



DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

Tuesday, November 13, 2018
Board of School Commissioners Meeting Minutes
Burlington High School, 52 Institute Road,
6pm

Commissioners in Attendance: Chair Clare Wool, Mark Barlow, Stephen Carey, Liz Curry, Mike Fisher, Monica Ivancic, Eric Gorman, Martine Gulick, Kathy Olwell, Keith Pillsbury, Jean Waltz, Jeff Wick
Student Commissioner: Sabin Hart
Superintendent Yaw Obeng

1. Opening Items

A. Welcome - meeting called to order at 6:04pm.

2. Agenda

A. Items to pull from Consent Agenda

Commissioner Curry requests to pull item off Consent agenda

B. Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Carey motioned to move #12-14 (Policy Changes, New Voices Law Ad Hoc Committee Policy Recommendations to the Board, Resolution on Elementary School Staffing) to #9-11 on agenda after Student Commissioner Report.

Motion to move the items above. Carey/Wick Motion carries unanimously

Commissioner Ivancic motioned to add Diversity, Equity & Inclusion as 9d under Committee Reports

Motion to approve agenda (Commissioner Pillsbury/Wick. Motion carries unanimously.

3. Executive Session A

A. Personnel Matters: Motion to consider Executive Session under 1 V.S.A. 313 (a) (1) (A), (B), (C), (E) and (F) because pre-mature general public knowledge would put the District at a substantial disadvantage.



Motion for Executive Session (Commissioner Fisher/Wick. Motion carries unanimously.

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Routine Financial Reports

Motion to approve (Commissioner Fisher/Wick). Motion carries unanimously

B. Routine Hiring - Nikki Fuller/Nate

Commissioner Curry questioned how we know how to budget this late in the year. Per Sr. Director's Lavery and Fuller, based on past figures budgeted.

Motion to approve (Commissioner Fisher/Wick). Motion carries unanimously

5. Approval of prior minutes

A. Finance & Facilities Committee Minutes

B. Policy & Governance Committee Minutes

C. Curriculum & Personnel Committee Minutes

Motion to approve (Commissioner Fisher/Wick). Motion carries unanimously

6. Public Comment

A. Comments/Questions from the Public

Fran Brock - BHS teacher -- thank you for bond! Leadership and oversight

Andrew Styles - Burlington Education Association (BEA) -- elementary school crisis - major theme this year showing less support, lack of staffing,

Terry Lasard - District Literacy Coach. Involved in the embedded coaching model- would like support.

Christina Erickson - parent/Sustainability Academy -- reduction in staffing, library budget, job description changes, future of Magnet schools

Mary Mitchell - Reinstatement of 1.0 FTE grade 2 - wants support for reinstating position at Flynn

B. Board Reflections -

Commissioner Carey - Need to remedy elementary staffing now and for the future.

Commissioner Curry - thanks to all for passion and educating board on experiences.

Previously we lost 37.5 staff and it's hard coming back from that but it's how we run a fiscally sustainable district and want to continue that. We continue to lose millions in



federal and local funding. This isn't what we want but we govern across the district based on needs. We have a set strategic and equity-based formula for change for our schools and community.

Commissioner Pillsbury - We must educate on what the children need. If we see something that's not right, we must step in. The public wants us to narrow the gap and we must do that. Hire based on dedication to educating children's needs.

7. **Chair's Report - BHS Bond** -- Very successful and thank you to all! Chair Wool thanked many people involved in the effort, including board members, district staff, community members and city officials.

8. **Student Commissioner's Report**

Musical, The Little Mermaid, this weekend.

Harvest Dance was a success.

Fall sports finished for the season.

Model UN had a successful trip to Brown University.

Six student athletes attended the state-wide leadership conference this week.

9. **Policy Changes**

A. Two items for Second Reading and Resolution for Adoption

Motion to waive reading - Commissioner Wick/Ivancic

Commissioner Fisher – Attorney McNeil signed off changes to policy updates to 4.4.

Board Officers

Commissioner Barlow – questions whether 2.10 update is appropriate for policy.

Commissioner Wick spoke in support of the update. Commissioner Barlow questions

2.4(b) why it's needed to add to policy if district staff already does it. Commissioner

Fisher spoke in favor of codifying practice into policy.

Commissioner Curry: 2.2.c Curriculum and Personnel Committee is not educating the board on hiring - cost implications on changing policies -- good goals but language needs to be changed

Superintendent Obeng: Thank you to P&G committee for robust policy changes. There needs to be real conversations on what Board policies guide the Superintendent -- big priority conversations. This will help us move forward. 2nd reading -- directs how to do something but max results would come from priority conversation...structure around that.

Recommends Board consider - 2.2.c -- believes the interim staff should be taken out.

That staff is on an urgency level where there isn't time to go to the board for approval.



At the last mtg staff presented mandatory policies--when will this be discussed?

Commissioner Wick: next P&G will review the 3 policies and bring back to 1st reading.

Obeng: Agrees with Commissioner Gulick -- hiring is the most important thing to do and would like board's input on what their expectations are -- identifying most important aspect and bring back.

After much discussion, Commissioner Fisher motioned call the question - motion carries.

Motion to remove 2.2.c from Commissioner Wick's motion Barlow/Curry --

No: Pillsbury, Wick, Ivancic, Carey, Olwell, Gulick

Yes: Barlow, Fisher, Waltz, Curry

Abstain: Gorman

Motion fails

Commissioner Curry motioned to vote on the policies one by one. No second, so the motion dies.

Main motion to adopt 2nd reading materials - motion carries by voice vote.

Items for First Reading: "2.2 Hiring and treatment of staff" and "2.1 Treatment of Students and Parents/Guardians"

Correction: 2.2.c will become 2.2.d

After discussion, item was closed for further discussion and consideration.

10. New Voices Law Ad Hoc Committee Policy Recommendation to the Board

A. New Voices Committee Freedom of Expression - template developed by VSBA.

The committee unanimously agreed to the 1st reading

Thanks to the committee: Mike Donoghue, Beth Fialko Casey, Noel Green, Traci Griffith, Halle Newman, Nataleigh Noble, Jenna Peterson, Julia Shannon-Grillo, Jeff Wick

We can deliberate on it and next time vote on it.

Commissioner Wick: it's the job of student supervisors (co-editors) to provide proper advise, with the guidance of a qualified Media advisor.

Commissioner Fisher - will media advisor perform prior review? Needs to be specifically worded.

Superintendent Obeng: Thanks for doing this work -- administrators will appreciate.

Who is responsible for liability? Supports this but we need to know who is responsible for liability if any of the 6 unprotected areas gets out.



Commissioner Wick: 1st amendment and New Voices Law provides balance and a risk. Media Advisor is not responsible, but must be trained and qualified for guidance so that verboten content is minimized. Needs more conversation -- our policy can only carry out the law, which is the point of the New Voices law. We need to speak with insurers and legal on what direction to take to protect staff.

Commissioner Curry: confidential releases -- consequences? We need to know how to handle these things especially confidential info leaked. Ask VSBA about confidentiality and what to do.

11. Resolution on Elementary School Staffing

A. Resolution

Motion to approve (Commissioner Carey/Wick).

Commissioner Barlow: spending more than budget?

Commissioner Wick: We will not go into a deficit situation --

Superintendent Obeng: Supports resolution even when over budget -- wants to be able to say board approved if questioned. Budget presentation from last year -- will be unbudgeted. Sr. Director Lavery: We would find a way to move money to fund resolution

Commissioner Curry: doesn't approve of this -- doesn't agree with all data. Current way has limitations and revising would address these situations. Modify equity index to prevent unbudgeted over \$10,000 to staff in the future. Proposed the following amendments:

Commissioner Wick: Not necessary to change language -- it gives the Superintendent authorization to do the right thing in an unbudgeted situation.

Motion to amend (Commissioner Curry/Waltz)

WHEREAS the Administration shall convene a group of staff who are willing to volunteer their time, and administrators to revise the Equity Index Formula to prevent the District from being out of compliance with its Policies in the future

WHEREAS the Board authorizes the Administration to make a single unbudgeted purchase or commitment of greater than \$25,000.

Motion fails via voice vote

Motion to move the question Pillsbury

Yes Gulick, Olwell, Waltz, Carey, Ivancic, Pillsbury

No: Gorman, Curry, Barlow, Fisher

Abstain: Wick

Motion passes



Vote on the original Motion

Yes Gorman, Gulick, Olwell, Curry, Waltz, Carey, Ivancic, Pillsbury, Wick, Barlow, Pillsbury

No: Fisher

Motion passes

12. Committee Reports

A. Policy & Governance

Commissioner Curry: 10/4 minutes have not been posted. Commissioner Wick to post

B. Community Engagement - met at Hunt -- one attendee

Co-chairing Early Ed committee with Kathy Olwell - first meeting tomorrow, 11/14 next Community Engagement meeting 11/29

C. Curriculum & Personnel - met 2 weeks ago. Revised minutes distributed at meeting

D. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: met on 10/16. First part of meeting was the incident at Hunt Middle School. Needs to be discussed at large and will be at the next Board meeting. Clarified the name of the committee is Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

13. Superintendent's Report -- Thank you to everyone for bringing the BHS re-envisioning to life. It was a great moment for us, the district and the community. Marty Spaulding was significantly active behind the scenes working to bring the amount down substantially.

A. FY20 Budget update -

Systems Leaders -- we talk about our staff and the administrators do remarkable work also. They are here to show their support and we give them public acknowledgement. These individuals do a lot of hard work, make tough decisions with limited resources and continue to do so. They are all supportive of their colleagues. The presentations are from a group analysis. Clare sat in on a systems leaders meeting to get a glance at the depth of what is happening. Thank you for showing your support: LaShawn Whitmore-Sells, Herb Perez, Don Van Nostrand, Laura Nugent, Stacie Curtis, Tracy Racicot, Christy Gallese, Miriam Ehtesham-Cating, Henri Sparks, Nikki Fuller, Noel Green, Megan McDonough, Victor Prussack, Bobby Riley, Stephanie Phillips, Jim Kelley, Len Phelan, Karen Vogle, Shelley Mathias.

Sr. Director Lavery went through presentation, along with Principals LaShawn Whitmore-Sells and Tracy Racicot as presenters. This was to gauge their staff and prioritize on students' needs.

LaShawn/Tracy: There is a powerful connection that all of our educational leaders have on behalf of the teachers and students. We are on the balcony and looking from the top



to see it all. They would love Board feedback and they can act on it. Appreciated that Chair Wool was present at the last Systems Leaders meeting. Everyone was excited about the work they were able to accomplish.

Commissioner Fisher -- Requests to have presentation in advance for proper meeting planning. Superintendent Obeng: There is an extreme amount of diversity in our schools and we are working on system alignment. There is a term called Simplicity. Keeping it simple but in the complexity of the organization. Nate will share the community forum information

Superintendent Obeng: A lot of info shared -- need direction from the board. At the last minute is when we have to make decisions.

A. Equity and Inclusion Report - Henri Sparks and Karen Vogle presenting

There are new state reporting requirements. Teachers are being trained and to be facilitators. We need the best trainers, which we have in the district.

BSD is conducting the best trainings in the state. Every \$ spent in the best way possible.

RP is the only program that the district has been consistent with. We can change Burlington to a restorative city.

Superintendent Obeng: One concern is building capacity -- having a plan to measure that our plan is working. You will see some investment asks that we are confident we need to move forward with. RP will be district-wide.

B. Climate Survey (Christy Gallese/Bobby Riley presenting)

Superintendent Obeng: Social media is a new component that has shown up in the last 10 years. We need to see the impact and how to address this.

We will be maintaining these surveys -- 2020 will be required by the state. Data shows that annual surveys are unproductive. Time in between helps in getting true data and better results. We can further disseminate data. All the information here and more can be found on the website. RP plays a large role and relationship building. There is a priority and need in our area. Health and wellness team driving some needs -- social and emotional needs.

Commissioner Ivancic: In the future -- new Americans need to get these surveys in their language.

Superintendent Obeng: Data shows annual surveys are unproductive. There needs to be time in between and the data will be greater. Lower percentages issues: what steps taken?

Commissioner Fisher: This is interesting but the district data is concerning. Use this as a metric to increase climate in the district.



Commissioner Curry: We have a toxic environment since before Superintendent Obeng. Still have challenges.

Superintendent Obeng: The whole reason we identified this as something needing to improve climate.

2011-2015 - similar results survey -- we are picking this up again. These areas are no surprise to us...in Superintendent's performance goals to spend energy on fixing what the data tells us -- then we see how we are doing.

Commissioner Fisher: actions and respect will make an impact with the teachers and engaging with them. Staff input important.

- C. Superintendent Obeng: It takes a village...it's all our responsibility to move forward -- our staff is doing it also. Health Insurance benefits administration - status update.

Sr. Director Nate Lavery: Good news -- Data Path sent out information in an effort to clean up claims. They needed to reprocess the incorrect claims from the past company. Most claims have been paid out (\$85,000 that ppl were owed that hadn't been paid). A lot of progress now. Some challenges continue and some staff will have to pay back overpayments. District cannot help if there's an issue-- employee/patient will have to contact Data Path customer service.

- D. Good News

Congratulations to Principal Shelley Mathias and Edmunds Elementary School achieved VTPBIS Exemplar Status for 2017/2018! This achievement is a result of a significant commitment on the part of both Principal and the staff to implement Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.

14. Superintendent's Monitoring Reports

- A. Budget and Planning Report (2.4)

Motion to table report -- Commissioner Wick/Waltz

- B. Communication to the Board (2.8) - Discussion

Motion to table this to next Board meeting: fisher motion - wool 2nd

15. Executive Session B

- A. Negotiations: Motion to consider Executive Session under 1 V.S.A. 313 (a) (1) (A), (B), (C), (E) and (F) because pre-mature general public knowledge would put the District at a substantial disadvantage.

Will be put on the December Board meeting agenda.

16. Adjournment



A. Motion to Adjourn Wick/Fisher 11:15pm

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