

HARTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES

Regular Meeting – March 15, 2016

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Hartford Board of Education (hereinafter “Board”) met on Tuesday, March 15, 2016. The meeting was held at M.D. Fox Elementary School, Hartford, Connecticut, 06112.

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

Dr. Taylor called the meeting to order at 5:39 p.m. There was a quorum present.

<u>Present:</u> Beth Taylor, Second Vice-Chair Craig Stallings, Secretary Robert Cotto, Jr. Michael Brescia Tiffany Glanville Karen Taylor	<u>Absent:</u> Richard Wareing, Chair Jose Colon-Rivas, Vice-Chair Matthew Poland
Superintendent Beth Schiavino-Narvaez	
Student Representative T.J. Noel-Sullivan Student Representative Abraham Fattouh	

III. Public Participation

1. Luis Delgado, HPS employee and Hartford resident, spoke on his concerns about merging Bulkeley. He feels that the administration has been secretive and lacked transparency. He also added that he found the upcoming workshop on Racism and Equity condescending.
2. Hyacinth Yennie, expressed her concern over the cuts, and Hartford Public High School having 3 principals that they can't afford. She also feels we can't allow arts to be cut, and that we need to keep the lower level workers and cut the higher level.
3. Jane Russell, parent at Bulkeley High School, is concerned over the budget decisions, and felt there were missing voices at the table. She feels this is a lack of communications and transparency issue, rather than a budget one. She asked for the administration to meet with the Bulkeley community. She added that the School Governance Council approved a budget, and that now it was changed. Why waste their time? She wants their voices to be heard, to have respect, communication and transparency.
4. Natalie Langlaise, parent of a M. L. King student, came to share on behalf of the school parents, a message. They wanted to thank the Superintendent for her vision of equity, but added they want to be involved in the process. There were letters that were sent home with each child regarding the renovations, and most never reached the parents. This is not an adequate form of communication. She added they want to see the constructions plans, when the funding is secured, and the plans for the move back to the MLK School.
5. Donovan Greenwood, student at M. L. King School, received the letter about the temporary move to another school, but has concerns over the move back.
6. Levey Kardulis, Head Custodian at Bulkeley, came to talk about the Budget, and why we are not saving money by moving out of the G. Fox Building. We could save on rent, and move central

office to a school. He asked that the administration stopped taking the employees from Buildings & Grounds out of the schools to work at central office. He also spoke on summer youth employment, and the Hartford Public Schools being more involved.

7. Xyaria Clark, student at Bulkeley, spoke on her concern over Bulkeley Lower School losing their identity when they are merged. She hopes that the lower school ideas are brought to the upper school.
8. Justin McGlamery, parent at Renzulli, spoke on his concern over the budget cuts affecting the arts, as he stated there is plenty of research showing that arts help students in all of their education. He also agreed with the M. L. King School parents by saying that the administration has not learned their lesson over what happened with Renzulli, since it appears that MLK was informed the same way Renzulli was, with a letter in the backpack.
9. Tynima Toney, parent, spoke on not having a good experience with her son at Betances School, and her son now going to High Roads, a much better fit for her son.
10. Janieka Lewis, parent at West Middle, spoke on the enrollment cap, and feeling that it should be for all schools, not just magnet schools.
11. Syeita Rhey-Fisher, parent at Global Communications Academy, spoke on her concerns over cuts to the intervention specialist position at her school, and feels that presents a danger to her school. She feels that we need to put the decisions on what to cut, back in the hands of the schools and School Governance Councils.
12. Alden Paye, Kindergarten teacher and parent of Hartford students, came to speak on testing. She commended the superintendent on reducing the amount of testing and that it has helped, but still has concerns on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing. She has not found evidence that it is good for kindergarten students.
13. Milly Arciniegas, Hartford Parent University, introduced the Hartford Parent Leadership Coalition. She recommended opening a K-12 transitional school, so not to change the enrolment on other schools mid-year. She wants to have a real, authentic conversation on doing this, to help the schools out.
14. Andrea Johnson, President of the Hartford Federation of Teachers, stated she has been to the board meetings previously and has spoken on the treatment of teachers, in her document titled 'Enough is Enough', and feels that the disrespect continues. She feels there is an environment of fear, where teachers are being threatened with bad Domain 4 evaluation marks.
15. Melissa Avery, teacher in Harford, came to represent Horizons at the Ethel Walker School. One of the feeder schools to this program is the M. L. King School, and it has been successful due to the parental engagement. She was there to show support for the MLK community.
16. Angel Arce, and Edwin Vargas, both State Representatives, received many calls from Bulkeley High School, and since it falls in Mr. Arce's district, he has to act on it. He stated that if Bulkeley is going to be combined, then Hartford Public High School should also be combined. He also asked for a meeting with the Superintendent and Bulkeley Community. Mr. Vargas has also received calls, even though it's not his district. He stated the Bulkeley consolidation may not be a bad thing, but the process is just as important as the goal, and the parents need to be involved. Fully engaging the parents and the community may not be easy, but it has to be done.
17. Omyra Lockhart and Keiano Ruth of Grow Hartford, came to advocate for quality student lunches. They shared their plan of "10 Slices of Lunch", and asked that the school lunch budgets be transparent.

18. Oscar Padua, Principal at Bulkeley Lower School, stated he wants to leave this community better than when he started. He may not be there after June, but his students will be and their concerns are real. How do we ensure that these decisions are about the students? He asked why these decisions were being made, and not to make changes just for the sake of change.
19. Mary Myers, Case Manager at Bulkeley High School, spoke on there being no transparency and keeping decisions made hidden. She would like to see the money that is going to central office to the schools, and have Mr. Padua stay at Bulkeley. Robert Green, Lead Teacher, spoke on the inequity of Bulkeley's lower school, and stated there were 15 staff cut from the Lower School, yet 0 staff cut from Upper School. There were zero notifications that this was coming, and their School Governance Council did not approve any of this.
20. Michelle Vickery, spoke in support of Oscar Padua staying at Bulkeley Lower School and all of the initiatives that he started.
21. Christine Ladd, spoke on the decision making process, and that we shouldn't be making decisions on 'average students', since there is no such thing. She also stated that teachers are constrained by the tedious evaluation process.
22. Ray Yackel, teacher at HPHS Nursing, spoke on being fed up on the board not being better listeners, and to really look at neighborhood schools. He gave examples like the library at HPHS not being supplied, and on parking and rodents being an issue. He feels the Board needs to listen to the union, as they speak for them.
23. Michael Casanghino, teacher at Culinary Academy, expressed his concern over the school, and on lack of support, in particular with students with behavioral issues. They spend a disproportionately amount of time on discipline issues. He also spoke on lack of supplies, lack of safety, lack of copiers, and on the pressure teachers feel to say yes to extra work because of domain 4. He feels teachers are not asked their opinion or what they need, they are just told what to do and how to do it.
24. Diana Ayrula spoke on understanding there is a budget crisis, but believes decisions made are hasty, and there is not enough focus on the long term. She feels that students are just set up for failure.
25. Norma Neumann-Johnson, former principal at Breakthrough Magnet School, spoke in support of Ms. Katherine Leonard's appointment on tonight's agenda.
26. Kent Ashworth, Achieve Hartford, spoke on the big issues facing us, and that we need to fight, and make big tough decisions.

IV. Reports

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

The Superintendent started out by addressing the budget issue, stating we are facing a budget deficit of approximately \$20 Million. She reiterated that we are all in this together, and has cut central office staff as well.

Good work shout outs included Executive Principal Gayle Allen-Greene, for being awarded the Outstanding School Administrator Award at the UCONN 2016 NEAG Alumni Award Celebration. Karla Cruz, Manager of Family and Community Engagement, and Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, one of our Assistant Superintendents, has been recognized as community leaders and are two of the five new recipients of the Maria C. Sanchez award.

3. Committee Reports

- Parent and Community Engagement Committee

Ms. Glanville spoke on the committee meeting on March 7th, and the continued planning for the Community Conversation on Race, Racism and Equity event being held on March 19th.

V. Business Agenda

A. Items in Order of Importance

1. Administrative Appointments (Supt et al.)

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

- a) Mr. Stallings made a motion, and Mr. Brescia seconded, that Katherine Leonard be appointed to the position of Principal at Breakthrough II North Campus, effective March 16, 2016;

VOTE

In favor: Taylor, Stallings, Brescia, Cotto, Glanville, Taylor

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Wareing, Colon-Rivas, Poland

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

- b) Mr. Brescia made a motion, and Mr. Stallings seconded, that Christine McCarthy be appointed to the position of Principal at Expeditionary Learning Academy at Moylan, effective March 16, 2016.

Mr. Cotto expressed his support for the appointments, and thanked Ms. McCarthy for her leadership after Mr. Colon left.

Mr. Stallings expressed his concern over the parent engagement and culture and climate issues that he has heard about.

VOTE

In favor: Taylor, Stallings, Brescia, Cotto, Glanville, Taylor

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Wareing, Colon-Rivas, Poland

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

2. Acceptance of Funds and Contract Approval: Nellie Mae Education Foundation – Imaj Associates \$152,155 (Supt et al.)

In July of 2015, the Board approved the District Level Systems Change (DLSC) grant, a three year grant award from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation. These funds are supplemental to the original grant award, and will go to support communications and engagement work associated with implementing the HPS Strategic Operating Plan, specifically putting students at the center of their learning. Through this funding, Nellie Mae Education Foundation provides the professional communications supports and services of Imaj Associates to create family and community learning modules and webinars, student-centered learning communications materials, and website development services for the HPS/Hartford Public Library partnership called Boundless. In addition, the funds will be used to purchase communications software and supplies.

- a. Mr. Stallings moved; and Ms. Glanville seconded, that the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to accept funds in the amount of \$152,155 from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation.

Mr. Cotto expressed his concern over accepting and spending money on things that the students are not asking for. They are asking for lunches and teachers, not more computers.

VOTE

In favor: Taylor, Stallings, Glanville, Taylor

Opposed: Brescia, Cotto

Abstained: 0

Absent: Wareing, Colon-Rivas, Poland

The motion passed by voice vote.

- b. Furthermore, Mr. Stallings moved, and Ms. Taylor seconded that the Hartford Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to approve the contract with Imaj Associates for the term delineated in the contract ending June 30, 2016.

Mr. Cotto again expressed his concern over this not being put out to bid, because it is a requirement from Nellie Mae in accepting the money. It would have been interesting to see what else was out there.

VOTE

In favor: Taylor, Stallings, Brescia, Glanville, Taylor

Opposed: Cotto

Abstained: 0

Absent: Wareing, Colon-Rivas, Poland

The motion passed by voice vote.

B. Consent Agenda

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

3. Authorization by the Board of Education: E-Rate Funding Application \$514,561.32 (Supt. et al)

That the Hartford Board of Education approves the Superintendent's recommendation to endorse the applications filed by Metro Hartford Information Services (MHIS) on behalf of the district for E-Rate funding. Payment of the applicant's share, at a cost not to exceed \$514,561.32, is included in the current MHIS budget request for 2016-17.

4. Acknowledgment of: iboss Web Gateways – No additional funding (Supt. et al)

MHIS is charged with safeguarding the users, data, and infrastructure of both the Hartford Public Schools' and the City of Hartford's network system. One part of these multilayered protections is providing the filtering of network traffic in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act ("CIPA").

Currently the Hartford Public Schools access the internet through the Connecticut Education Network. In addition to the security provided by that service Hartford also employs Fortigate firewalls coupled with iboss Web Gateways to provide enhanced filtering and protections for our students and staff. The iboss Web Gateway is a newer addition to the infrastructure and allows the security staff to not only protect users from offensive and dangerous content on the internet, but also allows comprehensive protection against malware and intrusion threats.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules indicate that any school or library receiving E- Rate reimbursement must remain compliant with CIPA. As a part of that, the Board of Education must be made aware of and acknowledge any changes in conditions that could affect CIPA compliance, and have it on record at a regular board meeting. To that end MHIS is bringing forth the addition of the iboss gateway adding an additional layer of security for our network and users.

That the Hartford Board of Education acknowledges the addition of The iboss Web Gateway and asserts that the Hartford Public Schools continues to exceed the requirements of CIPA in protecting our children.

VOTE

In favor: Taylor, Stallings, Brescia, Cotto, Glanville, Taylor

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Absent: Wareing, Colon-Rivas, Poland

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.