

BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION

September 23, 2019

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING

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

Also in attendance: Superintendent of Schools Brian J. Benigni and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Erin McGurk.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Tencza called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. at the Par Fore the Course Restaurant meeting room at Timberlin Golf Course, 330 Southington Road, Berlin.

II. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Nothing to report.

III. BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP

- a. Use of iPads - *Lora Curtis provided instruction about access and use of Schoology*
- b. Dinner and Open Discussion- *Personnel and Security updates*
- c. Membership in CABA – *Presentation by Robert Rader, Executive Director*

Robert Rader, executive director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABA), discussed various ways CABA can support the work of the Board of Education, with particular attention to issues related to advocacy, policy, and the provision of professional development. He also noted that communications regularly are disseminated to CABA members. Educational webinars will also be forthcoming. Mr. Rader reported that CABA encourages all participating districts to make use of CABA services.

Mr. Rader discussed the role of the Board, the role of the Board Member, Boardmanship, the role of the Board Chair and policy versus administration. An overview of these was presented, including the responsibilities and requirements associated with each. Discussions related to board responsibilities (e.g., hiring and evaluating the superintendent, policy, and budget) were had.

Questions were posed to Mr. Rader concerning the cost of special education, how best to maximize use of CABA services, and how the CABA Board of Distinction recognition relates to

the elements demonstrated by high performing Boards of Education. The question of whether CABE collects data regarding school budgets was posed. Mr. Rader reported that CABE collects data concerning salaries and that other budgetary information may be found on the state website www.edsight.ct.gov.

Following Mr. Rader's presentation, the Board discussed CABE offerings and how to best utilize their services. Mr. Rader will return at a future meeting at which the Board will present him with questions to better inform our use of these services.

d. Continuation of January Retreat

The Board discussed attendance at the upcoming CABE conference, and the possibility of attending the National School Board Administration conference.

The Board reviewed the mission statement, the core beliefs, and the primary focus of the Board, as proposed and drafted at the January 2019 retreat and discussed their relevance. The actions supporting these beliefs that were undertaken since the January retreat also were discussed. Superintendent Benigni and Assistant Superintendent McGurk reported on several follow up actions that have moved these practices forward, including activities related to increasing social emotional learning (e.g., reviewing Mark Brackett's work, attendance at the RULER training, etc.).

Board subcommittees were discussed, including subcommittee titles and their purpose in relation to board mission. The Board reached consensus about these subcommittees and their purpose.

e. Discussion of CABE Self-Evaluation Tool

The Board members agreed to independently complete the CABE self-evaluation tool and return to Debbie Batista by Monday, September 30, 2019. The Board further discussed how these data will be used to inform our future discussion with Mr. Rader and the actions that follow.

f. Venue(s) for future Board Meetings

Discussion was had about holding the Board meetings at the schools rather than at the Board of Education administration office building. The intention of holding these meetings was to increase attendance by community members at Board meetings and also increase the community members and Board members ability to gain exposure to offerings and ongoing within each of the schools. Dates for meetings at each of the schools are set.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:08 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Dennis, seconded by Ms. Miller, to adjourn.

FAVOR: ALL

MOTION CARRIED: 9:0; including President Tencza

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