

## HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

### Minutes

#### Regular Meeting – August 30, 2011

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Hartford Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Tuesday, August 30, 2011. The meeting was held at McDonough Expeditionary Learning School, 111 Hillside Avenue, Connecticut 06106.

#### I. Call to Order

6:00 p.m. Mr. MacDonald called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

<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.	<u>Absent:</u> Mr. Israel Flores
Superintendent Christina Kishimoto	

#### I. Public Participation

1. **Kerry McNamee, Anna Lebedeva and Dario Lopez**, spoke to the Board regarding the new transportation guidelines. They spoke in favor of transportation for suburban students.
2. **Shontá Browdy**, parent, shared her concerns for the safety of the students at Weaver. She also spoke regarding communication with the schools and recommended that contact records are kept updated.
3. **Milly Arciniegas**, HPOC President, spoke to the Board regarding communication. She stated that the parents' contact information available in the schools is not kept updated. She recommended identifying a staff member who should be made responsible for keeping records up to date. She also spoke regarding the Special Education Task Force and the recommendations made. She stated that another complaint was submitted to the State and someone has to be held accountable.
4. **Deborah Bigelow**, parent, spoke to the Board regarding school uniforms. She stated that the some uniforms are expensive and parents are being forced to get their uniforms from one vendor.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that we need to take a look at the cost of uniforms per individual schools and address this issue at the school level.

Mr. Rodriguez-Davila stated that public schools cannot recommend a sole uniform vendor. He requested that this issue is investigated.

Mr. MacDonald stated that this issue was discussed at length. Schools were not to be steering business to one vendor; there should be multiple vendors that provide the uniforms.

Dr. Kishimoto stated this issue was followed up. A uniform vendor fair was coordinated with the school principals. We need to look at where the issues are and target those few schools.

5. **Rosa Morales**, resident, spoke to the Board regarding the cleanliness in the school grounds. She stated that the McDonough neighborhood needs to come together to maintain the school and building grounds clean.
6. **Paul Holzer**, Achieve Hartford! director, spoke to the Board regarding the first day of school. Mr. Holzer expressed the support of his organization and their commitment to the school system and the new administration.
7. **Shelly Davis**, Co-President of the Hartford Federation of Paraprofessionals, spoke to the Board regarding Dr. Kishimoto's open door policy. She expressed her support for the new administration.
8. **Andrea Johnson**, HFT President, welcomed Dr. Kishimoto to a new school year. She stated that HFT officers were invited to the first day of school tour bus and that was a great experience. She stated her support for the new administration

## II. Reports

### 1. Report of the Chair

Mr. MacDonald reported that Board retreat took place on July 28 and July 29. It was a transitional meeting, so the first day was focused on reviewing and discussing the final report of Dr. Adamowski; and the second day was dedicated to Dr. Kishimoto's vision for some major transformational goals for the district including the third grade promise for reading, redesign of the middle school grades, and a college career readiness goal. The Board reviewed a lot of data and held discussion about policy and goals for the upcoming year.

### 2. Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Kishimoto stated the school started well. She recognized the work of principals and teachers for having the schools ready with a welcoming environment for students and families.

Dr. Kishimoto thanked all the participants of the first day of school bus tour. She recognized the principals who welcomed a number of visitors into the building while managing the opening day.

Dr. Kishimoto reported that HPS had 90% attendance for Hartford residents. The suburban busses were impacted for magnet schools because the hurricane impacted various towns. She also recognized the staff attendance rate which was remarkable despite the storm that also affected many.

Dr. Kishimoto reported that six superintendent committees will be convened, the special education committee, an ELL committee that will work in partnership with the State Department. The third committee is the internet website committee; the fourth, fifth and sixth committees will be focused in the three goals that are part of the strategic plan. These three committees will have membership including educators and community partners,

- Timeline for Strategic Operating Plan
  - July 28-29: Board Retreat
  - August 16: Review SOP Goals/Objectives w/Principals
  - September 2: Finalize SOP Draft
  - September 6: Board Feedback @ Board Workshop
  - September 20: Board Adoption of SOP

- September 30: SOP Print and Distribution
- October 3: School Accountability Plans Due
- October–December: Superintendent’s Public Information Sessions
- June Workshop Annually: Progress on SOP Goals
  - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Building Update

Dr. Kishimoto informed that over the years, discussion has taken place about closing the Martin Luther King building and moving the school to the Lewis Fox building to share the space with Achievement First. This is due to several reasons, one is the enrollment for MLK which has dropped and is not meeting the enrollment needs for a building that can accommodate over 1,200 students. Another reason is the cost of renovation which is significant, about \$63 million.

Dr. Kishimoto proposed revisiting the potential construction project in this building so that the Hartford Public Schools can contribute to the development of this area. She recommended partnering up with the City on a grant proposal for construction on MLK.

- Status of M.D. Fox CommPACT School Design

This is a school design that was not fully implemented for a variety of reasons. This is a partnership with the University of Connecticut. It was a partnership proposed by the Hartford Federation of Teachers with the district leaders and teachers and staff at the building. The support from the University of Connecticut has not been delivery in terms of the design. This is not a solid school model. We also had five leadership changes at the University of Connecticut in terms of who is working with us at M.D. Fox.

Dr. Kishimoto recommended voting to discontinuing the CommPACT school design at M.D. Fox and working on providing teachers with training on top notch instruction in the building at all grade levels and content areas, and also focusing on supporting the families that are now existing in two temporary sites. The proposal will be presented to the Board the next month.

- Financial Report as of June 30, 2011 – Victor De La Paz

**General Budget Final Financial Report as of June 30, 2011:**

For the twelve-month period ending June 30, 2011 we have expended a total of \$283.3 million or 99.1% of the 2010-11 General Fund Budget of \$285.8 million. We have closed the 2010-11 fiscal year with a positive variance of \$2.5 million.

The variances are explained below:

- Positive variance in certified and non-certified salary accounts of \$ 503,759. The variance is attributable to favorable severance liabilities of \$399,410, and \$104,349 in salary savings resulting from attrition.
- Positive variance in contracts and services accounts of \$15,343 resulting from savings in professional development workshops expenses.
- Positive variance in property services accounts of \$ 224,726 resulting from savings in repairs and maintenance of facilities accounts.
- Deficit variance in tuition account of \$1,671,317 resulting from increasing costs associated with Special Education students placed in out-of-district facilities.

- Positive variance of \$ 148,271 in miscellaneous services accounts such as travel and conferences, communications, printing, and advertising expenses.

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- Positive variance in utility accounts of \$293,804 resulting from energy savings initiatives.
- Positive variance in supplies, materials, and equipment of \$ 199,783.
- Positive variance in miscellaneous expenditures of \$292,290.
- Positive variance of \$2,507,581 in Fringe Benefit accounts. The vast majority of the positive variance is attributable to our favorable health care claims.

### **Special Funds Final Financial Report as of June 30, 2011:**

The Special Funds year-end report shows total grants received of \$117.2 million with total expenditures of \$103 million, for an ending balance of \$14.2 million or approximately 12.1% of total grants received during FY 2010-11.

A copy of the financial statements can be found in the official file of this meeting.

- Revisions to the 2011-12 School Calendar – Alexander Nardone

Dr. Nardone informed that the School Calendar was revised to include the official State celebration on New Year's Day. The State Department was notified of the change.

- Welcome Center Report

A copy of the report can be found in the official file of this meeting.

### **3. Committee Report**

- Finance and Audit Committee

Ms. Richmond reported that the committee met on August 22 to review the financials and to establish a meeting schedule for the school year.

- Policy Committee

Ms. Noel reported that the committee met to review the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy in response to new State Law. The policy is being presented for first reading. The State is not expecting to have this policy fully implemented until the end of the year.

## **III. Business Agenda**

### **A. Items in Order of Importance**

#### **1. Acting Administrative Appointments (Supt. et al)**

The Hartford Board of Education approves the Superintendent's recommendation to appoint the following individuals to the positions indicated:

- a. Monica Quiñones to the position of Acting Principal, Batchelder Elementary School, effective July 14, 2011.
- b. Dianna Roberge-Wentzell to the position of Acting Assistant Superintendent of K-12 Education; effective July 1, 2011.

**Ms. Miranda made a motion; Ms. Hudson seconded the motion.**

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**The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

2. First Reading: Policy 5141 Bullying Prevention and Intervention (Policy Committee)

The Connecticut Legislature passed a new school bullying prevention law, An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws, Public Act # 11-232, which went into effect on July 1, 2011. The focus of the new law is on cyberbullying; requires all staff to be trained in bullying prevention; and the appointment of a Safe School Climate Specialist district-wide and in each school by July 1, 2012.

**Ms. Richmond made a motion; Ms. Noel seconded the motion.**

3. Acceptance of Funds: Travelers \$705,000 (Supt. et al.)

Travelers, a Fortune 500 corporation located in the City of Hartford, is Hartford Public Schools top corporate donor. Over the last four years Travelers has donated over \$4 million in support of the reform efforts. This is a multipurpose grant in support of the following programs: Asian Studies, High School, Inc., and the Principal Leadership Academy.

**Ms. Richmond made a motion; Ms. Miranda seconded the motion.**

Ms. Noel asked if this is a new grant.

Mr. Roldan explained that the District has to reapply for this grant every year and go through the application process. Travelers is very clear on the programs that they would like to support. This is the second year for this grant.

**The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

4. Grant Submission/ Acceptance of Funds/ Contract Approval: Connecticut State Department of Education Family Resource Center Program \$485,000 / \$97,000 per site (Supt. et al)

For approximately twenty years, the Connecticut State Department of Education has granted funds for Family Resource Center Programs at five of our schools. The programs are designed to support and promote comprehensive, integrated, community-based systems of family support and child development services. Currently, we operate four sites in partnership with community-based organizations and one is operated directly by the school. Mi Casa Family Services operates the Family Resource Center at María Sánchez School; the Village operates the Family Resource Centers at the Latino Studies Academy, Martin Luther King School, and America's Choice. The Early Reading Lab at Betances operates their Family Resource Center with the direction of the Hartford Public Schools.

**Ms. Richmond made a motion; Ms. Hudson seconded the motion. Mr. Cotto abstained.**

**The motion passed by voice vote.**

5. Grant Approval: Our Piece of the Pie, Inc. \$275,000 (Supt. et al)

Our Piece of the Pie, Inc. (OPP) is a leading youth development agency that helps urban young people become successful adults by effectively collaborating and partnering with schools. Recognizing the promise that Opportunity High School holds, the Connecticut

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Congressional Delegation assisted in obtaining a Department of Labor grant in Fiscal Year 2010. The \$275,000 appropriated funds, via the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, will be used by OPP for workforce readiness and job placement services within Opportunity High School.

**Ms. Miranda made a motion; Ms. Richmond seconded the motion.**

Mr. Roldan explained that this is a direct allocation from the United States Congress and goes through the Department of Labor. He explained that the Board requested a report on the status of the work, but it was not submitted earlier due to scheduling conflicts.

Mr. MacDonald stated his support for the program.

Mr. Rodriguez-Davila stated that the report was not available for reviewing prior to the meeting.

Ms. Noel concurred with Mr. Rodriguez-Davila. She requested a budgetary report similar to the ones reported for each school.

Mr. Cotto expressed his support for the program. He also requested information regarding the cost of running the program.

**The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

6. Acceptance of Funds: Brighter Futures Initiative - Hartford Foundation for Public Giving / W.K. Kellogg Foundation \$125,000 (Supt. et al)

The purpose of this grant is to provide adult education classes in the six neighborhood-based Brighter Futures Initiative Family Centers. The Adult Education Center in Hartford will provide at each of the family centers, adult education services, including, but not limited to, adult basic education, Pre-GED, GED, English as a Second Language, and English for students of other Languages.

**Ms. Miranda made a motion; Ms. Richmond seconded the motion.**

Dr. Jeter stated that these services will impact 128 adults in six different locations. The centers include: the Center para el Desarrollo de La Familia, the Asylum Center, the Hartford Memorial and the South side Family Center, among others throughout the City.

**The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

7. Approval of MOU Update: The Village for Families and Children (Supt. et al)

This MOU was approved by the Board of Education on June 21, 2011 in order to provide mental health delivery capacity in Hartford Public Schools. This updated MOU adds mental health services to the following schools: West Middle School, Clark Elementary School, Bulkeley High School, Hartford High and Weaver High, as part of the High School Graduation Initiative. Through its work with children and families, the Village has emerged as a

preeminent mental health/human service agency serving the Hartford region and the state of Connecticut. The MOU addresses use of space, terms, and mental health services description.

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**Ms. Miranda made a motion; Ms. Noel seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed by voice vote. Mr. Cotto abstained.**

8. Contract Approval: The University of Hartford, Hartt School Community Division \$225,000 (Supt. et al)

In replicating the successful Core/Encore model at Hartford Magnet Middle School, the Middle Grades Academy at Rawson (MGA) and the University of Hartford's HARTT School will partner to provide extensive and diverse arts programming to students at MGA. This program is needed in order to achieve fidelity to the Core/Encore model on which MGA is designed.

**Ms. Richmond made a motion; Ms. Miranda seconded the motion.**

Mr. Cotto raised concerns for the contract being sole source. He stated that there are other organizations in the area that can provide similar services and maybe at a lower price. He stated that the teachers will be subcontracted and will not have benefits.

Ms. Coleman, Arts Director, stated that the options were discussed with Ms. Biggs, principal at HMMS. The discussion was around identifying a partner and mirroring the partnership of HMMS and Trinity College.

Ms. Noel stated that this is another example of an opportunity to partner with the University of Hartford, particularly with the Hartt School Community. She also recognized the concerns regarding the contract being sole source.

Ms. Richmond recommended that future contracts follow the RFP process to avoid controversy.

Dr. Kishimoto stated that the Board approved a MOU agreement with the University of Hartford to expand the partnership with the schools; particularly with the schools that are closest to the campus in order to support the continuum between our schools and the University of Hartford as a higher education institution.

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

9. Contract Approval: College Board \$100,000 (Supt. et al)

The College Board is a national non-for-profit membership organization whose work falls into three major categories: College Readiness, College Connection and Success, and Advocacy. This particular agreement falls in the category of College Connection and Success. The contract delineates two particular services: SAT School Day and SAT Readiness Program for SAT School Day.

**Ms. Richmond made a motion; Ms. Hudson seconded the motion.**

Dr. Kishimoto stated that this contract is the first component of the work towards the college career readiness goal included in the Strategic Operating Plan.

Mr. Cotto raised concerns for the particulars of the contract regarding the SAT's. He stated that the contract is about setting a baseline-year for future test-based accountability. He stated that the District is using this contract for management purposes rather than educational purposes.

Dr. Kishimoto clarified that the contract is not being used for management purposes; that would be a waste of the administration's time and a waste of the time of every student in the district. The contract is being used for educational purposes. The baseline is being use to look at where the students are performing, relative to the entrance requirements of colleges on both the State and nationally.

Ms. Roberge-Wentzell, Assistant Superintendent for K-12 education, stated that over the last three years, we have had a decrease in the number of students taking the SAT exam; therefore, they can not apply for a number of colleges. Students should have access to this exam and be able to be competitive for college. We raise expectations around student performance; we need to do better at skill building.

Mr. Rodriguez-Davila asked if private entities provide test preparation for students to take the SAT's.

Ms. Roberge-Wentzell stated that families would seek this test preparation at their own expense in order to better prepare their children for the admission requirements of college.

Mr. Rodríguez-Dávila stated that Hartford will be providing an opportunity for urban students to compete at the same level than suburban students.

Ms. Hudson expressed her support for the contract.

Ms. Noel requested data on the number of students who take the test.

**Mr. Cotto opposed; Ms. Noel abstained.**

**The motion passed by a voice vote.**

Ms. Hudson made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss collective bargaining negotiations and personnel matters. Ms. Richmond seconded the motion.

The motion passed. The Board entered executive session at 9:19 p.m.

The executive session adjourned at 10:02 p.m.

<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</p>	<p><u>Absent:</u> Mr. Israel Flores</p>
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Mr. Robert Cotto, Jr.	
Superintendent Christina Kishimoto	

**B. Executive Session (Collective Bargaining and Personnel Matters)**

10. Proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement – The Hartford Schools Support Supervisors Association (Supt. et al)

The Board of Education approves the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Hartford Schools Support Supervisors Association, Local 78, AFSA, AFL-CIO. The Parties reached a tentative agreement on June 28, 2011, and the membership of the bargaining unit ratified the tentative agreement on July 13, 2011.

**Ms. Miranda made a motion; Ms. Richmond seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.**

**C. Consent Agenda**

11. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding: School-Community Partnership \$90,000 (Supt. et al)

This Memorandum of Understanding reflects the continuation of Hartford Public Schools' School-Community Partnership and Community Schools. Community Schools are operated in partnership with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut, and the City of Hartford. In order to continue to advance and leverage community resources, School-Community Partnership members will continue to invest as partners in the operational needs of the work.

12. Approval of School Construction Plans: Revised Educational Specifications for alterations at Bellizzi School for the Asian Studies Academy (Supt. et al)

The Hartford Board of Education accepts and approves the modifications to the Educational Specifications for alterations at Bellizzi School for the Asian Studies Academy and authorizes submission of the documents to the Bureau of School Facilities for purposes of updating the project record.

13. Approval of School Construction Plans and ED042 Submittal (Supt. et al)

The State Department of Education, Bureau of School Facilities (BSF) requires that School Building Committees and Boards of Education certify that they have approved the final construction documents for school construction projects prior to BSF review of the plans. The Hartford Board of Education approves the final plans and authorizes the architects to submit the documents for the Journalism/Media High School, State Project #064-0299 (Phase 2 of 3).

14. Approval of the minutes of the regular meeting held on May 17, 2011 (The Board)

15. Approval of the minutes of the special meeting held on May 3, 2011 (The Board)
16. Approval of the minutes of the public hearing held on April 19, 2011 (The Board)
17. Approval of the minutes of the special meeting held on April 11, 2011 (The Board)

**Ms. Richmond made a motion; Ms. Miranda seconded the motion.**

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**The motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.**

#### **IV. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.