

HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES

Special Meeting – Wednesday, August 1, 2012

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Hartford Board of Education (hereinafter “Board”) met on Wednesday, August 1, 2012. The meeting was held at the Connecticut Science Center, 250 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, Connecticut 06106.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Poland called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. A quorum was present.

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

II. Business Agenda

1. Approval of Operations Plan for Betances STEM and Breakthrough II Magnet (Supt. et al)

Mr. Poland moved; Ms. Noel seconded; that the Hartford Board of Education approves the operation plans for Dr. Ramon Betances STEM Magnet School and Breakthrough II Magnet.

Ms. Noel made a motion to have the approval of the two operations plan presented for vote individually. Mr. Cotto seconded.

VOTE:

In favor: Cotto, Colon-Rivas, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Rodriguez-Davila, Mayor Segarra.

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Hudson, Wareing.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

1. Approval of Operations Plan for Betances STEM Magnet School (Supt. et al)

Mr. Poland moved; Ms. Noel seconded; that the Hartford Board of Education approves the operation plans for Dr. Ramon Betances STEM Magnet School.

Dr. Kishimoto thanked the Board for moving forward with the partnership with the State for the establishment of two new magnet schools in the City of Hartford.

Mr. Genao stated that the Betances STEM is a 4 through 8 magnet school that focuses in Science, Math and Technology; the curriculum mirrors the highly successful STEM magnet program at Annie Fisher. The Breakthrough II is Pre-K – 8 that mirrors the successful

Breakthrough Magnet School program, with a similar curriculum. The two schools will be known as Breakthrough Magnet North Campus and Breakthrough Magnet South Campus.

Ms. Noel asked if the Early Reading Lab and the Betances STEM magnet school will be located at Betances.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that a permanent site needs to be identified for Betances STEM for 2013-14.

Ms. Rey stated that Betances STEM will open with 100 students, 50 from Hartford and 50 suburban students. Ms. Rey stated that the lottery process was still active, so there was no full enrollment at that time.

Mr. Colon-Rivas asked if there will be continuum between the schools.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the principals are working with central office to ensure that there is continuum between the schools, also using the best practices for early reading lab and the STEM skills.

Ms. Noel stated that there will be students who may not want to continue with the STEM program. She asked for the opportunities that will be available for them.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that that is always a possibility; the goal is to have one continuum of the school with two components. In the Pre-K – 8, the students will have the integrated curriculum but there are also other options. The design is to have the two models working in one school.

Ms. Tammy Cassile stated that one key component of the Early Reading Lab and the STEM is infusing the curriculum so the early reading skills fuse into the STEM program and vice versa. One component in terms of early literacy is the non-fiction text, switching the text into science and technology so there is awareness as opposed to being a STEM curriculum. The exposure piece is the goal for the early reading.

Mr. Cotto stated that the distinction between the design and the operations plan is important. He stated that per the Bylaws, the Board's School Choice and Facilities committee should review the designs or redesign of schools. He raised concerns for the operations plan being changed into the design of the school.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the Board has taken action on operations plans for other magnet schools when working within the State's timeline. Other aspects of the schools such as identifying a new building for Betances STEM will be brought to the School Choice and Facilities Committee. Dr. Kishimoto also stated that for Breakthrough II, the Board has already approved the design specifications.

Mr. Cotto asked if the original design plan for Breakthrough II is being considered as the design for the Breakthrough II magnet program.

Dr. Kishimoto explained that the design plan for the school mirrors the Breakthrough Magnet School. The problematic element is not being changed. The Board is taking action on the operations plan which includes other components that the State requires.

Mr. Cotto raised his concerns stating that the District is creating an entire new magnet school which includes suburban students; therefore, the design specifications may differ from the original proposal approved by the Board.

Mr. Cotto also stated that the plan includes preference for students in Betances' zone. He asked if that will be the case for Breakthrough II.

Mr. Genao stated that the preferences for all the magnets are: neighborhood preference for within the mile and/or within the zone, also sibling preference, and staff preference.

Mr. Cotto recommended outlining the neighborhood and zone preference so the students in the north end of Hartford are aware of it.

Mr. Rodriguez-Davila stated his support for the operations plan and stated that he will track the school progress to ensure that it is as successful as the other magnets.

VOTE:

In Favor: Cotto, Colon-Rivas, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Rodriguez-Davila, Mayor Segarra.

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Hudson, Wareing.

The motion passed by voice vote.

2. Approval of Operations Plan for Breakthrough II Magnet (Supt. et al)

Mr. Poland moved; Ms. McIntye seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education approves the operation plans for Breakthrough II Magnet.

Ms. Noel expressed her support for the program. She asked for the number of suburban students who will be enrolled.

Ms. Tammy Cassile, principal at Breakthrough, stated that there will be 77 students.

Mr. Cotto expressed his support for the item. He also asked the Board to consider the options for the design of schools. He stated that there are differences between what is being offered to different schools. Breakthrough II will receive additional resources from magnet funds, and will include the enrollment of suburban students. Meanwhile, the redesign for Milner will increase segregation probably by race and income. One model is completely opposite to the other.

VOTE:

In favor: Colon-Rivas, Cotto, McIntye, Noel, Poland, Rodriguez-Davila, Mayor Segarra.

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Hudson, Wareing.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

III. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.