

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
Ellington, Connecticut

**Communications Committee Meeting Minutes**

The Communications Committee of the Ellington Board of Education met on Tuesday, September 10, 2019 in the Ellington School Administration Building.

**Attendees:**

*Administrative Team Members:* Dr. Scott Nicol, Mr. Brian Hendrickson

*Board of Education Committee Members:* Ms. Tracey Kiff-Judson, Ms. Kris Picard-Wambolt, Mr. Gary Blanchette

*Guest Board Members:* Ms. Liz Nord

*Absent Committee Members:* Ms. Marcia Kupferschmid

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 5:34 PM by Ms. Kiff-Judson.

**Agenda Items:**

**Holiday and Cultural Observances**

- Dr. Nicol presented research on which school districts in Hartford and Tolland County that close for Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur, as well as data on cultural observances and calendars for several other school districts.
- The committee discussed the reasons for adding or not adding other religious holidays to the EPS calendar.
- Mrs. Picard-Wambolt indicated a preference to separate all religious holidays from the school calendar and have no religious basis for the calendar. Ms. Kiff-Judson agreed with the caveat that the calendar is geared toward Christian holidays even though they are embedded under different names.
- The group discussed the possibility of renaming Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples' Day on the calendar. Ms. Kupferschmid provided an article related to the topic. The group did not feel strongly that the name should be changed.
- Dr. Nicol is inquiring with teaching staff what the impact is to them, but he indicated that he believes staff would like to have our calendar aligned with other school districts such as Tolland and South Windsor.
- The committee agreed that it would be a good idea to provide a list of cultural and holiday observances of a wide variety of religions, like that provided in South Windsor, with the thought that it would help people to be aware of when students might have conflicts.
- Dr. Nicol will collect additional data before the next meeting.

**Board/School District Communication Template**

- Dr. Nicol provided an updated draft of the communications template.
- The administrative team will continue to chart the communications throughout the year to have a plan going forward.

**Adjournment**

- **Motion:** Adjourn this meeting of the Communications Committee at 6:05 PM.
  - **1<sup>st</sup>:** Ms. Picard-Wambolt, **2<sup>nd</sup>:** Mr. Blanchette, **Vote:** Unanimous

**Minutes submitted by:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Tracey Kiff-Judson, Communications Committee Chairperson