



BLOOMFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION – SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 7:30 P.M.

Bloomfield Board of Education, Board Room

1133 Blue Hills Avenue

Bloomfield, CT 06002

Attendance: D. Harris, Chair	Present
H. Frydman, Vice Chair	Present
J. Wilkerson, Secretary	Present
R. Ike	Present
L. Easmon	Absent
T. Moore	Present
F. Bogle-Assegai	Absent

Also Present: J. Thompson, Superintendent of Schools
W. Guzman, Chief Operations Officer
D. Nesmith, Assistant Superintendent for Accountability and Performance
D. Moleti, Human Resource Coordinator
A.M. Cullinan, Curriculum Consultant
E. Pierce, District Grants Specialist
W. Shepard-Bannish, Director of Student Support Services
L. Lamenzo, Director of School Improvement
J. Titelbaum, District Data Systems Coordinator
J. White, Principal, Bloomfield High School
F. Macchi, Interim Principal, Global Experience Magnet School
T. Ellis, Principal, Carmen Arace Middle School
S. Williams, Principal, Carmen Arace Intermediate School
P. Guzzo, Principal, Metacomet Elementary School
J. Dwyer, Principal, Laurel Elementary School
S. Straker, Principal, Wintonbury Childhood Magnet School

1. Establishment of a Quorum and Call to Order

D. Harris determined a quorum was present and the Bloomfield Board of Education Special meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All rose to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Opening Statement

Joseph Wilkerson, Jr., Secretary, welcomed all attendees. The purpose and process of the Board of Education meeting was stated.

4. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting – November 8, 2022



A motion was made by H. Frydman and seconded by R. Ike for the Bloomfield Board of Education to approve the minutes from the November 8, 2022 regular Board meeting, as presented.

D. Harris	Aye
H. Frydman	Abstain
J. Wilkerson	Aye
R. Ike	Abstain
T. Moore	Aye

The motion passed 3-0-2.

5. Recognitions

A. *Schools of Distinction*, Metacomet Elementary School and Carmen Arace Intermediate School

Dr. James Thompson, Jr., Superintendent of Schools reported that Metacomet Elementary School and Carmen Arace Intermediate School have been identified as Schools of Distinction for the 2021-2022 school year. These schools are in the top 10% for academic growth of high needs students in the area of English Language Arts in the state of Connecticut. Dr. Thompson commended the principals and staff for their hard work.

B. Recognition of Dan Matthews, Bloomfield's 2023 Teacher of the Year

Dr. James Thompson, Jr. recognized Bloomfield Public Schools' Teacher of the Year, Dan Matthews. He is a Physical Education teacher at Bloomfield High School and has been a Bloomfield educator for fifteen years. The State of Connecticut, Teachers of the Year Celebration was held on Thursday, November 16, 2022.

Dan Matthews was presented with a token of appreciation on behalf of Dr. Thompson and Chairman Donald Harris, Jr.

6. Presentations

A. Introduction of Nicholas Carambelas, Food Services Director

William Guzman, Chief Operations Officer, introduced Nicholas Carambelas, the district's new Food Services Director. Mr. Guzman provided some background information and welcomed Mr. Carambelas to his new position. He is replacing Susan Pinkham who recently retired.

B. Student Representative Report – Bloomfield High School

The Board of Education Student Representatives from Bloomfield High School (BHS) were introduced by the Chairman. The students gave a presentation on recent events at BHS such as the Agri-science holiday bazaar, the FFA National Convention, the annual holiday door decorating contest. In addition, recognitions were given to the boys football team making it to the Class "S" State Championship game; senior Wyatt Anderson for making it to the New England Music Festival; and the 25 new National Honor Society inductees. Students recently visited Trinity Health to explore career opportunities. Upcoming events at BHS was shared.



7. Public/PTO Comment

Mary Kay Rendock a teacher from Carmen Arace addressed the Board of Education. She gave an update on the middle school's performance of the musical, *The Descendants*. She also shared information on the Journey's program and a math program. Mr. Harris congratulated Mary Kay on her upcoming retirement.

8. Superintendent's Report

1. Superintendent's Update

Dr. James Thompson, Jr. provided an update to the Board of Education members for the month of January. He congratulated Board of Education Chair, Donald F. Harris, Jr. who was recently recognized by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE). He was honored with the 2022 Philip S. Fenster Distinguished Service Award for his lifetime commitment to public education.

He also noted student Wyatt Anderson who has been selected to participate in the New England Music Festival Associations' Concert Festival in March.

Dr. Thompson shared an update relative to the Office of Family and Community Engagement. In partnership with Bloomfield Leisure Services and The Village, the district is hosting monthly workshops for families on mental health and financial literacy.

2. Financial Report – December 2022

Mr. William Guzman, Chief Operations Office reported on the financials as of January 5, 2023. He noted that \$3.04 million of the adopted budget has yet to be expended or encumbered.

Mr. Guzman noted on the one-page summary report, major account 01 Certified Salaries is over budget as a result of covering teacher vacancies. Also on the summary page, major account 08 Tuition is showing a deficit of \$105,000.

On page 1 of the six-page detail report, sub accounts 1110 – Salaries, Teachers and 1210 – Salaries Professional Staff are over expended as one district occupational therapist position had to be increased from part-time to full-time. Mr. Guzman further noted tuition sub accounts 5600 and 5630 are over expended as the Excess Cost Grant receivables have yet to be posted.

Mr. Guzman gave an update on the fire alarm at Bloomfield High School. The district has been required to maintain a fire watch with an additional anticipated cost of \$35,000. The repairs are expected to be completed by the end of February and will be paid through the Capital Non-Recurring account.

R. Ike inquired about the status of the fire alarms at the other schools and if there have been any recommendations to update or replace these systems. W. Guzman noted inspections are completed annually at each school and the recommendations can be shared with the Board of Education.



3. Health Update

Wendy Shepard-Bannish, Director of Student Support Services and COVID-19 Liaison gave a COVID-19 and health update. She noted the positivity rate as of January 5, 2023 in Bloomfield was 17%. Currently schools are being affected by COVID-19, RSV, and the flu. She shared updated vaccination rates for children in Bloomfield. She encouraged all to visit the district webpage for up-to-date information.

T. Moore inquired what we can do to increase student vaccination rates. Mrs. Shepard-Bannish noted we have done all we can by providing information and hosting vaccination clinics.

9. Old Business

A. District Plan of Excellence – Update

The following presenters gave an update on the progress of the 2021 – 2024 District Plan of Excellence:

- Nesmith, Assistant Superintendent for Accountability and Performance
- A.M. Cullinan, Curriculum Consultant
- L. Lamenzo, Director of School Improvement
- J. Titelbaum, District Data Systems Coordinator
- Q. Jones, District Coordinator of Extended Learning and Family Community Engagement
- D. Davis, School to Career Specialist

The presentation shared the work aligned to 2021-2024 District Plan of Excellence from each of the following Priority Areas:

1. Holistic Accountability
2. Rigorous Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
3. Positive School Climate
4. Family and Community Engagement

It was further noted the goals of the schools' and district Plans of Excellence are aligned.

10. New Business

A. Mid-Year School Performance Update

Desi Nesmith, Assistant Superintendent for Accountability and Performance, Lisa Lamenzo, Director of School Improvement, and the principals shared a mid-year academic performance update. The purpose of this presentation was to review current academic performance, highlighting strengths and instructional focus areas. The presentation shared information regarding the standards that teachers are targeting during instruction. It was noted the work has been led this year with Focus Walks and a reimagining of district professional development.



Each principal from the following schools shared the areas of instructional strengths, followed by instructional focus areas in English Language Art, mathematics, and an optional category:

- Samantha Straker, Wintonbury Early Childhood Magnet School
- Jennifer Dwyer, Laurel Elementary School
- Paul Guzzo, Metacomet Elementary School
- Sarah Williams, Carmen Arace Intermediate School
- Trevor Ellis, Carmen Arace Middle School
- Frank Macchi, Global Experience Magnet School
- Jesse White, Bloomfield High School

J. Wilkerson stated the hard work at each school is apparent based on tonight's presentations. He also noted the rigor in the district.

11. CABA Updates

Mr. Donald Harris, Jr. will be attending the Equity Symposium and Advocacy Institute in Washington, D.C., January 26 – 31, 2023. This conference is sponsored by the National School Boards Association (NSBA).

Mr. Harris is also a member of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABA) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee. They are hosting a book talk on "Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?"

12. Board Comments

R. Ike wished all a happy New Year. He extended his condolences to the family of Lynette Easmon and Representative Quentin Williams.

T. Moore thanked the principals for an excellent report on their schools. He also congratulated all those tonight who received awards or recognitions. He noted he looks forward to hearing more about the district's chronic absenteeism.

J. Wilkerson extended a happy New Year to all. He also offered his condolences to the families of Mr. Williams and Ms. Easmon. He welcomed our new Food Services Director to Bloomfield and congratulated Mr. Matthews and Mr. Harris. He shared that tonight's presentations were excellent.

H. Frydman congratulated those recognized and thanked all for coming to the Board meeting. He highlighted that two of our schools were honored as *Schools of Distinction*. He commended the great work of the principals, staff and students.

D. Harris noted he was in Miami for a National School Boards Association (NSBA) Culture Diversity Conference in December. He extended his condolences for the families of Quentin Williams and Ms. Easmon. He also noted the principals gave an excellence presentation this evening. He wished all a happy New Year.



13. Adjournment

At 9:31 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by R. Ike and seconded by J. Wilkerson.

The motion passed unanimously.

J. Wilkerson, Board Secretary

J. Thompson, Ed. D., Superintendent