

## **Board of Education Ellington, Connecticut**

April 25, 2018

A regular meeting of the Ellington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, April 25, 2018, in the School Administration Building.

Present were: Messrs. Blanchette, Young and McNamar; Mesdames Kiff-Judson, Picard-Wambolt, Foster, Socha, and Kupferschmid; Dr. Scott Nicol, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Erin McGurk, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Dr. Kristy LaPorte, Director of Special Services; Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Finance & Operations; Mr. John Collins, Director of Technology; and Mr. Mark Mahler, Ellington Education Association Representative. Mrs. Dzen, Mr. Purcaro, and Mr. Willett (Student Representative) were absent.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Mrs. Kiff-Judson, Chairperson.

Mrs. Kiff-Judson asked for a round of introductions, then reviewed the guidelines for the Citizens and Staff Forum.

### **CITIZENS AND STAFF FORUM**

Amy Bernabe and Melissa Scarbrough, Ellington High School teachers, thanked the Board for the recent trip to Madrid and Paris made by 16 EHS students. They shared some pictures from the trip; the slide show also included positive feedback quotes from the parents of the students who made this trip. Overall, the teachers stated it was a wonderful experience for the students and thanked the Board for their support.

Nancy Lowther, Ellington High School Food Services, stated that she was there to support the food service workers at the high school regarding the outsourcing issue currently being discussed in the district.

Shannon Milligan and Sarah Litty, Ellington High School students, spoke to the Board regarding a report that Ralph Santaniello, Security Specialist at EHS, would be discharged due to the elimination of the security specialist position and the creation of the security officer position. Ms. Milligan stated that many of the students have a strong bond with "Ralph" and wish for his employment to be retained. Ms. Milligan shared a petition with board members that was signed by many students. She thanked the Board for considering this request.

Mrs. Kiff-Judson thanked all speakers for sharing their comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mrs. Kiff-Judson asked if anyone wished to remove any item from the Consent Agenda. As there were no objections, Consent Agenda items one through seven were adopted.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the March 28, 2018 Regular Board Meeting.
2. Approval of the Minutes of the April 2, 2018 Special Board Meeting.
3. Acceptance of the resignation of Kelly Ouellette as a part time paraprofessional at Crystal Lake School, effective April 3, 2018.
4. Approval of the employment of Sowmya Prakash as a long-term substitute Math/Literacy Interventionist at Ellington Middle School, effective April 4, 2018.
5. Acceptance of the resignation of Dr. Erin McGurk as Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, effective June 30, 2018.
6. Acceptance of the resignation of Christopher Stapleton as a social studies teacher at Ellington Middle School, effective June 30, 2018.
7. Acceptance of the resignation of Christian O'Neil as a science teacher at Ellington Middle School, effective July 1, 2018.

REPORT AND DISCUSSION ITEMSSpecial ReportsNext Generation Accountability Report

Dr. McGurk made a presentation on the Next Generation Accountability System Results for 2016-2017. She stated that the current Next Generation Accountability System replaced a previous system that looked solely at test scores and used those test scores to make determinations about categories of school performance. Three years ago, the state transitioned to a new program that is designed to be more comprehensive in nature and to meet state requirements as to the tracking of data around student performance.

Purposes of Accountability Systems:

- Track progress
- Help schools and districts make improvements
- Show where support is needed most
- Recognize successes

- Promote transparency
- Satisfy federal and state requirement

Changes made to the Accountability System:

- Added several new indicators to underscore the importance of a well-rounded education
  - College and Career Readiness
  - Arts Access and Physical Fitness

Emphasized academic growth on state tests

Adjusted classification methodology to better represent overall school performance, target interventions and support, and refrain from “labels”

Dr. McGurk discussed the twelve Indicators to the Accountability System, Indicator Weight by School Type, and Index Scores. She shared a graph of Ellington Public Schools 2016-2017 District Report and Focus Schools that are exiting, highlighting the fact that Ellington High School not only exited the Focus School list, but was one of only eleven high schools in the state to achieve a rating in the highest level of performance, Category 1. Lastly, Dr. McGurk discussed efforts to Increase Accountability Index Score in the Elementary Schools, Middle School, and High School.

### Regular Board Committee Reports

#### Curriculum Committee

Dr. Young reported that the Curriculum Committee met on April 6, 2018. On the agenda was an update on mathematics resources for instruction at grades 6-8. Dr. McGurk provided a background on the elementary math resources used prior to Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the process for selecting an Open Education Resource (OER), and the process for making a large-scale adoption change, including some pilot use, at all three grades. Mrs. Mancuso next described some of the attributes of the problem-based curriculum of “Illustrative Math” program and author Bill McCallum’s oversight of the development of the materials, tested widely by teachers. Mrs. Mancuso and the curriculum team proposed the adoption of these resources. She described the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics’ (NCTM) five practices and alignment of these materials. Board members inquired about a variety of topics. The committee asked about student experiences, and positive acceptance by students was reported. The Curriculum Committee provided its support for this adoption.

Mrs. Cole provided a background on the adoption of a Next Generation Science Standards-aligned text for AP Environmental Science. Committee members inquired about the size of AP Environmental classes. The Curriculum Committee provided its support for this adoption.

Communications Committee

Mrs. Kiff-Judson reported that the Communications Committee met on April 16, 2018. On the agenda were the topics of Board Governance, Budget Communications, and BOE Videos. The committee made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Board Meeting Packet Cover Page for use in future Board meetings. The motion passed, and it is an Action Item.

Policy Committee

Mrs. Picard-Wambolt reported that the Policy Committee met on April 25, 2018. The committee continued discussion of Policy 5139 – Academic Eligibility Standards. Dr. McGurk presented this revised policy to the committee. The revised policy allows certain students who may have previously been identified as academically ineligible to be placed on academic probation. A motion was made to recommend to the full Board acceptance of revised Policy 5139 – Academic Eligibility Standards with added language. The motion passed.

The committee continued discussion of Regulations 5131.6 - Alcohol Use, Drugs, and Tobacco, and 5145.12 – Search and Seizure. Dr. McGurk presented these revised regulations to the committee. Essentially, when a breathalyzer test is positive, but on second administration the result is negative, the parents or guardians will be notified and the student will be permitted to return to the school sponsored event or resume their regular school day. Although the committee is comfortable with this change, no action is necessary, as the committee nor the full Board is required to approve regulations.

Mrs. Picard-Wambolt also reported that the committee discussed the revised SDE Standards for Alternative Education Opportunities for Expelled Students, the Supreme Court Ruling Clarifying F.A.P.E. (Free and Appropriate Education), Policy 4111.1 - Affirmative Action, Policy 9325.2 – Order of Business, and Board Member Use of Social Media.

Administrative ReportsSuperintendent's Report(s)Superintendent's Goals Update

Dr. Nicol first discussed two topics related to Superintendent Goal #3b, enhanced safety and security of schools. First, there will be an Executive Session meeting on June 12, 2018, which will be attended by Dr. Joseph Erardi, former Superintendent of Newtown Public Schools, and Sergeant Santa of Ellington. At that meeting will be an update on

work that has been done and recommendations moving forward. The second related topic is in regards to an event with a drug-sniffing dog at Ellington High School this coming spring. Parents and students have been notified.

Dr. Nicol then discussed an example related to Superintendent Goal #3c, continue support services for staff cross-training and capacity building. He stated that Mr. Greenleaf and Mr. Collins have begun work on the process of online registration. This began with registration for preschool and kindergarten. The next step will be to move annual student information forms to be updated online. Dr. Nicol shared a printout related to the registration process and praised them for work done so far.

Regarding the Transparent School Initiative, Dr. Nicol provided an example of Superintendent Goal #2d, executive progressive communication strategies to parents and community leaders primarily via video communication. He shared a video on Learning Walks at Windermere School, and he discussed ways in which videos can be used to communicate to parents or to new recruits in the near future.

Lastly, Dr. Nicol discussed Superintendent Goal #1c, to co-create an environment that supports innovative practices. He reported on the recent 30-30-30 Tour at Windermere School, and he stated that invitations have also been sent to parents who serve on the Parent's Advisory Committee and PTO presidents.

### 2018-2019 Budget Update

Dr. Nicol stated that he sent the Board members a communication on the budget update. The Board packets contained a notice of the Annual Town Budget Meeting to be held on May 8, 2018. The notice stated the 'anticipated May 15, 2018 Budget Referendum,' and Dr. Nicol sent that message out to parents to communicate the date. Dr. Nicol also pointed out that the Board of Education budget request of 3.88% had nothing removed by the Board of Finance, largely due to the strong relationship the BOE has with the BOF. Dr. Nicol offered his thanks to the BOF.

### 30-30-30 Tour – Ellington Middle School

Dr. Nicol reported that a 30-30-30 Tour at Ellington Middle School will take place on May 11, 2018. Video footage featuring Mastery Based Learning (MBL) will be taken during this tour. Dr. Nicol is working with the Mastery Based Learning Task Force to produce three short videos, with each video focusing on a topic in MBL. Videos will be parent-friendly and parent-informed.

### Directors' Reports

### Update on Food Service RFP Process

Mr. Greenleaf provided an update on the Food Service Request for Proposal (RFP). He shared the Administrative Review Process that has been developed. Mr. Greenleaf stated that he also met with the Food Service staff on April 24 to update them on the past month's developments and preview what will happen during the next month. Regarding the process, Mr. Greenleaf stated that first, an Administrative Review committee was created to review RFPs. This committee conducts a state required technical review of the proposals, and the review contains eleven criteria. The committee will consist of school administrators Dr. Nicol, Mr. Greenleaf, and Jenn Kinney and Board members Jen Dzen and Jaime Foster. Second, the administrative review committee will present to the Finance Committee at a public meeting in May. The cafeteria food service employees will be on the agenda for the Finance Committee and will be able to present and discuss with the Board their thoughts on the current food service program. The final step will be a full Board of Education discussion at a public meeting with a date to be determined.

### Board Liaison Reports

#### CREC

Mrs. Picard-Wambolt reported on the April CREC meeting; topics discussed included funding for magnet schools. Mrs. Picard-Wambolt also stated that she would be stepping down from her representative position as BOE liaison at CREC. She asked other Board members to consider taking on this position.

#### Student Representative Report

Dr. Nicol read Representative Willett's report; the report included highlights of the National Honor Society's "Senior Prom" at the Ellington Senior Center, participation in the National Student Walk Out Day to protest gun violence, and the upcoming OKP performances on May 4 and May 6.

### ACTION ITEMS

A motion was made to add as Action Item #3, the Approval of the Employment of Brian Hendrickson as Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

1<sup>st</sup>. K. Picard-Wambolt      2<sup>nd</sup>. K. Socha

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

1. A motion was made that upon the recommendation of the Policy Committee, the Board hold a second and final vote to adopt the Ellington Public Schools: Policy 6163.1 – Selection of School Library Learning Resources, as presented.

1<sup>st</sup>. K. Picard-Wambolt      2<sup>nd</sup>. M. Kupferschmid

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

2. A motion was made that upon the recommendation of the Communications Committee, the Board approve the Board Meeting Packet Cover Page for use in future Board meetings.

1<sup>st</sup>. J. Foster      2<sup>nd</sup>. M. Kupferschmid

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

3. A motion to approve the employment of Brian Hendrickson as Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, effective July 1, 2018, with a salary of \$156,600 for the 2018-2019 school year and a salary of \$159,889 for the 2019-2020 school year.

1<sup>st</sup>. M. Young      2<sup>nd</sup>. M. Kupferschmid

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

A motion to adjourn was made at 9:15 p.m.

1<sup>st</sup>. J. Foster      2<sup>nd</sup>. K. Socha

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracey Kiff-Judson  
Chair

TKJ/amd