



BLOOMFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION - REGULAR MEETING

Regular Meeting AT Tuesday, April 7, 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 - March 10, 2015 2
5. Public/PTO Comment
6. Presentations
  - A. Student Representative Report - BHS  
D. Harris
  - B. Connecticut Council for Education Reform  
Dr. Villar
  - C. 1003a Site Visitation at Bloomfield High School  
M. Rosado
  - D. Recognition of 2014 Connecticut Milken Educator  
M. Rosado
  - E. Special Presentation  
D. Nesmith
7. CABE Updates  
D. Harris
8. Board Comments
9. Adjournment



BLOOMFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION – REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, March 10, 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  
Q. Johnson Present *arrived at 7:18 p.m.*

**Also Present:** J. Thompson, Ed.D., Superintendent  
E. Stoltz, Chief Academic Officer  
W. Guzman, Chief Operating Officer  
B. Silver, Accountability, Performance and Assessment Officer  
S. McCann, Director of School Improvement and Intervention  
W. Joslyn, Interim Human Resources Specialist  
E. Pierce, District Grant Specialist  
S. Simpson, Director of Strategic Communication and Planning  
S. Braun, Director of Accounting  
D. Moleti, Principal, Bloomfield High School  
S. Loveland, Principal, Global Experience Magnet 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 – February 10, 2015**

A motion was made by M. Walters and seconded by R. Ike for the Bloomfield Board of Education to approve the minutes from the February 10, 2015 regular board meeting, as presented.

The motion was passed unanimously.



A motion was made by M. Walters to add “Bloomfield High School Principal Search” to the agenda as item 7F.

The motion was passed unanimously.

**A. Approval of Minutes – Special Meeting – February 19, 2015**

A motion was made by M. Walters and seconded by R. Ike for the Bloomfield Board of Education to approve the minutes from the February 19, 2015 special board meeting listed under the consent agenda, as presented.

The motion was passed unanimously.

**5. Presentations**

**A. Student Representative Report - GEMS**

Mr. Harris introduced student representative J. Lawrence.

The Global Experience Magnet School currently has a student ski club with 26 participants. The ski club recently had a trip in February that went well and the club will be going again in March.

GEMS is currently hosting spirit week with a different theme each day. One theme for this week is for students “to be the teacher they want to be” and another day will be “twin” day.

Spring Fling Dance for the middle school will be held on March 20, 2015.

GEMS launched a new website this week.

The South African experience was February 9-18, 2015. During this time abroad, the government strike had closed schools which provided an interesting perspective for our students.

GEMS students will be traveling to China April 6-17, 2015. This trip will be including home stays.

The CMT/CAPT Science exams for grades 8 and 10 will be held in March. The Smarter Balanced Assessments will be held in May for grades 6-8 and 11.

H. Frydman inquired if there is a possibility to video chat with China experience participants as they did last year. Dr. Thompson stated they will look into this.

**6. Public/PTO Comment**

Mary Kay Rendock, teacher at Carmen Arace Intermediate School wanted to share some news. The Bloomfield Education Association is holding their 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Book Swap on March 28, 2015. Donate gently used books and also collecting non-perishable food items.



Also, Carmen Arace is hosting softball clinics for girls in grades 5-8 to serve as a feeder program for Bloomfield High School softball team which is coached by Dhana Tulloch-Reid.

## **7. Superintendent's Report**

### **A. Connecticut Board of Education Appreciation Month**

The first item on the Superintendent's Report is the recognition of our Board of Education during the Connecticut Board of Education Appreciation Month. This annual event provides a perfect opportunity to thank all of our Board Members for their hard work and dedication to this district. The work of a board member is a time consuming process that requires significant effort devoted to the business of effective governing. Dr. Thompson gifted a small token in appreciation for their commitment and leadership. He offered his thanks to the board members.

### **B. Global Experience Magnet School – Magnet School of Distinction Award**

Dr. Thompson announced that Global Experience Magnet School has won the Magnet School of Distinction Award from the Magnet School of America organization. A Magnet School of Distinction is the second highest recognition that a magnet school can receive from this organization. He commended the GEMS staff for this accomplishment.

### **C. Bloomfield High School Class S Indoor Track Champions**

Dr. Thompson congratulated our Bloomfield High School Boys and Girls Indoor Track Teams on their first place finishes in the Class S Championship held on Thursday, February 12th. This is the Boys' 3rd and the Girls' 7th consecutive first place finishes. Dr. Thompson noted the coaches have done an exceptional job preparing our students to excel on such a competitive level.

### **D. Arts Festival at the Bushnell**

Dr. Ellen Stoltz presented on the annual Arts Festival which will be held on Thursday, April 30, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. The title of this year's program is Triumph. NBC's anchor Kiesha Grant will be the special guest host. The visual arts pieces will be on display for 30 days at the Bushnell. Tickets are \$7.00 and go on sale March 10, 2015. The district website will have more information on tickets which can also be purchased through the Bushnell box office.

### **E. Financial Report – February 2015**

Mr. William Guzman distributed the one-page and six-page financial reports. He stated he would like to highlight a couple of areas this evening. We are currently 2/3 way through the current fiscal year. On the summary page, you can see that as of February 2015 59% of the budget has been expended and 39% is encumbered.

There currently is a \$559,000 deficit in the tuition line. This is attributed to two factors SPED tuitions and magnet school tuitions.



Currently 9 of 63 accounts listed on the six-page report are over budget. The deficits will be accounted for by the processing of budget transfers to get the budget back in line.

R. Ike asked as the district heads down the final stretch will we be under budget. Mr. Guzman replied that we expect to have a surplus but not sure how much as this time. We will continue to be conservative through the remainder of the year.

L. Mara inquired if line items 5600, 5630 and 5690 make of the \$559,000 tuition deficit? Mr. Guzman replied that if these line items do comprise the total deficit of the tuition line mentioned from the one-page report. The private tuitions are usually placements of the courts.

H. Frydman requested additional information on the 48% surplus in the printing account and asked if outside organizations use our print shop for a fee. Mr. Guzman replied that there will be additional printing costs to the schools through the remainder of the school year. We currently do not print for outside vendors; however this is something the district can look into as long as it does not affect the operation of the schools.

#### **F. Bloomfield High School Principal Search**

Mr. William Joslyn presented an outline of the national principal search for the Bloomfield High School principal position. The outline anticipates an announcement to the Board of Education in May. This process will provide ample time to do a complete search with input from focus groups. The district will be looking to the parents, student, staff and community through focus groups to provide information to create a leadership profile for the incoming principal. They will use the input for screening and interviewing purposes. The position will be posted on March 20, 2015.

M. Williams inquired why the position will be posted prior to collecting information from the focus groups. Mr. Joslyn replied that the postings will include credentials, education and experience. They will further screen the applicants with the input from the focus groups. Mr. Joslyn stated the district does not want to limit the number of applicants as the high school principals are more difficult to come by.

Mr. Harris commented that the outline is similar to the one being utilized by CREC in their search for an administrator and thinks the district is right on target.

H. Frydman asked if the district does not find the right candidate how will the search be extended. Mr. Joslyn replied that the district will not settle. There is constant turnover in the state and the district would reopen the search if needed.



L. Mara stated in conjunction with Mr. Williams' statement, it would be a possible solution to inform the focus groups how much their responses will weigh into the interview questions. The focus groups would provide the needs that are unique to Bloomfield.

R. Ike commented that an informational town meeting to include community members who do not have children would be very helpful. Also, asked to clarify how focus groups play a role in screening process. Mr. Joslyn replied that how we evaluate the candidate will be driven by the information received from the focus groups. Dr. Thompson commented that this process is very similar to the one used to select the principal at WECMS.

## 8. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

## 9. New Business

### A. Bloomfield High School Athletic Field, Track and Retaining Walls Assessment

Mr. Williams Guzman, Chief Operating Officer, stated that an assessment had been completed of the Bloomfield High School athletic field, the track and retaining walls. This was conducted by BSC Group of Glastonbury; who was one of three bidders for this project. These options have been vetted through the Finance Committee who recommended Option #2 to the full board.

Mr. Luke McCoy introduced himself. He noted his company was hired to evaluate the field, track and retaining walls at the Bloomfield High School athletic field.

From their analysis they found the field contains hardpan just below the top soil surface. This is the reason the water is unable to properly drain causing compacted top soil. The second thing they reviewed was the track surface and edging. Overall, the track is in generally good condition in terms of the surface adhering to the asphalt; however it is due to be recoated. They also looked at the layout of the track events and their orientations. The final review was of the retaining walls. The structures are good but cosmetically the freezing and thawing is causing the blocks to fall out.

Met with the athletic director and small group to discuss programming in relationship with the assessment and came up with three possible options as noted in the presentation. Option #1 would be to renovate the existing natural grass field, rehabilitate the track and retaining wall (with drainage and cosmetic fix). Option #2 similar to #1 with track and wall but looked to change field a synthetic field. Option #3 looks to expand the track from 6 to 8 lanes to have the ability to host larger meets and to reduce meet times (not required).

BSC Group then developed cost estimates for all three options. Option #1 will cost approximately \$750,200 to renovate existing field with reseeding (looked at sodding rather than sodding). Once natural grass is installed the district will lose two



playing seasons. Option #2 is the conversion from natural to synthetic is estimated at 1.2 million but the district is getting the all-weather synthetic and there is no-down time. Option #3 same as option #2 but includes expanding the track to 8 lanes. This cost estimate with the add-on to create on continuous asphalt base totaling 1.5 million.

The final part of the assessment was providing a schedule for each option. Per the schedule, today through mid-May would be design and permitting and then BSC Group would work with town to create a bid-package. Once contractor is in place, they anticipate the work would be completed around mid-September falling in line with the fall sports season.

D. Harris added that the Finance Committee received a more detailed presentation and committee voted unanimously option #2.

R. Ike is there any town approval needed from town officials. The funds will be paid out of the Capital account. It would exhaust the account but would be good investment in light of recent injuries on the athletic field. The town is the holder of the money but their only investment would be the continued maintenance of the field. With this estimate includes the grooming equipment.

H. Frydman what are synthetic materials made of and are there any future health concerns with this material. This is yarn fiber that is about 2.5 inches in height. The infill is a sand/rubber mix known as crumb rubber. All health tests demonstrate the product meets safety standards. The rubber product was sent to Europe to be tested as their criteria are much stricter and it passed the safety standards of a child's toy.

M. Walters asked Mr. McCoy to speak about the natural turf as well. There are two ways to feed natural grass with pesticide and fertilizers or organic. You may be forced to use only organic in the near future which is very expensive and takes 2-3 years for fields to become accustomed. Additionally, the maintenance for the natural field is more costly due to the mowing and lining of the fields (lines are in-laid on synthetic and does not require re-lining). The natural grass field can only handle about 300 hours per year versus 800 hours. The lifespan of a synthetic field is 10-12 years.

M. Williams asked if the audience can view the samples.

Q. Johnson inquired if the budget includes a replacement field in the cost. Mr. McCoy replied that the budget is just construction and the escalated cost to replace in 10-15 years would be about \$400,000-500,000.

A motion was made by M. Walters and seconded by R. Ike for the Bloomfield Board of Education to approve Option #2 for capital improvements as described in the Bloomfield High School Athletic Field, Track and Retaining Walls Assessment presentation.



The motion was passed unanimously.

**B. Climate Survey 2014-2015**

Dr. Bethany Silver presented on the longitudinal survey information and benefits for the 2014-2015 Climate and Satisfaction Survey. The purpose today is to inform the Board of Education of preliminary climate survey data and goals.

The survey began in 2011 and at that time 21% of families, 49% of students and 99% of staff participated in the climate survey. Used an internet based tool to collect the data. The 2012 data shows a slight decrease in staff. In 2013, the district selected a vendor to maintain our data and keep anonymity of participants. The survey was opened up to all staff and has steadily increased to an estimated 81% this current year. Family participation has also increased to 47%.

The data gathered from the annual climate survey allows the district to create SMART goals that are aligned with our four district priorities. It also allows us to monitor school climate over time and incorporate the data into school accountability plans. Finally allows us to integrate data into school-wide data teams. Dr. Silver thanked the members of the district-wide steering committee.

**10. CABA Updates**

Mr. Donald Harris, Jr. is one representative from Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABA) to attend the National School Board Conference in Nashville, TN.

CABA on the Hill will be held on March 25, 2015 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Bushnell. Open to all board members and Superintendent. Includes presentations by legislators, followed by meetings at the

Mr. Harris will represent CABA and CREC as he provides testimony at the Legislative Office building during this critical budget session.

**11. Board Comments**

R. Ike had no comments.

H. Frydman congratulated and thanked student athletes. He asked those students who received high honors to raise their hand. Mr. Frydman is thankful the district is addressing the football field. He encouraged parents to participate in PTO and to take the time to learn about what is happening at the schools. He wished everyone a Happy Easter and Passover.

Q. Johnson no comments.

M. Williams no comments.



L. Mara acknowledged Principal Loveland and students of the Global Experience Magnet School. She commented a wish to throw in a new roof for the Board of Education with the new proposed athletic field. L. Mara further offered her congratulations to the athletes.

M. Walters recognized the student athletes and also noted the board is catching water throughout the building. Mr. Walters attended Black History programs at Laurel School. CCER, New Haven-based, non-profit education reform organization featured the Bloomfield Blueprint and highlights the districts successes in improving student performance and reducing the achievement gap over the last four years. You can view this on [www.ctedreform.org](http://www.ctedreform.org). This article is positive publicity for Bloomfield.

D. Harris congratulated the Bloomfield school district for the positive publicity from CCER. There is a letter going out to all of our stakeholders this week with all of the information about this good news coming from our district. Dr. Thompson noted his office sent a hard copy of the CCER publication to Town Council members, Board members and elected officials. Mr. Harris thanked Dr. Thompson for recognizing the board members for their volunteer work. My congratulations for boys and girls track teams. Next week, Dr. Thompson will be an invited guest on the Ray Dunaway show on Thursday morning. Congratulations to GEMS for their Award of Distinction, another example of the good works we are doing in the school district.

## 12. Adjournment

At 8:13 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by R. Ike and seconded by M. Walters.

The motion was passed unanimously.

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L. Mara, Secretary

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J. Thompson, Ed. D., Superintendent