

HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

Minutes

Regular Meeting – November 15, 2011

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Hartford Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Tuesday, November 15, 2011. The meeting was held at America's Choice at SAND - 1750 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06105.

I. Call to Order

Mr. MacDonald called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. A quorum was present.

<p><u>Present:</u> Mr. David MacDonald, Chair Ms. Pamela Richmond, Vice Chair Ms. Lori L. Hudson, Second Vice Chair Ms. Sharon Patterson-Stallings, Secretary Ms. Elizabeth Brad Noel Ms. Ada Miranda Mr. Luis Rodríguez-Dávila Mr. Robert Cotto, Jr.</p>	<p><u>Absent:</u> Mr. Israel Flores</p>
Superintendent Christina Kishimoto	

II. Public Participation

1. Nelson Moquete, parent, spoke in favor of keeping Bulkeley High school as one school. He raised concerns for the challenges to obtain the accreditation; Hartford High lost the accreditation because it is not longer one school. He stated that her daughter will be applying to college, so she needs that the school is accredited.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that she would like to have Bulkeley High school continuing its accreditation status. The concern raised was that Bulkeley could be in the same challenging situation as Hartford High. Bulkeley will move forward with the NEASC accreditation. They will be supported by the K-12 team which includes Mr. McCaskill and Ms. Roberge- Wentzell. There is no desire to lose the accreditation for any of the schools.

Ms. Noel stated that there is a very tense situation because the community feels that the school could lose its accreditation because it was divided into academies.

2. Terry Starks, PTO president at Milner, stated that there are some areas that need improvement, not only at Milner but throughout the community. She spoke in favor of cleanliness and maintenance in the schools. She recommended conducting a cultural diversity study. She asked if cultural diversity training was ever offered for the staff. She requested to get data from the training, if ever conducted, and whether it was evaluated.
3. Ms. Stark also advocated for parents and requested that there are more open communication between the administration and parents. She encouraged parental involvement in the schools. She invited Dr. Kishimoto to visit Milner and to present her future plan to the school community. Parents have a lot of ideas and they would like to share them.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that several community forums are being conducted where parents can provide feedback about how to strengthen the partnership with parents. A visit to Milner will be scheduled soon.

4. Lorna Shipp, PTO at Breakthrough and SGC member at Pathways, reported an incident involving a high school sophomore who arrived late to his school at High School, Inc. He was turned back because he did not have an excuse to be late. The student did not go back home; he was arrested for shoplifting. She recommended that the school should have a different approach for tardiness.
5. Andrea Johnson, Hartford Federation of Teachers President, stated that the schools were open on Veterans Day. There was minimum or almost no curriculum on Veterans. She recommended having a curriculum based on Veterans for that day. She recommended using the partnership with CPBN to communicate the curriculum.
6. Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila advocated in favor of observing Veterans Day. He mentioned several members of his family who are veterans. He recommended recognizing the sacrifice of heroes.
7. Paul Holzer, Achieve Hartford! spoke in favor of the School Governance Council policy presented to the Board for second reading. He supported the training for the School Governance Councils. He stated that parents like to be involved.
8. Shay Teal, parent, advocated for special education students and services. She stated that members of the Special Ed task force met several times to develop the recommendations. She raised her concerns for the creation of a new committee where parents were not invited to participate. She requested a report of the trainings for principals around IEP's. She requested a report on the status of the recommendations.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the Ad-Hoc committee was a short term committee form with the superintendent's team. She stated that the committee was formed to review the status of the recommendations and to evaluate the systems that were working or not working in terms of the staff. Also to review the action plan as required by the State. It was an internal committee, not an open committee.

9. The report of the Ad-Hoc committee was shared publicly to reconfirm the recommendations of the task force. A structured plan needs to be implemented to be in alignment with the timeline of the State Department. The Task force will reconvene in December where more constituent groups will be included.
10. Ms. Teal asked for a report on the students who are out of district placement and who will be brought back.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the process of moving a student from one place to another is through the PPT. The program in Hartford is the same program available in Wallingford. The students will not have to be transported to Wallingford and they will receive the same services in Hartford. High Roads compromised to identify teachers who will be willing to move to the Hartford Location. The 55 children will be identified through the PPT process.

11. Maria Vargas, parent, asked if the members of the Ad-Hoc committee specialized in special education. The Special Education task force was comprised by special education teachers, professionals specialized in special education and parents with special education children.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the Ad-Hoc committee is not a replica of the Task Force; the task force will reconvene.

12. Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila stated that the State report states that Hartford is not in compliance. The report mandated the superintendent to comply with the Law. There should be a system in place to address these issues. There is no accountability and we need to stay on top.
13. Sheyla Harris, representing AFCAMP, advocated on behalf of the children with special needs. She expressed her commitment to continue the partnership with the school system through the Task Force. She stated that Hartford should provide trainings on PPT's and IEP's for parents. AFCAMP provided free trainings. She stated that HPS is not in compliance and is in violation of the Law and rights for children with special needs.
14. Levey Kardulis, parent, expressed his concerns for the challenging situation about the accreditation for Bulkeley High. He recommended addressing the issue closely. He also spoke in favor of observing the Veterans Day holiday. He concluded expressing his support for the athletic programs. He recommended having more athletic programs in the schools.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the District is working on re-establishing strong athletic programs.

15. Regina Tyton, St. Francis, advocated in favor of a parent whose child's door to door transportation was cancelled. She raised concerns for the safety of the student due that there are fifteen registered sex offenders in that area. The bus stop is in front of a house dedicated to men who were just release from jail. She mentioned a case concerning sexual abuse, and recommended appropriate training for principals and staff.

III. Reports

1. Report of the Chair

Mr. MacDonald attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for Renzzulli Academy at the former Mount Laurel School. He stated that the program was brought to Hartford under the leadership of Dr. Adamowski and Ms. Morales-Taylor.

Mr. MacDonald attended the superintendent's forum on the strategic operating plan, many members of the community and parents attended the forum and raised important questions about school reform. He recommended Board members attending the forums to hear from the community.

Mr. MacDonald stated that the policy on Student Representatives to the Board is presented for first reading and discussion. The policy was reviewed by the policy committee at two different meetings. The committee did not agree on moving the policy for first reading; Mr. MacDonald is endorsing the policy as chair of the Board.

2. Report of the Superintendent

- o CAFE Board Leadership Award

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the Board will be recognized by CAFE for its leadership work as a Board. The Board has been unified about providing the administration with well developed policies, well developed approaches for running Board meetings and putting agendas that reflect to the public the important work that is happening. She congratulated the Board for its leadership over the last few years.

- Financial Report – Paula Altieri

General Budget Final Financial Report as of September 30, 2011:

For the three-month period ending September 30, 2011 we have expended a total of \$40.6 million or 14.3% of the 2011-12 General Fund Budget of \$283.4 million. Total encumbrances amount to \$25.7 million and represent 9.1% of the Adopted Budget.

We are presently forecasting the following variances through September 30, 2011:

- A negative variance in the Rental of Facilities budget of \$178,702. This variance is attributable to the settlement and payment of the costs associated with the leased facility at 2550 Main Street.
- A negative variance in the Transportation budget of \$3.14 million. This variance is a result the various factors needed to meet student transportation needs. A detailed listing of the additional costs and associated factors is attached for your review (Exhibit A).
- A positive variance in the Tuition budget of \$170,383 through September 30, 2011. This forecast is based on students placed in out of district settings through September 30.
- A positive variance in the Fringe budget of \$6.5 million through September 30, 2011. The accounts which comprise this variance can be found in the Fringe Benefits Analysis report attached to this narrative.

Special Funds Final Financial Report as of September 30, 2011:

For the three-month period ending September 30, 2011 we expended a total of \$15.36 million or 12.8% of the 2011-12 Revised Special Funds Budget of \$120.3 million. Total encumbrances amount to \$7.95 million and represent 6.6% of the Revised Special Funds Budget.

There are no forecasted variances to report at this time.

At this time of the fiscal year, many unknown and somewhat volatile factors may impact year-end projections. These factors include but are not limited to: Special Education mandated services, future healthcare claims, the severity of the winter, and many other unknown or unforeseeable circumstances. We continue to monitor expenditures closely to ensure funds as expended as appropriate and aligned with District priorities.

The entire financial statement can be found in the official file of this meeting.

3. Committee Reports

- Parent and Community Engagement Committee

Ms. Patterson-Stallings stated that the committee met as a Committee of the Whole to review and discuss the after school standards, to give all Board members an opportunity to discuss and provide their feedback. Several members of the community and parents participated in the meeting. The task force was established by Dr. Adamowski in 2010. The task force work for a year to develop their recommendations which are based on researched and best practices.

- Policy Committee

Ms. Noel stated that the committee met to review the policy on student representatives to the Board. She stated that the Board used to have student representation at Board meetings, but the practice was

stopped due that the schools were multiplied. The committee was not in consensus endorsing the policy for first reading without hearing from principals.

Ms. Miranda asked for clarification around the points of contentions about endorsing the policy.

Ms. Noel stated that there are many high schools now and that may represent a challenge for principals. Ms. Noel agreed with the value of having students participating at Board meetings and providing their feedback on the items, but since principals will have the responsibility to organize the student bodies, they should also have the opportunity to provide their feedback.

IV. Business Agenda

A. Items in Order of Importance

1. Approval and Adoption of After School Standards (Supt. et al)

The Report of the Task Force on After School Program Standards is the result of a year-long process in which the task force researched and put forth a set of recommendations and after school standards. The Board of Education accepts the recommendations and adopts the after school standards submitted by the Task Force. Furthermore, the Board authorizes the Superintendent to exercise due diligence and implement the recommendations of the Task Force beginning with a pilot that will inform future work.

Ms. Richmond moved; Ms. Miranda seconded.

Mr. Cotto asked for the time when the task force was convened.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the task force was convened and established by the previous administration.

Mr. Cotto stated that the after school task force did not have Board approval.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the superintendent's task force was created by the administration and did not require Board approval. The Board was aware of the creation of the task force.

Mr. Cotto recommended adding a timeline so there is more clarity as to how long the pilot will run.

Mr. Cotto offered an amended to add to the recommendation "to conclude on June 2013, and the superintendent should provide a report by July 2013". Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila seconded the motion.

The motion to amend passed unanimously by voice vote.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to exercise due diligence and implement the recommendations of the Task Force on After School Standards beginning with a pilot to conclude on June 2013, and the superintendent should provide a report by July 2013.

The item as amended passed unanimously by voice vote.

2. First Reading: Bylaw 9160 – Student Representative to the Board of Education (Mr. MacDonald as Chairman of the Board of Education)

The Hartford Board of Education recognizes the importance of maintaining open communication with the student body. Being cognizant of student interest in the affairs of the Board and also of the board's interest in knowing the opinions of those under its charge, it is vitally necessary that the lines of communication between the two groups be as open and effective as possible.

Ms. Hudson moved; Ms. Richmond seconded.

Ms. Noel offered an amendment to table the item until January. Mr. Cotto seconded the motion.

Ms. Miranda asked if Ms. Noel anticipates modifications to the policy.

Mr. MacDonald stated that he is looking forward to see the policy implemented. There is a lot of excitement in the community and among the students.

Ms. Noel stated that this policy will represent a challenge for the high schools. She requested feedback from principals.

The motion to table the item failed.

Ms. Miranda recommended having the Policy committee reviewing the policy and getting feedback from principals.

Mr. MacDonald stated that the committee met twice to review the policy and there was significant discussion. He also stated that there have been significant changes from the first draft to the one currently presented for first reading. The process will continue.

3. Second Reading and Adoption: Revised Policy 1211 – School Governance Councils (Parent and Community Engagement Committee)

The state education reform law, An Act Concerning Education Reform in Connecticut, Public Act 10-111, Section 21(g), includes provisions for School Governance Councils. Those provisions were incorporated into the District's School Governance Councils Policy 1211.

Ms. Miranda moved; Ms. Richmond seconded.

Ms. Patterson-Stallings stated that the policy was revised from the first reading to add language under the roles and responsibilities of the council members.

Mr. Cotto stated that the policy was developed in Hartford. He stated that there are some benefits that Hartford is losing as a result of the alignment with the State policy. He stated that there are parents that have some issues with the election process which is the result of implementing new policy and practices. Mr. Cotto asked for clarification about reconstituting schools.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the intent of the law is for low performing schools. Low performing schools is in part defined by the No Child Left Behind and by the local authority, if the local authority has a set of standards for defying a school being in good standing. The question raised is the same question raised by superintendents.

Mr. Cotto stated that the State law states that if a local board decides not to cooperate with the Governance Council, then the request will go to the Commissioner of Education.

Ms. Miranda recommended adding clarification to the language.

Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila stated that it could go the other way around. The Board may decide to implement the policy and reconstitute a school, but parents could go to Council to oppose.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the law is placing the ultimate responsibility on the guardian.

Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila stated that if a School Council decides to close or redesign a school because is not meeting the standards, we should listen because there could be many more factors than just the numbers.

Ms. Sierra stated that there are at least 31 schools that fall under the State Law and each one of them has a School Governance Council. The election process was followed and positive feedback was received from parents.

Mr. Cotto expressed his concerns with the language of the policy. Mr. Cotto made a motion to table the item and refer it to the Parent and Community Engagement Committee to have the committee reporting back to the Board.

Ms. Miranda asked if the committee had the opportunity to review the policy with parents.

Ms. Patterson-Stallings stated that the committee met to discuss and review the policy and the language was reviewed based on feedback provided at the committee level.

Ms. Richmond thanked Ms. Patterson-Stallings for her work as a Chair of the committee. She also thanked the parents for their participation and feedback. She recommended that the committee move forward and suggested establishing a time limit to offer suggestions or language that the Board would like to see implemented. Board members should provide their input and feedback in a timeline matter.

Mr. MacDonald stated that many of the recommendations were implemented due to the State law. He stated that the Board has to follow the law. The policy includes the feedback from School Governance Councils, parents, community members, etc. He stated that he does not see a reason to send it back to the committee. Significant discussion has taken place regarding this policy.

Ms. Hudson recommended adding clarification of the language for reconstituting a school.

Mr. Cotto stated that there are several constituents that have raised concerns about the schools not following the election process. He recommended having the committee revisiting the policy to ensure that everything is covered by establishing the processes that should be followed.

Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila stated that the devil is in the details. The process for election and recording are not established. They are vague and open to interpretation.

Ms. Patterson-Stallings stated that the Board develops the policy for the administration to follow. It is the responsibility of the administration to implement the procedures and that the policy is followed.

Ms. Noel stated that she participated in the committee meetings and heard input from parents. She stated that there is no harm on delaying the adoption.

The motion to table the item failed.

Mr. MacDonald called for the motion to accept the second reading and adopt the policy.

The motion passed by voice vote. Mr. Cotto opposed.

4. Acceptance of Funds: Connecticut State Department of Education for Hartford Adult Education Programs - \$1,781,191 (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.

Ms. Richmond moved; Ms. Miranda seconded.

Ms. Noel asked for the number of students who achieved their diplomas through this program.

Dr. Jeter stated that she did not have the number of graduates, but she would forward the number at a later time.

Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila asked for the services that the grant refers as “special population”.

Dr. Jeter stated that the term refers to ELL’s and Citizenship programs.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote

5. Acceptance of Funds: Connecticut State Department of Education - Cooperating Eligible Entity Grant for Supplemental Adult Education Programs - \$276,277 (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.

Ms. Richmond moved; Ms. Miranda seconded.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote

6. Acceptance of Funds: Connecticut State Department of Education - Program Improvement Project Grant for the Adult Education Center in Hartford - \$126,099 (Supt. et al)

The Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to accept funds from the Connecticut State Department of Education for the Program Improvement Project Grant:

- a. Family Literacy, Elementary ESL and ABE/GED for the amount of \$50,400
- b. Preparing the 21st Century Workforce project for the amount of \$37,899
- c. Transition to Post Secondary School and Training project for the amount of \$37,800

Ms. Richmond moved; Ms. Hudson seconded.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote

7. Contract Approval: Supplemental Education Providers - \$3,089,990 (Supt. et al)

Supplemental Educational Services (SES) is one of the requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). If a school has not made Adequate Yearly Progress for two or more consecutive years, it is identified as "in need of improvement". SES is tutoring that is available to low-income students attending Title I schools identified as "in need of improvement" under NCLB for 2 years or more. These services are offered by state approved providers and occur outside of the regular school day. The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to approve the contracts with Supplemental Educational Services providers for the period of November 15, 2011 through June 1, 2012, at total combined payments not to exceed \$3,089,990.

Ms. Richmond moved; Ms. Miranda seconded.

Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila stated that there are several providers. He asked for the number of providers that are minority owned.

Ms. Puhlick stated that there is an RFP process that the State requires for these vendors. We received a comprehensive list of State approved providers. The providers indicate whether they are interested in providing services in Hartford. The District contacts the providers and the information is forwarded to parents.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the State identifies the organizations on behalf of the parents and forwards a list of providers from which parents can choose.

Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila requested a copy of the packets distributed to parents.

Ms. Noel stated that the same discussion was held last year. She asked for the percentage of students who sign for these services. She asked if there are families that do not need the services.

Ms. Puhlick stated that we get a per pupil allowance (PPA). This number gives us an estimated number of seats available. The neediest students are offered to receive the services first.

Ms. Richmond asked for the process on which the information is communicated to parents.

Ms. Puhlick stated that there is an SES liaison at every school that has office hours, so parents that need assistance for filling out the applications or have questions can contact them.

Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila asked for the process on how low income families are identified.

Ms. Puhlick stated that the application comes from schools that are identified to receive the services. Any student who is enrolled in those schools is able to apply.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the services are for students with academic needs, not necessarily with financial needs.

Ms. Puhlick stated that District files a report with the State Department and the report can be shared with the Board.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the District does not produce reports based on income.

Mr. Cotto stated that there are many concerns about where the money goes. He asked if the contract is part of the student base budgeting. He asked for the number of students that are being served by this contract.

Ms. Puhlick stated that the money is not coming from SBB. A report is filled with the State Department listing the schools and the number of students being served by the school. We have to be on compliance with the students with the most academic needs.

The motion passed by voice vote. Mr. Cotto opposed; Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila opposed.

8. Contract Approval: Advance Therapy Associates, LLC - \$215,000 (Supt. et al)

Advance Therapy Associates, LLC will provide certified speech-language pathologist services to students who are identified through the Planning and Placement Team process as requiring services as part of their Individualized Education Plan.

Ms. Richmond moved; Ms. Miranda seconded.

The services are mandated by the students' IEP. The school system will not be in compliance if the services are not set in place. The contract for the services is needed until the recruitment of permanent staff is completed. This is a position that is difficult to fill.

Mr. Cotto asked if the speech language pathologists are certified in Connecticut.

Ms. Gates stated that they are required to have the American Speech Language Association Certification. They have a Connecticut Department of Health Certification and also a Department of Education Certification.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

B. Consent Agenda

9. Contract Approval: Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network at America's Choice at SAND - \$90,000 (Supt. et al)

The Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network has agreed to continue partnering with the America's Choice at SAND School for a second year to provide an after-school program that exposes 7 and 8 grade students to the media industry with a curriculum focus on developing writing and communication skills. Students will be provided with a dynamic and unique educational opportunity that is tightly integrated with their regular academic curriculum. Teachers in grades 7 and 8 are key partners in developing this program.

10. Contract Approval: Leadership Greater Hartford - \$77,050 (Supt. et al)

Leadership Greater Hartford is a non-for-profit organization that will provide training and support to all of the School Governance Councils in Hartford as needed. The training sessions will be provided from October through February 2012.

11. Resolution: Authorized Signatures – Child Nutrition Programs (The Board)

The Hartford Board of Education authorizes Superintendent Christina Kishimoto or in her absence, Victor De La Paz, Chief Operating Officer, to sign claims for reimbursement and required reports for Child Nutrition Programs.

Ms. Miranda moved; Ms. Richmond seconded.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the contract with Leadership Greater Hartford is also to build internal capacity. The District will provide the services in the future.

Mr. Cotto raised concerns for the contract with CPBN. He stated that the language under the sole source form indicates that this is a public utility service. He stated that the statement is incorrect.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the information included on the Sole Source form is incorrect. The funding comes from the School Improvement Grant. She stated that the partnership with CPBN is to provide an opportunity to students to complete the work in terms of leadership development. This is the second year of implementation.

Ms. Cotto stated that the information provided in Sole Source Forms needs to be closely checked. He stated that Hartford has a number of contracts with CPBN and the Board has not received a report yet.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote

Mr. MacDonald accepted a motion from Ms. Hudson to enter into executive session to discuss personnel matters. Ms. Richmond seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

V. Executive Session (Personnel Matter and Superintendent Evaluation Model)

<p><u>Present:</u> Mr. David MacDonald, Chair Ms. Pamela Richmond, Vice Chair Ms. Lori L. Hudson, Second Vice Chair Ms. Sharon Patterson-Stallings, Secretary Ms. Elizabeth Brad Noel Ms. Ada Miranda Mr. Luis Rodríguez-Dávila Mr. Robert Cotto, Jr.</p>	<p><u>Absent:</u> Mr. Israel Flores</p>
<p>Superintendent Christina Kishimoto</p>	

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.