

Thursday, April 23, 2020

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STUDENTS AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held April 23, 2020, by video conference, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Present were members Chair Albert Benejan and members Bobbi Brown and Joseph Sokolovic.

Herminio Planas, executive director of elementary education, was present.

Mr. Sokolovic moved approval of the committee's minutes of February 20, 2020. The motion was seconded by Ms. Brown and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was an update on the PAC and PTSO e-mail addresses and phone numbers.

Mr. Planas said every school was contacted and the list was updated to include those who agreed to share their contact information. He said the information had been provided to Mr. Benejan.

The next agenda item was on PAC and PTSO using the Bridgeport-edu e-mail addresses. Mr. Planas said PAC presidents can request through the principal the usage of an edu address.

Mr. Benejan asked that principals be informed of this policy.

The next agenda item was on Title I funding. Mr. Benejan said a lot of PAC and PTSO presidents are trying to expend Title I funds to order supplies that can be used next year when school buildings are open. He said some of them have to teach the principal how much money the PACs have. He said some school secretaries are questioning the expenditures. He said he was glad Mr. Testani sent an e-mail to the principals urging the money be spent so it is not lost.

Mr. Planas said May 1st was the deadline to spend the money.

In response to a question, Nadira Clarke, director of grants, said high school parent engagement is funded through the Priority Grant, which would not be eligible for the federal carryover waiver the state has applied for with regard to Title I funds. She said she would inquire of Ms. Siegel to see if she and Mr. Testani have had discussions about the potential waiver for parent engagement Title I funds that could be carried over into the next fiscal year. She said the deadline to spend the money remains May 1.

Mr. Sokolovic said if waivers were possible he would be in favor of having parent engagement money at the school level that is not spent by May 1 be rolled into next year rather than having it revert to the overall district Title I.

There was a discussion of the policy of parent leaders having to obtain quotes for the purchase of items. Ms. Clarke said she not heard of any relaxation of the regular purchasing ordinances during the pandemic. She asked Mr. Benejan to have Ms. Boyle contact her about the issue being discussed.

The next agenda was on the parent convention. Ms. Clarke said the money for the convention was assigned for this year. She said Ms. Siegel's plan was that it would be the same amount next year. Mr. Benejan said he believed the \$9,000 should be used next year in addition to the \$9,000 scheduled to be allocated, for a total of \$18,000.

In response to a question, Ms. Clarke said the parent convention funding was in Title I.

Mr. Benejan said she would bring the issue to the full board. Mr. Sokolovic said the impact of parent dollars is quite important to the district. Ms. Brown said she believed it was important to keep parents engaged and to let them know they're still supported.

Mr. Sokolovic moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Ms. Brown and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod