

# **BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**July 8, 2019**

## **MINUTES**

### **REGULAR MEETING**

Attendance: Richard Aroian  
Julia Dennis - Absent  
Jake Fisher - Absent  
Jaymee Miller  
Timothy Oakes  
Adam Salina  
Kari Sassu, Ph.D.  
Tracy Sisti  
Matthew Tencza

Also in attendance: Superintendent of Schools Brian J. Benigni.

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Tencza called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. in the Board of Education (“the Board”) meeting room at 238 Kensington Road, Berlin, CT. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

#### **II. COMMITTEE REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE TO THE BOARD**

A. Communications Committee

Superintendent Benigni reported the Communications Committee met on June 21, 2019 and discussed how communications have changed with the elimination of the broadcasting of the Board meetings to streaming on the website, the discontinuation of *The Bulletin Board* and the use of social media. The Committee discussed events sponsored by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) and presenting at the CABE conference; however, it was decided the Board would not present this year. The Committee also discussed presenting at the national conference and the criteria required to be recognized for CABE awards. Mr. Tencza reported the Board renewed its membership with CABE this year with the intention of having access to their resources and suggested the Board invite a representative from CABE to attend the Board’s second meeting in September to explain why the Board should be a member, what the Board is missing out on by not being a member and what is included in the membership. Board members were provided with the July 2019 CABE liaison newsletter.

B. Correspondence to the Board

Superintendent Benigni shared thank you cards received from Sharon Anderson, Mary Salerno, Patty Curcio and Maura Sullivan and an email he received the night of graduation at 10:46 p.m. concerning Father’s Day was not acknowledged and the behavior of parents and students at graduation.

Mr. Tencza reported, prior to leaving for vacation, he received an anonymous letter in the mail, a copy which was also sent to Superintendent Benigni, Town Councilor JoAnn Angelica-Stetson, Mayor Mark Kaczynski and the *Berlin Citizen* concerning one of the district’s employees taking a two week vacation in which compensatory time was used. Mr. Tencza shared with Board members that an investigation was done, which determined the employee was within the parameters as outlined in the district’s policy concerning compensatory time. The *Berlin Citizen* determined there was no story.

### **III. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS**

Nothing to report.

### **IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting of June 10, 2019

B. Request for Leave of Absence – BCBA – BHS and McGee

Alyssa Chouinard, Board Certified Behavior Analyst at Berlin High School and McGee School, requested an unpaid leave of absence, for childrearing purposes, to begin immediately following her maternity leave through January 2020.

C. Overnight Field Trip Request – BHS – Groton/East Hampton – September 26-27, 2019

Berlin High School Principal Eileen Eustis requested permission for AP-UConn Biology students to travel to Project Oceanology in Groton, CT and Salmon River State Park in East Hampton, CT, on September 26-27, 2019, to investigate the biotic and abiotic aspects of fresh water and marine ecosystems, along with the evolution and adaptation of terrestrial plants. The trip will provide hands-on science in these areas. Students will also observe animal behavior using organisms collected.

**Moved by Ms. Miller, seconded by Dr. Sassu, to approve the consent agenda as presented.**

**FAVOR: ALL**

**MOTION CARRIED: 7:0; including President Tencza**

### **V. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Discuss Upcoming Meeting Dates  
1. Special Meeting July 29

Mr. Tencza reported Superintendent Benigni is proposing a Special Board meeting for July 29, 2019 to appoint the principal for Willard School. The Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. on July 29, 2019.

2. Reschedule August 12 Regular Meeting

Due to scheduling conflicts, the August 12, 2019 Board meeting will be cancelled. In the event, there is Board of Education business that needs to be taken care of, prior to the start of the new school year, it will be addressed at the Special Board Meeting on July 29, 2019.

B. Policy Review/Revision – New Policy 3281.1 – Advertising and Promotional Activities on School Property – Second Reading/Adoption

A second reading of the new policy took place. The new policy was reviewed by the Ad-Hoc Committee for Policy Review/Revision at their meeting on June 10, and a first reading took place at the June 10 Board meeting.

**Moved by Mr. Salina, seconded by Mr. Oakes, that the Board adopt Policy 3281.1 – Advertising and Promotional Activities on School Property, as presented.**

The Board discussed the restrictions for advertising materials. With regard to Section VI. Regulations number 1, Mr. Oakes questioned whether Superintendent Benigni, not school principals, should authorize all publications of advertising or promotional materials. After further discussion, included in the policy will be the definition of school officials.

**Moved by Mr. Salina, seconded by Mr. Oakes, that the Board adopt Policy 3281.1 – Advertising and Promotional Activities on School Property, as presented and amended.**

**FAVOR: ALL**  
**MOTION CARRIED: 7:0; including President Tencza**

C. Deposit into the Non-Lapsing Account – Amend Motion of June 10, 2019

At the June 10 Board meeting, a motion was made to have the Town Council deposit unexpended education funds (not to exceed \$355,000) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019, into the non-lapsing account to be used for renovations for the Blast classroom at McGee, repair and maintenance of the gym floors at all schools, and painting of the McGee Main Gym. Board members were provided with a memo that was sent to the Town Council and rejected by the Board of Finance because the request was made to the Town Council and should have been made to the Board of Finance. Mr. Tencza added that originally \$25,000 was allocated for security equipment for the security guards. These funds will now be deposited into the non-lapsing account. Therefore, the Board needs to amend the previous motion.

**Moved by Mr. Aroian, seconded by Mr. Oakes, to amend the motion of June 10, 2019, to read that the Town of Berlin Board of Finance deposit an amount not to exceed \$380,000 from account 001-35-3560-0-51000-00000 Board of Education Program 60 into account 500-35-3561-0-54000-01733 Unexpended Education Funds for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019.**

**FAVOR: ALL**  
**MOTION CARRIED: 7:0; including President Tencza**

## **VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION**

Mr. Tencza indicated a motion was necessary to go into Executive Session to discuss the Superintendent's Evaluation and the Board of Education's performance.

**At 6:48 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Oakes, seconded by Mr. Salina, to enter into Executive Session, to discuss personnel matters and to invite Superintendent Benigni.**

**FAVOR: ALL**  
**MOTION CARRIED: 7:0; including President Tencza**

In attendance for Executive Session were Board members Aroian, Miller, Oakes, Salina, Sassu, Sisti and Tencza. In addition, Superintendent Benigni was present.

**VII. DISCUSSION OF BOARD OF EDUCATION'S PERFORMANCE**

At 9:50 p.m., the Board returned to Open Session

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**At 9:51 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Salina, seconded by Mr. Aroian, to adjourn.**

**FAVOR: ALL**

**MOTION CARRIED: 7:0; including President Tencza**

Respectfully submitted,

Kari Sassu, Ph.D., Secretary, Berlin Board of Education