

HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES

Regular Meeting – July 19, 2016

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Hartford Board of Education (hereinafter “Board”) met on Tuesday, July 19, 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 5:46 p.m. There was a quorum present.

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

III. Public Participation

1. Hyacinth Yennie spoke in support of Dr. Colon-Rivas appointment. Also spoke on seeking outside funding for Martin Luther King school construction, and on wanting to see one principal for the three proposed academies at Weaver.
2. Edwin Vargas, State Representative, also spoke in support of Dr. Colon-Rivas appointment. He also spoke on his hope that the new bus company hires Hartford residents first.
3. Levey Kardulis felt that what is happening with Weaver and Martin Luther King Schools being a travesty, and that we are not taking care of the community. He also spoke on Mr. Genao and the district not having done anything to remedy the situation in the past. He stated that HPS kept him on while firing other good employees. Lastly he spoke against paying outside consultants.
4. Maria Rodriguez, grandmother of students in Hartford Schools, spoke in support of City Connects and all of the wonderful services they provided. She urged the Board to pass the item on tonight’s agenda.
5. Maria Cruz, parent and bus monitor, wanted the Board and Superintendent to be aware of things that were happening at the bus company, such as lowering the living wage, and that Specialty Transportation has resisted hiring drivers.
6. Michelle Muhammed, local business owner, spoke on Hartford not having quality education. Money is not the only consideration, and she feels tax dollars are not being used appropriately. She stated the community wants Weaver to be one name and have one principal. The community fully expects to be engaged and fully informed.

7. Juan Brito, social worker at Burns Latino Studies Academy, spoke in support of City Connects and the huge benefit it has brought to the school and the community.
8. Katherine Wood, instructional coach at Wish, spoke in support of City Connects, and that it brought a small town feel to the school.
9. Caitlin Bexley, theme coach at Wish, spoke in support of Achievement Network. The school, her included, had doubts in the beginning, but once they worked with them, they saw how the program enriched the education and curriculum.
10. Cassandre Edwards, Clinician at Catholic Charities, spoke in support of City Connects. The program has helped tremendously with the basic needs of the children, so that the families can focus on education.
11. Tina Jeter spoke in support of Dr. Colon-Rivas appointment.
12. Mary Myers spoke on many of our students not being able to read, and her disappointment in the Superintendent and the Board chair. She also spoke on the SAND incident where the kids were labeled with dots, and that bringing a lawsuit, and feeling we are amassing too many lawsuits. She spoke on feeling that people that spoke out against the administration are targeted.
13. Larry Deutsch, Councilman, spoke on the serious issues the Board and City face, spoke in support of Dr. Colon-Rivas, and against the Chief Legal Officer that should've acted previously on child molestation charges. Lastly he spoke on finding funding for the Martin Luther King renovation.
14. Michael Downes spoke on his disappointment in phasing out the Culinary Academy, as it is one of the only vocational technical aspects. He also spoke on having too many highly paid employees and the need to stop renting space for Central Office.
15. Jason Farquaharson spoke on being very passionate about Weaver and it being one name, and under one principal. Weaver needs to have a robust and quality education and challenge our kids. He is tired of discussions and focus groups, and wants the Board to approve one school. He also spoke on the original Weaver, which is now Martin Luther King School, and that what is happening to MLK is a shame.
16. Alyssa Peterson spoke on old Board meetings being chaotic, until Mayor Mike convinced the State to takeover. She spoke on the cost of transportation, and that being a side effect not counted on from Sheff. She proposed a charter change, with 6 elected and 3 appointed board members. She plans to start a petition for this.
17. Susan Palisano spoke on increasing digital literacy, and having a robust and reliable infrastructure. She is pleased to partner with Weaver High School in this endeavor.
18. Will Moffett spoke on the lack of trust with Hartford Schools' administration, particularly with the Genao case. He spoke on stumbling on documents from 2007 that were not released with the Freedom of Information request. He said he was frustrated with the process and the leadership.
19. Precious Ross-Ellis, with the Blue Hills Civic Association, spoke on being eager for the Weaver construction project to continue. Their expectation is to have one principal and one Weaver, and that it have a high quality education and high expectations from staff and parents. She re-iterated what others stated, saying they demand to be fully included and informed on the entire process.
20. Evelyn Richardson, founder of Daughters of Eve, a grassroots nonprofit, is requesting that Weaver be one school and one principal, with neighborhood preference, and that the community

have input on all decisions. She also supports Dr. Colon-Rivas appointment, but wished the process had been transparent.

21. Alicia Pinchin spoke in support of City Connects, and feeling supported as a teacher with that program.
22. Stephen Wilson, graduate of Weaver High School, spoke on the education in Weaver High School having to be paramount. All of the academies have to be high performing, and it be one school, one principal. There is tremendous pride in the original high schools of Hartford, they are a city that is really a small town. He also spoke in support of renovating Martin Luther King.
23. Phyllis Airey, spoke on the Weaver project having been delayed enough, and encouraging the board to vote yes on the Weaver agenda item. She stated the community needs to be involved in every step of the process, and encouraged transparency. She stated there must be a high quality education for all the themed academies in Weaver.
24. John C. Clark III, member of the North East NRZ (Neighborhood Revitalization Zone), had formed a subcommittee to further review the closing of Clark School. It came to his attention that the 2nd round of PCB testing was higher than allowed, but only for the younger children. For older children the PCB's were within the normal range. He would personally like to review the report.

IV. Election of Officer

Mr. Wareing nominated Ms. Tiffany Glanville for the Office of Vice Chair, and hearing no other nomination, nominations were closed.

All written ballots were collected, and Ms. Tiffany Glanville was elected to the office of vice chair.

Corporation counsel administered the oath of office.

V. Reports

1. Report of the Chair

Mr. Wareing reported the changes in committees as follows:

Finance and Audit Committee

Chair: Craig Stallings

Members: Beth Taylor, Richard Wareing

Parent and Community Engagement Committee

Chair: Tiffany Glanville

Members: Robert Cotto, Jr., Craig Stallings

Policy Committee

Chair: Karen Taylor

Members: Michael Brescia, Tiffany Glanville, Beth Taylor

School Choice and Facilities Committee

Chair: Beth Taylor

Members: Michael Brescia, Robert Cotto, Jr., Karen Taylor, Richard Wareing

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Hartford School Building Committee

Members: Brescia and Wareing

Human Resources Committee:
Chair: Tiffany Glanville, TBD
Members: Michael Brescia

REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

- Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE): Richard Wareing
- Capital Region Education Council (CREC): Michael Brescia
- Hartford Public Library: TBD
- Metropolitan Learning Center: Michael Brescia

2. Report of the Superintendent

3. Committee Reports

- Parent and Community Engagement Committee

Ms. Glanville stated the committee was working with the School Governance Councils having a bigger impact on the Equity 2020 work.

- Finance Committee

Mr. Stallings stated the committee reviewed financials, and losing an alliance grant that was for professional development.

VI. Business Agenda

A. Items in Order of Importance

1. Administrative Appointment (Supt et al.)

Mr. Wareing made a motion; and Mr. Brescia seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education approve the Superintendent's recommendation to appoint Dr. José Colón-Rivas to the position of Chief Operating Officer, effective July 20, 2016.

VOTE

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

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: 0

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

2. Approval of: Academic Programming at Weaver High School (Supt et al.)

Due to the recent budgetary constraints for the district and the Weaver High School construction project, it is being recommended that the Culinary Arts Academy be phased out.

This academy will be replaced by Journalism & Media Magnet Academy. Additionally, it is being recommended the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics Academy be replaced with Kinsella Magnet School of Performing Arts.

All partners who currently work with High School Inc., Kinsella and Journalism & Media have pledged that they will continue to be partners at the new location.

Dr. Taylor made a motion; and Mr. Stallings seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education approve a change in academic programming at Weaver High School and the modified Educational Specifications for the project accordingly.

Mr. Stallings asked if it was possible to maintain a culinary program in the new Weaver.

Dr. Narvaez stated that the current culinary students will continue with Culinary classes, and that Great Path has a culinary program that we can talk about. We are also expanding our internship opportunities.

Ms. Glanville asked that we speak to Weaver being one school and one principal as was requested throughout the public portion.

Dr. Narvaez said we are working with the steering committee that includes community members, and they have 3 years to work the details out.

Dr. Taylor spoke on Kinsella previously being at meetings and speaking on their fear of having the high school be separate, not close to the elementary school, and now we are separating them by putting Kinsella High in the Weaver Building.

Dr. Narvaez said we need to plan for that, but it is not cost effective to keep small schools.

Mr. Cotto voiced his frustration that the school board had very little role in this decision. He questioned how the Blue Hills Civic Association (BHCA) was able to decide what schools get to be moved into the new Weaver. He also questioned Equity 2020 being too late since this had already been decided. He also wondered how it got this far, when he started as a board member in 2010, a new Weaver building was supposed to happen. What took so long and how did it get to this point where there is no money.

Mr. Wareing clarified the background on the change in academic programming for Weaver. It was not solely the BHCA, there were meetings for the past 2 months that involved himself as well as members of BHCA, the Superintendent, Mayor Luke Bronin, State Representatives Brandon McGee and Douglas McCrory, Senator Eric Coleman, and City Council President T.J. Clark among others, and together this was decided. It was clear that the 80% reimbursement rate was not sustainable in this fiscal climate. Led by Representative Matt Ritter, there a deal was brokered and the State agreed to a 95% reimbursement *if* a magnet school was included in Weaver, as it also helped them not to have to pay for a new magnet school building.

Mr. Wareing added that the Board can want to build and renovate all the schools they want, but the question is will the State pay for it. We can approve new buildings as a board, but the motion would die on the floor of City Council.

Discussion over the field house, and at this point there being no renovation.

Dr. Taylor wondered if we could use this as a negotiating point when we go to negotiate with Sheff, that Sheff, as it is now, is not working.

Discussion that going forward these decisions need to be made through Equity 2020.

Mr. Stallings wanted to make a point that he is a lifelong resident of Hartford and Hartford graduate, and that Hartford did not fail him. He also spoke against phasing out Culinary.

VOTE

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

Opposed: Cotto

Abstained: 0

Absent: 0

The motion passed by voice vote.

3. Approval of Contracts: City Connects and Achievement Network – Acceleration Agenda (Supt. et al)

The Acceleration Agenda is a focused Action Plan to optimize support, in order to address matters of equity and achievement. A cohort of eight schools will be part of a network that will engage in continuous improvement (with multilayer supports) to boost/accelerate performance and outcomes by focusing efforts and resources around improving instructional practices, leadership practices, and student support practices. Those eight schools are: Alfred E. Burr Elementary School, Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School, Thirman Milner School, Fred D. Wish Museum School, and Burns Latino Studies Academy, (which will all enter their second year of implementation) and Asian Studies Academy at Bellizzi, SAND School and Dr. Frank T. Simpson-Waverly School (which will all enter their first year of implementation).

In order to advance the Acceleration Agenda, the district will engage expert resources who have a proven track record in implementing the multi-layer support framework while building the district's capacity to sustain the work. These partners are: City Connects and the Achievement Network (ANet).

That the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to execute the contracts listed below, for the terms delineated in the contracts.

- a. City Connects: One year contract at an amount not to exceed \$264,880. This contract will provide a systemic strategy for each school to wrap services around each student. City Connects involves every classroom teacher, leverages resources in the community and ensures that all students receive the support they need. For the first three years in a school, they will provide induction, training, coaching and monitoring of fidelity of implementation. For the next two years, they will offer a lighter touch, but still remain present in and to that school to support more independent implementation and to address the recurrent issues, e.g., transitions in school leadership or City Connects staff. After these two years, they simply will support the district with monitoring the "fidelity of implementation" and provide consultation as needed.

VOTE

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

Opposed: Stallings, Brescia

Abstained: 0

Absent: Cotto

The motion passed by voice vote

- b. Achievement Network (ANet): One year contract at the amount not to exceed \$314,000. This contract will help schools boost student learning with great teaching that's grounded in standards, informed by data, and built on the successful practices of educators around the country.

VOTE

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

Opposed: Stallings, Brescia

Abstained: 0

Absent: Cotto

The motion passed by voice vote.

4. Contract Continuation Approval: Curriculum Associates – \$427,472 (Supt et al.)

Curriculum Associates will provide iready, a comprehensive computer-based reading resource to all HPS students in grades 3-8; and math and reading resources to students in grades K – 8, that are in alignment with CT Core Standards and all tiers of HPS curriculum and instruction.

That the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to execute a contract with Curriculum Associates for the term delineated in the contract ending June 30, 2017, at a cost not to exceed \$427,472

VOTE

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

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; Mr. Stallings seconded.

5. Interim Administrative Appointment (Supt et al.)

That the Hartford Board of Education approve the Superintendent's recommendation to appoint Sheldon Neal to the position of Interim Principal of Culinary Arts Academy at Weaver effective July 20, 2016.

6. Contract Approval: Schlagheck Solutions, LLC. \$64,000 (Supt et al.)

The consultant will work to identify, secure and prepare students at Pathways Academy of Technology & Design for paid internship opportunities where our students will gain work

experience and hands-on experience by working in local businesses. The experience gained will help our students with making career choices, college/career decisions and transitioning into the workplace setting.

Pathways has secured a grant from Travelers to fund this contract, in alignment with the district's strategic plan.

That the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to approve the contract with Schlagheck Solutions, LLC for the term delineated in the contract ending June 30, 2017 at an amount not to exceed \$64,000.

VOTE

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

Opposed: Brescia

Abstained: 0

Absent: Cotto

The motions passed by voice vote.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:53 p.m.