

EASTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING

Helen Keller Middle School - Learning Commons

November 12, 2019 – 7:30 p.m.

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Parker, Chieda, Bindelglass, Hicks, Stinson

Administration: McMorran, Pierson Ugol, Reiss, Del Conte, Fox Santora, Mohr, Brownstein

Others: 4 members of the public

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

Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education approve the minutes of the October 15, 2019 Easton Board of Education Regular Meeting with the addition of “Pat Linnane, Burr Street Easton” under fourth item under Public Comment. Bindelglass, Stinson. Approved, Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education approve the minutes of the October 29, 2019 Regular Joint Meeting of the Easton, Redding and Region 9 Boards of Education Meeting as submitted. Stinson, Bindelglass, Approved, Unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mr. Stinson talked about the possibility of getting a copy of the survey findings, including raw data spreadsheets. Dr. McMorran offered to help Mr. Stinson obtain information. Mrs. Chieda recognized the talents and efforts of Mr. Brownstein and Ms. Desiderio in their work with students at SSSES. The Board offered sincere congratulations to Dr. Bindelglass for his success in the town election. Dr. Bindelglass spoke about his pride in being a member of the Easton Board of Education.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Dr. Pierson Ugol spoke about the middle school integrated STEM program, specifically “Project Lead the Way” at Helen Keller Middle School. She was pleased to report growing student interest in STEM and Easton, Redding, and Region 9 consultation with a STEM professor from Sacred Heart University. The integrated STEM program teachers and the consultant are working to draft a program vision and mission statement that will inform 3-year goals.. Dr. Pierson Ugol shared the hope that these programs will begin at the elementary level and continue through high school.



BUILDING ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Ms. Fox Santora spoke about a writing project for kindergarten with "Show and Tell" as the theme. This supplements a unit that focuses on teaching reading, writing and spelling strategies. She spoke about the many ways the reading specialist is assisting in this and similar reading units throughout SSES. Ms. Fox Santora described the guest speaker for Veteran's Day and his well-received presentation about his army experiences. She also honored two teachers that are veterans.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: 2020-2021 BUDGET

Mr. Parker asked board members to compile a list for the next board meeting of needs and wants for the upcoming budget season. Mr. Parker provided a presentation of cost history for Easton and Redding from 2014-2020. The presentation described the portion of Easton payment for Joel Barlow High School as well as Redding's. He said based on the projections, Easton will have to fund more in the future. Mr. Parker said that this was an estimate of cost. Mr. Parker spoke about the possibility of adding a Director of Digital Learning to assist in finding new and better ways to serve students.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: HEALTH CURRICULUM

Dr. Pierson Ugol spoke about her health curriculum presentation from the October 29 joint meeting of the Easton and Redding Board of Education Curriculum Committees and included the option for parents to "opt-out" of certain lessons including sexual assault prevention, human growth and development and AIDS education. Mr. Stinson said that the presentation was well done and, in his opinion, the content was age-appropriate. Mr. Hicks and other board members asked about the content of lesson plans and what was included. Several members of the board requested more information and time to review the health curriculum documents prior to voting to approve. Mr. Parker requested that Dr. Pierson Ugol provide more information about the health curriculum prior to the next board meeting.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: SCHOOL CLIMATE

Ms. Mohr and Mr. Brownstein provided a powerpoint presentation on Safe School Climate, which will be available to view on the website. Mr. Parker asked about advisory programs. Ms. Mohr said the purpose of these is for students to have the opportunity at regular intervals to meet in small groups and talk with adults in a comfortable and safe environment.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Dr. McMorran spoke about the need to "rightsized" for the changing student population and examine student performance. He also emphasized the importance of students' integration in the community and their need to feel connected. He stated that this is important in preventing students from engaging in harmful behavior.

Dr. McMorran left meeting at 9:20 p.m.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: SCHOOL WIDE GOALS

Ms. Fox Santora provided hand out describing ER9 vision and mission.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: BOE ELECTIONS FOR CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY

Mrs. Chieda suggested that the board table the elections until December 2019 to give members more time to decide preferences.

Motion: move to postpone election for Easton Board of Education Chairperson and Secretary until December 2019 meeting. Hicks, Stinson. Approved, Unanimous.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: POLICY FOR 1ST READING

-6142.101 Student Nutrition and Physical Activity (School Wellness Policy)

Mr. Stinson reported good progress is being made on policy, there are no changes to mention since the last meeting.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Ms. Del Conte provided information regarding parent interest in a special education PTA. She added that students in special education are interested in playing an active role in their own education. Mr. Reiss spoke about heating and cooling issues at SSES. He expects repairs to take place in July 2020. Mr. Reiss reported that health insurance costs are within a good range and there is a reserve fund at this time.

BOE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Parker spoke about the Tri-Board Committee meeting. Mr. Parker was surprised at the amount of paper and plastic used in school cafeterias. He speculated about the possibility of using metal plates and dishwasher and potential costs and benefits. Mr. Parker has a meeting with Chartwells in January 2020, and will discuss the possibility of switching over to metal utensils or compostable materials in order to reduce the use of paper and plastic.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mr. Stinson spoke about his experience of the positive school climate in Easton and belief that the outcome is successful.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education Regular Meeting be adjourned. Hicks, Stinson. Approved. Unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Submitted by Jenny Chieda, Easton Board of Education Secretary
Recorded by Deborah DeLorenzo