reopen and support it one hundred percent. He said Bridgeport should say it was doing something different and out of the box and give it thirty days. He offered to accompany Mr. Testani to the state board.

Supt. Testani said many districts were opening next week, so there would be some data available on how things are going.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said the IEP would direct accommodations for any special education child who cannot wear a mask.

Ms. Martinez said this meeting was incredible and made a whole lot of difference. She noted a lot of people were watching the meeting remotely.

Mr. Taylor moved "*to close the Bridgeport Public School system in favor of remote learning until furtherer notice.*" The motion was seconded by Mr. Benejan.

The motion was defeated by a 6-3 vote. Voting in favor were members Benejan, Taylor, and Allen. Voting in opposition were members Martinez, Sokolovic, Brown, Weldon, Lombard, and Illingworth.

Mr. Sokolovic moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

Thursday, August 13, 2020

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held August 13, 2020, at Bridgeport Regional Vocational Aquaculture School and video call, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 6:16 p.m. Present were members Chair John Weldon, Vice Chair Hernan Illingworth, Secretary Bobbi Brown, Joseph Sokolovic, Joseph Lombard, Sybil Allen, and Albert Benejan. Jessica Martinez arrived subsequently as noted.

Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present.

Mr. Weldon said Mr. Illingworth and the Governance Committee would deal with the fifth item on the agenda at their next meeting.

Ms. Martinez arrived at the meeting.

The next agenda item was to award purchase of commodity food items for the 2020-21 school year. Mr. Weldon said the item was heard by the Contracts Committee last night and Mr. Garrity made a presentation. Mr. Weldon said they are food items that go out every year and the items proposed to be purchased were the low bidders with the exception of a meatball item. The bid chosen in the meatball category was the lowest in exactly what was being asked for.

Mr. Illingworth moved *“to approve award of purchase of commodity food items for the ’20-21 school year as outlined in the package presented in the package by Mr. Garrity.”*

Thursday, July 23, 2020

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held July 23, 2020 at Bridgeport Regional Aquaculture Science & Technology Education Center, 60 St. Stephens Road, Bridgeport, Connecticut Bridgeport, Connecticut, and by audio conference.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. Present were Chair John Weldon, Vice Chair Hernan Illingworth, Secretary Bobbi Brown, Joseph Sokolovic, Joseph Lombard, Sybil Allen, and Albert Benejan. Jessica Martinez arrived subsequently as noted.

Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present.

Mr. Weldon noted there was limited seating available at the meeting on a first-come/first served basis, but the meeting is available online.

John Gerrity, director of food and nutrition, said he was discussing the software package for point of sale, inventory, and production to replace the current product. He said after bidding Titan was selected because it was priced on modules that the district could select, resulting in a lower cost than the other two bidders.

Ms. Brown moved *“to approve award of a contract to Titan School Solutions to provide point of sale, inventory production software to the Bridgeport Public Schools Food and Nutrition Center.”* The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on accepting construction documents for the partial roof replacement for Marin School. Mr. Weldon said the item was covered at the prior Facilities Committee meeting.

Supt. Testani said it was a continuation of work from prior to COVID-19, which included limited operations by state offices. The documents must be submitted to the state. Mr. Weldon said the documents were included in the board packets.

Mr. Illingworth moved *“to approve and accept construction for the partial roof replacement for Luis Munoz Marin School.”* The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on approval of education specifications for the removal of underground storage tanks at several schools. Mr. Weldon said the item was covered at the prior Facilities Committee meeting.

In response to a question, Mr. Weldon said he believed the bidding process for the job would occur after approval of the education specification.

Ms. Martinez joined the meeting.

Supt. Testani said Ms. Valle confirmed the bidding process had not taken place yet.

Ms. Allen moved *“to approve the educational specification for the removal of underground storage tanks for John F. Kennedy Campus, Read School, John Winthrop School, Wilbur Cross School, Park City Magnet School, and Columbus School for oil tank removal projects, Project*

*number 21054 for \$315,000 in revenue Line 44122; \$80,000 in Line 41006; total revenue: \$395,000, as approved in the BOE budget.”* The motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was discussion and possible approval to enter into a restricted donation agreement with the School Volunteer Association(SVA). Mr. Weldon said the item was referred to the board by the Contracts Committee.

Supt. Testani said the board had heard a lot about the SVA line being put back in the budget. He said Mr. Davies, the SVA president, offered to fund the salary of the director if the district would cover the salary of the clerical employee. He said the SVA will make monthly payments to cover the director’s salary for 2020-21 school year.

Ms. Martinez moved *“to approve the restricted donation agreement with the School Volunteer Association of Bridgeport, Incorporated, and authorize the superintendent to execute it.”* The motion was seconded by Mr. Benejan and unanimously approved.

Mr. Weldon noted Ms. Hiller of the SVA had provided a copy of its annual report to board members.

The next agenda item was on modifying the 2020-21 student school year calendar.

Supt. Testani said the state Board of Education voted to reduce the mandatory school days from 180 to 177 provided the three days were used for COVID-19-related professional development. He said the time would be used prior to Labor Day with the school year for students beginning on the day after. The school year for staff will remain at 186. He said

staff will need to be ready to teach students in the new format. The additional time will also give time for more training of new staff on digital platforms.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said some schedules may have to be altered in buildings without air conditioning if the buildings are too hot.

Supt. Testani said there is a fiscal reward for the later start due to lower busing costs.

Mr. Illingworth moved “*to approve the modified school year 2020-21 student calendar as presented by the superintendent.*” The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on the 2020-21 district reopening plan.

Supt. Testani said there was a misconception that the district had the discretion not to open school. He said the plan has to be submitted to the state tomorrow and includes three parts: a full reopening, a hybrid, and remote learning. He said some colleagues in other districts released hybrid plans publicly, which are not currently approved for use.

Supt. Testani noted the plan includes the message to parents that if a child is sick they should be kept at home. He said four thousand thermometers that were donated are being distributed to families. He said frequent hand washing and hand sanitizing is expected, with time provided during the school day, along with the resources.



Supt. Testani said he believed every adult should be able to screen themselves in the morning. Faces coverings will be required and social distancing used when possible.

The superintendent said he speaks frequently with the city's new health director to get updates on what is happening in the community.

Supt. Testani said a lot of time has been spent on the hybrid model. He noted almost 9,000 responses had been received from the parent survey. He said whatever model is used it will be based on the needs of the district's families.

Supt. Testani discussed the protocol for how confirmed cases of the virus in a school will be handled, which could include short-term closures of buildings, classrooms or the entire district.

The superintendent displayed the great number of people who worked on the reopening task forces. He said a significant amount of time was contributed by the members. Membership included city officials, parents, administrators, and union representatives.

Supt. Testani there will have to be extensive work in adjusting collective bargaining agreements through MOUs. He said the social-emotional committee worked on the challenges after the lost time in the classroom.

The superintendent said it was hoped that more parents would be able to transport their children to school, particularly if they are given the opportunity for before-school care.

Supt. Testani said 1.5 million masks have been purchased through the budget and facilities purchased another 500,000. Four thousand disposable gowns and four thousand face shields have been bought. There are nine hundred sanitizer stations that have been ordered and will be delivered. Sanitary wipes in the amount of 70,000 90-count containers have been purchased, along three thousand Plexiglas shields.

The superintendent said the district was approaching a one-to-one status for students and devices. He said the final delivery of the Connecticut Partnership devices has been received, totaling about 5,000 for high school students. He said the mayor and the City Council provided funding to purchase 2,100 devices and the district provided another 2,000 tablets for young learners. There are discussion with the housing authority toward providing internet opportunities in housing complexes.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said the plan includes the likelihood that a significant number of parents will opt out of in-person learning and will be able to access remote learning. He said the district learned it needs to do a better job in tracking student attendance. A one-page document on expectations will be provided based on the online credit recovery classes this summer.

Supt. Testani it could be some teachers would work strictly on remote learning; live-streaming classes is another option. He said he meets weekly with Fairfield County superintendents and has a weekly session with the Stamford superintendent.

The superintendent said there could be accommodations for staff as would be done under ADA. If leave is needed

through FMLA, employees will have that right. The expectation is that everyone who is healthy comes back to work.

Mr. Illingworth thanked the superintendent and task force for their work. He said checking students' temperatures is probably not feasible, but that does take place in many workplaces. The superintendent said there are discussions about taking the temperature of staff entering. He said the plan was developed based on consensus, not majority vote.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said an alternating model will have to be used if every child decides to come to school and it is not possible to socially distance in classrooms. He said this would probably be the case in any district in the state.

Mr. Illingworth urged there be a team that inspects every building before they are opened for students. He expressed his disappointment that the co-chairs for health and safety did not reach out to him via e-mail so he was unable to participate in the committee, even after the superintendent forwarded his e-mail to the chairs. Mr. Testani said minutes were not kept of the meetings and he apologized to Mr. Illingworth.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said Ms. Earley has come up with a strategy and plan to have a nurse at every school, every day. He noted every school has to have an isolation room and separate bathroom for anyone placed in that room.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani described how class participation works in online learning. He said he had heard complaints from the teachers' union about live streaming, but

he personally would welcome a parent observing a class remotely in order to be able to help their children. He said he believed taking attendance in remote learning should be as close to normal school as possible.

Mr. Weldon said it seemed the teacher is going to have to be that more diligent to engage a more diverse group of students, some of whom may be in the class on a remote basis.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said the document will be placed on the website after the it is submitted to the state tomorrow. He said a city representative – Mr. Shamus – was needed to facilitate communications with the city, particularly with press releases.

Ms. Martinez said she had mixed emotions about the resumption of classes. She said in-person classes were important, but she was unsure how she felt as a parent on sending her son to school. She said she heard from a student who did no work, received no assessment, and passed the course. She said she was very appreciative of the hard work to create the plan.

The superintendent said he heard some teachers did not want to return to school, but the governor has ordered schools to open in the state. He said folks who work in health care, grocery stores and Home Depot have continued to work. He said our top priority should be our children.

Mr. Weldon said it was a scary time for everyone, but many of the elements in the plan are designed to keep everyone as healthy as possible.

Ms. Brown said she approved of the decision by the governor to give parents the choice as to what they feel is safe for their children. She noted a lot of parents are working more than one job, especially young parents. She urged the superintendent keep doing his weekly updates so parents feel like they have a direct line to him. Supt. Testani said he would continue the Facebook Live events for families, even though some naysayers have participated via comments.

Mr. Sokolovic thanked the reopening committee members. He said he believed there was 280 hours of meeting time at a minimum. He said board and the superintendent had to rebut misconceptions about the situation, which he described as insulting to people who did hard work and a very good job. He said every question asked by board members had been asked at the committee meetings. He noted the plan was just a framework that had to be submitted to the state and other work still remained to be done.

Mr. Sokolovic said taking the temperature of students entering a building would create a bottleneck and lead to less social distancing. He said since 53 percent of parents want their children to attend classes in person this will allow social distancing.

Supt. Testani said he taped a video that will go out announcing a hotline next week where parents can respond via telephone to the survey. He said the cutoff for responses may be by mid-August, at which point a default option will have to be selected for parents, probably remote learning.

Mr. Sokolovic said he was disturbed by seeing on social media and in the press that some parents don't care about their children's health. He said he was choosing to send his

child to school due to the importance of in-person learning. He said every precaution is being taken for health and safety. He said he believed Connecticut was the safest state in the country.

Mr. Sokolovic said some of the criticisms have an ulterior motive because they are looking for educational systems to fail and want to pick off students who are not happy with the system in place. He said there was an incorrect editorial that indicated the district was doing no work at all to prepare. He said he would like to move that Mr. Testani respond by enumerating what has been done.

Mr. Weldon said the superintendent had already started on that and would be bringing it to the board.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said parents can change their mind throughout the year on in-person vs. remote learning, but a week's notice would be requested at the elementary level.

The superintendent said the CIAC had sent out a survey around fall athletics. He said a football season may be ambitious. He said some extracurricular activities will provide opportunities for virtual participation as did take place during the closure.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said he did not believe the responses to the survey indicated reasons for not wanting their children to come to school other than feeling they were not safe. He said he respected parents' choice. He noted more frequent breaks may be needed for children to take off their masks outside. He said he had visited the camp at Rev. Moales's church where children were

comfortable and he noted there are sports camps and sports leagues starting up.

Mr. Illingworth said he agreed with Mr. Sokolovic about the need for a response to the op-ed piece that contained outrageous lies. He said the charge that we never gave professional development to teachers was a lie.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said if a child tests positive the protocol will be that of the health department, which may include contact tracing. He said there was a incident in Norwalk where summer school was closed for one week and then reopened safely. He said he was sure someone would test positive when school is reopened, although they may have contracted the virus somewhere other than school. He said the HR department has guided staff members very appropriately. He said if staff doesn't want to come back without any real reason, it sends a message to families that they shouldn't send their children to school.

Mr. Benejan said what the superintendent is going through is not easy and the board is trying to help him. Mr. Weldon said he believed the document that will be submitted to the state will respond to a lot of the questions and criticisms.

Supt. Testani said he agreed with Mr. Sokolovic that one critic is hoping public education fails for their own profit and gain.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

Draft



The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on purchase of non-commodity food, paper goods, and cleaning supplies for the 2020-21 school year. Mr. Weldon said all the items proposed to purchase came in as the low bid.

Ms. Brown moved “to *authorize award of purchase of non-commodity commercial food, paper goods, and cleaning supplies for the 2020-21 school year.*” The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was an update on the district’s reopening plan.

Supt. Testani said Lisa Morrissey, the city’s director of public health, has joined the meeting. He said she was a contributor to the reopening task force and a great partner in developing the safe reopening.

Ms. Morrissey said the entire department was ready to provide support to all the schools in Bridgeport.

There were technical difficulties with the audio broadcast.

Ms. Martinez moved to recess the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen and unanimously approved.

The meeting was recessed at 6:28 p.m.

The meeting was reconvened at 6:44 p.m.

Ms. Morrissey said right now Connecticut as a whole is looking good in terms of testing results. She said Bridgeport

positively rates remain low and there have not been major changes over the last four weeks. Numbers remain within state guidelines for reopening. She said she would be advising Mr. Testani and the board on a weekly basis as to where Bridgeport stands.

Ms. Morrissey said the data includes rates at the neighborhood level.

Mr. Testani said the district has worked hard and is excited to welcome our students, staff and families back for the 2020-21 school year. He said these are unprecedented times for opening schools. He noted there was a two-hour session today with the BEA. The superintendent said BEA leader Ana Batista has worked closely with him on reopening.

Ms. Batista said the people outside the building were expressing their freedom of speech, but are not acting on behalf of the BEA.

Supt. Testani said parents have an option whether to send their children back to school in person or engage in remote learning at home. He said he respects the decision of every parent.

The superintendent noted the harms attributed to closing schools by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. He said it is well documented that lack of in-person educational options disproportionately harm low-income and minority students and students with special needs. He said many students lack their own device and do not have reliable internet connectivity. He said the district would be much better equipped with devices and connectivity than in March.

Supt. Testani said Bridgeport students rely on schools for more than just education, including critical services that develop social-emotional skills. He said the staff plays a critical role in addressing neglect and abuse. Last year, referrals to the state of abuse and neglect in the home was over 150. He said food and nutrition provides essential nutritional needs for thousands of children. School provides children with recreational opportunities that may not be available in some neighborhoods.

The superintendent said reopening schools creates an opportunity to invest in the education, well being, and future of our children. He said he believed schools could safely be reopened, while taking every safety precaution.

Supt. Testani said the hybrid model was introduced this week. High school students whose last name begins with A to L will attend in person Mondays and Tuesdays; students whose last name begins with M to Z will be on remote learning. All students will be on remote on Wednesdays to allow for deeper cleaner and sanitizing. Students on remote learning Monday and Tuesday will attend in person on Thursday and Friday. Students with IEPs and in ESL/bilingual will have the opportunity to attend all four days.

The superintendent said remote learning expectations will include communications from the school and the district, students reading at least 30 minutes every day outside of the learning process and to participate in video, real-time lessons every day, all day. He said students should collaborate with the teacher and peers using digital tools on Teams. All students should wear appropriate clothing. Students should ask for help and support when needed, and

should compete their assigned work to the best of their ability and by the due dates indicated.

Supt. Testani said teachers and support staff should provide timely feedback on student work and requests. Remote lessons should be age and grade appropriate. Teachers will be available to communicate with students and parents during the scheduled work day.

The superintendent said parents need to review the remote learning plan and request their child's student number for future reference, which can be found on Power School. Parents need to update their contact information and coordinate a time for the administration of district assessments for their child. He urged that parents ensure that students get the right amount of sleep and exercise.

Supt, Testani said it was important to note that attendance will be kept for all remote learning days through Power School and will be consistent with in-person attendance. He said hard copies of work can be dropped off at schools between 8:00 and 12:00 Monday to Friday with advance notice.

The superintendent said a regular grading scale would be used. He said last year was ended with a board-approved modified grading scale. He said assignments must be completed in a timely manner or they will be marked a zero.

Supt. Testani said data indicates that students who do not have an effective learning year with a good teacher fall behind; if it's two years, they are at risk to drop out of school.

The superintendent said the hybrid model is not being used at pre-K to 8th grade because 45 percent of parents have

opted for remote learning, so full-time attendance can be kept a low size. He said the district is prepared to pivot to a hybrid if in-person attendance grows too much.

Unfortunately, six thousand families have not chosen an option; if a choice is not received by August 20, those students will be placed on remote learning.

Supt. Testani described the purchase of face shields, masks, packets of wipes, sanitizers, Plexiglas dividers, and sanitizing stations.

Mr. Benejan said he was not in support of reopening schools due to safety concerns.

In response to a question, the superintendent said he realized parents are in a difficult position with an overwhelming task. He said he understood health and safety is first and foremost, but he has seen basketball courts and splash pads in the city packed, along with camps and daycare facilities. He said he believed there was no substitute for a highly trained teacher in a classroom; it was not like a robot on an assembly line.

Ms. Martinez said she had concerns with the level of expectations on parents, but we're all going to have to do our part.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said we're asking parents to self-monitor their children and asking staff to self-monitor and stay home if they feel sick. He said it is now documented that Fairfield County is under control with COVID after being the hardest hit in Connecticut. He said the rate of pay for substitute teachers has been increased to try to attract quality substitutes, including the use of building-based subs.

Ms. Martinez said she had discussions with staff members who were outside the building tonight and exchanged opinions with them.

The superintendent said schools are going to have to open at some point and noted he heard some parents indicate they would not be willing to take a vaccine even if it were available.

Mr. Sokolovic noted he was choosing to send his child to school because he believed the plan was safe and because there is no substitute for in-person learning. He said parents should have the right to choose. He objected to parents who make different choices attacking each other on the internet.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said in warm weather some buildings may have to go to half a day or close entirely due to air circulation concerns. He noted the Commissioner of Education was very supportive of the district's plans. He said class sizes would not exceed 50 percent of the contractual limit. Mr. Sokolovic said due to the parent choice numbers there will be classes with less than ten students.

Ms. Brown noted the stress of young parents who have multiple jobs and have to teach their children. She said she had heard from a lot of parents in this category. She said this was a situation the board had never faced before and she urged everyone to work together.

Supt. Testani said the district is working closely with the BEA and the relationship is strong, which will go a long way in getting through this. Ms. Batista said the session today with teachers and the superintendent was helpful.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said staff support services that are available in person will be available virtually for students at home. He said that one reason for the emphasis on attendance is to identify students who are not engaged. He said grab-and-go meals will be available as well as after-school activities for students via the internet.

Ms. Allen said there are many parents who cannot help their children. Supt. Testani said that situation can arise where parents choose remote learning but do not have the ability to support it. He said creating a safe environment will make those parents realize that it's okay to send their child to school.

Mr. Testani said there has been technology training for parents and videos are available on the district's website. He said remote learning is a tough way for a child to go to school.

Jeff Postolowski, IT director, said there is going to be an academic support number for parents and there is an academic support team for teachers. He said multiple sessions were held for parents on technology with language barriers.

Supt. Testani said CARES funding is being used for kindergarten paras to support teachers.

Mr. Illingworth thanked Ms. Morrissey for her work and assistance to the district. Ms. Morrissey said the guidelines for reopening schools depend on fewer than ten new COVID cases per 100,000 for the population per day. She said the data would be continually monitored.

Mr. Illingworth said parents were going to need a lot of support with the hybrid model or distance learning. He said it seemed the district was being proactive in this area. He said all the data and guidelines seemed to indicate things were working, so it should be about parents' choice. He said it hurt to receive an e-mail from a parent that indicated he did not care about children's lives. He said the children who lost 30 percent of their school year are never going to get that back. He said if the data supports reopening schools, then we must do that. He said it was sad that the community was divided and not supporting each other.

Mr. Illingworth thanked the superintendent for his leadership.

In response to questions, Supt. Testani said face coverings are required for students as soon as they get on a school bus or on the campus if they do not ride the bus. Failure to comply will result in the student being placed on remote learning. He said parents will not be allowed to walk their children to classrooms and they will have to make appointments to visit the schools. Parents will have the option of participating in PPTs in person or remotely.

Supt. Testani said the PTSO/PAC situation needs further discussion, perhaps at the Students & Families meeting.

The superintendent said there will not be temperature checks at the door, but the 4,000 thermometers given to the district by the health department have been distributed to parents. He said teachers will be allowed to check the temperature of children with the infra-red thermometers in their classroom. He said students will be provided with breaks with classes so they can take their masks off and so they are not cooped up in a classroom all day.



Mr. Weldon said he had been working remotely for the last five months. He said it was important to have a structure, including dressing as if going to work, which changes your mindset. Working in a designated area is also helpful.

Mr. Weldon said choices in life are not always easy, but the district had structured the reopening to give choices. He noted people with underlying conditions have the option of going out on family medical leave.

Mr. Weldon said he wanted to clarify that under the law the district is required to provide physical, in-person learning. It can be supplemented by distance learning, but we are not allowed to take away the choice of in-person learning. He said any request for a waiver to that statute is not likely to be granted by the state Department of Education.

Supt. Testani said there are 169 school districts in Connecticut and the vast majority of them, including wealthy districts, are creating schedules with in-person learning to meet the needs of their children. He said the district's children could not afford to fall farther behind.

Mr. Weldon said it seemed there was a consensus to move forward as we are, with the plan being fluid enough to change if developments warrant. Mr. Benejan said he wanted it noted that he did not agree with reopening the schools.

The next agenda item was on the 2020-21 fall sports program.

The superintendent said there had been a lot of discussion statewide on this issue. He said the football committee of the CIAC voted to postpone the season from the fall to the

spring. The full board of the CIAC reversed the decision and said football would take place in the fall. Today the state Department of Health advised against playing in the fall.

Supt. Testani said the overwhelming number of districts and superintendents are questioning the CIAC's decision. He said he would be the first one to make the decision that we cannot play football this fall. He said if the Big Ten cannot play football, the district's schools should risk playing this fall. He pointed to issues with safely transporting teams and sanitizing locker rooms. He said the game itself does not call for social distancing.

The superintendent said volleyball is also not conducive to social distancing. He noted the gyms will not be used for physical education, so it would be contradictory to play volleyball.

Ms. Allen said she would not want to jeopardize a child playing contact sports.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said he would like to work with the BEA in negotiations to pay some coaches to continue to work with small cohorts of athletes for conditioning so they will be prepared to play when the opportunity comes.

Supt. Testani said soccer was being played throughout the summer safely, so that will be played. He noted there are less children to transport for soccer away games. Cross-country will go forward.

In response to a question, Supt. Testani said a passing league as typically done in the summer for football might be possible.

Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Weldon, and Mr. Sokolovic said they supported the superintendent's decision.

In response to a question, Ms. Morrissey said she felt comfortable with the reopening plans provided by the public, private and charter schools. She said from a deep dive into the numbers and looking back for the past six weeks there is nothing that jumped out that was a concern with school reopening shortly. She said the numbers will be closely monitored.

Mr. Sokolovic said we need information put out to counter the misinformation being spread by special interest groups. He suggested more informational sessions around the city. He said some people are still questioning whether we have enough masks because they haven't read the plan.

Supt. Testani said he would likely resume Facebook Live events to explain the plans further.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

Wednesday, July 1, 2020

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held July 1, 2020, by video and audio conference call, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. Present were members Chair John Weldon, Vice Chair Hernan Illingworth, Secretary Bobbi Brown, Joseph Sokolovic, and Albert Benejan.

Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present

Mr. Weldon noted Mr. Testani as of today is the permanent superintendent of Bridgeport Public Schools. He said Mr. Testani completed his curriculum and received his 093 certification on May 17th. He congratulated Mr. Testani and said he looked forward to working with him for the long term.

The sole agenda item was discussion and possible action to concur that certain property proposed to be acquired by the city of Bridgeport meets the requirements set forth in the education speciation for a new Bassick High School.

Mr. Weldon said the item qualifies for executive session because it deals with property that is technically still under negotiation to acquire.

Mr. Sokolovic moved *“to go into executive session to discuss this item, with those present being the board members and Supt. Testani.”* The motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth and unanimously approved.

The executive session began at 4:07 p.m.

The board resumed in public session at 4:18 p.m.

Ms. Brown moved that *“the Bridgeport Board of Education concurs that certain property proposed to be acquired by the City of Bridgeport meets the requirements set forth in education specification for a new Bassick High School pursuant to the discussion just held in executive session.”*

The motion was seconded by Mr. Benejan and unanimously approved.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

Monday, June 22, 2020

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held June 22, 2020, by video and audio conference call, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Present were members Chair John Weldon, Vice Chair Hernan Illingworth, Secretary Bobbi Brown, Albert Benejan, Joseph Sokolovic, Jessica Martinez, Sybil Allen, and Joseph Lombard.

Acting Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Weldon said a written communication from Ella H. Marsh of the School Volunteer Association was received, although it appears she did not successfully join the public comment section in person. He read Ms. Marsh's comments. Ms. Marsh wrote about the positive experiences she had while serving as a volunteer reader. She urged the board to include the School Volunteer Association in the budget.

**APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:**

Mr. Illingworth moved approval of the board's minutes of June 8, 2020. The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen and approved by a 7-0 vote.

Voting in favor were members Brown, Sokolovic, Weldon, Illingworth, Allen, Lombard, and Benejan. Ms. Martinez abstained.

**CHAIR REPORT:**

Mr. Weldon said he attended the last few drive-through high school graduations and he was impressed at how much work had gone into them and how smoothly they have run. He said the building-level leaders and Mr. Postolowski, who directed streaming the events, were especially deserving of congratulations..

Ms. Brown, Mr. Benejan, and Mr. Sokolovic added how enjoyable the events were. Ms. Martinez said the event at Central today was beautiful.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS/REFERRALS:**

Mr. Sokolovic referred the naming of Columbus School to the Facilities Committee. He noted the population of the school was now 84 percent minority. He questioned Columbus's history and whether his name should be on a minority school building.

Mr. Illingworth said there was a different process for name changes, which includes the superintendent forming a committee. Mr. Weldon said it could be looked at by the committee and they could recommend a naming committee be formed. Mr. Illingworth said the superintendent could potentially act sooner. Ms. Martinez suggested community input be gathered.

Mr. Testani said the process includes a naming committee which recommends three choices. He said it could be handled more quickly outside of the committee. He suggested the issue begin with the Columbus School community. He said there could be an anonymous survey of

the community. He indicated he would like to see a 60 to 70 percent response rate.

Mr. Benejan referred a report from the IT Department to the Facilities Committee.

Mr. Sokolovic said there was nothing new to report from the Finance Committee.

Mr. Illingworth said the Governance Committee was awaiting the drafting of some documents and he would schedule a meeting upon receipt.

Mr. Lombard reported on the Teaching & Learning Committee, which included the special education report and approval of a proposed airplane building program at Bassick.

Ms. Brown said she wanted to learn more about African-American studies in the district. She said she wanted to highlight the pride of African-American students or students who come from a different country. Mr. Testani said African-American and Latin American studies are part of the high school curriculum and a state graduation requirement. Mr. Sokolovic said he would look at exploring a more diverse curriculum in the future at the Teaching & Learning Committee, which he described as a long-haul type of thing.

Mr. Weldon suggested holding a special meeting the on African-American and Latin American studies, which were previously presented to the board. He noted the textbooks selected could be reviewed.

Mr. Weldon said the Personnel Committee met twice since the last board meeting. Candidates were interviewed on June 12th for various positions; on June 17th, other



candidates were referred to the superintendent in the interests of time. He said the committee has discussed looking at streamlining personnel policies.

Mr. Benejan said the Students and Families Committee received a report from Mr. Planas on student grades and graduation rates, purchases of school supplies, the parent convention funding that will be rolled into next year, and the parent survey.

Mr. Weldon said the Contracts Committee met on June 12th and referred three items for tonight's agenda.

Mr. Sokolovic reported on the actions of the Ad Hoc Committee on Great City Schools/Males of Color. Dr. Melissa Jenkins spoke on the committee's white paper. She said the presentation represents the work of the committee that is cumulative for about the last six years. She added that the board had received one of the final drafts of the white paper.

Dr. Jenkins said she would present an overview of the white paper. She said the board's adoption of the Council of Great City Schools' pledge occurred on May 30, 2014, and an ad hoc committee was formed. She said Ibram X. Kendi said in *How to be an Anti-Racist* that the word racism is not equivalent to a slur, but descriptive, and racism must be consistently identified, described and dismantled. She said the paper strives to identify the racism, challenges, and the plight of men of color. She said we take up the mantle for all children when we assure that male of color life matters.

Dr. Jenkins said there is a section on systemic challenges for males of color. She noted the data includes both African-American and Hispanic males. She said the data compares

the males of color to nothing other than the standard of excellence created for all children.

Dr. Jenkins said data used was from the SBAC assessment over four years in Grades 3 to 8 for ELA and mathematics. While the data shows small gains for males of color it also reveals that approximately 80 percent are performing below proficiency in ELA and math.

Dr. Jenkins said the SAT data for high school students is flat or perhaps may be considered up and down. As of 2018-19, 22.14 percent of males of color scored at levels meeting or exceeding proficiency in ELA and 7.73 percent met or exceeded proficiency in math.

Dr. Jenkins said the NGSS science assessment was administered last year for the first time; 273(15.92 percent) males of color in Grades 5, 8 and 11 met or exceeded the science standard.

Dr. Jenkins said the percentage of males of color with one or more in-school suspensions, with peak numbers in Grade 9, reveals the need for more support before then. She noted the data on out-of-school suspensions reveals the same need.

Dr. Jenkins said school climate data indicates overall the majority of males of color have a trust for their classroom teacher, but the trend decreases as students move across the grade bands.

Dr. Jenkins said student-teacher trust and emotional regulation indicators were selected because they often have a high correlation with students' grades and performance in school. She said half of the males of color surveyed reported

they have a strong understanding of their emotional regulation. The rates improve in Grades 9 to 12.

Dr. Jenkins said the next section is on the literature around educational challenges and societal issues that present challenges to males of color. She said concepts such as white supremacy, institutional racism, equity, the cases of *Crumpton vs. Chop* and *Sheff vs. O'Neill*, and magnet schools are covered. She said white supremacy is a political or socio-economic system in which white people enjoy a structural advantage over other ethnic groups. She said the *Crumpton vs. Chop* case began in the district in 1979, when there weren't many teachers of color employed. She said the district had to settle the case and teachers of color who were laid off during budget issues were hired back. She said the committee is very passionate that the school system should represent how the children they serve look.

Dr. Jenkins said two community forums were held during the time the white paper was being developed. Questions were posed to participants about males of color. Dr. Jenkins said the answers are summarized on a slide. Many respondents mentioned mentoring, after-school activities, more male teachers of color, parent training, addressing systemic racism, and creative instruction.

Dr. Jenkins said the pressing issues facing males of color include early-start care, high-quality child care and preschool, high-stakes testing, high administrator and teacher turnover, suspensions, over identification in special education, adverse childhood experiences, and a pedagogy of self.

Dr. Jenkins said the call to action includes asking the board to considering mentoring and an equity audit to support

males of color. Formal mentoring has the power to equip males of color with the assets needed to navigate the socio-political context of schooling and settings outside of education.

Dr. Jenkins said the equity audit recommendations would include implicit bias training and racial-neutral policies, review of systems and structures such as hiring practices, a teacher summit, an annual forum, and a parent-community summit.

Mr. Illingworth congratulated the committee for their hard work and he thanked Mr. Sokolovic for his leadership. Ms. Brown said the presentation was very well put together and said she believed the community would appreciate it. Ms. Allen said she hoped the board can accomplish everything contained in the report.

Mr. Benejan said Dr. Jenkins always does an amazing, professional job.

Mr. Lombard said he wanted to echo the appreciation for the hard work and said it seems like it came together at the best time.

Mr. Weldon said the process had been frustrating for a long period of time, but we can now see that there has been a phenomenal degree of work that has gone into this and contributions by a lot of different people.

Ms. Martinez said she was excited that the project was completed and she praised those involved.

Mr. Sokolovic said he wanted to especially thank Dr. Jenkins for doing the majority of the work, along with Dr. McPherson

and all the volunteers. He said the white paper was the starting point to going forward in the future. He said the committee needs to evolve into something else to look at all these things through an equity lens. He said these are not going to be easy conversations. He said when he hears about white supremacy he closes up, but we have got to get past those barriers and change ourselves and our city.

Mr. Testani thanked Mr. Sokolovic for seeing the white paper completed and said he agreed this is just the beginning of the work that needs to take place. He said in addition to Dr. Jenkins's many responsibilities, this took up a lot of her time and she took a lot of pride and made sure the end product was of the highest quality. He said she deserved a break from some of the heavy lifting now.

Dr. Jenkins said the white paper still has to be edited to the final version.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT/AGENDA:**

Mr. Testani said the BMA and Harding graduations have been completed very successfully, and Central Magnet was completed today. He congratulated all the graduates and families. He said the staff put together tremendous events. He said going forward many have suggest a hybrid graduation combining the old forms with things used this year and he would like to get student and staff input on this.

Mr. Testani said the school year ended on June 17th. He said overall he believed the district and the community did an outstanding job in rallying around students and families during the pandemic. He said planning for reopening is going on, but guidance from the governor's office and state Department of Education is still being awaited. He said many

parents and staff are anxious to know what the reopening will look like, but definitive answers are not possible at this time.

Mr. Testani said he was not sure what the distance learning option would look like in the event schools are reopened in the fall. He said Connecticut had the lowest positive test rate in the world, so things are looking good.

Christy Maldonado asked a question of Mr. Testani on options for leaving children on distance learning if parents choose to. Mr. Testani said he was not sure if that option would be available. If it is, paper copies and packets will not be an option.

Ms. Maldonado thanked Mr. Testani for the hard work put in by the teachers during the pandemic. Mr. Testani said the Facebook Live events would continue in the summer to update parents.

Mr. Benejan said the team was doing an amazing job by working together.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

The next agenda item was on an RFP for transition services for students 18 to 21 with disabilities.

Mr. Testani said it was believed the current transition program could be improved. It is housed at the Burroughs Community Center and is staffed. He said the RFP is designed to see what kind of response is received.

Mr. Sokolovic moved *“to issue an RFP for transition services in an ages 18 to 21 program for individuals with disabilities.”*

The motion was seconded by Ms. Martinez and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on a joint board and City of Bridgeport RFP for Medicare supplement and Medicare prescription contracts.

Mr. Testani congratulated Ms. Christine Walsh Mitchell, recently retired payrolls and benefits director, for her service.

Ulysses Rogers, director of payroll and benefits, said historically the RFP has been presented by the city. He said he was seeking board approval for the new RFP. He said the board's administrative costs are 44 percent of the overall cost of the Anthem plan; 49 percent of the prescription plan; and 44 percent of the Beacon prescription plan. The total of all plans has a 47 percent contribution by the board to the costs.

Mr. Rogers said the board only pays for costs directly to attributable to us.

Mr. Lombard moved that "*the Bridgeport Board of Education participate in a joint Bridgeport Board of Education and City of Bridgeport RFP for Medicare supplement and Medicare prescription contract.*" The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on a memorandum of agreement between the board and Tango Flight, Inc., to build a light sport aircraft at Bassick High School. Mr. Testani said he brought the matter to the Teaching and Learning Committee after Dr. Cardona the commissioner of education, presented this opportunity to him.

Mr. Testani said he jumped at the opportunity and thought it would fit nicely with the manufacturing and auto programs at Bassick. He said Mr. Blum, the Bassick teacher, would be perfect to work with the students on this. He said all funding is provided by an outside entity. The proceeds from the sale of the aircraft will fund next year's project.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said the proposed contract has been sent to counsel for review. There is no additional liability than that associated with the regular auto shop class. Mr. Weldon said the contract in the packet was a sample that Tango used with a district in Kansas.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said there will be mentors with aviation experience that will also participate, and which will expose the students to potential careers.

Ms. Allen moved *"to enter into a memorandum of agreement with Tango Flight, Incorporated, to build a modern FAA-certified light sport aircraft at Bassick High School as presented by staff."* The motion was seconded by Mr. Benejan and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on vacation day buyouts for Mr. Testani for the year ending June 30, 2020. Mr. Weldon said the item was brought through the Contracts Committee.

Mr. Testani said contractually he has 25 vacation days as part of his contract and was able to use five days during winter break, however, due to the pandemic he has been unable to use any other days. He said he was asking to be compensated for some of the time and he was not asking for all twenty days.



Ms. Allen suggested giving all the days to Mr. Testani. Mr. Testani said he would be able to use three days before the end of the contract.

Mr. Lombard said because of the exceptional situation and Mr. Testani doing so well he should receive compensation for all unused days, which would amount to 17 days. Mr. Weldon said he agreed, noting there was no way Mr. Testani could use his vacation time during this school year. Mr. Benejan said he agreed with Mr. Lombard. Ms. Martinez said she agreed.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said he would be willing to roll five days out of the 17 into next year. Mr. Sokolovic said it would not be like Mr. Testani would be losing the days, but he was counting the dollars and cents. He said there should be a contractual amendment in writing. Mr. Testani noted the acting superintendent contract expires in eight days.

Mr. Weldon suggested the motion amend the contract to allow the buyout. Mr. Sokolovic said he was fine with that.

Mr. Illingworth appeared to have dropped off the call at this point.

Ms. Allen moved *“to amend the acting superintendent’s current contract such that he is compensated for all but three remaining vacation days.”* The motion was seconded by Mr. Benejan.

Mr. Sokolovic moved to amend to pay Mr. Testani for the twelve days and him roll over the five days as allowed in his current contract. The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen.

Mr. Lombard said he opposed Mr. Sokolovic's amendment because we don't know what the situation will be next year and Mr. Testani will have more vacation time available. He said he wanted to create a clean slate for next year. Mr. Weldon said we could possibly find ourselves in the same position next year.

The amendment failed on a 5 to 2. Voting in favor were members Sokolovic and Allen. Voting in opposition were members Brown, Martinez, Weldon, Benejan and Lombard.

The main motion was approved by a 6-0 vote. Voting in favor were members Allen, Brown, Martinez, Weldon, Benejan and Lombard. Mr. Sokolovic abstained.

There was a discussion of holding future board meetings in public. Mr. Testani said currently groups of 25 people can gather indoors, with 25 percent of the room capacity, however, the numbers increase on July 6th. He added members of the public might have to reserve an available spot ahead of time. He said health precautions would have to be included as well.

Mr. Weldon suggested a special meeting in July be held. Mr. Sokolovic suggested live streaming the meeting as well. Mr. Testani said Geraldine Johnson School would be larger than Aquaculture and help in distancing.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

Draft

Monday, June 22, 2020

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held June 22, 2020, by video and audio conference call, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. Present were members Chair John Weldon, Secretary Bobbi Brown, Albert Benejan, Joseph Sokolovic, Jessica Martinez and Joseph Lombard. Vice Chair Hernan Illingworth joined subsequently as noted.

Acting Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present

The sole agenda was discussion and possible approval of resolution settlement for Workers' Compensation claim number W00901604.

Mr. Lombard moved *"to go into executive session to discuss this item, with those being present being the Board of Education; the superintendent, our director of benefits, Ulysses Rogers; and Atty. Joseph Marotti, who is the attorney involved in this claim."*

Mr. Illingworth joined the meeting.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic and unanimously approved.

The executive session began at 6:04 p.m.

The board reconvened in public session at 6:14 p.m.

Mr. Sokolovic moved “*to approve the resolution of settlement for Workers’ Compensation claim number W00901604.*” The motion was seconded by Ms. Brown and unanimously approved.

Mr. Sokolovic moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lombard and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

Draft

Wednesday, May 20, 2020

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held May 20, 2020, by video conference call, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. Present were Chair John Weldon, Secretary Bobbi Brown, Joseph Sokolovic, Sybil Allen, Albert Benejan, Joseph Lombard, and Jessica Martinez.

Acting Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present.

The sole agenda item was briefing and discussion concerning possible land acquisition, appraisal or negotiation for a site to build a new Bassick High School.

Ms. Allen moved “*to go into executive session to discuss the sole agenda item.*” The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic. Invited to participate were the board members and the superintendent.

The motion was unanimously approved.

The executive session began at 5:36 p.m.

The board reconvened in public session at 6:06 p.m.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

Draft

Bridgeport Public Schools Staff Movements

As of  
August 24, 2020

**I. PROBATIONARY APPOINTMENTS**

	<b>NAME</b>	<b>LOCATION/POSITION</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE</b>
1.	Rania Abuznaid	Math Teacher	8/26/2020
2.	Emily Aquilino	English Teacher	8/26/2020
3.	Elana Barnett	Special Education Teacher	8/26/2020
4.	Patrick Beck	Conceptual Physics	8/26/2020
5.	Nicole Blaskewiz	Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
6.	Jonathan Brown	Mathematics Teacher	8/26/2020
7.	Lyndsey Bulkley	Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
8.	Sarah Burns	TESOL Teacher	8/26/2020
9.	Rashawna Butler-Bennett	Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
10.	Timothy Carlson	Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
11.	MacArthur Cheek	Social Studies	8/26/2020
12.	Edward Collazo	Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
13.	Jessica Crow	Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
14.	Miguel Diaz	Spanish Teacher	8/26/2020
15.	Anthony Dillon	Math Teacher	8/26/2020
16.	Dawn Drew	Math Teacher	8/26/2020
17.	Brenda Fernandes	Social Studies Teacher	8/26/2020
18.	Vanessa Garcia	Self contained	8/26/2020
19.	William Garraty	Social Studies Teacher	8/26/2020
20.	Rebecca Gellatly	Music Teacher	8/26/2020
21.	Megan Good	Music Teacher	8/26/2020
22.	Waldina Hernandez	Spanish Teacher	8/26/2020
23.	John Hoyt	Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
24.	Peter Huszagh	Math Teacher	8/26/2020
25.	Edward Huydic	Special Education Teacher	8/26/2020
26.	Tarsheen Jackson	Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
27.	Angela Johnson	Dual Language Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
28.	Michelle Johnson	Math Teacher	8/26/2020
29.	Lamar Kennedy	Co-teacher	8/26/2020
30.	Mary Kennedy	ELA Teacher	8/26/2020
31.	Emma Kimmell	Visual Arts Teacher	8/26/2020
32.	Rachel Klem	Biology Teacher	8/26/2020
33.	Eric'ka Lalanne	Guidance Counselor	8/26/2020
34.	Ashley LaQuesse	Special Education Teacher	8/26/2020
35.	Christine Lesperance	ELA Teacher	8/26/2020



Bridgeport Public Schools Staff Movements

As of  
August 24, 2020

	<b>NAME</b>	<b>LOCATION/POSITION</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE</b>
36.	Kelsey Linnell	Social Studies	8/26/2020
37.	Lizeth Lopez	Spanish Teacher	8/26/2020
38.	Nora Mackay	Science Teacher	8/26/2020
39.	Teressa Massedge	Science Teacher	8/26/2020
40.	Christina Mazzeo	Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
41.	Maite Mendizabal	Physical Education Teacher	8/26/2020
42.	Ochoa Michelle	Grade 6	8/26/2020
43.	Vivian Miller	Special Education Teacher	8/26/2020
44.	Elizabeth Monks	Art Teacher	8/26/2020
45.	Kelly Mulligan	Science Teacher	8/26/2020
46.	Christopher Myers	English Teacher	8/26/2020
47.	Michelle Ochoa	Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
48.	Anita Patel	Math Teacher	8/26/2020
49.	Matthew Paz	Special Education Teacher	8/26/2020
50.	Daniela Pellegrini	Art Teacher	8/26/2020
51.	Crystal Perachio	Special Education Teacher	8/26/2020
52.	Tess Pieragonstini	Social Worker	8/26/2020
53.	Marisa Pollack-Kurtz	Speech and Language Pathologist	8/26/2020
54.	Christine Queen	Special Education Teacher	8/26/2020
55.	Sidra Rafaqut	Biology Teacher	8/26/2020
56.	Jose Ramos	General Science Teacher	8/26/2020
57.	Haley Raphael	General Science Teacher	8/26/2020
58.	Katherine Reyes	Math Teacher	8/26/2020
59.	Alicia Rivera	Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
60.	Carmen Ruano	Dual Language Elementary Teacher	8/26/2020
61.	Lisa Russo	Math Teacher	8/26/2020
62.	Kelsey Sabia	Special Education Teacher	8/26/2020
63.	Daisy Sebastian	Special Education Teacher	8/26/2020
64.	Joanne Schonberg	Special Education Teacher	8/26/2020
65.	Ian Shannon	TLC Program at MCM	8/26/2020
66.	Matthew Smith	Math Teacher	8/26/2020
67.	Emma Soltis	Kindergarten Teacher	8/26/2020
68.	Erica Stapleton	Art Teacher	8/26/2020
69.	Oscar Trujillo	Science Teacher	8/26/2020
70.	Elijah Uttley-Rosado	Music Teacher	8/26/2020
71.	Alyssa Zebrowski	Kindergarten Teacher	8/26/2020

Bridgeport Public Schools Staff Movements

As of  
August 24, 2020

**II. RETIREMENTS**

	<b>NAME</b>	<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>YEARS of SERVICE</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE</b>
1.	KAREN BAKER	FCW	BIOLOGY	18 YEARS	06/30/2020
2.	DIANE LARACUENTE	HALL	ELEMENTARY	31 Years	07/31/2020

**III. SEPARATIONS**

	<b>NAME</b>	<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE</b>	<b>REASON</b>
1.	BONNIE MCKINNEY	DUNBAR	MATH	08/09/2020	Personal
2.	ROBIN HETHERMAN	ROSSEVELT	KINDERGARTEN	08/17/2020	Personal
3.	ROBERT TRADER	BLACKHAM		08/14/2020	Personal
4.	CHRIS MORGILLO	COLUMBUS	ELA	08/11/2020	Personal
5.	LOGAN WHITLEY	CLAYTRO	SCIENCE	08/01/2020	Personal
6.	TARA HUTCHINSON	BATALLA	SPED	08/14/2020	Personal
7.	SARAH RICCIO	BLACKROCK	MATH	08/16/2020	Personal
8.	JOANNE SCHONBERG	ADMIN OFFICE	SLD	08/05/2020	Personal
9.	JOHN RAMOS	HARDING	COUNSELOR	07/31/2020	Personal
10.	LUCILLE GOMES	COLUMBUS	ESL	07/22/2020	Personal
11.	JUDITH MARSHALL	BASSICK	CULINARY ARTS	07/28/2020	Personal
12.	MATHEW SILBER	CENTRAL	SOC STUD	07/27/2020	Personal
13.	MARISSA FASOLI	BLACKHAM	ELEM	07/27/2020	Personal
14.	DAY MITCHELL	READ	ELEM	07/24/2020	Personal

Bridgeport Public Schools Staff Movements

As of  
August 24, 2020

15.	TEKENYA MONTEIRO	BLC	SOCIAL WORKER	08/01/2020	Personal
16.	TAYLOR DAWSON	HARDING	LTS	07/23/2020	Personal
17.	KRISTEN REID	HIGH HORIZON	MATH	07/22/2020	Personal

Bridgeport Public Schools Staff Movements

As of  
July  
21, 2020

**I. PROBATIONARY APPOINTMENTS**

	<b>NAME</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE</b>
1.	VICTOR SANTOS	SPED	08/26/2020
2.	JESSICA KROTKI	MATH	08/26/2020
3.	JACINYA BENJAMIN	PRE-K	08/26/2020
4.	ALYSSA SKIBO	SLP	08/26/2020
5.	RYAN PIRRO	ELEMENTARY	08/26/2020
6.	ISABELLA HERNANDEZ	ART	08/26/2020
7.	KENYA ERSKINE	ELEMENTARY	08/26/2020
8.	KYLE BRODERICK	PHYSICS	08/26/2020
9.	FARZANA DOSANI	ELEMENTARY	08/26/2020
10.	NICOLE RIZZO-RIVERA	ELA	08/26/2020
11.	MEGAN LOCANTE	SOCIAL WORKER	08/26/2020
12.	JESSICA REYES PALENCIA	KINDERGARTEN	08/26/2020
13.	JULIA DOHERTY	TECHNOLOGY	08/26/2020
14.	MELINA VIEUX	KINDERGARTEN	08/26/2020
15.	MEGAN IBARRA	MUSIC	08/26/2020
16.	SARAH BAKUSLKI	LIBRARIAN	08/26/2020
17.	VALERIE SALTZMAN	BIOLOGY	08/26/2020
18.	SARAH RICCIO	MATH	08/26/2020
19.	SARAH LEWIS STOWE	SOCIAL WORKER	08/26/2020
20.	BRIDGET CORCORAN	SKANE SUPERVISOR of SPECIAL EDUCATION	08/10/2020

Bridgeport Public Schools Staff Movements

As of  
July  
21, 2020

21.	ANEURY MORALES	ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL (MARIN)	08/17/2020
22.	NEKITA HALL	ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL (MARIN)	08/17/2020

**II. RETIREMENTS**

	<b>NAME</b>	<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>YEARS of SERVICE</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE</b>
1.	CANDIDA UMPIERRE	ROOSEVELT	TESOL	25 Years	06/30/2020
2.	AUDREY TAYLOR	ROOSEVELT	ELEMENTARY	41 Years	06/30/2020

**III. SEPARATIONS**

	<b>NAME</b>	<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE</b>	<b>REASON</b>
1.	ELANA MAJORGA	BARNUM	KINDERGARTEN	06/30/2020	Personal
2.	KEVIN DOUGHERTY	DUNBAR	ELA	06/30/2020	Personal
3.	KEVYN JACKMAN	FCW	Biology Teacher	06/30/2020	Personal
4.	MONICA MONTEIRO	TISDALE	KINDERGARTEN	06/30/2020	Personal
5.	PAUL ALBANO	ROOSEVELT	SOCIAL STUDIES	06/30/2020	Personal
6.	CHELSEA GAGLIO	SKANE	SLP	07/20/2020	Personal
7.	ALISHIA McBETH	BRYANT	ELEMENTARY	06/30/2020	Personal
8.	MIKAYLA RICCIO	COLUMBUS	RESOURCE TEACHER	07/20/2020	Personal
9.	JEFFREY BROWN	BATALLA	ENGLISH	07/20/2020	Personal
10.	MATTHEW SWEET	CITY HALL	SPED	07/20/2020	Personal
11.	KIMBERLY CARROZZA	BLACK ROCK	TESOL	07/20/2020	Personal

Bridgeport Public Schools Staff Movements

As of  
July  
21, 2020

12.	ELVINA RUGOVAC	BLACKHAM	ELEMENTARY	07/21/2020	Personal
13.	MARGARET JOYCE	WINTHROP	GIFTED & TALENTED	07/21/2020	Personal
14.	GEORGE PRIETO	READ	MUSIC	7/21/2020	Personal