

Easton Board of Education  
Meeting  
September 13, 2016  
Minutes

Board of Education: Bindelglass, Bobroske, Chieda, Hicks, Parker, Underberger  
Administration: McMorran, Pierson Ugol, Sullivan, Edwards, Freeston, Fox Santora, Brownstein, Kaplan, Burke  
Others: 15 members of the staff and public

Mr. Parker called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion; move that the Easton Board of Education accept the minutes of the joint meeting of Easton and Redding Boards of Education held on June 7, 2016. Bindelglass, Hicks. Approved. Unanimous.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Alisha Gorder, Sport Hill Road, Easton: Stated she and her husband were impressed by the HKMS Back to School Night. Felt there was a positive vibe; teachers were energized and enthusiastic.

Pamela Gupta, Easton CT: Spoke of the organization *Easton Connects with Kindness*. An annual celebration will be held on November 15<sup>th</sup> at HKMS – a family event where comfort bags will be made to be given to families in the hospital. Asked the Board to support the group and asked that everyone read the book, *Encouraging Kindness*.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dr. Underberger stated that this would officially be his last meeting as a member of the Board of Education.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION - ENERGY STAR TASK FORCE

Carroll Brooke, Heidi Armster and Katie Callahan presented a plaque to Kimberly Fox Santora – an award for having achieved Energy Star status pertaining to the installment of solar panels at SSES.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION – CS EXPLORERS

John Simpson and Patrick Keane spoke of the success of the before-school and after-school programs that were run in the spring at HKMS and SSES which were six-week programs on computer science funded by the Easton PTA. They are non-profit organization partners with Sacred Heart University and Fairfield University. They asked for the Board's approval to continue offering such programs to Easton students to begin as soon as possible. Dr. Bindelglass asked if the participants in the spring program represented a good cross section of the student population. Dr. Underberger stated he was in favor of supporting the program as long the Board and school administration had oversight of what was offered. He also recommended that a written agreement be drawn up.

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education approve that CS Explorers continue their work through the Easton Board of Education as overseen by the Easton administrators through November 30, 2016 with expansion of the program considered in November when terms of an agreement will be reached. Bobroske, Underberger. Approved. Unanimous.**

DISCUSSION – TEACHER SUMMATIVE EVALUATION RATINGS 2015-2016

Dr. McMorran gave a brief overview of the Teacher/Administrator Evaluation Plan and stated that it is a statutory requirement that the administration report to the Board the teacher ratings for the school year. For 2015-2016 the ratings were as follows: 9 Leader Teachers; 77 Effective Teachers; 1 Developing Teacher; 2 Below Standard Teachers and 3 not rated because they were on a leave of absence.

DISCUSSION – SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT LEARNINGS AND ANALYSIS

Susan Kaplan and Kimberly Fox Santora gave a presentation on the Smarter Balanced Assessment and analysis of data. (The presentation will be posted on the Board's Webpage.) Easton had the third highest growth rates in the state at 10.5% for

English Language Arts and 13.5 % in Math. Mrs. Chieda stated she hopes this trend continues and asked the administrators to let the Board know how best to support this continued growth in the budgetary process.

#### DISCUSSION – MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH INSTRUCTION

Dr. Pierson Ugol presented information regarding middle school math performance and instructional grouping strategies that will be used this year to yield improved math achievement. Flexible grouping and additional support will be provided to math classrooms based on student need. Groupings and support will not affect students' math level placement and the model's effectiveness will be monitored over the course of the year by the math leadership team and administration.

#### DISCUSSION – STUDENT DATA PRIVACY PREPARATIONS

Peggy Sullivan provided a handout from Shipman & Goodwin on new state legislation: Public Act No. 16-189, An Act Concerning Student Data Privacy which was passed in June, 2016 and goes into effect on October 1, 2016. It includes requirements for Boards of Education as well as Contractors. It sets new standards for contracts. Under the law, we must get a statement from the contractors indicating that they will not use student data. The legislation outlines how quickly they need to notify us. Within five days of signing a contract with a vendor that uses student data, we need to notify the parents, providing a link to the contractor's website. Compliance initiatives have commenced with the development of an inventory of all the software, applications and websites currently in use that include student data. Information will be provided on the district website explaining the legislation with all the links listed.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Special Services: Tracy Edwards reported that the Extended School Year Program was a success. She welcomed new special education staff: At SSES - Annie Brooks – preschool teacher; Katie Myers – grades K-2 teacher; Giovanna Maiolo – grade 3 teacher; Meredith Alvarez – grades 4-5 teacher; two new BASES paraeducators, Amy Belcourt and Lauren Malinowski. At HKMS – Krystie Seese – grade 6 teacher; Lori DeGroat – paraeducator; Amanda Beers – BASES paraeducator. She also welcomed a new occupational therapist, Melissa Campanaro. Ms. Edwards spoke of various professional development and training being offered by the Center for Children with Special Needs. She informed the board of the Transition Bill of Rights for Parents of Children Receiving Special Services. She said overall the opening of school was a success.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction: Dr. Pierson Ugol gave an overview of summer curriculum work and curriculum updates. The K-12 science team worked together for five days in June; the K-8 groups got back together in August.

Director of Finance & Operations: Mrs. Sullivan reported on health insurance. The claims report received for 2015-2016 indicated that Easton had five of the top nine highest claims. Total Easton claims for 2015-2016 were \$3,250,000. The town had appropriated \$1.2 million which was used. The year ended with a \$130,000 budget surplus which was added to the Health Care Reserve. Ended the year with \$55,000 in the health care account. In July, claims were at \$170,000 and August \$200,000.

Samuel Staples Elementary School: Mrs. Fox Santora reported she only had one position to fill this year, .50 FTE Spanish teacher. It was a difficult position to fill but the district was lucky to find a strong candidate in late August. She will be starting in late September once her prior district releases her. Her name is Mikki Durkin. Mrs. Fox Santora thanked the PTA for the luncheon they provided. Enrollment is at 538.

Helen Keller Middle School: Mrs. Kaplan reported on new staff at HKMS – Dana Aponte, ILA specialist; Amy Kidd, Social Studies teacher in grade 6, and Jennifer Moore, Math teacher in grade 7. She added that Stacey Powell has returned to Easton to fill the .20 FTE discrete math position. Aubrey Nolan is a school psychologist intern. She reported the opening of school was smooth. Enrollment is at 319. Mrs. Kaplan also acknowledged Marion Carlson who was in attendance in the audience for the welcome she gives every student in the Library Learning Commons.

Superintendent: Dr. McMorran thanked members of the public who attend Board meetings. He announced that Mary Maday who has taken Board meeting minutes for many years has retired and thanked Vicki Cram for stepping in to help out.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Long-Range Planning: Mr. Hicks reported that there will be a meeting on Monday, September 19, 2016 at 7 p.m.

Transportation: Mr. Parker reported on the bus depot which is being called the Bus Barn. The site being considered is Morehouse Road in back of SSES. It is a financially prudent matter to pursue; waiting for Planning & Zoning.

Negotiations Committee: Mr. Parker reported that the Board and the administrators are currently negotiating the administrators' contract.

Insurance Committee: Dr. Bindelglass reported that the districts have gone out to bid for an insurance broker. Responses are due Monday, September 26<sup>th</sup>. The committee will meet in October.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Vicki Cram, Redding and Central Office Employee: Thanked Dan Underberger for his many, many years of support as a member of the Board of Education.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Regina Bobroske and Jeff Parker added comments about Dan Underberger and thanked him for his mentorship.

Mrs. Fox Santora added how much she appreciated Dan Underberger's support and dedication to the staff, administrators and students of Easton over the years.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education adjourn the meeting. Bobroske, Cheida. Approved. Unanimous.**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:06 pm

Submitted by Regina Bobroske, Secretary

Recorded by Vicki Cram