

HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES

Regular Meeting – August 16, 2016

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Hartford Board of Education (hereinafter “Board”) met on Tuesday, August 16, 2016. The meeting was held at SAND Elementary School, 1750 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06120.

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Roll Call**

Mr. Wareing called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m. There was a quorum present.

<u>Present:</u> Richard Wareing, Chair Tiffany Glanville, Vice-Chair Beth Taylor, Second Vice-Chair Craig Stallings, Secretary Julio Flores Karen T. Taylor Michael Brescia	<u>Absent:</u> Robert Cotto, Jr.
Superintendent Beth Schiavino-Narvaez	

III. Swearing in of Mr. Julio Flores

Mr. Flores was sworn in to office by corporation counsel.

IV. Public Participation

1. Samantha Pacheco, parent of S.A.N.D. school student, stated that after reading the S.A.N.D. State investigation report, she felt anger in regards to the leadership of Dr. Narvaez, and that the children did not have a voice in that, but the parents do. They have started a petition for parents that have no confidence in the Superintendent’s leadership.
2. Monica Carrasco, parent of SAND student, felt emotionally affected in regards to the S.A.N.D. incident.
3. Shontá Browdy, parent, spoke on hoping that having overcrowded classrooms and then hiring long term substitute teachers for the overflow, instead of 2 certified teachers, were not a standard practice. She stated that parents want teachers in the classroom not long term subs, they want continuity in the classroom.
4. Joshua Rosario, spoke on the recent S.A.N.D. School investigation from the State, and it shows the state of education and dysfunction in HPS. This society treats groups differently based on economic power, and this cannot be the case in Hartford
5. Paul Holzer, Achieve Hartford, commended the Mayor on keeping his word and appointing more parents as board members. In fact, right now, 6 out of 8 board members are parents. He stated he hears a lot of judgment being passed on what the superintendent and the board stand for, and if they don’t communicate what they *do* stand for, these problems will persist. He also commended initiatives such as Equity 2020 and Hartford Promise being bold, but he added we should be even bolder. He added it was time to figure out what Hartford stands for, he doesn’t think the City, as a plaintiff, has a position on Sheff.

6. Nancy Mendez, with the Montessori Magnet Community Organization and Parent Advocacy Committee, who work on implementing appropriate suggestions and organize initiatives to build the community. They have been working on the current and future location of Montessori Magnets, including surveys, and they feel their school should not move to another temporary location. They prefer to stay where they are while they look for a permanent location.
7. Kent Ashworth, Achieve Hartford, spoke on knowing what it means to fight poverty. You cannot afford to be distracted by the many issues that are sure to come up. Focus on the leadership and pay attention to the kids, neighborhood schools and the issues.
8. Anna Cantres, building substitute teacher and parent, spoke on how wonderful her experience at S.A.N.D. has been. She feels supported by the staff, parents, and principal and it gave her hope to continue with her teaching certification.
9. Bethany Sullivan, McDonough Middle School principal, spoke in support of the Expeditionary Learning Contract on tonight's agenda. The focus on culture and climate has been a strength of Expeditionary Learning, and she has seen a 24% decrease in chronic absenteeism in the last 3 years, among other gains.

V. Reports

1. Report of the Chair – no report
2. Report of the Superintendent

The Superintendent began by thanking Principal Gerardo Heredia for his leadership and for hosting again this summer.

She then stated that we have received the Report of Findings regarding the November 9th, 2015 Instructional Rounds at SAND from the CT State Department of Ed, released 8th months after the incident occurred.

While there are some discrepancies with the findings of fact in the report that we are addressing with the CSDE, we continue to take this matter very seriously. We did not wait to take action; our response to these concerns was immediate and comprehensive.

Several recommendations in the report fully align with the work that we have already implemented as a district, including:

- Providing training on diversity and cultural competency to increase leadership capacity on cultural proficiency in decision-making, leadership, instructional practices and engagement. Training sessions have been held every month during this past year at principal professional development as well as during cabinet meetings and other staff meetings.
- SAND school has gone beyond the equity audit and is working with The Discovery Center to support its school-based efforts focused on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Working with our Board of Education Family and Community Engagement Committee, we held a Community Conversation on Race, Racism and Equity, and we have plans to further advance this work at the school/community level.

We continue to remain committed to our Cultivating Equity and Excellence Agenda and will take the State Department's suggestions into consideration as we continue this important work.

Not wanting that to be the only story for SAND school this evening, the Superintendent added that as reported earlier, SAND had the greatest gains in all equity indicators. She is very proud of the work that has unfolded at SAND, they made consistent progress to decrease chronic absenteeism (40% to 26.4%) and out-of-school suspensions (244 to 27), and to increase culture and climate, and Reading (22.9% to 28.6%) and Math (8.8% to 14.6).

She continued by welcoming the newest member to the Board, Mr. Julio Flores. The first day of school was around the corner, August 30, 2016, and invited the board to join her on the first day of school bus tour. This year they would visit University High School of Science and Engineering, West Middle Elementary School; and Alfred E. Burr Elementary School. She also extended an invitation to Convocation, being held on August 29, 2016, at Bulkeley High School.

School shout outs included the E.B. Kennelly School being awarded the 2016 National Network for Educational Renewal's Richard W. Clark Award for Exemplary Partner School Work.

Update on Equity 2020: The last meeting of the Equity 2020 Advisory Council took place on July 21st. We reviewed some additional enrollment analysis and preliminary data on school operational capacities. We also discussed our purpose and criteria, to develop a long term facilities plan. Everyone knows the need for that in Hartford; we all have seen the consequences of not having a long term facilities plan. This is not about closing schools, it is about maximizing resources - dollars, materials, facilities, program opportunities, staff, every resource for the education of children; making sure that every Hartford family has access to a high performing school

The next meeting of the Equity 2020 Advisory Group will convene on Wednesday, August 24th from 5-7pm at Burr Elementary School.

VI. Business Agenda

A. Items in Order of Importance

Mr. Wareing made a motion to add an item to the agenda; and Dr. Taylor seconded.

VOTE

In favor: Wareing, Glanville, B. Taylor, Stallings, Flores, Brescia, K. Taylor

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Cotto

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

1. ADDENDUM Item: Appointment of members to the Hartford School Building Committee (The Board)

Special Act 01-7 established a Hartford School Building Committee (HSBC) to oversee all school construction projects taking place in the Hartford Public Schools. Three members of the HSBC must be selected and approved by the Board of Education (BOE). Alternates to those members may likewise be approved by the BOE.

The HSBC members presently designated by the BOE are: Superintendent Dr. Beth Schiavino-Narvaez, Chairman Richard Wareing and Mr. Michael Brescia.

Effective August 15, 2016, the Hartford Board of Education appoints Dr. Jose Colon-Rivas to serve on the Hartford School Building Committee as alternate for any of its designated members as necessary.

VOTE

In favor: Wareing, Glanville, B. Taylor, Stallings, Flores, Brescia, K. Taylor

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Cotto

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote

2. Resolution: Approval of de-magnetization of Journalism & Media Magnet Academy, and renaming to the Thomas J. Snell Weaver Journalism & Media Academy (The Board)

Mr. Wareing made a motion; and Mr. Stallings seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education authorizes and directs the Superintendent to initiate the process with the State Department of Education to de-magnetize the Journalism & Media Magnet Academy and covert it to a neighborhood school named the Thomas J. Snell Weaver Journalism & Media Academy, effective July 1, 2017.

Mr. Brescia asked if the State has to approve the de-magnetization of the school, and the answer was no, it does not, Hartford Schools is the ultimate authority in this. There is however a process that we need to go through with the State.

Mr. Stallings expressed his enthusiasm for this item, and appreciation for Journalism's return to Weaver.

Ms. Taylor was also excited about the return of Weaver, and it being the right decision to restore the school to the neighborhood. The school will help to bolster the community.

VOTE

In favor: Wareing, Glanville, Stallings, Brescia, Flores, B. Taylor, K. Taylor

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Cotto

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

B. Consent Agenda

Mr. Wareing made a motion to accept all items listed under consent agenda; Dr. Taylor seconded.

3. Contract Continuation Approval: Expeditionary Learning Contract \$182,098 (Supt et al.)

The Hartford Public Schools seeks to continue the contract with Expeditionary Learning to provide ongoing professional development and support in the Expeditionary Learning model at McDonough Expeditionary Learning School, the Expeditionary Learning Academy at Moylan, and the Maria Sanchez School. This includes but is not limited to on-site and off-site professional development and access to Expeditionary Learning designers.

That the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to execute a contract with Expeditionary Learning for the term delineated in the contract ending August 31, 2017, at a cost not to exceed \$182,098.

Mr. Stallings raised the question of how are we extracting the best practices from Expeditionary Learning.

Dr. Narvaez answered that we use our equity indicators and there have been gains, as stated by Principal Bethany Sullivan in public comment.

Ms. Taylor asked if the board would be able to see a report on the contracts we use for outside vendors doing this type of work, and compare them to equity indicators to see if they are working. The Superintendent will supply that information.

4. Contract Continuation Approval: PowerSchool Group LLC. \$125,250 (Supt et al.)

PowerSchool Group LLC provides the district with PowerSchool, a student information system which collects, stores and analyses student level data. Continuation of this contract would allow the district to continue to electronically manage student information such as academic, enrollment and discipline in a web-based, accessible manner, facilitating the process and exchange of information between various agents with the Hartford Public Schools. It is used to complete various State and federally mandated reports. Enterprise infrastructure monitoring is provided to ensure a stable and secure environment.

That the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to execute a contract with PowerSchool Group LLC., for the term delineated in the contract ending August 31, 2017, with an annual renewable option, at a cost not to exceed \$125,250.

5. Acceptance of Funds: Dalio Foundation for the RISE Network \$350,000 (Supt et al.)

The Dalio Foundation invited RISE districts to submit Innovation Grant proposals of up to \$350,000. The RISE Network seeks to demonstrate that improving science – and processes to innovate, measure, and learn together – can improve outcomes at scale for low-income students attending public schools. The grant has been submitted for the HPHS Nursing Academy. The RISE Innovation Grant proposal aligns to the network’s commitment to strengthening data systems and improving college and career readiness by:

- Promoting successful transitions to high school as measured by Grade 9 on-track credit accumulation.
- Increasing college and career readiness as measured by the percentage of Grade 11 and 12 students achieving readiness benchmarks on the SAT, AP
- Strengthening school and district data systems.

That the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to accept funds in the amount of \$350,000 from the Dalio Foundation.

VOTE

In favor: Wareing, Glanville, Stallings, Flores, B. Taylor, K. Taylor

Opposed: Brescia

Abstained: 0

Absent: Cotto

The motion passed by voice vote.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.