



**APPROVED BY THE BOARD OCTOBER 13, 2016**

**BURLINGTON BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES  
Ira Allen Administration Building Board Room  
September 13, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

**1. Opening Items**

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call

**Commissioners:**

Mark Barlow , Lauren Berrizbeitia , Brian Cina  (7:00 PM),  
Liz Curry , Susanmarie Harrington , Anne Judson , David Kirk ,  
Kat Kleman , Kathy Olwell  Mark Porter , Stephanie Seguino   
(7:15 PM), Miriam Stoll

**Student Representatives:**

Jacob Bucci

Isabella Weston

**Administration:**

Yaw Obeng, Superintendent

Stephanie Phillips, Senior Director Teaching  
& Learning

Nikki Fuller, Senior Director Human Resources &  
Equity Affairs

Paul Irish, Senior Director Infrastructure & Technology

Nathan Lavery, Senior Director of Finance

Elizabeth Atkins, Accounting Manager

Henri Sparks, Director of Equity

Miriam Ehtesham-Cating, Director of ELL

Doug Davis, Director of Food Service

Marty Spaulding, Property Service Director

*The Board wishes to recognize, welcome and thank those that are providing language interpretation of the Board proceedings. The Board's commitment that all children receive equitable academic services must ensure that New American parents are welcome and can attend meetings, understand the process and be actively engaged. Interpretation of proceedings honors, respects and values our New American parents and*

**—————YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT—————**

*students. The Board asks the public and media to respect and understand the importance of this interpretation.*

## **2. Oath of Office for New Board Commissioner**

Senior Director Fuller gave Commissioner Olwell the Oath of Office.

## **3. Approval of Agenda**

*Motion (K. Kleman/D. Kirk) to approve agenda.*

Take out item 6B

Add 4.1 after policy discussion Negotiations Update

Pass unanimously

## **4. Policy Governance Roundtable Discussion**

Val Gardner and Jim Fitzpatrick gave a 55 minute training on policy governance.

### **4.1 Contract Negotiation Status**

Chair Porter gave an update on contract negotiations. Provided summary of mediation yesterday. The union reduced salary proposal from 4.6% to 4.3%, the Board raised their salary increase from 2.0% to 2.42% which would put the District teachers at or above the midpoint compared to other Chittenden County districts. The Board believes the middle of the middle language should be removed from the contract. The teachers were offered a 15 - 17% contribution for health insurance which is lower than state employees pay.

The union offered 16% effective January 1, 2017. The District offered tuition reimbursement from 100% to 75% of cost capped at \$75,000. The union did not agree to changes. The Board offered to eliminate the golden handshake for all new teachers and to preserve for all existing teachers. The union did not agree.

The Union's proposal would require \$900,000 in additional budget cuts. The Board remains committed to reaching a sustainable agreement respecting needs of students.

Next steps will be discussed in executive session later this evening.

## **5. Public Comments/Questions -**

### **A. Public Comment**

1. Kate Davie - spoke to library cuts. The Educational Quality Standards require there be a full time librarian in any school with more than 300 students. The Standards also require schools to provide instructional

---

**YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT**

---

research and information technology skills. It has been asserted that the District is in compliance with the Agency of Education's guidelines. How can this be true with current library staffing? Would like the Board to explain how one half time librarian can provide services to more than 1000 students at BHS and half time librarians at SA and IAA to complete work the guidelines required. Requesting a response from the Board.

2. Fran Brock, History teacher, BEA President - trying to settle one year contract for more than a year. Will begin negotiations for next year in a couple of months. This contract needs to be settled. Questioned how funds have been allocated. Believe Burlington residents deserve to know how their money is spent. We did not reach an agreement last night after eight hours of negotiating. The Board team's most recent salary proposal may look fair on paper but if you look deeper into details you will find that mid-career teachers are falling behind their peers in neighboring districts. The Board could have sided with continuity and peace but instead chose disruption and rancor. We want great schools that strive to give all students a chance at success.
3. Cara Clopton, Flynn teacher – in 2013 moved her family to Burlington because she wanted to teach for Flynn. We need a contract - concerned about young teachers trying to make a career out of education. We have to support young professionals, make sure this profession compensates. Education is our calling. We need leaders on School Board to keep this in mind. Need to be fair and comparable to other districts in our area.
4. Andrea Nelson, 4th grade teacher at Flynn, 2nd year with BSD – it has been my intention to build a home and career in Burlington. Some of the proposals from the School Board have worried me. My old district has become a revolving door, detrimental to community. Students and families deserve better. Reductions are making me feel unsupported. I don't want to work anywhere else. Need to be in line with surrounding districts. BSD cannot become a revolving door district. Help Burlington children learn and flourish.
5. Jeff Wick stated he is uncomfortable with Policy Governance structures - would like to meet with any Board members that would like to hear his concerns. For the upcoming budget next year, the taxpayers will support a credible budget that meets student needs and pays competitive compensation for teachers. Should put together a grid where we are competitive with neighboring communities. We can afford it, understand tax adjustment in VT for taxpayers that are least able to pay get large discounts from the state. We want to attract good teachers and to do that we need to be competitive.
6. Kate Stein, parent – spoke about the conditions at BHS. Wanted to make sure the Board is aware that a window fell out before the start of school and today a professional educator was stuck in the elevator for 25 minutes

---

**YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT**

---

with a student. The phone didn't work. This is a safety concern. Need to revisit work committee did re BHS renovations. Invite any Board member to shadow her son on a white day to see how he gets from one class to another.

7. Linda Siegel, resident, both children attended BSD schools, teacher for 25 years, teaches ELL refugee students when they first arrive in Burlington, first time attending school ever. Taken courses beyond degree, received two awards for mentoring college students in her classroom. Choosing professional development to address professional needs is critical to growth as a teacher. I am here for one reason - we need a contract. Concerned for support and encourage young professionals to seek teaching as a career. Burlington is a good place to build a career. Make sure we are compensated for education. We need leadership of School Board to come up with a fair and comparable contract to other districts that supports high qualified and professional teachers.
8. Vermont Consortium of Academic Libraries - reinstate full time librarians to Burlington schools. We have intimate knowledge of what skills students need to be successful in college and beyond. Students will be at a disadvantage in college over their classmates who have experienced robust library programs in their elementary and high schools. In order to be competitive, students must achieve information skills valued by employers. School librarian media specialists have a measurable impact on reading, writing and critical thinking skills. Requesting a response from Board about provision of library services in schools.

*Motion (M. Porter/S. Seguino) to extend Public Comment by five minutes.*

All in favor

9. Joseph Hagen, resident taxpayer, practice pediatrics – Many patients are students in Burlington schools. Teachers are the most essential element in children's learning. Failure to compensate our teachers is a grave disservice to our community's children. Expressed concern about the number of teachers that have left because of the climate administration has created. Neither our children nor our teachers are responsible for the budget deficit created by others. The burden must not be placed on their shoulders. Taxpayers have provided revenue to compensate teachers but the district has decided to allocate funds elsewhere.
10. Karen Downey, District Occupational Therapist - part of committee that looked at BHS and BTC renovation reported out to Board November 2014. Spoke to summary of three proposals. One proposal looked at new building and total demolition. Another was to keep footprint making major renovations and changes and another to do full renovation with small

---

**YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT**

---

changes. Also spoke about a second report of ADA concerns at BHS. A summary of tour taken with Mayor and Superintendent at the time. Students with disabilities gave tour and pointed out concerns. The Board can contact Karen or Lindsay Foote, District Physical Therapist regarding these reports.

Public Comment ended at 7:30

B. Board Reflections

Commissioner Kleman thanked teachers for their hard work.

**6. Board Report**

A. Commissioner Seguino will be proxy for VEHI Vote - seeking VSBA Representation on VEHI Board

B. Presentation of Superintendent Goals

*Motion (S. Seguino/S. Harrington) to accept Superintendent Goals*

Commissioner Harrington reported that the Ad Hoc Committee received many comments from Board members about items to be added to the goals. Most were considered indicators. The committee will work on developing indicators for success for each of the sub goals next. These indicators will be used for the Superintendent evaluation process.

The Board discussed the goals.

Commissioner Curry said she is uncomfortable with the word audiences in Goal 2. Would prefer stakeholders or constituents. Goal 1 is very specific. Goal 2 – would like part 1 to be more specific – like a communication plan that reflects a variety of communication methods. Would like to see plan have some structure.

Commissioner Judson stated she did send out the most recent document and they are still working on benchmarks/indicators

Chair Porter suggested tabling this item for further discussion.

Commissioner Harrington said she would like to amend motion to withdraw Goal 2 if everyone is in agreement with Goal 1 and Goal 3.

Commissioner Stoll stated she has similar concerns around Goal 3 – confusion on what is an indicator. Indicators came largely from Finance Committee to Ad Hoc Committee. We brought here so the Board can get a sense of what kind of work we have been doing. We also asked Diversity & Equity Committee to

---

**YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT**

---

weigh in on indicators.

Commissioner Stoll would like to add under 3.2 – does not end in a deficit  
Commissioner Curry stated this motion is just to approve the major three goals in basic areas.

Suggested committee come back with language more specific as a starting point for communication.

*Motion (S. Harrington/L. Berrizbeitia) to amend motion to eliminate sub goals and endorse bolded Goals 1, 2 & 3.*

All in favor

Set time limit for the next Board meeting in October. Chair Porter asked that suggestions be sent to Ad Hoc Committee before the meeting and asked Board members to attend.

C. Superintendent Visa

Chair Porter gave a summary about the Superintendent visa process. In June Superintendent was awarded his own H1 visa in affiliation with the District. Current visa ended September 8 with UVM. The new visa starts October 1 beginning of the fiscal year for the Federal Government. The Superintendent is out of the country for 16 days but has been conferring with the Board. Thanked UVM for coming through last year.

D. Student Report

Student Rep Bucci gave the report:  
BHS football beat Rice on Friday  
Girls volleyball and boys soccer are undefeated  
Drama program has started up  
BHS Student Union will have their first meeting tomorrow before school - set goals for coming year. Invite board members to come  
Newspaper is accepting editorials - welcome Board members to submit  
3 new admin this year – all students had meetings except seniors  
Have not had new attendance policy explained to them

Chair Porter asked Student Rep Bucci to start conversation with principal to mentor someone that might want to be involved on the Board. Student can attend meetings to get feel for things.

**7. Superintendent's Report - Stephanie Phillips**

A. Summer Programs Report - Christy Gallese

—————**YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT**—————

Powerpoint on vision - mission, values, overview of program

Reported on work going on in schools

We support after school, summer programs and Parent University

There are after school programs in all 9 schools - over 1500 students attended programs. 65% are Free and Reduced lunch participants. All programs are licensed by the state.

Discussed the SOAR Summer learning program in elementary and middle schools. SOAR Program had 200 participants this summer. Provides academic programs for those that are at risk of falling behind in school. The program is an opportunity for students to participate in programs they may not normally be able to due to financial restrictions or transportation. They have additional supports and are exposed to their community through field trips.

Board Comments/Questions

Commissioner Seguino stated she would like to see an evaluation of how these programs are affecting academic outcomes. Director Gallese said she is working with teachers to identify the primary outcomes and goals for students they are encouraging to attend programs. Primary piece is the test results.

Commissioner Curry asked if any part of the funding is from the District general funds or are they reliant on grants, city and state subsidies? Director Gallese explained where the funding comes from and what students are eligible to attend.

Commissioner Cina thanked Director Gallese for the presentation. It is thought provoking. Asked if outcome shows this program is helping to close the achievement gap, would you recommend changing our model to year round school? Director Gallese stated she is not comfortable answering that question but she feels the expanded learning model is critical and we need to continue to promote learning beyond the school day.

B. Libraries Update – Senior Director Phillips

The Vermont Agency of Education approved request for waiver so we are in compliance with Education Quality Standards.

Library services at BHS – Library is open every school day during school year from 8:00 to 3:00. Staffing has become available for the Library to be open from before school starts at 7:00 and to be open until 4:30.

Resources - IAA and SA have been granted additional funds equivalent to .2 staffing. Principals have been charged with how best to implement funds to improve student learning.

To ensure quality library programs remain a priority, a Central Office Administrator will be assigned to work with library staff to make recommendations to bring library services into alignment with the goals in the

---

**YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT**

---

strategic plan.

Priorities include integration of library with other curriculum areas, develop plan to help close the achievement gap in literacy, better integration of technology and enhanced library access.

- C. Strategic Planning Community Meeting October 13th  
There will be a strategic plan event to allow the community to give additional input on October 13. More details will be shared as agenda is set.
- D. Budget Planning Process starts October  
Chair Porter stated the budget process will begin next month. We have the model from last year and will modify to make better with more engagement. Asked Commissioner Olwell to join Finance and ITC team for another set of eyes.

## 8. Approval of Consent Agenda Items

- A. *Motion (S. Harrington/D. Kirk) to approve Consent Agenda.*
- B. Board Minutes of August 9, 2016
- C. Contract Negotiations Minutes of August 15, 2016
- D. Infrastructure & Technology Minutes of August 16, 2016
- E. Finance Minutes of August 16, 2016
- F. Governance, Policy & Advocacy Minutes of August 23, 2016
- G. Contract Negotiations Minutes of August 23, 2016
- H. Diversity & Equity Minutes of September 6, 2016
- I. Planning Minutes of September 6, 2016
- J. Special Contract Negotiations Minutes of September 7, 2016

All in favor

## 9. Infrastructure and Technology Committee Report

- A. Capital Plan Update -  
We are working on capital plan and going to the City with request for bonding – ITC is not comfortable going in November along with City. Requesting public input in October to determine funding direction we should go. ITC is recommending waiting until March to put on ballot.

Board expressed their concerns with waiting until March.

We will be bonding the same time as school budget on ballot. Possibility of budget going down or bond not passing.

Commissioner Kirk said he understands the need to get done but does not think the public is on board.

---

**YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT**

---

If we are going to bond in November, the paperwork has to be submitted to the City by the end of September – we could vote on this tonight.

The Board has not had formal discussion to move forward by November - remind people City is putting out multiple things in November and we would be going against them. Can hold a special election or wait until next November and see what can we do under existing budget.

The process started collaboratively by the City asking us to work with them. We have gone through process with good faith effort. Surprised to find out in the newspaper the City was putting bond request on November ballot. Commissioner Curry requested the Superintendent have conversation with City to find out where the collaboration stands and what the City's expectations are.

Need to do more public outreach on this. Requested to have paper handouts available to the public before October. Need to hold public information sessions to get the word out. Need NPA and others to weigh in.

Chair Porter stated he doesn't feel good going out in November. There is not enough information. Does not have problem with March conjoined with budget. Any further discussion, direct to Commissioner Kirk. Want to have plan by October giving direction on presentations and who we want to talk to.

- B. *Motion (D. Kirk/B. Cina) to recommend that Governance, Policy & Advocacy Committee discuss merger of Infrastructure & Technology Committee & Finance Committee*

Commissioner Kirk stated these committees overlap all the time. This will lessen the amount of commitment and make better use of time.

Motion passed unanimously

**10. Curriculum Committee Report** - No report – will meet first Tuesday in October

**11. Diversity & Equity Committee Report**

Commissioner Seguinto reported the Superintendent is restructuring Diversity & Equity Team. Commissioner Stoll recommended person with knowledge of disabilities be on the team. Superintendent Obeng and Senior Director Irish presented the Equity and Inclusion report. Encouraged the Board to look at the report. Shows disparities across different groups. We now have five years' worth of data. This is a monitoring

—————**YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT**—————

mechanism and can be used to evaluate some of the proposed Superintendent goals. Thanked Senior Director Irish for producing the report in a short period of time. The report can be found on BoardDocs in the D&E meeting of September 6. Also requested report be put on the webpage.

## 12. Governance, Policy & Advocacy Committee Report

Commissioner Curry gave the Governance, Policy & Advocacy Report

### A. Mandatory Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect Policy for 2nd Reading & Adoption

*Motion (L. Curry/S. Seguino) that the Board adopt the new proposed Mandatory Reporting Policy with the following changes to the Policy:*

*Strike from the District's Policy all language referencing and/or describing personnel, staff positions, and definitions that are not included in District's job or programmatic offerings and budget, including the following "the relevant section of the law are provided for reference":*

*Pages one & two, recommend striking:*

*(1) health care provider, including any:*

*(A) physician, surgeon, osteopath, chiropractor, or physician assistant licensed, certified, or registered under the provisions of Title 26;*

*(B) resident physician;*

*(C) intern;*

*(D) hospital administrator in any hospital in this State;*

*(E) registered nurse;*

*(F) licensed practical nurse;*

*(G) medical examiner;*

*(H) emergency medical personnel as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 2651(6); (I) dentist;*

*(J) psychologist; and*

*(K) pharmacist;*

*Second page, recommend striking:*

*2. (B) headmaster of an approved or recognized independent school as defined in 16 V.S.A. § 11;*

---

**YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT**

---

6 through 12, including the language in 12 (b):

- ~~(6) probation officer;~~
- ~~(7) employee, contractor, and grantee of the Agency of Human Services who have contact with clients;~~
- ~~(8) police officer;~~
- ~~(9) camp owner;~~
- ~~(10) camp administrator; (11) camp counselor; or (12) member of the clergy.~~

~~(b) As used in subsection (a) of this section, "camp" includes any residential or nonresidential recreational program.~~

Last page: section (j) 1-4 and (k), language which all pertains to clergy specifically

~~(j) A member of the clergy shall not be required to make a report under this section if the report would be based upon information received in a communication which is:~~

- ~~(1) made to a member of the clergy acting in his or her capacity as spiritual advisor;~~
- ~~(2) intended by the parties to be confidential at the time the communication is made;~~
- ~~(3) intended by the communicant to be an act of contrition or a matter of conscience; and~~
- ~~(4) required to be confidential by religious law, doctrine, or tenet.~~

~~(k) When a member of the clergy receives information about abuse or neglect of a child in a manner other than as described in subsection (h) of this section, he or she is required to report on the basis of that information even though he or she may have also received a report of abuse or neglect about the same person or incident in the manner described in subsection (h) of this section. (Added 1981, No. 207 (Adj. Sess.), § 1, eff. April 25, 1982; amended 1983, No. 169 (Adj. Sess.), § 1; 1985, No. 208 (Adj. Sess.), § 19, eff. June 30, 1986; 1989, No. 295 (Adj. Sess.), § 3; 1993, No. 156 (Adj. Sess.), § 1; 2003, No. 43, § 3, eff. May 27, 2003; 2005, No. 101 (Adj. Sess.), § 2; 2007, No. 77, § 1, eff. June 7, 2007; 2007, No. 168 (Adj. Sess.), § 3, eff. Jan. 1, 2009; 2007, No. 172 (Adj. Sess.), § 19; 2009, No. 1, § 45; 2011, No. 156 (Adj. Sess.), § 28, eff. May 16, 2012; 2011, No. 159 (Adj. Sess.), § 7; 2015, No. 60, § 4.)~~

---

**YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT**

---

Discussion on whether volunteers are mandatory reporters. Commissioner Curry stated the committee discussed this and decided it is not appropriate to include volunteers as mandatory reporters. We would have to train volunteers - do not want to create barriers.

Motion passed  
5 against

B. *Motion (L. Curry/S. Seguino) to approve that the Board adopt the new, proposed Mandatory Reporting Procedures with revisions to the Procedures language as follows:*

*1. All Staff will participate in Child Abuse and Neglect Training annually- (AOE Online resource available here). This information can also be accessed at VT NEA. Once completed, certification will be documented by the state, and the Burlington School District will collect and track certification data to assure that all staff covered by the Policy complete the required training.*

*4. Reporter will complete the written report, file with the ~~school~~ building administrator or other designated personnel, as appropriate, and mail or fax to FSD. (mailing address: Family Services Child Protection Central Intake, 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671).*

*These procedures represent the minimum required by statute; nothing herein prevents the District from adding language to these procedures to assure that reports filed with the state are strictly confidential, and that reports may be brought to the attention of senior administrators and/or other designated personnel in addition to, or instead of building administrators.*

Discussion continued around volunteers. Committee discussed this in August and decided this is not the appropriate place to incorporate something about volunteers. Decided a Volunteer manual should be published by the District in consultation with staff and Superintendent.

Commissioner Stoll said she would like to ask the Superintendent to report back in his next report to the Board on plans for the District around safety and how to deal with volunteers.

Chair Porter called for a vote

---

**YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT**

---

Motion passed unanimously

C. Public Participation Policy for 2nd Reading

*Move (L. Curry/A. Judson) to approve 2nd reading of Public Participation Policy*

Pass Unanimously

**13. Finance Committee Report**

Commissioner Cina reported on August 16 discussed merger of ITC and Finance Committee.

Heard the audit update – should have small surplus under 1% in general fund budget. This is the first year of universal pre k – enrollment exceeded projections - may need additional special education funding

Budget planning for FY'18 talked about using different formula - staffing needs Discussed benchmarks for Superintendent G3 goals and came up with indicators.

**14. Executive Session**

A. *Motion (M. Porter/B. Cina) to consider Executive Session to discuss contract negotiations where premature disclosure could place the School District at a substantial disadvantage at 9:08 p.m.*

*Motion (M. Porter/B. Cina) to enter Executive Session at 9:08 p.m.*

*Motion (D. Kirk/B. Cina) to come out of Executive Session at 11:50 p.m.*

**15. Adjournment**

A. *Motion (K. Kleman/L. Berrizbeitia) to adjourn at 11:50 p.m.*

---

**YAW OBENG SUPERINTENDENT**

---