

AGENDA

ITEM # 10

**Hartford Board of Education
Special Meeting – Tuesday, December 18, 2007
Hartford Public High School Library – 55 Forest Street**

MINUTES

I. Opening – 5:00 p.m.

At 5:19 p.m. Ms. Miranda called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

<p><u>Present:</u> Honorable Mayor Eddie A. Perez, Chair Ms. Ada Miranda, First Vice Chair Mr. David MacDonald, Secretary Ms. Andrea Comer Ms. Elizabeth Brad Noel Ms. Sharon Patterson-Stallings</p>	<p><u>Absent:</u> Mr. Israel Flores Mr. Luis Rodriguez-Davila Ms. Pamela Richmond</p>
<p>Superintendent Steven Adamowski</p>	

A. Workshop

1. Presentation and Review of Educational Program Specifications for the Redesign of Hartford Public High School

The educational program specifications for the redesign of Hartford Public High School into a Ninth Grade Academy and three autonomous grades 10 through 12 academies in August of 2008 will be presented. These academies are in alignment with the Board-adopted “An ‘All Choice’ System of Schools” five year-district plan and include at the 10 through 12 grade levels: Nursing Academy, Academy of Engineering and Green Technologies, and Law and Government Academy.

Superintendent Adamowski welcomed the members of the design teams. He asked Dr. Christina Kishimoto to introduce the design teams.

Dr. Kishimoto provided an overview. The design team chairs will present the three design specifications for three academies at Hartford Public High School. They will run in grades 10-12 and include the Nursing Academy, the Law and Government Academy, and Engineering and Green Technologies Academy. Approximately 2/3 of the design team members were teachers.

The designs were developed with the three Rs in mind: rigor, relevance, and relationships. The academies are designed for approximately 400 students and will include college credit courses. They all have a college ready curriculum. They each will be offering 6-8 theme based courses. They each integrate job shadowing and internships. A faculty member and a member from the specific field will chair the academy.

Dr. Kishimoto introduced the 2 co-chairs of the Nursing Academy design team: Jaye Rottner, teacher at Weaver High School, and Dr. Carol Polifroni, from the University of Connecticut School of Nursing. Ms. Rottner stated that there will be a link to UConn School of Nursing and a link will be maintained with Capital Community College for the Certify Nursing Assistance program. There are many core courses, and many of the design team members are very well versed in this strong academic foundation.

Many of the elective courses focus on nursing interventions. Ethical compartment and moral fiber are relevant to the courses and are throughout the curriculum. The mission is to provide college readiness for all students. It is hoped that the principal will have a strong background in the nursing field. There will be shared decision making with parents, faculty, and students. A school governance council will be formed. A student handbook will delineate what is expected of students. A school compact will be a signed contract for all students in the program.

Students will have a student voice and will be required to develop a student portfolio. Parents will be encouraged to be active participants in the education of their children. All faculty will be certified to teach in the field that they are teaching. There will be teaching teams with a cohort of students, so the focus is on what the students are learning, not what they are being taught.

Dr. Polifroni highlighted 3 points. The theme is CARE – Character, Accountability Responsibility and Excellence. Integrity and ethical compartment are integral. In term of the curriculum, it will be designed for college readiness and college preparation. It will be a student centered curriculum that will rely on relationships between faculty and students. Personalized learning plans will be developed for each student, so students are fully informed of where they are going and what is required to get there. Three years of language will be required. Science courses offered include physics, anatomy and physiology. E-portfolios will be developed; there will be a lot of monitoring and web-based activities. Students will be able to keep track of his/her own progress, and the faculty will also be able to access and keep track of it. The greenhouse at Hartford Public High School will be utilized to learn about herbal medicine and dietary courses in regards to maintaining health. Partnerships are with institutions of higher educations and health centers, department of public health, department of higher education.

Ms. Miranda asked for the definition of the autonomous academy. Dr. Kishimoto stated that the autonomy comes with a principal and the school having its own budget and school governance council. It is semi-autonomous because it shares some of the facility with the other academies in the school.

Ms. Miranda asked about the certification for students. Jaye Rottner answered that students who complete the program will receive a Certification from the State; they will be Certified Nursing Assistants.

Ms. Miranda asked about the rigor that will be applied. Dr. Kishimoto answered that staff will be sought to meet various requirements and certified in various areas of science. In addition, the district will utilize partnerships with higher education faculty to train staff in teaching the curriculum. Dr. Kishimoto added that many school nurses have inquired as to what they would need to do to become certified to teach.

Ms. Comer expressed her concern about the nursing program at Weaver High School. She also is concerned that there is not a parent on the design team. If a parent, particularly a Weaver High School parent, was involved maybe the design team would know the concerns of the Weaver High School parents. She hopes that moving forward parents will be involved. Dr. Kishimoto stated that the design teams have been instructed to identify parents, if parents have not been placed on a design team. Superintendent Adamowski added that Hartford Public High School has the necessary and adequate science labs in order to fulfill the requirements of a richer program. Ms. Rottner added that she has spoken with many parents of her Weaver High School students. Many are hesitant to participate on the committee. Hartford Public High School is so superior to complete the goal, and many are willing to come to Hartford Public High School, especially with the new choice option and transportation offered.

Mr. Flores expressed his excitement for the program, but he also raised his concern that the rigor be sustained. Dr. Polifroni stated that the focus is on college preparedness and college readiness. CNAs are not needed; registered nurses are needed in the field. The benefit of the teacher/coach/mentor relationship with the students will encourage student success and monitor it closely. It is a progressive model that addresses any deficits, so students can be successful. The CNA role is a piece and not an end.

Mayor Perez asked how the enrollment plan will be implemented. Dr. Kishimoto stated that there is a posting for a principal. A timeline will be rolled out in January for all of the academies and other high schools, so students and families will be informed of the academies: open houses, workshops, applications. Dr. Adamowski added

that the existing CNA students at Weaver High School will be given priority, as well as the students in the Hartford Public High School 9th grade academy.

Mayor Perez asked about students who enter the academy in 12th grade. Dr. Kishimoto stated that the students will be required to have enough credits to graduate. They also would look at that course study to see which electives courses those students will be able to take during that 12th grade year. They want to ensure that they are ready and have all the minimum credit requirements to graduate and to be competitive to go for a four year college. Guidance and teachers will be the key.

Dr. Kishimoto introduced the Law and Government Academy design team chair, Bridget Allison, teacher at Hartford Public High School and Meisha Ross-Porter, Principal at The Bronx School for Law, Government and Justice. She also listed the other design team members.

Ms. Allison stated that leadership is critical. The mission of the academy is to create ethical community leaders who will be independent thinkers, empower students to make good public policy decisions to create a better community, and prepare for the challenges of post-secondary education.

An advisory board will consist of representatives from local post-secondary institutions, state and local governments, the legal community, non-profit organizations and other community partners. The Board will focus on building and maintaining the external relationships of the Academy.

A school compact will lay out the expectations around academy courses, study plans, applied learning, senior projects and graduation requirements. The parental role will be critical to the students' academic and social success. Teachers will be expected to model leadership. Teacher support will be provided by community partners to train the teachers.

Community partners will be part of the advisory board. Community partnerships will also help us with the resources needed to train staff and students. They will provide internships, job shadowing opportunities and other mentoring related to community leadership.

In terms of what is expected of students, all students will engage in the most rigorous curriculum. They will be expected to take 7-9 course credits/ year. Ethical behavior will be expected inside/outside of school. A summer bridge program will be mandated, so they can handle the curriculum.

The curriculum will be delivered through differentiated instruction. The pedagogical method will be used in all classrooms. The courses that distinguish the academy include: civil and criminal law, computer applications and research, urban studies and internship or senior project in 12th grade. A public speaking course will also be required.

Creative scheduling will mean that students will be engaging in extended academic days, Saturday programs, and summer school.

Ms. Ross stated that this program will expose students to many opportunities, while encouraging students to give back to their own community. Students will be able to connect to each other and faculty in a smaller environment. The advisory board will provide a functionary role, not just an advisory role. The leadership council will consist of the school faculty.

Ms. Ross's school has made a commitment to partner in the design of this school.

Students will be involved in the selection of the electives that they will take in the 12th grade. Leadership Greater Hartford and the UConn Law School Minority Association have already made a commitment to the school. When given the opportunity to choose courses, students take ownership. The selection of the school leader is essential to the success of the school.

Ms. Comer asked if conversations have been initiated with the minority and county bar associations. Ms. Allison answered that conversations have been had and meetings are being planned.

Dr. Kishimoto introduced Felix Giordano, Hartford Public High School teacher, and Dayl Walker from the Connecticut Business Industry Association, the co-chairs of the Academy of Engineering and Green Technology. She also listed the names of the other members of the design team.

Mr. Giordano stated that the four themes of the school include: pre-engineering, engineering technologies, green technologies, and advanced manufacturing. This academy will provide an introduction to engineering. Engineering technology will support engineers by testing and prototyping. Green technologies cover everything that is related to efficiency. The mathematics and science courses will be expanded. Advanced manufacturing will involve the partnership with highly technical companies. Curriculum will provide real-world experience. Much of the education will take place in a workplace.

The parents' understanding of what the academy is trying to accomplish is essential for success. Parents have shown that they can impose a work ethic. There is an inter-disciplinary approach to teaching and learning.

The curriculum that will be utilized is based on three sequential steps: Foundation Courses, Specialization Courses and Capstone Courses.

Ms. Walker spoke of community partnerships, which is a key feature of the academy. The low level manufacturing jobs no longer exist. The high level manufacturing positions are high paying and in demand. Anyone brought into the school to speak will be tightly integrated into the curriculum.

There will be a performance assessment to demonstrate the success of the academy. Teachers, with support from the community, parents, as part of the structure; will be responsible for the academic excellence of students. Students will have to apply to college, so the expectations are set high.

Students need to be able to articulate why he/she is in school. The climate needs to be set that continuous improvement is part of the academy. The academy will have a longer school day, after school programs, Saturday programs, and summer academies.

Ms. Comer expressed her excitement to see all of the partners. She encouraged participation of parents.

Mayor Perez asked how long the team has been in existence. Ms. Walker answered 4 months.

Ms. Miranda stated that it may take a longer time to successfully meet the rigorous curriculum. There are many students who are ready for this and excited for such an academy.

Superintendent Adamowski asked Mr. Giordano if the facility is adequate for this academy. Mr. Giordano replied that there is a very good network in the school, which is very stable. The only consideration may be to take down walls to increase the lab room size, and the type of flooring may have to be changed to accommodate the labs. The labs will be about \$150 thousand each but aren't necessarily needed the first year. One lab will be needed for the first year.

Superintendent Adamowski thanked all of the members of the design teams.

II. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.