

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting Administration Building 7:00 p.m.– 9:35 p.m. September 18, 2019

Members Present:

Mark Mirabile, Presiding Officer

Mary Lenzen

David Negron

Joy Tristano

Kristin Violante

Charles Zona

Absent:

Jon Buralli

ROLL CALL AND VISITORS

Present with Superintendent Dave Palzet were staff members Erika Sawosko, Jennifer Ban, Frank Adams, Kathleen Tomei, Griffin Sonntag, Grant Kramer, Kelly O’Keefe, Tracy Van Zandbergen, Haylee O’Donnell, Kathy Falout, Allison Bronsteader, Michelle Cuttitta, Andrea Mars, Julie Crist, Amy DuVall and Karyn Lisowski; and residents Sue Gainer and Michelle Dzielak.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

This summer, grade 5 students worked on the courtyard at the middle school. They revived the area with weeding and landscaping. These students lead the pledge of allegiance. Middle school teacher, Kathy Falout, showcased the work of her students in a Summer of Science project on the bulletin boards.

ELEARNING HEARING

Board President Mark Mirabile declared the eLearning hearing open at 7:03 p.m.

Superintendent Palzet presented the district's plan to use eLearning (Engaged Learning) days, as an option, in the event of an emergency school closure. In the 2019-20 school year, the state has put additional requirements on districts that wish to use eLearning in place of emergency days. Dr. Palzet reviewed how the eLearning days will be structured, how they will be communicated to parents, and how the state requirements have been met. The Board discussed the 5 hour requirement and how eLearning days would be decided. The Board expressed that they felt an eLearning day would be far more beneficial to students than adding the day at the end of the year.

Public comment: Elementary teacher Julie Crist asked about the time limit that students are working. It was stated that work should be robust and created as you would in the classroom. Elementary teacher Amy DuVall inquired if the two days built into the calendar for emergency weather days would be used first. It was shared that those days would be looked at first for eLearning days.

Board President Mirabile declared the eLearning hearing closed at 7:23 p.m.

BUDGET HEARING FY20

Board President Mark Mirabile declared the budget hearing open at 7:23 p.m.

The budget for FY20 meets the Board policy financial guidelines of the district. Business Manager Frank Adams presented an outline of the major components of the budget. The FY20 proposed final budget projects revenues at \$17,301,500 and expenses at \$18,039,600. It is estimated that there will be a \$738,100 decrease to the fund balance. Mr. Adams also reviewed changes from the tentative budget provided last month. There were no public comments.

Board President Mirabile declared the budget hearing closed at 7:39 p.m.

ACTION NO. 4

Budget Adopted

Motion by Violante, seconded by Negron, that the Board of Education adopts the 2019-20 school district budget as presented. Motion carried by a roll call of 6 ayes (Lenzen, Negron, Mirabile, Tristano, Violante, Zona) absent – Buralli.

OPEN FORUM

Parent Michelle Dzieliak expressed her frustration with regard to her students' IEPs and getting their needs met. She asked that the Board explain why teachers are not trained to identify and treat dyslexia; why parents have to fight with a school to get proper educational needs met; and can you approve training for teachers to identify this problem and get the children the targeted help that they may need.

Elementary teacher Julie Crist addressed the Board regarding class sizes in grade 4. It was shared that facilities were not prepared to accommodate 27 students in each class and grade 4 was doing their utmost best to meet the needs of each student. Mrs. Crist requested that the Board closely analyze their current policy on class size to address the 4th grade student population.

Parent Sue Gainer shared with the Board that on the first day of school, her grade 4 student did not have a cubby with students in her class, but her cubby was located in the special education room. She feels that this segregation should not have occurred in an inclusive school. She requested that the Board consider professional development training for the district with a focus on inclusion.

ACTION NO. 5

Consent Agenda

Motion by Lenzen, seconded by Violante, that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda consisting of: regular meeting minutes of August 14, 2019; closed session meeting minutes of August 14, 2019; payment of August payroll/September Warrants; revised Superintendent's evaluation tool and job description; declassify closed session minutes; Personnel (sec. 5) and 2:20 Powers and Duties Board policies; September 2019 Personnel Report containing the hiring of Allison Bronsteader, kindergarten, middle school instructional aides Corey Gallai and Kelly Butvilas, part time instructional aide Michelle Cuttitta, and middle school secretary Anastasia Tantillo. Motion carried by a roll call of 6 ayes (Lenzen, Negron, Mirabile, Tristano, Violante, Zona) absent – Buralli.

ACTION NO. 6

eLearning Resolution

Motion by Lenzen, seconded by Tristano, that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution on an eLearning Program in Lieu of Emergency Days as presented at the public hearing. Motion carried by a roll call of 6 ayes (Lenzen, Negron, Mirabile, Tristano, Violante, Zona) absent – Buralli.

REPORTS AND
DISCUSSION ITEMS

Introduction of New Staff

Superintendent Palzet shared that over the course of the summer, the district hired ten new staff members for our schools. The following staff were introduced to the Board and community: Haylee O'Donnell, grade 1; Grant Kramer, EL teacher; Tracy Van Zandbergen, grade 4; Michelle Cuttitta, instructional aide; Allison Bronsteader, kindergarten; Kathy Falout, grade 7 math/science; and Kelly O'Keefe, reading specialist.

Construction Update

Superintendent Palzet shared that our libraries are 90% complete, and we are awaiting the delivery of the circulation desks to put us over the finish line. The final pieces to be delivered are the circulation desks. These are scheduled for delivery on 9/20 for the middle school and 9/27 for the elementary school. Once these items are delivered, we will be at substantial completion. We are still awaiting the delivery of some light fixtures and doors, but those are more cosmetic than essential to the function of the library.

Strategic Blueprint Update

The district continues to make great progress on the Strategic Blueprint. The third-grade flexible use of classroom space pilot continues to evolve. These new classroom configurations provide a more significant amount of voice and choice as students select the environment that best meets their needs. Additionally, we continue to make progress on the action step Establish building and district schedules allowing staff the time to have the greatest impact on teaching and learning. With the implementation of a new schedule at the middle school, the administrative team and a group of teachers have worked to define how planning time will be used. This "curriculum time" is being used to enhance learning experiences for kids, provide time for co-teachers to meet, and engage in professional development. The Board will receive an update on the middle school schedule in October.

Establish Superintendent Advisory Teams

Each year, the district hosts several Superintendent Advisory teams to provide suggestions to the administration. Our Superintendent Advisory teams can include up to two Board members. Below is a list of the Superintendent Advisory Teams and the Board members who volunteered for these teams. These teams are open to community members, as well. If you are interested in serving on an advisory team, please contact Dave Palzet at dpalzet@d107.org.

- Finance Team: Mark Mirabile, Jon Buralli
- Facilities Team: Kristin Violante, Mary Lenzen
- Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) Team: Joy Tristano, Charles Zona

Curriculum Review Cycle

Last year Dr. Ban and our Curriculum Council designed and implemented a curriculum review cycle. The purpose of the review cycle is to ensure the curriculum and resources used in classrooms meet the needs of our students and are current based on state requirements. Dr. Ban provided the Board with an update on our progress and areas of focus for the year. The Board had questions regarding classroom library purchases and the age range of materials available to students. The Board discussed creating one survey for parents to answer at the beginning of the year and then at the end that would capture questions in many areas.

Superintendent 2019-20 Goals

Each year, the Board approves the superintendent's goals, which then become part of the superintendent's contract. In District 107, we observe a process of cascading goals, which means that the district goals become the administrator's goals. Administrators' goals then trickle down to the school level. This being the case, the superintendent's goals mirror those found in the Strategic Blueprint. Additionally, the superintendent's goals include a goal for academic achievement and a few other items of importance.

FY20 Calendar Adjustment

To ensure our staff is prepared in the event of an active incident, the administration proposed holding an active incident simulation with local law enforcement. To meet this need, the district will observe an early release day (noon dismissal) on November 22, which is the Friday before Thanksgiving break. The district will hold the active incident training once students have been dismissed. The administration will communicate this plan to parents. Likewise, the administration will work with the Pleasant Dale Park District to provide childcare on November 22.

Finance Tutorial: The Nine Major Funds

As part of an ongoing series, our Business Manager, Frank Adams presented a tutorial that will help the Board as they carry out their fiduciary duties. This month’s tutorial focused on the nine major funds that the school district manages.

Review Finance (sec. 4) and Curriculum and Instruction (sec. 6) Board Policies

The Board reviews its policies to ensure that the current policy reflects the current realities of running a school district. This month Finance (sec. 4) and Curriculum and Instruction (sec. 6) Board Policies are up for review. Once reviewed, these policies will be on the October Consent Agenda for approval.

Board of Education Information Requests

No requests were made at this time.

NEXT AGENDA

Items submitted for the October agenda include:
Review/Approve Superintendent 2019-20 Goals; Financial Tutorial #3; Approve Finance (sec. 4) and Curriculum and Instruction (sec. 6) Board Policies; Class Size Update; Elementary/Middle School Improvement Plans; and Middle School Schedule Review.

ACTION NO. 7

Closed Session The Board did not go into closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Negron, seconded by Lenzen, that the regular meeting adjourns at 9:38 p.m. Voice vote. Motion carried.

App. ___ President _____ Secretary _____