

Board of Education Meeting, Tuesday, October 27, 2020

Generated by Rhonda Schaefer, District Clerk

Members present

Joe Alati, Carol Bellavia, David Francis, Caralyn Ross, Gary Stottler, Stephanie Templeton, Amy West, Dave Ghidiu, Jeff Klein

Meeting called to order at 7:02 PM

1. Meeting Called to Order

Action, Procedural: A. Call to Order

Procedural: B. Account for Absences

2. Proposed Executive Session, subject to Board Approval

Action: A. It is anticipated that the Board will act upon a resolution to convene an executive session for discussions regarding pending litigation.

3. Return to Public Session

Action: A. Motion to Return to Public Session

Motion to Return to Public Session.

Motion by Gary Stottler, second by Joe Alati.

Final Resolution: Motion Approved

Yea: Joe Alati, Carol Bellavia, David Francis, Caralyn Ross, Gary Stottler, Stephanie Templeton, Amy West, Dave Ghidiu, Jeff Klein

4. Approval of Agenda

Action: A. Approve Tonight's Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion by Amy West, second by Gary Stottler.

Final Resolution: Motion Approved

Yea: Joe Alati, Carol Bellavia, David Francis, Caralyn Ross, Gary Stottler, Stephanie Templeton, Amy West, Dave Ghidiu, Jeff Klein

5. Approval of Consensus Agenda Items

Action (Consent): A. MOTION for Approval of Consensus Agenda Items

Motion to approve all items of the Consensus Agenda

Motion by Amy West, second by Joe Alati.

Final Resolution: Motion Approved

Yea: Joe Alati, Carol Bellavia, David Francis, Gary Stottler, Stephanie Templeton, Amy West, Dave Ghidiu, Jeff Klein

Abstain: Caralyn Ross (Conflict of Interest)

Action (Consent), Minutes: B. Board Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve all items of the Consensus Agenda

Motion by Amy West, second by Joe Alati.

Final Resolution: Motion Approved

Yea: Joe Alati, Carol Bellavia, David Francis, Gary Stottler, Stephanie Templeton, Amy West, Dave Ghidiu, Jeff Klein

Abstain: Caralyn Ross

Action (Consent): C. Personnel Appointments

Motion to approve all items of the Consensus Agenda

Motion by Amy West, second by Joe Alati.

Final Resolution: Motion Approved

Yea: Joe Alati, Carol Bellavia, David Francis, Gary Stottler, Stephanie Templeton, Amy West, Dave Ghidiu, Jeff Klein

Abstain: Caralyn Ross

Action (Consent): D. CSE & CPSE Recommendations

Motion to approve all items of the Consensus Agenda

Motion by Amy West, second by Joe Alati.

Final Resolution: Motion Approved

Yea: Joe Alati, Carol Bellavia, David Francis, Gary Stottler, Stephanie Templeton, Amy West, Dave Ghidiu, Jeff Klein

Abstain: Caralyn Ross

6. Board President's Remarks

Discussion, Information: A. Board President's Remarks

7. Superintendent's Report

Discussion, Information: A. Announcements - Capital Project Update and Review

Members of the Campus Construction and SEI Design firms presented. In attendance were: George Spinaris, Brian Bellaire, Sarah Bald, Mark Esposito, Aaron MacDonald, and Mike Ebertz.

Phase 2.0 Budget and Closeout

Phase 2.0 Lessons Learned

Phase 2.5 Budget and Financing

Phase 2.5 Construction Scope and Schedule

Energy Performance Contract (EPC)

Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations, Dr. Bruce Capron highlighted that there are a number of projects ready to go as part of the 2.5 project and Energy Performance Contract.

Campus Construction's George Spinaris, provided an update on the closeout of Capital Project 2.0. PPT slides are duly kept a part of the BoardDocs packet, including the budget summary.

It was noted that the \$11K remaining balance will be spent down into some new technology or other items to maximize state aid.

Other items:

Superintendent Mancuso provided the following COVID-19 related updates:

- Surge in Livingston County of COVID rates is higher than at any time during the pandemic. Cluster has been recognized within the LCS and Elim Church community. Open testing is being made available. Because we are in the geographic area, we may be asked to pause. The District currently has all positive cases cleared, but have the highest number of quarantine rates seen yet. SUNY Schools are requiring students to test prior to leaving campus for holiday.
- New approach will be cluster closures versus state closures. More information will follow as appropriate.

Campus Construction's Brian Bellaire, highlighted the Phase 2.5 Budget Summary (71% is state building aid; 29% is capital reserve)

- Long term solutions for cooling the buildings were discussed.
- Contractors would work to not disrupt the concert season and will adjust accordingly. There are also classrooms six sets per day.
- Bids just came in very favorable for the project work, including lighting on the multi-purpose field and dug outs and sound system
- Construction Schedule was provided for Phase 2.5
- Lima second floor and tile work will be replaced
- Lima elevator is complete and roofing for Lima is on the agenda for the new project
- Track condition was discussed and it was recommended that every 7-10 years there is resurfacing and would be part of a major capital project.
 - Q - What can be done about cars using this track? Dr. Capron indicated that he will look at this.

Attending remotely, Steve Abramski highlighted the EPC Contract.

- The project has been submitted to SED and preapproval has been provided. Approximately 4-weeks are anticipated for engineering comments. Comment review is then factored in, with potential for another review.
- The timeline is included in the information.
- The board selected CNS therefore, all future involvement is at will only. No further action items are required at this point.

All highlights of the project are duly maintained as part of the BoardDocs packet and detailed in the accompanying powerpoint slides.

Discussion, Information: B. Update on Proposed Action Items

Discussion, Information: C. Presentations

8. Group Workshop

Discussion, Information, Workshop: A. Topic: Student Feedback - How is School Going? Review of Thought Exchange Results

Dr. Williams reported on the findings from the recent Thought Exchange with students grades 7-12. Breakout rooms were initiated with leadership teams attending via zoom, grouped with 1-2 board members to analyze and review thoughts from each of the top-five thought theme areas. Feedback forms for each group were incorporated as part of the exercise.

Each group reported back after a 20-30 minute discussion.

1. Study Hall - Highest rated thoughts in this themed area suggested that there is a building level policy; suggested that this should not be a requirement.

(Breakout Room attendees: Board members Ghidiu and Templeton; Leadership team members Scott Hassall, Joelle Weaver and Dana Boldt)

Consistent message from students about study hall: "check in is okay, but check out is not necessary".

2. In School - Highest rated thoughts in this themed area suggested that it is easier to learn in-person vs. online.

(Breakout Room attendees: Board members Francis, Ross and West; Leadership team members Shawn Williams, Kim Roberts and Brian Donohue)

Board members agreed that this is an important area to explore regarding connections of delivery and meaningful interaction with remote students and concerns that students are feeling alone all day and not as engaged.

3. Mask/Breaks - Highest rated thoughts in this themed area suggested that general breaks with the longer set duration, and mask breaks were inconsistent; students strongly feel they need more mask breaks.
(Breakout Room attendees: Board member Klein; Leadership team members Matt Weider, Bill Harvey)

4. Assignments/Homework - Highest rated thoughts in this themed area suggested that there is too much homework and screen time is too long. Many requests for outdoor time. Kids feeling stressed.
(Breakout Room attendees: Board members Alati and Bellavia; Leadership team members David Roth, Jeanine Lupisella and Lindsay Ali)

Board members agreed that it may be worth thinking about how to maximize the experience by letting kids brainstorm some solutions about getting extra help or attention. Suggestions were also made regarding asynchronous learning as this may be the only option at some point. An upcoming scheduled staff development focus on asynchronous learning days should help with this. Mark D'Annunzio will be assisting to video capture teacher teams and some best practices for keeping students engaged.

5. Online/Zoom - Highest rated thoughts in this themed area suggested that engaging students at home is probably the most important and challenging issue.

(Breakout Room attendees: Board member Stottler; Leadership team members Holly Sidebottom, Cindy Gorley and Allison Cimmerer)

The group discussed equity issues with learning styles, technology support, PD and on the ground teaching every day. Too much screen time was a common thought shared. Students also suggested that it is harder to get help and harder for teachers to "read the room". PD Director, Holly Sidebottom suggested that professional development will be critical to growth in these areas. Tools and limitations were discussed, what we have now and what is next. Teachers are beginning to see the benefit to cameras that work both ways. More time sleeping and easier access to food were among the positive thoughts in this theme.

Q - Due to the cut off of learning in March, are students caught up to where they would normally be? A - Building leaders from each School responded as follows:

- Manor School Principal, Mrs. Jeanine Lupisella shared that iReady data - compared to the last four years for reading is right on par. 61%. Math is a bit different and students are at about 3% and struggling by about 6%. Losses feel like they are manageable.
- Middle School Principal, Mr. Shawn Williams indicated that testing is not entirely done, but reading with current data comparing fall to fall, not as good as last year, but better than some learning years in September. Also comparing winter to now, there was not as much regression as they would have thought. Comparing from the year prior, 7th to 8th grade is almost identical data. There is more regression in studentship during online learning. Lacking skill sets that in-person tends to offer more directly.
- LIma Primary Principal, Mrs. Allison Cimmerer reported at the primary level for K-1, they are looking back at Fastbridge data. Noticed a drop in kindergarten data last year, those same students lost some skills this year as first graders. Incoming kindergarten students are more so on track with iReady data. Targeting skills to close gaps.
- High School Principal, Mr. David Roth reported that mathematics are not showing as much regression as others. Some students are simply learning organization skills in shifting back and forth from online to at school, time management appears to be an issue all around. AP exams did not show a drop in results.

Q - If there is a need to go all remote tomorrow, how will this look? A - It will look a lot different than it did March. Much has been learned and teachers will still be in the classroom, addressing all students at once. After a math class observation today, Superintendent Mancuso indicated that teachers are doing phenomenal things. And, struggling learners are still being carefully studied for best practices.

Q - Are there any avenues for students to have feedback? A - These conversations will likely come from further drilling down, perhaps another Thought Exchange to capture suggestions.

C - There is no end in sight, this is what makes it difficult.

C - Thanks were extended to the LT for participating and facilitating in the review of results.

C - Thanks were extended to the Board for approving the purchase of Thought Exchange.

9. Board of Education - Action Items

Action: A. Monthly Treasurer's Report

Audit Committee chairperson, Mr. Gary Stottler explained that the monthly report looks very ordinary for this time of year. COVID-19 related events and expenses of \$500K of which any technology upgrades will be beneficial into the future. Some budget transfers may be seen soon as accounts for PPE are running down quickly. Otherwise, things are on track.

Motion to approve the Monthly Treasurer's Report, as presented.

Motion by Gary Stottler, second by Caralyn Ross.

Final Resolution: Motion Approved

Yea: Joe Alati, Carol Bellavia, David Francis, Caralyn Ross, Gary Stottler, Stephanie Templeton, Amy West, Dave Ghidui, Jeff Klein

Action: B. Health Services Contract for 2020-21 School Year Nursing Services - Rochester School of the Holy Childhood

PPS Director Lindsay Ali clarified that this contract covers nursing services in the classroom during the day.

Motion to approve the Health Services Contract for 2020-21 Nursing Services with the Rochester School of the Holy Childhood, as presented.

Motion by Amy West, second by Stephanie Templeton.

Final Resolution: Motion Approved

Yea: Joe Alati, Carol Bellavia, David Francis, Caralyn Ross, Gary Stottler, Stephanie Templeton, Amy West, Dave Ghidui, Jeff Klein

Action: C. Requests for Approval to Dispose or Recycle District Property

Motion to approve Disposal of District Equipment, as presented.

Motion by Stephanie Templeton, second by Gary Stottler.

Final Resolution: Motion Approved

Yea: Joe Alati, Carol Bellavia, David Francis, Caralyn Ross, Gary Stottler, Stephanie Templeton, Amy West, Dave Ghidui, Jeff Klein

Action: D. Second Review/Approval Academic Calendar Changes for Asynchronous Learning Days
Motion to approve the Academic Calendar Changes for Asynchronous Learning Days, as presented.

Motion by Amy West, second by Stephanie Templeton.

Final Resolution: Motion Approved

Yea: Joe Alati, Carol Bellavia, David Francis, Caralyn Ross, Gary Stottler, Stephanie Templeton, Amy West, Dave Ghidui, Jeff Klein

10. Board President's Update

Discussion, Information: A. Board President's Update

President Bellavia inquired on behalf of the board about trends in vaping.

High school assistant principal, Mr. Scott Hassall reported that it has been very quiet so far. Two incidents this year. One off campus, one on campus. He remains very visible and vigilant, not seeing signs or evidence of this going on.

Middle school assistant principal, Mr. Matt Weider echoed that this has been quiet at the middle school as well with no cases so far this year.

NYSSBA Convention feedback - time will be designated on the agenda during the next couple of meetings.

Board self-assessment coming in the near future. (December)

In response to uncertainties in the upcoming budget year, an 11/14 meeting for a Budget Workshop has been scheduled. An in-person meeting is the intent, with no anticipated action items on the agenda.

11. Board of Education - Review Only Items

Discussion, Information: A. Summer Professional Development/Curriculum Report

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Renee Williams spoke about the opportunities for professional development and reviewing curriculum for restructuring. Her office has maximized federal grants whenever possible. She indicated that it has been very rewarding to see the groups coming back together.

Discussion, Information: B. Annual Special Education Report

PPS Director, Mrs. Lindsay Ali reported that there has been a significant decline in referrals, however cautions this data in the current environment as this will continue to change. Trends with UPK and pre-school are being tracked. Lots of student success across the board and similar percentages of approximately 11%.

Last year's information would be appreciated. Lindsay will make some changes and resubmit.

Discussion, Information: C. Annual Student Attendance Report

PPS Director, Mrs. Lindsay Ali reported that this data too is interesting with the pandemic. Numbers from March to June, attendance was skewed as there was no way to accurately represent this during the closure. Continuing to track students who are chronically absent, which constitutes missing more than 20% of the school year. Mental health visits if needed. Principals and staff are engaged across the board to make sure that students are present and in person and working on issues.

Q - These numbers are all through March of last year? A - Yes. With regard to this year, the high school level is attempting to work through kinks in capturing attendance during the at-home week for those who simply check into class online but then do not engage. Following up with strugglers. Remote weeks can be especially difficult for struggling learners. No glaring trends yet.

Kudos and expressions to keep up the good work were extended to Mrs. Ali.

Discussion, Information: D. Health Services Contract for 2020-21 - Learning Academy for Cognitive Psychology, Kimberlee Strauss

PPS Director, Mrs. Ali clarified that alternative high school is the former name for a horse farm program where special needs students visited every morning with a success rate at about 50%. Working on some different things in science, building a greenhouse and environmental pieces. This contract is for cognitive psychology also with horses, incorporating barn brain and incorporating skills learned into the classroom. Science credits are gained as well. Lots of interest in working with animals and outdoors.

C - Board members echoed that another district reported on similar therapies involving horses, from the Hoosick Falls area. They reported great results as well.

C- Horse therapies are becoming common.

Discussion, Information: E. Tank Liability Insurance

ASsistant Superintendent for Business and Operations, Dr. Bruce Capron reported that underground tanks on the transportation facility grounds do require maintenance with 16,000 gallons of gasoline near the creek, to mitigate environmental breaches. These tanks are inspected regularly.

Discussion, Information: F. Celebrations of staff, students at Board Meetings

Some initial thought-provoking questions were suggested for board members to consider.

What are the procedures?; When will it occur?; Budget for recognition?

Board members engaged in open conversation and reviewed some sample guidelines and policies from other district's.

C - Culture stems from being valued. Appreciate that the board is considering more positive promotion. Interest in keeping it simple but also diverse and inclusive.

Q - Smarties Garden - what is this process? A - A. Cimmerer said that this is ongoing and read over the announcements, postcard and keychain and recognition. Rolling recognition.

Q - Tracks board - catching others in acts of greatness and kindness. Joelle Weaver described that HOM celebrations, teachers and students work together to acknowledge when students are exhibiting the habits, going above and beyond. HOM celebrations were modified to create zoom traveling team to go classroom to classroom and include families.

C - Mr. Weider spoke about teams of teachers who nominate students of the month with a post card recognition and ice cream treat during lunch. Between 4-8 per grade level per month.

C - Mr. Hassall reported that celebrations are more at the classroom level. Wall of WoW, sticky notes remotely, shared at staff meetings, winners will get a fun surprise and are encouraging.

C - Social emotional - remind the HOM include 16 traits. 8 are primary and 8 are secondary habits. Teachers focus on specific areas each month and the students have binders to reflect their accomplishments.

C - Talked about instituting something systemic in the past. Promotion of celebrations.

C - Suggestion was made and echoed to highlight HFL Pride each month, a student, teacher, group - keeping it simple and frequent. Moments of WoW.

C - Each school has something.

C - Good apple award. Recipients receive a pin apple. Board announces this and it is publicized.

C - Focus on Kindness - Going above and Beyond.

Ideas were debated about how best to go about recognizing and rewarding others.

Finding a starting point is good and modifying as needed.

Superintendent Mancuso echoed that it is wise to be thoughtful and implicit with recognition guidelines. Establish a nomination process. This will help to establish culture.

Board of Education Cougar Pride Award - Recognition letter and trinket were among ideas considered.

Conversation will continue until all are in agreement.

Discussion, Information: G. Update on Committee Meetings

Music Boosters - Agenda is attached for review of the most recent discussion items.

Labor Relations - Mr. Stottler attended the latest meeting regarding unemployment benefits. School districts have to pay the state back for those collecting. 10-month employees at HF-L receive in June a reasonable assurance letter, assuring of their return the following school year and resulting in no eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits. Many unemployment insurance claims that have hit school districts, are likely mostly from bad advice. There is a process to contest claims submitted that district's must go through. Previous employers are obligated for up to 18-months. Even substitutes are "qualified" to receive unemployment insurance as a general rule.

District Health and Safety Committee - Mr. Stottler and Mr. Francis attended the latest zoom meeting. Quite a bit of discussion about drill statuses during the COVID pandemic. Middle School is moving to a video-based presentation. Improving traffic patterns at the buildings. Water testing for lead? Bob Fussa is working on a water quality project across the buildings. Building visual inspections are required on an annual basis, Gary and Dave will be attending. School Climate was discussed as it relates to school culture and how drills are evolving to fit.

Information Exchange - Dr. Williams attended. Reopening schools while addressing mental wellness was the main topic.

Disproportionate impact of COVID. Feelings and needs are often unseen. Responses and resources were reviewed.

NYSSBA Law Conference - S. Templeton and C. Ross attended. No change to tenure and should be happening as in a non-COVID year. Could use a Juel agreement, but not advised. Semester credits with tenure credits were discussed. Letter of counseling does not require employee consent and can be used as a recommendation for change. Section 9:13

Day 2 was about reserves and ill-advised to spend your reserves. Sunset discussion. Collective bargaining many administrators are voluntarily freezing salaries.

Teaching students with disabilities proof for progress of education. Parent meetings over zoom are improving getting split families together more easily.

Delegate Meeting - Mr. Ghidui reported on his role as the District's representative at this year's NYSSBA Convention.

Resolution 3 - Burden of Proof. Anything that is an increase in the cost of burden to taxpayers was not being recommended by NYSSBA. Board agreed to vote NO.

Charter Schools - Agreed NO

Expanding Mayoral Control Beyond NYC - NO

19 & 27 - Child Abuse training YES

Single Care Healthcare for all NYer's - NY Health Act - Single payer health act - NO

Eliminating Consolidation of School Districts - Voted YES

Resolutions 25 & 26 - BOCES non-instructional services

12. Questions from the Audience

Discussion, Information: A. Questions from the Audience - Click for contact information

No Comments from the audience.

13. Adjournment

Action: A. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:34 pm

Motion by Joe Alati, second by Stephanie Templeton.

Final Resolution: Motion Approved

Yea: Joe Alati, Carol Bellavia, David Francis, Caralyn Ross, Gary Stottler, Stephanie Templeton, Amy West, Dave Ghidui, Jeff Klein