

Monday, June 8, 2020

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held June 8, 2020, by video and audio conference call, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. Present were Chair John Weldon, Secretary Bobbi Brown, Joseph Sokolovic Joseph Lombard, and Sybil Allen. Albert Benejan joined the meeting subsequently as noted.

Acting Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:

Ms. Allen moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 26, 2020. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lombard and unanimously approved.

COMMMTTEE REPORTS:

Mr. Sokolovic said the Finance Committee will meet on Wednesday, June 10th.

Mr. Weldon, in the absence of Mr. Illingworth, said the 1000 Series was discussed with counsel at the Governance Committee meeting.

Mr. Benejan jointed the meeting.

Mr. Sokolovic said the Teaching & Learning Committee tentatively will meet on June 16th.

Mr. Weldon said the Personnel Committee met last week to conduct interviews of candidates for principal and a recommendation was made to the superintendent. There will be another meeting in the next week or two.

Mr. Benejan reported on the Students & Families Committee. He said the meeting discussed parent engagement expenditures and he indicated he was very happy with the level of expenditure. He added Mr. Young gave the committee an amazing report on bullying. He said he believed parents and students should have consequences for bullying.

Mr. Weldon said the Contracts Committee will meet this week to address minor contract-related items, including Mr. Testani's contract and an RFP for special education services.

Mr. Sokolovic said the Ad Hoc Committee on Great City Schools/Males of Color met last week and received an update on the white paper, which should be ready to present to the board at its next regular meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Marge Hiller said a number of speakers would speak on the importance of the School Volunteer Association(SVA) to teachers and students. She said weekly readers have posted stories online for classrooms. She said the SVA office has formed partnerships with Fairfield University and Urban Impact to be used when school reopens in the fall. She said all the volunteers miss the students. She said many of the volunteers are very familiar with the Microsoft Teams platform and are eager to use it with classes. She urged the SVA be restored to the district's budget.

D. J. Maxwell, library media specialist at Madison School, said she was advocating for the School Volunteer Association and for its return to the budget. She said she began as a volunteer eight years ago in Bridgeport, which inspired her to return to graduate school in order to work in her present position. She said the mentors help with the social-emotional needs of the students. She that asked the SVA be added back into the budget.

S. Bungu said the SVA donates thousand of books and supplies to classrooms. She highlighted the visits of authors to her classroom because of the SVA. She said there is a mentorship program that visits students once a week and all students in the program receive tee shirts and certificates. She said the program reminds children that people that do not know them care about them.

Claudia Gillespie, a bilingual teacher at Marin School, said if she needs books Ms. Goodwin of the school volunteer office finds a way of fulfilling the request. She described the positive impact the volunteer had on the classroom. She said students in her class make great connections with the volunteer reader, even though he doesn't speak Spanish. She said she would hate to lose access to the volunteers at the school.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND AGENDA:

Mr. Testani said there was a lot of information about distance learning on the district's website, including learning opportunities for children during the summer.

Mr. Testani said registration for high school credit recovery will begin June 15th. Dr. Jenkins is working with principals to

identify students for the early reading success program. Both programs will take place online.

Mr. Testani discussed the graduation schedule. He said graduations began today at Skane School.

Mr. Testani said the governor's order allows graduations with up to 150 people outdoors. The figure includes the graduates. He said for this reason the plan for drive-through graduations in the district would continue, along with lawn signs, and video montages. He said a celebration later in the summer might be possible.

Mr. Testani said the last day of school is June 17th, with collection of devices and pickup of personal belongings continuing. He said his Facebook Live events on Fridays seems to be working well for parents and students. He said he would like to continue the events when school reopens.

Mr. Testani said the reopening task forces committees have started meeting, with some reports expected soon.

Mr. Testani said the first parent survey on the website will close tomorrow.

Mr. Weldon indicated there were no members of the public who had dialed in to submit questions on COVID-19.

In response to question, Mr. Testani said each school was in charge of keeping track of which devices were given out.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said once he starts to receive reports from the reopening task force committees he would be able to schedule a general overall meeting on the matter. He said he has provided guidance on what models

are starting to develop from the state Department of Education.

NEW BUSINESS:

The next agenda item was on the E-Rate contract.

Jeff Postolowski, director of IT, said every year the department has to put forward an official submission for the ratification of filing Form 471, which basically provides details to the federal government, which provides the lion's share of the district's internet services, wifi services, fiber, and connectivity. There is also Category 2 which has to do with paying for infrastructure that runs everything.

He said Rachel Botts, the E-Rate consultant, was available to answer questions. Ms. Botts said E-Rate results in a huge discount for the district on internet services and connectivity, as well as infrastructure. She said for all services that come into campuses and connect campuses there is a 90 percent discount and an 85 percent discount for the equipment to do so.

Ms. Allen moved to approve *“Be it resolved that the governing body for the Bridgeport school district; (1) authorizes the filing of FCC form 471 Schools and Libraries Universal Program Services Ordered and Certification form for the services and/or products as detailed in the attached report entitled, ‘E-Rate Requests, FY2020,’ for the fiscal year of July 1st, 2020 to June 30th, 2021. And (2) Authorizes payment of the applicant's share under the following conditions: (1) approval of the funding of the discounted portion of the Schools and Libraries Division(SLD) of the Universal Service Administrative Company(USAC) and (2)*

receipt of service during the fiscal year July 1, 2020 to 6/30/2021.”

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

Approved by the board on June 22, 2020