

BOARD OF EDUCATION

COLUMBIA, CONNECTICUT

Christopher Lent, Chairman
Kathy Tolsdorf, Vice Chairperson
James Chakulski, Jr.
David Crim
Linette Dooley
Lisa Napolitano
Karin Vertefeuille
Laurence Fearon, Superintendent



The Columbia School District is a community of learners providing rigorous programs to ensure that each student can excel as an individual.

January 4, 2016
Regular Meeting Minutes
7:30 p.m.
Horace W. Porter School Cafeteria

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Christopher Lent-Chairman, Lisa Napolitano, David Crim, Linette Dooley, Kathy Tolsdorf-Vice Chairperson, Karin Vertefeuille, James Chakulski, Jr.

OTHERS PRESENT: Lol Fearon-Superintendent, Alyssa Gwinnell-Principal, Mary-Kate Farley-Director of Special Services, Morales family members, Karen Woodward, Tammy Ekstrom, Christine Sposito, Brian Golembiewski, Amara Moe, Karen Caputo-School Social Worker/Administrative Intern, Bryan Tarbell, Michelle Barton, and Dolores, Marcous.

I. Call to Order

C. Lent called the January 4, 2016, Regular Meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Comments from the Audience (Bylaws of the Board #9300)

Time allotted for public participation is twenty (20) minutes; time allotted for an individual speaker is three (3) minutes.
None.

IV. Celebration of Excellence

*At Porter School our students are empowered to lead and to demonstrate civic responsibility. **Maya Morales** has been named one of two finalists representing Tolland County in the Fire Prevention Poster Contest.*
L. Fearon gave an explanation of the contest Maya was a part of and a certificate was given to Maya. A picture was taken of Maya, Mr. Fearon and Mr. Lent, which will be posted on our website.

V. Public Input to the 2016/2017 Columbia Board of Education Budget

The Board of Education encourages community engagement as an on-going and long-term process that involves listening to and deliberating with members of the public.

C. Lent introduced Mr. Fearon, Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Fearon gave an introduction to the 2016-17 Budget. There was a slide show presentation on the 2016-17 budget considerations. Mr. Fearon also invited the public to attend the BOE subcommittee budget meetings. Dates for these meetings can be found on the district website under BOE.

C. Lent asked if anyone from the public would like to speak.

Brian Tarbell of 115 West Street spoke on behalf of Kindergarten teacher to student ratio. Indicating a need for class sizes to be smaller due to age of the students.

Michelle Barton of 14 Randazzo Road also spoke to student/teacher ratio in Kindergarten. Ms. Barton spoke to her desire that there be three teachers for second grade, as those students currently have three teachers in first grade.

Brian Golembiewski of 19 Dilaj Drive spoke regarding having a high school late bus. He has a daughter at E.O. Smith and other towns have late busing. He requested that the BOE consider adding a late bus in next year's budget.

Mr. Fearon responded stating that we have looked at late busing over the last two years. We have to look at the equity to all our High Schools, Windham, Bolton and E.O. Bolton does not provide late buses and E.O. provides one day a week. A survey was taken and the result was that bus use could not be predicted and may not justify the expense.

Christine Sposito of 62 Doubleday spoke to first grade classes to continue on with three teachers for second grade.

There was discussion between Mr. Fearon and the public regarding the use of paraprofessionals, the different types of paraprofessionals, students' needs and class sizes.

Tammy Ekstrom of 10 Sunrise Drive introduced herself as a parent and a teacher at the school. She supports having smaller class sizes in first grade and it is important that the youngest get the option first. She also spoke about the benefits of the middle school model for grade 5.

Alyssa Gwinnell-School Principal spoke to the fact that fifth grade is middle school but is more preparatory with middle school choices but does not have full middle school options.

C. Lent asked if anyone else wished to speak and thanked all the participants.

VI. Action Items (Consent)

To be read by Board of Education Chairperson prior to taking action:

A consent agenda is presented by the Chairman at the beginning of a meeting. Items may be removed from the consent agenda on the request of any one member. Items not removed may be adopted by general consent without debate. Removed items may be taken up either immediately after the consent agenda or placed later on the agenda at the discretion of the assembly.

- a) *Approval of December 7, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes*
- b) *Approval of December 15, 2015 Special Meeting Minutes*
- c) *Approval of Payment of Bills*

K. Tolsdorf **MOVED**, L. Dooley **SECONDED** to remove action item (a) for correction.
MOTION CARRIES 7:0

D. Crim **MOVED**, and L. Napolitano **SECONDED** to approve action items (b) and (c) as presented.
MOTION CARRIES 7:0

J. Chakulski **MOVED**, L. Napolitano **SECONDED** to approve action item (a) with correction to VII. (c) adding L. Napolitano as opposed.
MOTION CARRIES 7:0

VII. Action Items – Discuss and Act Upon

a) *H.W. Porter Capital Improvement Five-Year Plan*
L. Napolitano **MOVED**; K. Tolsdorf **SECONDED** to table item (a).
MOTION CARRIES 7:0

b) *Board of Education Subcommittee Reorganization*
There was discussion and the Committee Membership List was updated. Updated list attached.

c) Board of Education Goals 2015/2016

L. Fearon passed out the proposed goals with some alternate language submitted by K. Vertefeuille. There was discussion by the BOE. L. Fearon will revise goals from discussion and send out to the BOE for review.

VIII. Discussion Items

a) 2016/2017 Columbia Board of Education Budget

The budget was discussed by the BOE regarding class sizes and kindergarten enrollment for next year. Alyssa Gwinnell-Principal spoke to co-teaching in Kindergarten and the use of paraprofessionals.

b) February 17, 2016 Budget Subcommittee Meeting – rescheduled date

The BOE will remove February 17th from the calendar and wait until closer to the 8th of February to see if a meeting is needed.

IX. Correspondence/Communications - None

X. Board of Education Subcommittees

- Future Meeting Dates:
 - January 11, 2016 – Budget Subcommittee Meeting, 6:30 p.m. H.W.P. LMC Conference Room
 - January 19, 2016 – Budget Subcommittee Meeting, 6:30 p.m. H.W.P. LMC Conference Room
 - January 26, 2015 – Budget Subcommittee Meeting, 6:30 p.m. H.W.P. LMC Conference Room
 - February 1, 2016 – Budget Subcommittee Meeting, 6:30 p.m. H.W.P. LMC Conference Room
 - February 1, 2016 – Regular BOE Meeting – Supt. Presents 2016/17 Draft Budget, 7:30 p.m. H.W.P. Cafe
 - February 8, 2016 – Budget Subcommittee Meeting, 6:30 p.m. H.W.P. LMC Conference Room
 - February 22, 2016 – Public Hearing & Special Meeting, 7:00 p.m. H.W.P. Cafe

XI. Superintendent's Report

L. Fearon stated that the Non-Lapsing Account Resolution has been sent off to Attorney Jessica Ritter. There was discussion by the BOE. L. Fearon will have a draft of the resolution at the next meeting.

XII. Future Regular and Subcommittee Agenda Items (Tentative)

XIII. Columbia Board of Education Member Remarks

L. Napolitano stated "Happy New Year."

K. Vertefeuille asked the BOE if they are supposed to get back to people that spoke this evening.

L. Napolitano stated that the Board cannot make comments, and that should be announced before asking for participation from the public so they are aware of that fact.

XIV. Adjournment

K. Tolsdorf **MOVED**; K. Vertefeuille **SECONDED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.
MOTION CARRIES 7:0

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Tolsdorf, Columbia Board of Education-Vice Chairperson