



BLOOMFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION - SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Special Board of Education Meeting AT Tuesday, February 21, 2017

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

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BLOOMFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION – REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, January 10, 2017 at 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
	H. Frydman, Secretary	Present
	R. Ike	Present
	M. Williams	Present
	Q. Johnson	Absent
	D. Banks	Present

Also Present: J. Thompson, Jr., Superintendent of Schools
B. Silver, Assistant Superintendent of Accountability and Performance
S. McCann, Assistant Superintendent of School Improvement and Intervention
A.M. Cullinan, Chief Academic Officer
W. Guzman, Chief Operations Officer
W. Joslyn, Human Resource Specialist
S. Simpson, Director of Strategic Communications and Planning
E. Pierce, District Grant Specialist
D. Moleti, Principal, Bloomfield High School
N. Poplin, Dean of Students, Global Experience Magnet School
T. Ellis, Principal, Carmen Arace Middle School
S. Williams, Principal, Carmen Arace Intermediate School
J. White, Principal, Metacomet Elementary School
P. Guzzo, Principal, Laurel Elementary School
L. Eells, Principal, Wintonbury Early Childhood Magnet School
N. Campagna, Intern

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

H. Frydman, 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 13, 2016

A motion was made by M. Walters and seconded by R. Ike for the Bloomfield Board of Education to approve the minutes from the December 13, 2016 regular Board meeting, as presented.

The motion passed unanimously.

5. Presentations

A. Lions Club International Peace Poster Contest Winners

Mr. Donald Harris, Jr., Board Chair introduced Phyllis Perry, representative from the Bloomfield Lions Club. Ms. Perry was unable to attend the meeting. Louisa Cummings, the Vice President of the Bloomfield Lions Club spoke in her place.

Ms. Cummings commented that the Lions Club is one the largest service organization in the world. The Peace Poster Contest is an initiative that encourages children worldwide to express their vision of “peace” in the art realm.

Theme of this year’s peace poster contest was “A Celebration of Peace”. This year there were 60 entries from Bloomfield students, aged 11-13 years.

The contest winners from Carmen Arace Middle School, Metropolitan Learning Center and Carmen Arace Intermediate School were recognized. The posters will be on display at the Board of Education throughout the month of January.

B. Student Representative Report – Global Experience Magnet School

The student representative from Global Experience Magnet School shared a presentation with members of the Board of Education.

The representative reported that students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 completed their fall and winter benchmarks.

All students are participating in exhibitions. This occurs twice a year in January and June. The students make a 30 minute presentation related to academic progress and global citizenship skills. Students receive useful feedback from staff, students, and parents. The exhibitions help with goal setting/achievement and communication skills.

The Positive Climate Training program for students was recently provided by the Connecticut Department of Education. This program is designed to empower students to help develop a positive climate within the school.

The middle school students also participated in the Young Women of Color Conference – Leadership conference. The conference is intended to motivate and inspire young women.



Students from GEMS will be traveling to a village in South Africa in March. From this experience, students will understand how their peers live in South Africa and learn about the educational system. They will also partake in a safari.

Some recent events at GEMS included the Positive School Climate/Anti-Bullying/Mean-Spirited Behavior/Teen Dating Violence interactive informational session and Black History month door decoration contest.

6. Public/PTO Comment

Patrene Davis from 84 Englewood Avenue in Bloomfield addressed the Board of Education. Ms. Davis specifically commented on the budget cuts at Carmen Arace Middle School, the increased class sizes and the number of noncertified staff. She also stated the parents of the Carmen Arace School Governance Committee would like to create a meaningful partnership with the Board of Education and be a part of the 2017-2018 budgetary process. She noted her motivation is driven by the desire to obtain the best possible education for our children.

7. Superintendent's Report

A. Mid-year Highlights

Dr. Thompson shared some highlights at the midway point of the school year.

1. The Bloomfield High School Graduation Rate is 92% for 2016

- The graduation rate was 88% in 2015
- The district goal is 100%

Next Step: The district is developing a new strategic plan that will intervene earlier and provide targeted support for at-risk students.

2. Student Performance on the 2016 Smarter Balanced Assessment

- 5.9 percentage point increase in Math
- 6.1 percentage point increase in Literacy

3. Student Enrollment – Up 4% in 2016 (significant increase)

- More Middle School families are sending their students to Bloomfield High School

4. Implementation of Extended Day at Laurel and Metacomet

- This is a grant-funded project in partnership with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.
- The Extended Day adds an additional 45 minutes to the school schedule. This translates to 20 additional days of school for our students.
- The current focus is – Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Math. We are currently seeing promising results in all areas.

5. The New England Association of Schools and Colleges Accreditation Visitation at Bloomfield High School (in October 2016)



- The preliminary feedback from the visiting team about the high school's academic programs and family and community engagement was positive.
- 6. The Alliance Construction Grant Projects
 - The grant total is \$1.02 million.
 - The scoreboard and lockers at Bloomfield High School have been replaced.
 - Significant technology upgrades are in progress.
- 7. We hosted our annual Legislative-Community Breakfast (in December 2016)
 - The Bloomfield community was well represented.
 - We shared our achievements, challenges and solutions with our local elected officials.
- 8. Minority Teacher Recruitment Bill-Signing at Carmen Arace
 - The Governor publicly praised Bloomfield Public Schools for its efforts in embracing a diverse work environment and its efforts to attract and retain teachers of color.
- 9. Presentation at the National Alliance of Black School Educators Conference on the Bloomfield Blueprint
 - Members of the District Data Team presented the Accountability Plan
- 10. The House that Students Built
 - Bloomfield Public Schools partnered with Habitat for Humanity – with students raising money to build a home for a Bloomfield family in need.
- 11. Recognition/Awards
 - The district received a number of awards for excellence in education, from organizations such as CT Association of Boards of Education and from Lead CT.

B. Financial Report – December 2016

Mr. William Guzman presented the finance report for December 2016. He distributed the one-page and six-page financial reports. The district is five months into the fiscal year and about 1.8% of the budget has not been expended or encumbered.

On the Six-Page report there are several accounts which were at a negative balance. These include 5100 Transportation Pupil, 5630 Tuition Private and 5600 Tuition Public. These expenses are mainly associated with special education services and tuition. The district currently has 103 students receiving outside services. The services to meet the needs of these students have extraordinary high costs. These accounts could impact all operations and therefore the business office is monitoring them on a weekly basis.

Many districts are experiencing similar situations across the state. The current



reimbursement under the Cost Savings Grant has affected districts throughout Connecticut.

Mr. Guzman noted the district has implemented a budget freeze on all accounts except those that impact student activities, instruction, health and safety and utilities.

Mr. Guzman notes we have about 29 students outplaced. Outplaced means the student's special education needs are such that they cannot be handled by the district and this is determined through the PPT process. Mr. Walters asked which schools provide services for outplaced students. Mr. Guzman stated these schools include Grace Webb and the Institute of Living.

R. Ike inquired on the long range plan of the district. Mr. Guzman reassured the Board that the business office is monitoring these volatile accounts as the number of students who require special education services changes frequently.

8. Old Business

A. Approval of the 2017-2018 Academic Calendar

Mr. William Joslyn presented the proposed 2017-2018 Academic Calendar for the Board's review.

This document was reviewed by the president of the Bloomfield Education Association.

The only modifications to the calendar are March conferences and the winter holiday recess. The March Parent Conference moved from March 21-23, 2018 to March 27-29, (before Good Friday) to reduce the number of disrupted weeks in March.

The holiday recess in December of 2017 was increased by one day and a day was added to the end of the year in June to complete the 180 school-day calendar. This was in response to the feedback from staff regarding an extended holiday recess.

A motion was made by M. Walters and seconded by H. Frydman for the Bloomfield Board of Education the 2017-2018 academic calendar, as presented.

The motion was passed unanimously.

9. New Business

A. Cycle I & Cycle II Benchmark Assessments

Dr. Bethany Silver, the Assistant Superintendent Accountability and Performance reported the Benchmark Assessment for Cycle I and Cycle II. The purpose of this presentation is to review benchmark assessments and highlight strengths and strategies by school. Benchmark assessments help teachers target instruction and help students prepare to meet end of year expectations while demonstrating skill on the spring assessments.

Dr. Silver explained that benchmark assessments are valuable as they inform students



of their skill level, inform instruction and demonstrate our learners' skills relative to the end of the year grade-level expectations.

Each principal from the following schools shared the strength areas, followed by the standards and strategies in each of their focus areas.

- Mrs. Lisa Eells, Wintonbury Early Childhood Magnet School
- Mr. Paul Guzzo, Laurel Elementary School
- Mr. Jesses White, Metacomet Elementary School
- Mrs. Sarah Williams, Carmen Arace Intermediate School
- Dr. Trevor Ellis, Carmen Arace Middle School
- Mr. Dan Moleti, Bloomfield High School
- Mrs. Nicola Poplin, Global Experience Magnet School

It was further noted that the district is using Renaissance Learning Company and the assessments are highly predictive of performance on the Smarter Balanced Assessments.

The board members commended the principals on challenging students with close reading strategies. H. Frydman noted he would like to see a debate club in the schools.

R. Ike thanked Ms. Eells for sharing a sample of the testing materials from Kindergarten.

M. Williams inquired if there is achievement gap between the two kindergarten programs in Bloomfield. Dr. Thompson stated these reports can be shared at the next Curriculum committee meeting.

M. Walters commented on the value of data teams, as he observed in-person. The district also has three levels of data teams: District, school-wide and instructional. They use data teams to review data and to inform instruction, focus on individual students, review strategies and review student class work. The principals also added that teacher work collaboratively to score and review teaching practices to improve our curriculum and meet student needs.

10. CABE Updates

Mr. Harris serves on the Diversity Committee which is discussing the issue around people of color serving on Boards of Education across the state.

The CABE/CREC/CAPSS Legislative Breakfast will be held on January 26, 2017 at 8:00 a.m.

11. Board Comments

R. Ike extended a Happy New Year.



M. Williams recognized a difficult budget process ahead and the effects of cuts at the state level.

D. Banks commented on the great presentations by the principals.

H. Frydman thanked the principals for the informative presentations. He also noted the available summer jobs for young adults and advised them to check in with Leisure Services.

M. Walters also noted the excellent presentation by the principals. He noted the seamless process and connectivity between the schools.

D. Harris wished everyone a Happy New Year. He shared that he and Dr. Thompson will be presenting to Dr. Villanova's UCONN Executive Leadership class on Thursday, January 19th on creating a positive Board/Superintendent relationship.

He commented to the Board that the special education services within the budget is a moving target and very difficult to predict. The unfunded grants from the federal government and state have affected districts throughout the state.

Mr. Harris also shared that he will be in Washington D.C. as part of CAFE National School Board advocacy group to advocate for preventing the passing of unfunded mandates.

12. Adjournment

At 8:43 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by R. Ike and seconded by M. Walters.

The motion was passed unanimously.

H. Frydman, Secretary

J. Thompson, Ed. D., Superintendent