

Tuesday, November 13, 2018

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held November  
13, 2018, at Bridgeport Regional Aquaculture Science &  
Technology Education Center, 60 St. Stephens Road,  
Bridgeport, Connecticut

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m.

Present were Chair John Weldon, Vice President Hernan Illingworth, Secretary Jessica Martinez, Dennis Bradley, Joseph Sokolovic, Sybil Allen, Maria Pereira and Ben Walker.

Supt. Aresta Johnson, Ed.D., was present.

Mr. Weldon said that Spanish translation services were available.

### **RECOGNITIONS:**

Dr. Johnson recognized Harry Bell, security guard at Curiale, for being honored as 100 Men of Color for work in Connecticut, including authoring a color book distributed in the district.

Ms. Allen noted Mr. Bell was one of her former students.

Dr. Johnson honored Carrie Ramanauskas, the district's social-emotional learning coordinator, for her outstanding work and success in getting the Tauck Foundation to donate books for classroom libraries.

Dr. Johnson recognized Alicia Robinson for receiving the 2018 Bridgeport NAACP's Berry M. Gordy Award for her efforts to inspire through the arts. Ms. Robinson said she was a Bridgeport resident and a proud product of the Bridgeport Public Schools. She said it was an honor to serve the community.

Dr. Johnson honored Dr. Melissa Jenkins for receiving the 2018 Bridgeport NAACP's Prudence Crandall Education Award in recognition for her work in promoting excellence in education.

Dr. Johnson recognized Diana Soares for being honored by the Cape Verdean Women's Social Club of Bridgeport for her support and dedication to the community of Bridgeport. She noted Principal Soares was a former Bassick High prom queen. Ms. Soares said she got her love of education from her mother, a former Bridgeport educator, and her father's Cape Verdean's roots. She dedicated the award to her late son, Jordan.

Ms. Pereira said Ms. Soares was a wonderful educator with an ability to connect with children.

Dr. Johnson recognized Stephen Cassidy, principal of Black Rock School, for running in the Hartford Marathon to raise over \$2,000 to expand technology for Black Rock students. Mr. Cassidy said he stresses thinking outside the box to raise money and this was his way of doing it.

## **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:**

Alicia Brockenberry of Bassick High reported on her school. She highlighted the school's hosting of a community

conversation on funding our schools, the annual Turkey Bingo night next Tuesday, the boys' soccer team's success despite losing in the state quarterfinals, and the Astronomy's Club's activities.

Ariana Smith of Bridgeport Military Academy highlighted the Veterans' Day breakfast which honored veterans, the open house on November 18th, the upcoming annual naval inspection, the 318 applicants for the 2018-19 school year, and the University of Bridgeport's honoring of secretary Pamela Adams.

Abud Hennawi of Central High highlighted the gratitude week of the Psychology Club, the upcoming pep rally, the planned multicultural night in December, the financial aid night held with Fairfield University, and the college applications by seniors.

Ethan Wei Aoki of the Aerospace School at Fairchild Wheeler reported on his school. He highlighted October 24th's Exhibition Day, the student council's blood drive, a schoolwide field trip to see the movie *First Man*, an open house for prospective students, the release of SAT scores, the school's increased results on SAT scores, and a presentation by Sikorsky to 10th graders about their internship program.

Emily Niveló, a senior at the IT School at Fairchild Wheeler, highlighted her thanks to Linda Lambeck for reporting on the school's Exhibition Day, the school's open house, visits by seniors to Fairfield University, a class trip to a college fair at Webster Bank Arena, and a visit by Microsoft to the school.

Anthony Miller of the Biotechnology School at Fairchild Wheeler reported on the results of SAT scores and

upcoming report card conferences.

Nathaniel Perez of Harding High reported on his school. He highlighted the college application process, SAT results, and college visits to Harding.

Allana Marrett of Harding High highlighted the Health Academy's fundraising for breast cancer, the PTSO's donation of turkeys to Harding families, the Tree of Life's food drive, the perfect attendance by 354 students in October, and the upcoming Spirit Week.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Albert Benejan, PTSO president at Bassick, thanked Dr. Johnson for responding to his inquiries despite her busy schedule. To address security concerns, he urged the board to create a policy allowing guards to check inside bags brought into the schools. He said some PAC and PTSO presidents are not spending their money for parent activities.

Gail Janensch thanked the board and Dr. Johnson for helping with her voting registration in the high schools. She said the League of Women Voters would have representatives at the upcoming community conversation events. She thanked the student representatives for helping her with voter registration.

Maria Pereira said only 800 students out of 6,000 applicants each year gain entrance to the district's magnet schools. She said the magnet school policies had been under revision by the board for about two and a half years. She said none of the participants got everything they wanted out of the compromise proposal. She said she was shocked that Mr. Walker and Mr. Sokolovic were in favor of denying the right

of parents to appeal decisions removing their children from magnet schools to the board. She said this was a direct conflict with board Policy 1312. She added Dr. Johnson had no objection to parents having the right to appeal a decision she makes to the board.

JoAnn Kennedy said she agreed with Ms. Pereira about the magnet school policies. She said political events should not take place during the school day as was proposed at Bassick High. She said the superintendent had a mandate to educate our children and no governor, mayor or anybody running for office should be able to come into the schools for photo-ops.

Ms. Pereira moved *"to postpone item 13 under New Business, discussion and possible action on requesting Commissioner Wentzel to issue a formal opinion on the City of Bridgeport failing to meet the MBR, and the first read on control transfer policy."* The motion was seconded by Mr. Walker and unanimously approved.

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

Ms. Pereira moved approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 22, 2018, with edits. Corrections were noted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Pereira moved approval of the minutes of the Special Meeting of October 29, 2018, with edits. The motion was seconded by Ms. Martinez. Corrections were noted.

The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote. Voting in favor were members Illingworth, Weldon, Bradley, Allen, Pereira and

Walker. Ms. Martinez and Mr. Sokolovic abstained.

### **CHAIR REPORT:**

Mr. Weldon said there was a discussion about meeting to finalize the superintendent's and the board's goals and objectives. There was a discussion among the board members of possible dates to hold the meeting and it was decided to hold the meeting on Friday, November 16th.

Ms. Pereira said Mr. Weldon had committed to putting Mr. Sokolovic on the Males of Color Committee, but a formal notice was needed. She added the termination of the Higher Education Finance and Teacher Apprenticeship Committees needed to be reflected on the district's website.

Ms. Pereira said the board had agreed to create an ad hoc committee to review or revise Policy 5166 and 5166.1, but it was not reflected on the website.

Mr. Weldon said it appeared there were agenda items tonight that were in conflict with another. He said sometimes things take place in public board meetings that could be handled with a phone call and discussions among people to resolve things.

Ms. Pereira moved that "*Items A and B under New Business be tabled.*" The motion was seconded by Mr. Walker.

Mr. Bradley said he agreed with the spirit of Mr. Weldon's comment, but he wanted an answer as to why the incident happened. Ms. Martinez said she understood Mr. Bradley sent an e-mail inquiry that was not responded to, and the matter was then put on the agenda. She added Mr. Bradley deserved an answer, while Item B was trivial and ridiculous.

She said the board needed to work as a team and focus on the children.

Dr. Johnson apologized to Mr. Bradley for missing his first e-mail. She said she would respond to the e-mail. Mr. Bradley said he appreciated that. He said his heart bleeds about the conditions when he drives by or visits Bassick. He described it as almost a Third World condition. He said whoever walks through the school and is willing to help fix Bassick should be welcomed.

Ms. Pereira said she called Dr. Johnson and had a conversation with her about the matter because it was a violation of board policy. She said Dr. Johnson's job was not to drop everything she's doing for political rallies.

Mr. Weldon said there may be some policies that need to be tightened up.

The motion was unanimously approved.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS/REFERRALS:**

Ms. Pereira said the Facilities Committee had only met once out of the three months since school resumed.

Ms. Pereira moved that *"the Bassick presentation be moved up under the Facilities Committee."* The motion was seconded by Ms. Martinez and unanimously approved.

Dr. Johnson said there would be a presentation on the three designs for Bassick.

Joe Costa, architect of Perkins Eastman of Stamford, said the presentation would be based of months of workshops,

discussions, and consideration sketches.

Mr. Costa said the company was in the beginning stages of our services to the city and the board, in the programming and feasibility study. He said the three options are renovation to new; demolish the old building and build a new high school in place; and a hybrid option of demolition and new construction.

Joe Banks, architect, indicated the old building at Bassick was from 1929; the new building was built in 1967. He said as part of the investigation the team crawled into every nook and cranny of the school.

Mr. Banks said the planning is based on a little over one thousand students. He said the 1929 building is roughly 120,000 square feet and the newer building is 130,000 square feet. He said this was important because the state's formula allows only 220,000 square feet for reimbursement. He described the conditions in current buildings as rough, and additionally very far apart, creating security challenges and problems with moving about the buildings.

Mr. Banks said all the boilers are original to the building and were formerly powered by coal.

Joseph Raiola, Bassick principal, said a great deal of time had been spent looking at the programming for the new Bassick. He said the result was a top-notch comprehensive high school program, including culinary, advanced manufacturing, planetarium, and auto shop. He noted the auto shop runs seven periods a day.

Dr. Raiola said the building would be organized into a freshman house and two other houses. A good-sized liberal



arts program would be incorporated, including the arts.

Michael Cegan, landscape architect, spoke about the site design of the eight-acre Bassick site. He said zone changes or variances may be needed for the site. There are currently 190 parking spaces.

Mr. Cegan demonstrated the site plan for the like-new renovation option. He said for this option the two buildings and the site itself would be renovated like-new. The goal of the plan would be to create 250 parking spaces. The landscape and streetscape would be upgraded. A courtyard would be created between the two buildings.

Mr. Cegan said he looked at the possibility of putting a field on the site. He said a half-sized practice field would have to be built on a roof deck, which is not really practical.

Michael Berger, architect, said a major problem with the current school is the location of the front door. He discussed the highlights of the design for the renovate-as-new proposal, including how the two buildings would be connected by a series of ramps to improve circulation. The renovation would include the advanced manufacturing lab and the construction tech lab in the basement.

Mr. Berger said the next option was an all-new building. This would involve demolishing everything on the site and constructing a brand-new school.

Mr. Cegan said this option would create a stronger connection with the street by being located more in the southern portion of the site. The main entryway would be closer to Clinton Avenue, with a major parking lot to the north of the school. The possibility of fields in this

configuration was investigated, but the entire surface is covered by parking and building. A rooftop field over the parking deck could be made full-sized, but it would have to be east-west, while north-south orientations are preferred. To put a field in the correct orientation it would have to be on the roof of the school.

Mr. Berger said the entire new school option would place the public spaces on the left side of the school and private side, including classrooms, to the right. There would be a commons space for students in the center. The advanced manufacturing, automotive and construction tech labs would be located in the back of the building. There would be an opportunity for a courtyard in the center to let natural light in. He said there are opportunities to take architectural relics of the 1929 building and implement them into the built-as-new option.

Mr. Cegan spoke on the third or hybrid option. The existing 1929 building is preserved and fully renovated in the back, while the 1967 building would be replaced with a new addition. He said all three options exceeds the site coverage requirements and do not achieve the minimum landscape area. A variance or a zone change would be needed.

Mr. Berger said the hybrid scheme was a challenge to make an efficient building. The buildings would be connected at the center, at the existing front door, via ramps. The new boiler would be located in the new building. The auto lab would be in the 1929 building. The media center would be at the core academic spaces, one level up from the street.

Mr. Banks said Option 1, renovate as new, is considerably over the square footage allowed by the state for reimbursement. He said the build-as-new option is closer to

the maximum square footage because it is purpose-built. The hybrid option has about the same square footage. He noted with renovations there are inefficiencies and the numbers for those options would be likely to grow.

Mr. Banks said the options were presented at the state office of construction grants. He said the next step is selecting the preferred option and going back to the state to submit the final grant application, at which point design services commence.

Mr. Costa said construction is scheduled to start next summer, so a decision is needed to allow the design and engineering teams to complete their work.

Larry Schilling said the state was presented with the options. He said it is their choice as to what option they will financially support, and they chose the new-building option. He said the application had to be presented to the Legislature in the mid-December time frame.

Ms. Pereira said the board makes the decision, not the state. Mr. Schilling said the state decides what option they financially will support.

Ms. Pereira said the 1929 building was designed by a Bridgeport resident who has properties on the national preservation list. Mr. Schilling said the new building could incorporate architectural features of the 1929 building.

Mr. Weldon said he understood the state makes the decision as to what it will financially cover. If an option was chosen that was not approved by the state, the city would have to pick up the difference.

Ms. Pereira said the board had always voted on every school renovation and construction project. She said she did not care about the 1967 building, but the 1929 has historical relevance in Bridgeport. She noted the 1929 building was donated by the Bassick family. She added the architect designed the Bijou Theater, the Mechanics & Farmers building and the original bathhouse in Seaside Park.

In response to a question, Mr. Schilling said the reimbursement rate from the state is 78.93 percent on the hybrid and new construction options.

Ms. Pereira said her concern was there was no one sharing with the state the historical significance of the original building.

Mr. Weldon said it seemed up in the air whether the hybrid option would be considered new construction for reimbursement.

Mr. Schilling said this would be presented to the School Building Committee on Thursday. Mr. Weldon urged Mr. Schilling to find out if the state would consider the hybrid option as new construction for reimbursement.

Mr. Weldon said he had previously understood there were only two options: renovate as new or new construction.

Ms. Pereira said John Ricci informed her that the state will give the same reimbursement rate for the hybrid as new construction. She said Mr. Ricci told her the state was supporting the hybrid.

Ms. Martinez said she loved history but felt the new-school option was best for our students. She said what Bassick

staff, students and parents want should be taken into consideration.

Mr. Walker said he liked the new construction because the architects could design the space to be efficient and because it would contain everything modern. He said he had not heard yet how the design could honor the 1929 building and the beauty of its architecture.

Mr. Berger said thought has been given to salvaging significant architectural components of the buildings and reusing them. Similar colors, window treatments and brick colors could be incorporated. Mr. Walker said the 1967 building did not do that at all and hid the beauty of the 1929 building.

Mr. Costa said the hybrid scheme still obscures the older building. He said the biggest problem with the building is its location on the site. If it was on the street, the façade could be preserved.

Mr. Sokolovic said he agreed with Ms. Martinez. He said we have to move forward and not live in the past. He said he was sure the students wanted a brand-new building. He said the 1929 building was pretty, but it would cost money to preserve it. He said people who have graduated want to preserve the building, but not the students who will use it.

Ms. Pereira said the Historical Society told her that there are strict requirements for buildings with historical significant because of state and federal funding. She said Bridgeport's history is relevant to Bridgeport. She noted \$2 million was spent putting a new roof on the 1929 building that the taxpayers will be paying interest on for a long time. She said studies have shown it's more cost-effective to renovate

school buildings than to build them from the ground up.

Mr. Costa said he didn't know of anything that was going to stop the city or the board from doing what they wanted to with the 1929 building. He said there would be a proration on the reimbursement for the roofing. He said the cost of addressing hazardous materials has skyrocketed, which adds costs to renovation compared to new buildings.

Ms. Martinez said the architect can be honored in a special way on site, but a new building was needed.

Mr. Costa said it was very possible the state was going to ding the board on the reimbursement for the roof because it would not be in place for twenty years.

Alan Wallack said he would contact the state tomorrow about the reimbursement issues and he will report to the superintendent on the results.

Mr. Wallack said the deadline with the state was December 1st. He noted the problems with the Central High project were because it was a remediation project.

Mr. Walker asked that the information presented in the board packet be updated to incorporate the additional comments made tonight.

Ms. Martinez reported on the Finance Committee meeting of November 7th. There was discussion of the current budget, legal expenses from August to September, the transportation RFP and the Commissioner's Network services for Columbus School.

Ms. Martinez moved *"to add to the agenda the transportation*

*RFP committee recommendation to the agenda.”* The motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth.

Ms. Pereira said there was an e-mail indicating the committee that rated the RFPs used an incorrect point system, which could lead to litigation. She said Ms. Siegel will reconvene the committee and rate the RFPs again before the board can move forward.

Ms. Martinez moved “*to add to the agenda the Columbus School Commissioner’s Network contract services.*” The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic.

Ms. Pereira noted this was a consultant for the school, however, the board did not receive any information on the matter in the board packets.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Martinez moved “*to approve the contract services for Columbus School Commissioner Network Literacy How and HILL for Literacy.*” The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen.

Dr. Johnson said Columbus School is currently using two literacy vendors. She said it was presented to the Finance Committee because there are two separate contracts over the \$25,000 amount. She added Columbus had used these two vendors since they entered the Commissioner’s Network. She said it brings continuity to the staff in terms of professional development.

Ms. Pereira said there was a lot of discussion because one of the rates was \$1800 per day, but the new principal at the school advocated for it. She said she would approve it this time even though the amount seemed exorbitant.

Mr. Sokolovic said he was reluctant to support it because the annualized fee would be \$327,600, which he described as hefty. He said he understood it was a grant, but it could probably be spent more efficiently in Columbus School.

Ms. Martinez said she agreed, but the board does not manage the money in the Commissioner's Network. Mr. Illingworth said the amount was outrageous; he said he wanted to be sure the principal evaluates the program and its impact before next year.

Dr. Johnson said the plan was approved by the state Department of Education, which is an advocate for the vendors. She said she shared concern about the price, but the goal is to build capacity within the staff to do this work without a consultant.

Ms. Pereira asked committee chairs who wish to add items to the agenda after the deadline to contact Dr. Johnson and Ms. Ortiz to have the documents added to the board packet.

Mr. Sokolovic moved "*to divide the question.*" The motion was seconded by Ms. Pereira and unanimously approved.

Ms. Martinez moved "*the HILL for Literacy be approved.*" The motion was approved by a 7-1 vote. Voting in favor were members Bradley, Allen, Martinez, Pereira, Walker, Weldon and Illingworth. Mr. Sokolovic was opposed.

Ms. Martinez moved "*for Literacy How*" to be approved. The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen and unanimously approved.

Ms. Martinez said the committee would next meet on



December 12th.

Mr. Weldon said the Governance Committee would meet on November 19th.

Mr. Walker said the Teaching & Learning Committee will meet on November 20th.

Mr. Illingworth said the Personnel Committee will meet tomorrow to interview three candidates for chief financial officer. The committee will also meet on Friday to interview two candidates for nutrition director.

In response to a question, Mr. Illingworth said the committee would discuss hiring policies and turnover figures in the December meeting.

Mr. Sokolovic reported on the Students & Families Committee meeting of November 8th.

Mr. Sokolovic moved *“the board authorize the superintendent and the CFO of Bridgeport Public Schools to enter into and sign a new permanent agreement with the Connecticut state Department of Education to be signed by the BBOE secretary in regards to child nutrition programs to include the following: The National School Lunch program, the school breakfast program, after-school snack program, the special milk, summer option of the National School Lunch program, food distribution program, summer food service program, and the child and adult care food program.”* The motion was seconded by Mr. Walker.

Mr. Sokolovic said these eight programs are now separately signed and reimbursed through a whole lot of paperwork. This will continue everything in a more efficient, streamlined

way. Nothing in the programs is really changing.

Ms. Pereira noted the board secretary has to sign the submission as well, but she has nothing to do with handling the reimbursements.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Sokolovic said the next item was a first read on the high school magnet policy. He said board members had received the draft policies. It was noted the draft was 16 pages.

Ms. Pereira said some of the policies were changed at the committee level without consultation of Dr. Johnson or the magnet school principals.

Mr. Bradley moved that "*we waive the reading of the formal document.*" The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic and unanimously approved.

Mr. Sokolovic said some members had discussed this over one year at the committee level. Ms. Pereira said she had been involved in it for two and a half years.

Mr. Sokolovic said the three committee members were in agreement on almost everything, with the exception of the appeal process. Mr. Walker and he believed the superintendent's decision should be final in an appeal process for removal from a magnet school. He said although the board contained two educators, that may not always be the case. Additionally, he said, it was going down that path of micromanaging.

Mr. Walker said he and Mr. Sokolovic came to the conclusion a little bit differently. He said his conclusion was

based on the buck stopping at the superintendent with educational decisions. He said the board deals with contractual decisions that are appealed to it by adults, but this should not be the case with students.

Mr. Walker described the final result as a compromise among the committee members, with only this item still being debated.

Ms. Pereira said she made the referral on the magnet school policy in 2016. She said the work came to a screeching halt during the boycott and it was not moved forward after the committee chair, Ms. Negron, left the board. Then Mr. Sokolovic came in as chair and started all over.

Ms. Pereira said nobody got everything they wanted, but when clean-up work was being done a motion was passed eliminating the right of parents to appeal a decision removing their children from a coveted seat. She noted the board Policy 1312 indicated that parents could come to the board about anything as long as they go through the administrative process.

Ms. Pereira said the administration did not have any data on how many children over the last five years have been forced out of magnet schools. She said she was sure the vast majority of children affected were minorities.

Ms. Pereira said two years ago High Horizons deselected a kindergarten student 45 days before the school year ended. She said Dr. Johnson indicated she could not support that.

Ms, Pereira said no parents have ever appealed decisions on control transfers to the board, despite having the right to do so. She said the right to appeal sends a message to

principals to follow the guidelines because the parent will have the opportunity to go all the way up to the board.

Ms. Pereira said Dr. Johnson was not consulted on the motion passed by Mr. Sokolovic and Mr. Walker. She said Dr. Johnson indicated she had no issue with parents being able to appeal her decision to the board. She added Mr. Sokolovic walked out of the last committee meeting when she wanted to address some incorrect formatting and language.

Dr. Johnson said she appreciated the position of Mr. Sokolovic and Mr. Walker, but recommended the policy be consistent with the ability to appeal the superintendent's decision on control transfers. She said if a parent comes to the board it is critical that the board is swift and timely in convening.

Mr. Illingworth said it was important to keep the board's policies consistent, but he didn't understand how a student would appeal failing two classes or behavior issues. He described being in a magnet school as a privilege that required hard work. He doubted an appeal would ever come to the board, but it did serve as a check and balance.

Mr. Sokolovic asked if Dr. Johnson would have a problem will the buck stopping at her level. Dr. Johnson said she preferred consistency in the board's policies.

Ms. Pereira said a student was removed from a control transfer for changing the home page of a Chrome Book to a selfie photo. She noted BEA and BCAS members have a right to appeal grievances to the board. She said she was disheartened to hear any board member say they don't want to hear from parents.

Ms. Martinez said she did not believe control transfers and magnet school policies should align. She said she supported higher standards in the magnet schools, along with proper supports. She said she was on all sides of this. She said she supported parents, but understood the point of Mr. Sokolovic and Ben Walker.

Ms. Pereira said she thought of her own daughter, who had nine math teachers in the 7th grade by March, as an example of things that happen in the schools that are not appropriate, so the ability to appeal should remain as a deterrent. She added principals and Dr. Johnson did not object to the provision.

Mr. Weldon said he believed the student level processes should be handled consistently, either ending at the level of the superintendent or the board.

Mr. Sokolovic said Policy 1312 addressed complaints, which was very different from an appeal. He said bullet 7 of Policy 1312 gives the right to request a review by the superintendent and bullet 8 gives the right to request a review by the board. He noted such requests may be denied. He said the way 1312 is written, if his son received an F on a test he could bring it all the way to the board.

Ms. Pereira said she inserted the language in red to correct errors.

Mr. Weldon said this was the first read of each version. Ms. Pereira said the board vote would come at the next meeting.

Mr. Walker said the matter should go back to the committee for tightening up. Mr. Sokolovic said before it goes back to

committee he would like to hear a consensus of the board so we're not wasting time. Mr. Bradley said he believed the consensus was to allow an appeal of the superintendent's decision to the board.

Ms. Pereira said there was an important error in the sibling policy. She said it was not reflected in the policy that pre-K students at Discovery Magnet automatically enter the school. Additionally, the reference should be to pre-K to 7th grade, not 8th grade.

Mr. Weldon suggested it be tightened up in committee and brought back for a second read.

In response to a question, Dr. Johnson said she would provide to the board the deadline for online applications to the magnet schools.

Mr. Walker asked why there had been no reports from charter school representatives on the board. Ms. Pereira noted Ms. Martinez did present one report.

Mr. Sokolovic said for himself he did not have the time to devote to something he had no vote on or voice on. He said he was looking to serve the students of Bridgeport Public Schools.

Ms. Martinez said the children in the charter schools are Bridgeport children and neighbors of the board members. She said she is a voting member on Capital Prep's board. She added there are positive things the board can mimic that happen at charter schools and vice versa. She said partnerships were extremely important.

Ms. Pereira said charter schools were supposed to be

laboratories of innovation, which is why the statute allowed board members to serve on the charter school boards. She said students who attend charter schools, Six to Six or Bullard Havens are not Bridgeport public school students; they are students of the state.

It was noted the item being discussed was not on the agenda

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

Dr. Johnson said she sent out an e-mail regarding a major budget issue that surfaced. She asked Marlene Siegel, chief financial officer, to present on the matter.

Ms. Siegel said when the state announced the governor's budget in May it was believed by the city and the board that the ECS increase would be \$1.1 million. In July, the state announced the Alliance Grant of about \$1.1 million higher than the prior year.

Ms. Siegel said last week when the state released its report on education revenues it was discovered that the actual ECS amount was lower than anticipated. The discrepancy emanated from a misinterpretation of the original announcement of state ECS.

Ms. Siegel said there are positive consequences because we had been working with the higher number since last week and the city built the higher number into the original plan and allocated the higher number except for \$250,000, which has been in dispute, and the amount for the displaced students.

Ms. Siegel said the difference between \$1.1 million and those two amounts is \$680,049, which is in the district's

budget in the MUNIS system. The city may not remove those funds, nor have they made any attempt to do so. She said Mr. Nkwo readily acknowledged the funds remained in the district's budget.

Ms. Siegel said the \$680,000 is added to the city's contribution, which now totals \$1,719,468. She said this means the board is now short of its projections by \$485,240. She said the positive is the additional \$680,000 increases the city contribution as the starting point for next year.

Ms. Siegel said there will be a three-part plan to resolve the \$485,000 gap, which she believed will not have a major impact, based on current information. She said there some are additional grant accruals from budgeting strategies. She added the district remains in deficit prevention mode, which means all accruals, including personnel, are captured. She said accruals result from time lapses in filling positions. She said it is hoped the bargaining units' transitions to the new medical plan will result in a minor surplus remaining in the Internal Service Fund that can be extracted if necessary to balance the budget.

Dr. Johnson said the District at a Glance included postcards that will be mailed to the homes of all students in the spring and the fall to publicize sign-ups for early college classes at no cost. The postcards will be funded through the I3 Grant.

Dr. Johnson said two of the four vacancies on the last board agenda have been filled; a third one will filled this week; and the art position at Marin will be filled by December 2nd.

Dr. Johnson said the district's foundation voted on officers for the upcoming year. She said she suggested the foundation hold a fundraiser in the spring of 2019 and the



first planning session has taken place.

Ms. Pereira said she wanted to commend Dr. Johnson for having the most students we've ever had in advanced placement courses. She said the test scores out of Fairfield Wheeler were amazing. She said she loved how Dr. Johnson is attaching specific items to the pillars in the strategic plan.

Ms. Pereira noted Mr. Postolowski was appointed to the School Building Committee, where he is needed desperately because they know nothing about technology.

Ms. Pereira thanked Ms. Gribbon and the School Volunteer Association for an amazing job on Read Aloud Day.

Ms. Pereira commended Dr. Johnson for filling every School Readiness slot this year. Dr. Johnson said Dr. Jenkins and her team did a great job on that.

Ms. Pereira moved to approve Items III to VIII. The motion was seconded by Ms. Martinez and unanimously approved.

Mr. Sokolovic asked for information about a school suspension officer recalled from layoff. He noted the board did not rank positions to bring back in the event of windfall.

Dr. Johnson said this move was because we had to let someone move into a different direction. The newly hired person filled the vacant slot.

Mr. Sokolovic moved to approve Item IX. The motion was seconded by Mr. Walker and unanimously approved.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

The next item was on meeting with the Bridgeport delegation regarding the 2019 legislature session. Ms. Pereira said it was critical this meeting take place before they go into session. Mr. Bradley said the delegation has already had a meeting and meets monthly in Bridgeport.

Mr. Bradley said Ezequiel Santiago would be the new chair of the delegation.

Dr. Johnson said she asked Mr. Weldon to help coordinate the board meeting with the delegation.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Ms. Pereira moved to table the next item because Ms. Siegel explained the situation with the MBR. The motion was seconded by Ms. Martinez and unanimously approved.

Ms. Pereira moved *“to approve the Regular Meeting calendar as proposed.”* The motion was seconded by Ms. Martinez.

Ms. Pereira said there were no holidays this year impacting the calendar.

The motion was unanimously approved.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

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