

Hartford Board of Education

Minutes

Regular Meeting – October 15, 2013

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Hartford Board of Education (hereinafter “Board”) met on Tuesday, October 15, 2013 at Global Communications Academy IB, 85 Edwards Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06120.

I. Call to Order

Mr. Poland called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. A quorum was present.

<u>Present:</u> Matthew Poland, Chair Cherita McIntye, Second Vice-Chair Robert Cotto, Jr., Secretary Honorable Mayor Pedro Segarra Elizabeth Brad Noel Richard Wareing	<u>Absent:</u> Lori Hudson, Vice-Chair Jose Colon-Rivas Luis Rodríguez-Dávila
Superintendent Christina Kishimoto	

II. Public Participation

Aaron Lewis, parent from Classical Magnet School, raised concerns for the Slaves Catcher program which is part of the curriculum at Classical, on which students participate as slaves and teachers as slave catchers. He stated that there are other ways to teach about slavery and the results of slavery. He spoke on behalf of other parents who also want this program to be removed from the curriculum.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that it is important for teachers to have sufficient training around when it is appropriate for students to study complex historical topics. The District will continue to review the units of study having in consideration parent feedback. Students should have an opportunity to study complex topics and being able to engage in these studies in a very respectful manner. The District will continue to review what is appropriate and not appropriate.

Terri Morrison, Martin Luther King School parent, spoke to the Board regarding enrollment at MLK. She stated that parents are sent to West Middle because they were told that there is no space at MLK. He asked the Board to increase the enrollment number. She stated that MLK is losing students to another school that is housed on a different floor, and if this continues, MLK will continue to loose enrollment and staff.

Ivonne Duncan, resident, raised concerns regarding access to the field at Hartford High. She stated that there are many members of the community who go and exercise at the field, but the gate has been recently locked and closed to the neighborhood. She was told that it is close due that is expensive to maintain the field. She stated that other schools, including Bulkeley High, have their tracts open to the community.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that she will find out what prompted the school to close the gates. She stated that this is a great resource for the students and would like to avoid getting the field vandalized, but at the same time, it is also a great resource for the community. She will look into the matter.

Andrea Johnson, Hartford Federation of Teachers president, spoke to the Board regarding their decision to not to evaluate the superintendent. She stated that all HPS employees are evaluated and held accountable, that the Superintendent should be held to the same standards. Ms. Johnson concluded that the Board's decision to not to evaluate is unacceptable.

Mr. Poland stated that the leadership of the HFT was informed that the evaluation of the Superintendent was a no-vote for her contract.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that it would be a mistake to continue to have uninformed conversations about her evaluation, or to use the newspapers as the primary source of information. Dr. Kishimoto stated that she has been publicly accountable during the years she has been in the District. She expressed her disappointment with the leadership of the HFT for not seeking to meet with her to discuss their concerns, instead of choosing to do so publicly. She stated that she met with the leadership of the HFT to discuss her contract, out of respect and courtesy for being the largest group in the District. She asked for the same respect and courtesy.

Marjorie Nishan, teacher at Martin Luther King, spoke to the Board regarding a classroom which she thought for several years, that is being closed because there were not enough students. She stated that she was reassigned to a new classroom and she was not given professional time to prepare for the new classroom, neither she was given professional time to close the classroom that she was teaching prior to the move.

III. Reports

1. Report of the Chair

Chairman Poland reported the appointment of the Superintendent Search Committee to begin the process of finding a new superintendent. The role of the Superintendent Search Committee is to provide input and assistance during the superintendent search process. An executive search consultant will be selected. In concert with the executive search consultant, the committee will:

- Work with the Board's Committee of the Whole (COW) on the development of a superintendent profile, recruitment timeline, advertisement and recruitment plan.
- Review the applicant pool and provide input on the selection of candidates to advance for interviews.
- Assist the consultant in developing the interview protocol and interview questions.
- Interview candidates and provide feedback.
- Exercise discretion and ensure confidentiality of the candidates' identities until ready to recommend finalists to the Board.

The search consultants will recommend a list of finalists to the Board, which will establish the interview protocol, interview finalists and make a hiring decision.

Committee Members represents a diverse sampling of the Hartford community and the district's stakeholders:

Four (4) board members:

- Jose Colon-Rivas (co-chair)
- Robert Cotto (co-chair)
- Richard Wareing
- Matt Poland (temporary)

Three (3) parents:

- Mayra Esquilin

- Samariya Smith
- Jack A. Soares II

Two (2) principals:

- Gayle Allen-Greene, Bulkeley High School
- Melany Brady, STEM Magnet School at Annie Fisher

Two (2) teachers:

- Mario Marrero (2013 teacher of the year)
- Tamika Knight (2013 Milken Award winner)

One (1) corporate representative:

- Marlene Ibsen, Travelers / Metro Hartford Alliance

One (1) higher education:

- Wilfredo Nieves, Capitol Community College

2. Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Kishimoto reported the focus on student attendance continues; attendance is tracked daily, weekly and monthly. Principals and their teams receive the list of the students who have missed two days of school during the start of the school, and from now on every month, they will also receive which students are starting to accumulate absences. This is an effort to ensure that students are attending school every day and on time to take full advantage of the instruction given at school so they can be college and career ready. Data is being collected at several pilot school sites at the high school level for four week period, to have a better understanding of what are the reasons for students who are chronically absent.

Dr. Kishimoto also reported that Hartford Public Schools is launching the Intranet site with Central Office Staff to get instant feedback from department heads and team. This is a very important communications tool for the District to share the best practices, fill forms electronically, find contact information, etc. This is a great resource for the staff internally. Staff will be able to have access to all the information across the District. This is part of the communications plan that is now finalized and will be presented to the Board for full bedding and launching. This is a multi-year communications plan.

3. Committee Reports

- Ad-Hoc Building Committee

Mr. Wareing thanked the members of the committee who participated and dedicated their time to evaluate the conditions of school buildings. The Ad-Hoc Building Committee was formed due to the collapse of a ceiling at McDonough School in June 2013. The problem at McDonough was a construction defect rather than a maintenance failure.

The Board of Education approved and formed a Facilities Ad Hoc Committee to investigate the physical conditions of schools in the district. The Committee was charged with making recommendations to the Hartford Board of Education related to improving the physical conditions of HPS school buildings. Committee recommendations are listed below:

- The Board of Education should retain the professional services of an engineering/architectural firm to conduct a comprehensive Facilities Study on all Hartford Public School buildings that have not been renovated as new or built as new within the last 5 years.

- The Board of Education through the Finance & Audit Committee should study the effectiveness of student based budgeting and its impact on custodial services and maintenance within HPS facilities.
- The Board of Education should make the necessary appropriations to hire an additional 5-8 professional trade positions to assist in the maintenance and repair of the 43 HPS buildings (i.e. Carpenters, HVAC Mechanical Positions, Painters, Electricians, and an Evening Custodial Supervisor) at a cost not to exceed \$450K per year.

A copy of the presentation can be found in the official file for this meeting,

- School Choice and Facilities Committee

Ms. Noel reported that the committee met with Capital Preparatory staff to discuss the possibility to duplicate the model. The committee did not make any decisions but it will be on the agenda in November.

IV. Business Agenda

A. Items in Order of Importance

1. Acceptance of Funds: Connecticut State Department of Education for Hartford Adult Education Programs - \$1,592,664 (Supt. et al)

This grant provides funding for state mandated educational services to adult learners in pursuit of English Language proficiency, secondary education completion, adult basic education and the acquisition of skills needed for postsecondary opportunities.

Mayor Segarra moved; Ms. Noel seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to accept a total of \$1,592,664 from the State of Connecticut Adult Education Program for the Adult Education Center in Hartford.

VOTE

In favor: Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Mayor Segarra, Wareing

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Colon-Rivas, Hudson, Rodriguez-Davila

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

2. Acceptance of Funds: Connecticut State Department of Education - Cooperating Eligible Entity Grant for Supplemental Adult Education Programs \$266,076 (Supt. et al)

The Cooperating Eligible Entity Grant provides mandated adult education services through a collaborative relationship between the Adult Education Center in Hartford and three Cooperating Eligible Entities: Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford, YMCA Read to Succeed Adult Reading Clinic, and Urban League of Greater Hartford. This grant supplements existing adult education services through enhanced activities such as services to special populations, specific literacy education and additional support services.

Mr. Wareing moved; Mayor Segarra seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to accept a total of \$266,076 from the State of Connecticut Cooperating Eligible Entity Grant for the supplemental Adult Education programs described above.

VOTE

In favor: Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Mayor Segarra, Wareing
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Colon-Rivas, Hudson, Rodriguez-Davila

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

3. Second Reading and Adoption: Policy No. 5131.1 / 6142.2 Childhood Obesity and Physical Exercise in Schools (Policy Committee)

Ms. Noel moved; Mayor Segarra seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education accepts the second reading and adopts the policy on Childhood Obesity and Physical Exercise in Schools.

VOTE

In favor: Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Mayor Segarra, Wareing
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Colon-Rivas, Hudson, Rodriguez-Davila

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. Second Reading and Adoption: Revised Policy No. 1211 School Governance Councils (Policy Committee)

Mayor Segarra moved; Ms. Noel seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education accepts the second reading and adopts the policy on School Governance Councils.

VOTE

In favor: Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Mayor Segarra, Wareing
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Colon-Rivas, Hudson, Rodriguez-Davila

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. Contract Approval: CBS Therapy \$312,732 (Supt et al.)

Hartford Public Schools will contract with CBS Therapy to provide speech and language services to mandated HPS students who required these services. Due to the shortage of speech and language professionals, it is necessary to utilize this service to ensure compliance with federal special education guidelines.

Mr. Wareing moved; Mayor Segarra seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to execute a contract with CBS Therapy for the term delineated in the contract ending June 30, 2014, at a cost not to exceed \$312,732.

VOTE

In favor: Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Mayor Segarra, Wareing
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Colon-Rivas, Hudson, Rodriguez-Davila

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

6. Approval of Lease Agreement: Ricoh USA, Inc. for Replacement of Current Fleet Copiers \$1,475,212.80 / 5-Year Agreement (Supt et al.)

Hartford Public Schools will contract with Ricoh USA, Inc. to provide 53 Ricoh copiers to replace the current fleet at Teacher Workstation areas. The current fleet is at the end of their useful life.

Ms. Noel moved; Mr. Wareing seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to execute a contract with Ricoh USA, Inc. for the term delineated in the contract ending June 30, 2018, at an amount not to exceed \$1,475,212.80.

VOTE

In favor: Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Mayor Segarra, Wareing

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Colon-Rivas, Hudson, Rodriguez-Davila

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

7. Contract Approval: Ricoh USA, Inc. \$235,800 for Maintenance and Supplies of Current Own Assets (Supt et al.)

Hartford Public Schools will contract with Ricoh USA, Inc. to provide copier supply and maintenance for all equipment currently serviced by Ricoh at the schools and Central Office Departments.

Mr. Wareing moved; Mayor Segarra seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to execute a contract with Ricoh USA, Inc. for the term delineated in the contract ending June 30, 2014, at an amount not to exceed \$235,800.

VOTE

In favor: Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Mayor Segarra, Wareing

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Colon-Rivas, Hudson, Rodriguez-Davila

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

8. Approval of Negotiations and Agreement between the Hartford Public Schools and the Lincoln Culinary Institute for Weaver Culinary Arts Academy (Supt et al.)

Mr. Wareing moved; Mr. Cotto seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to negotiate an agreement between Hartford Public Schools and Lincoln Culinary Institute for housing the Culinary Arts Academy during the construction period at Weaver High School.

Discussion

The school will have to be out of the Weaver building by the end of the 2013-14 school year due to the construction. Many options were explored to try to keep school in a City own building while the construction is going on. No space with classrooms and kitchens built-in found available. The partnership with Lincoln is the best option and will bring new opportunities for students. Lincoln is offering 14 classrooms and the use of their

gymnasium and parking lot. This is a temporary move; the Culinary Arts Academy will go back to Weaver building once the construction is over.

Board members raised questions regarding the build-out cost and the term of the lease listed on the letter of intent. They advised for more clarity and referred the item to the Finance committee since there are significant financial implications.

Mr. Cotto requested the information around the other options explored is also included on the resolution. He also recommended adding information regarding the accommodations that will be made for transportation.

Ms. Noel made a motion to table the item. Mr. Cotto seconded.

VOTE

In favor: Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Mayor Segarra, Wareing

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Colon-Rivas, Hudson, Rodriguez-Davila

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Mayor Segarra made a motion to change the order of the agenda to have the consent agenda prior to the executive session; Mr. Wareing seconded.

VOTE

In favor: Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Mayor Segarra, Wareing

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Colon-Rivas, Hudson, Rodriguez-Davila

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

C. Consent Agenda

Mayor Segarra made a motion to move all items listed under consent agenda; Mr. Wareing seconded.

10. Contract Continuation Approval: MRW Connected, Inc. \$290,300 / 2-Year Contract (Supt. et al)

Hartford Public Schools will extend the contract with MRW Connected, Inc. for the design and development of phase 2 of the employee intranet that will serve as a primary communications tool and a forum of learning and engagement among district teachers, principals, school staff, and administration, and for the development of school websites as part of the district's communications and family engagement goals.

That the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to extend the contract with MRW Connected, Inc. for a term of two years based on performance and funding availability, at an amount not to exceed \$185,900 FY 2013-2014 and \$104,400 FY 2014-2015.

11. Contract Continuation Approval: The Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth – Capital Preparatory Magnet School \$95,000 (Supt. et al)

Hartford Public Schools will contract with the Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth to provide gifted online curriculum to qualifying Capital Prep students.

That the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to execute a contract with Johns Hopkins University – Center for Talented Youth, for the term delineated in the contract ending June 30, 2014, at a cost not to exceed \$95,000.

12. Contract Continuation Approval: Connecticut Science Center-Betances Early Reading Lab \$63,191 (Supt. et al)

The Hartford Public Schools will contract with the Connecticut Science Center to provide professional development for teachers and to conduct classroom experiments with students.

That the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to execute a contract with the Connecticut Science Center for the term delineated in the contract ending June 30, 2014, for an amount not to exceed \$63,191.

VOTE

In favor: Colon-Rivas, Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Mayor Segarra, Wareing

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Hudson, Rodriguez-Davila

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

B. Executive Session (Collective Bargaining: The Hartford Federation of School Health Professionals)

Mayor Segarra made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss Collective Bargaining – The Hartford Federation of School Health Professionals; Mr. Wareing seconded.

VOTE

In favor: Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Mayor Segarra, Wareing

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Colon-Rivas, Hudson, Rodriguez-Davila

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

The Board entered into executive session at 7:20 p.m.

The executive session adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

9. Approval of Proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement: Hartford Federation of School Health Professionals (Supt. et al)

The Hartford Board of Education approves the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Hartford Federation of School Health Professionals, Local 1018 A/B, AFT, AFL-CIO. The parties reached a tentative agreement on September 16, 2013; the membership of the bargaining unit ratified the tentative agreement on September 26, 2013.

Mr. Poland moved; Mr. Wareing seconded, that the Board of Education approves the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Hartford Federation of School Health Professionals, Local 1018 A/B, AFT, AFL-CIO.

VOTE

In favor: Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Mayor Segarra, Wareing

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Colon-Rivas, Hudson, Rodriguez-Davila

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.