



BLOOMFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION - REGULAR MEETING

Regular Meeting AT Tuesday, February 10, 2015

Bloomfield Board of Education 1133 Blue Hills Avenue Board Room, 1133 Blue Hills Avenue ,
Bloomfield, CT 06002

1. Establishment of a Quorum and Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Opening Statement
L. Mara
4. Consent Agenda
 - A. Approval of Minutes - Regular Meeting - January 13, 2015 2
5. Presentations
 - A. Student Representative Report - BHS
D. Harris
 - B. Lions Clubs International Peace Poster Contest Winners
P. Perry
6. Public/PTO Comment
7. Superintendent's Report
 - A. Class Size Report
W. Guzman
8. Old Business
9. New Business
 - A. Presentation of Superintendent's Proposed 2015-2016 Budget
J. Thompson and W. Guzman
 - B. Approval of Budget Transfers
W. Guzman
10. CABE Updates
D. Harris
11. Board Comments
12. Adjournment



BLOOMFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION – REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, January 13, 2015, 7:00 p.m.

Bloomfield Board of Education

1133 Blue Hills Avenue

Board Room

Attendance: D. Harris, Chair Present
M. R. Walters, Vice Chair Present
L. Mara, Secretary Present
R. Ike Present
H. Frydman Present
M. Williams Present *arrived at 7:02 p.m.*
Q. Johnson Present

Also Present: J. Thompson, Ed.D., Superintendent
E. Stoltz, Chief Academic Officer
B. Silver, Accountability, Performance and Assessment Officer
S. McCann, Director of School Improvement and Intervention
W. Joslyn, Interim Human Resources Specialist
S. Simpson, Director of Strategic Communication and Planning
D. Moleti, Principal, Bloomfield High School
S. Loveland, Principal, Global Experience Magnet School
T. Ellis, Principal, Carmen Arace Middle School
S. Williams, Interim Principal, Carmen Arace Intermediate School
D. Nesmith, Principal, Metacomet School
P. Guzzo, Principal, Laurel School

1. Establishment of a Quorum and Call to Order

D. Harris determined a quorum was present and the Bloomfield Board of Education Regular Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All rose to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Opening Statement

L. Mara, Secretary, welcomed all attendees. The purpose and process of the Board of Education meeting was stated.

4. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting – December 9, 2014

A motion was made by M. Walters and seconded by R. Ike that the Bloomfield Board of Education approve the minutes from the December 9, 2014 regular board meeting, as presented.

The motion was passed unanimously.



5. Presentations

A. Student Representative Report - GEMS

Mr. Harris introduced student Brennan Napper a tenth grade student at Global Experience Magnet School. The Student Representative, Jarvis Lawrence was unable to attend as he is on a class trip to California.

The student reported that twenty-two students are participating in college courses in partnership with Capital Community College. Upon completion of these courses, students will receive college credit.

Juniors left for California as part of the West Coast experience. The students will be volunteering for Habitat for Humanity and participating in college visits. The trip to South Africa will be in February, China in April and the trip to France will be in May.

The Global Experience Magnet School has received over 220 applications for the 2015-2016 school year.

6. Public/PTO Comment

Roger Bunker of 28 Old Village Road addressed the Board of Education on the topic of gay and lesbian students in the middle school. He stated he is addressing the question again in regards to what the district is doing in support of these students. Dr. Thompson responded that an update will be provided.

7. Superintendent's Report

A. Board of Education Retreat – Saturday, January 24, 2015

Dr. Thompson reported that the Board of Education Retreat will be held on Saturday, January 24, 2015. The team will work with Dr. Julian Trevino to implement and analyze the results of the Board's self-evaluation. As part of the workshop, the board will also review their roles and responsibilities. Dr. Thompson welcomed Dr. Stoltz to present a preview of a collaborative art initiative followed by Mr. Joslyn who will present the December financial report on behalf of Mr. Guzman.

B. Bloomfield Public Schools Collaborative Visual Arts Initiative with Michael Borders

Dr. Ellen Stoltz introduced a new collaborative partnership with artist Michael Borders. Mr. Borders is a Bloomfield resident and internationally-renowned muralist who will be sharing his expertise with Bloomfield students. His traveling exhibit is on display at in the art gallery at the Board of Education. A miniature rendition of his Connecticut Industry mural integrates art, math, economics and social studies. Mr. Borders will be attending various visual arts activities and sharing his talents with students.

C. Financial Report – December 2014

Mr. William Joslyn, Interim Human Resources Specialist, reported on behalf of Mr. William Guzman. Mr. Joslyn first noted the tuition line, which is a volatile line that the business department is closely monitoring. The tuition expense is often hard to



predict as you cannot anticipate how many students will move in or out of a district during the course of a school year. To date, the tuition line is over budget by \$423,544. Mr. Joslyn noted the under expenditure in the textbook/library media line as typical for this time of year. The remaining funds are usually spent to buy materials that support district needs as indicated by the results of the benchmark assessments.

Mr. Frydman inquired about the cost of gas and oil prices going down in relation to effects on the district budget. Mr. Joslyn noted only one of the eight schools is oil fired and we buy oil from the state. He also noted the economy of oil has not reached the cost efficiency of natural gas.

Mr. Williams asked what the district vacancy rate is as relating to the under spent certified salary line (2.98%). Mr. Joslyn stated the district has three certified vacancies and although the certified salary line is underspent, this will be offset by the substitute expenditure line, as we are currently using Kelly Services to cover these unfilled positions.

8. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

9. New Business

A. District Accountability Report Update

Dr. Ellen Stoltz presented an update on the District Accountability Report (DAP). The District Accountability Plan was initiated in September of 2012 and is the foundation for everything we do in the district. It provides the vision statement, theory of action and our four priorities.

What does Holistic Accountability look like from a data standpoint? Dr. Stoltz noted that as adults we assess our own progress and document our adult actions. She further states that we look at our own practice and how it affects the way we look at student data. This information is used to adjust instruction and to monitor student data over time. The next step in achieving our goal for Holistic Accountability is to continue to improve staff competencies in meeting data team standards and to refine staff competencies in aligning district wide protocols.

The second goal speaks to a rigorous curriculum based on the Common Core State Standards. The goal is to increase the percentage of teachers who implement with fidelity a standards-based curriculum. This will be achieved by having teams review the new curriculum to ensure rigor, creating rubrics aligned with the national assessment, developing a common matrix and continuing the Instructional Rounds process.

The third priority is Positive School Climate. By September 2015 the goal is to create a supportive community where learners demonstrate enthusiasm for learning and respect for one another. To measure this goal, the 5th Annual Climate Survey will be administered and the data analyzed. Data from the 2014 Climate Survey was shared as



part of the presentation to support how we measure this goal. In the 2014 Survey, overall responses to questions related to academics, teaching and learning in our district were answered favorably by 83% of students, 95% of families and 96% of staff. Aside from the Climate Survey, the district will also develop and implement strategies to promote areas of strength and address areas of concern. Dr. Stoltz also mentioned the teacher evaluation as another means for measuring achievement in this priority area.

The goal for the fourth priority, Parent and Community Engagement is to develop strong community partnerships in every school, families who are active participants and community members who have a strong sense of stewardship. Joyce Epstein's six types of community involvement were shared with the audience. The district has incorporated the Parent Tracker software to track parent involvement and to provide more specific data.

Dr. Stoltz concluded the presentation by noting that in September 2015 the district will be creating a new District Accountability Plan.

H. Frydman requested specific examples of community partnerships. Ms. McCann commented that as part of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving grant we would be looking at very specific partnerships in our extended learning opportunities. Today, the district partners with organizations such as Friends of Bloomfield, Auerfarm, Seabury, Duncaster, Jewish Coalition of Literacy and Sons of Solomon.

L. Mara commented that Parent Tracker is a wonderful tool and important to have families involved. She inquired what Parent Tracker looks like from a parent's perspective. Ms. McCann responded that parents sign in and the data is manually entered by staff. In the future, the district hopes that each parent will have a scan card that can be swiped and automatically recorded.

M. Walters inquired what three key concepts do parents need to know about the Common Core State Standards. Dr. Ellen Stoltz responded that three key concepts that would summarize the Common Core would be increased rigor, citing and explaining text and a focus on non-fiction (informational text).

B. Cycle I & Cycle II Benchmark Assessment Reports

Ms. Stacey. McCann opened the presentation with an introduction of the purpose and process of the presentation. She introduced the principals who will be speaking this evening.

Dr. Bethany Silver reviewed the Theory of Action, which states that as a result of strengthened adult work, learning for all students will substantially improve over time. This speaks to increasing student vocabulary and helping students become better problem solvers. She commented that we know this is happening based on the results from the district benchmark assessments.

The benchmark assessments are used to inform students of their skill level, inform instruction and demonstrate the learners' skill relative to end of year expectations. The



new tools were selected to support the transition to both Common Core Standards and new assessments.

The tool selected for this year's district benchmark assessments is Blue Ribbon. The criteria used in the selection of this tool are alignment with Common Core, measures the standards in our curriculum and the tool must be electronic (computer based).

The benchmark assessments are administered three times during the school year to students in grades 3-11. The tests are intended to measure skills that align with our curriculum and relate to long-range student learning goals. The primary objective is to support classroom instruction using a standardized measure that helps us view learning in a broader context.

Following the selection of the assessment tool, is the development of the goals and targets. Goals and targets are based on grade level standards. In order to determine this, we look at the content validity of the test (is the test content appropriate and align with Common Core) and examine predictive validity (alignment with Smarter Balanced Assessment). The action plans are then developed through the School Accountability Plans to meet the end of year expectations.

The goals and targets are used to:

- Monitor individual student learning growth
- Inform classroom instruction
- Evaluate curricular resources and instructional strategies
- Inform the evaluation process
- Establish measureable targets for staff incentives

The strength areas and focus areas of the following school were presented:

- Metacomet School, Principal Desi Nesmith
- Carmen Arace Intermediate School, Interim Principal Sarah Williams
- Carmen Arace Middle School, Principal Trevor Ellis
- Bloomfield High School, Interim Principal Daniel Moleti
- Global Experience Magnet School, Principal Sabin Loveland

Please view the attached presentation, "Aligning the Benchmark Assessment to the District Accountability Plan" pages 7-16 for detailed information about the individual school presentations.

M. Williams inquired how we know we selected the right instrument. Dr. Bethany Silver responded that the first step was to audit the current district's curriculum and map out the Common Core Standards that are embedded in the curriculum. These standards were provided to the vendors and they were required to match the standards to their assessment resources. In addition, we required the ability to go into the program and see student responses. One of our challenges was finding a matched item validity as the Smarter Balanced field test data is not available.



The board requested additional information regarding how we are engaging parents in this new process and with the Common Core State Standards. In response, Ms. McCann responded that we are currently providing informational sessions to parents through events such as Common Core Workshops and Literacy Night. The district is still exploring avenues to engage and inform parents who are busy and unable to attend.

Q. Johnson asked what real world applications are students receiving to ensure college and career readiness. Dr. Stoltz responded that the elementary school hosts Career Awareness Day and there are College Fairs at the high school.

L. Mara noted that she would like to hear the faculty perspective and how they are handling the changes with the Common Core and assessments. It was also suggested to have Laurel School and Wintonbury Early Childhood Magnet School present their strengths and focus areas for the benchmark assessments.

10. CABA Updates

Mr. Donald Harris, Jr. noted that there are several workshops being presented by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABA) as outlined in the monthly Board newsletter. If you are interested, please e-mail Krista Cherry. On January 22, 2015 is the CREC/HASA Legislative Breakfast at the State Capitol.

Chairman Harris will be testifying in the legislative sessions in Washington, DC. If board members are interested in speaking, please see Mr. Harris.

11. Board Comments

R. Ike attended the Honor Roll Dinner and Fall Sports Banquet at Bloomfield High School. He commented the good use of Parent Tracker. He also noted the State of Our Schools address at Saint Thomas Seminary and the positive turnout. He provided information to the public on a special Martin Luther King, Jr. day event at a local church.

H. Frydman thanked the principals for their presentations and noted all of the hard work to ensure our students are successful. He requested that residents be aware of buses and ensuring our students are safe. The Bloomfield High School will be having their annual Winter Concert on Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

L. Mara shared with Board members that they received a gold pin from CABA and thanked them for going above and beyond. She thanked the participants for a substantial meeting and Mr. Bunker for his comments. Ms. Mara shared that she is participating in the 20 week workshop provided by the Alliance for Bloomfield's Children to help parents become better advocates.

Q. Johnson commented it is a privilege to be a part of a talented group working toward a common goal.



M. Williams commended the district as we move into a new era of national educational standards but also warned that as pioneers we are more likely to be under a microscope. He also encouraged all to volunteer and participate in a “Day of Service” on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

M. Walters commented that the Winter Concert at St. Thomas Seminary was outstanding. The genre of music and diversity spoke to the true talents of the student performers.

D. Harris commented on the attendance and presentation at the State of Our Schools Address on December 11, 2014. He also encouraged others to participate in the various speaking engagements and community events around the state on January 19, 2015.

12. Adjournment

At 9:01 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by R. Ike and seconded by M. Walters.

The motion was passed unanimously.

L. Mara, Secretary

J. Thompson, Ed. D., Superintendent