

September 6, 2016 (Tuesday)
Regular Meeting Minutes/DRAFT
7:30 p.m.
Horace W. Porter School LMC Cafeteria

Board Members Present: Christopher Lent-Chairman, Lisa Napolitano, David Crim, Linette Dooley Karin Vertefeuille, and James Chakulski

Board Members Absent: Kathy Tolsdorf – Vice Chairman

Others Present: Lol Fearon-Superintendent, Barbara Wilson-Director of Student Services, Alyssa Gwinnell-Principal, Michael Kenyon-Assistant Principal, Sandy Rij, Steve Piro, Mary Conway-Food Services Director, Jim Crawford, End Hunger CT

I. Call to Order

The Regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 7:39 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.

IV. Action Items (Consent)

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 August 1, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes*
- b) *Approval of Payment of Bills*
- c) *Appointment of Brenda Morey, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent*
- d) *Appointment of Anthony Gervase, .5 Technology Teacher*

D. Crim MOVED, K. Vertefeuille SECONDED to approve the items (a) through (d) of the consent agenda. MOTION CARRIES 6:0.

V. Action Items – Discuss and Act Upon

- a) *School Breakfast Program Pilot*

The Board consented to move item b first. L. Fearon welcomed Mary Conway, Columbia Food Service Director and Jim Crawford, End Hunger in CT. Mr. Crawford is a former teacher who works with schools seeking to institute a school breakfast program.

80.6% of schools that participate in the school lunch program also participate in the breakfast program.

The lunch program had been running a deficit which has been significantly reduced from \$22,000 to between \$1500 and \$2000. The application deadline for the pilot is October 1st. Columbia meets the CT

eligibility of “severe need” with more than 20% of our lunch meals served to students at a free or reduced rate. Columbia’s rate is approximately 28%.

Free and reduced priced lunches have risen from 10.9% in 2011/2012 to 19.2%. We are entitled to \$3000 grant from state department of education on top of our per meal subsidy. We are also eligible for reimbursement for equipment through a start- up grant from the New England Dairy Council.

Columbia is one of 26 towns in state who do not have a breakfast program. We have an established need based upon federal and state guidelines. Benefits of a school breakfast program include students have increased scores on standardized math tests, attend 1.5 more days of school each year and are 20% more likely to graduate.

The average food cost was calculated at \$1.10 per breakfast and Columbia would charge \$1.50-\$1.60 per meal. The price point of \$1.50 - \$1.60 would cover food costs. Labor costs would be offset by the “severe need” grant.

The breakfast program service would be offered as a “grab and go”. We have a very successful Before School Program and would run the breakfast program during that time. Any students coming off buses would be able to grab food to consume in homerooms or could save food for mid-day snack.

The pilot would operate for 6-8 weeks beginning in October. Costs and benefits would be reviewed and then reported back to the BOE.

BOE members discussed their concerns regarding the nutrition of the foods offered, the impact of grants and the possible staffing and distribution process.

K. Vertefeuille MOVED, D. Crim SECONDED to approve a 6-8 week school breakfast program pilot.

Members discussed the length of the pilot and when data would be made available to the Board. L. Fearon estimates the program will begin between October 1st and October 15th. Promotion of the program will occur once approval is received.

L. Napolitano voiced concerns about the nutritional value of the foods offered and requested protein be available.

K. Vertefeuille MOVED to amend, D. Crim SECONDED the amendment of the motion to approve the 8 week pilot of the school breakfast program beginning between 10/1/2016 and 10/15/2016 with the understanding the Board of Education will receive an update on the impact of the program.

The AMENDED MOTION CARRIES 5:1. L. Napolitano OPPOSED.

b) Expenditure Report 2015-2016

L. Fearon distributed a revised register. After a \$400,000 supplemental appropriation we are ending the year with \$93,000. FiPAC has asked members to draw up resolution to establish a non-lapsing account.

L. Napolitano MOVED, J. Chakulski SECONDED to approve the Expenditure Report 2015/2016.
MOTION CARRIES 6:0

B) Presentation – Long Range Planning Options – Mr. Lol Fearon, Superintendent

- L. Fearon described the vision statement including the following key points and supporting evidence.
- Students mastery of comprehensive skills and their ability to apply what they have learned and how that learning is evidenced.
 - Students are empowered to lead and demonstrate civic responsibility
 - Students prepare for a lifetime of learning and engage in personal development
 - Parents are active partners in their child's education
 - The district seeks out and retains the most highly qualified administrators, teachers and staff
 - Students, staff and leadership recognize the value of their individual contributions and commit to excellence
 - The district values self-discipline, respect and integrity as essential to creating an effective learning environment
 - The district honors the community by developing partnerships which support the educational process and build life-long relationships
 - The Columbia School District will provide opportunities for all students to meet their potential by developing and implementing programs which will make our schools highly competitive and our graduates exceptional

Board members complimented Mr. Fearon on the excellent presentation.

L. Fearon reviewed current district program structure. He described 3 potential options.

Option 1 is what we are currently planning for the 17/18 school year. Option 1 looks at our program as a pre-k-5 program. Grade 5 would stop being part of the middle school forming a more traditional elementary school. Grades 6-8 would be covered by a team of teachers and high school programming would continue to be tuition based. This option offers a short term solution to declining enrollment.

Options 2 & 3 speak more to long term planning potential. Option 2 offers PK -6 at Porter, 7-8 and 9-12 as tuition based programming. Option 3 offers PK-6 at Porter and regionalization for grades 7-12.

Board members agreed this will be a long term process and many options exist. They agreed the full committee would like to participate in this discussion and planning. Special meetings will be scheduled to continue looking at options and the impact to the district.

C) Correspondence/Communications - None

- a) *2016/2017 Horace W. Porter School Staff List*
- b) *Letter to Mark Walter, Columbia Town Administrator 08/29/2016 Lol – work the town did with us this summer was wonderful. Thanks to Mark and the Public Works Staff.*
- c) *2016-2017 Staff Handbook*
- d) *2016-2017 Guest Teacher Handbook*

L. Fearon noted the documents are reviewed and revised each year. The feedback on the guest teacher handbook is very positive. Mr. Kenyon holds a meeting prior to start of school and reviews the handbook information with guest teachers.
- e) *Willimantic Chronicle – New Playscape installed for Columbia students – Mr. Fearon noted the wrong playscape is featured in the picture. Thursday at 9:00 is the dedication ceremony. Some of the funding was received from the Bell family.*

D) Board of Education Subcommittees

- *Future Meeting Dates:*
 - September 14, 2016 – Fiscal Policy Board Meeting, 8:30 a.m. H.W.P. LMC Conference Room
 - September 14, 2016 – Negotiations Session, 5:30 p.m. H.W.P. Library Media Center
 - September 22, 2016 – Negotiations Session, 5:30 p.m. H.W.P. Library Media Center
 - September 29, 2016 – Negotiations Session, 5:30 p.m. H.W.P. Library Media Center
 - October 3, 2016 – Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 6:30 p.m. H.W.P LMC Conference Room
 - October 3, 2016 – Regular Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 p.m. H.W.P Cafeteria

E) Superintendent's Report

- *Opening of School – The opening went smoothly.*
- *Playscape Update -*
- *Electives 2016/2017 - A handout of elective choices for grades 5-8 was included in the Board packet.*

F) Future Regular and Subcommittee Agenda Items (Tentative)

- *SBAC 2015-2016 Report – can begin releasing results.*
- *Special Meeting Long Range Planning Options*

G) Columbia Board of Education Member Remarks

K. Vertefeuille commented on enrollment numbers. Old projection numbers show numbers which are lower than where we are currently.

L. Fearon noted the population bump is mainly at high school level.

K. Vertefeuille feels Columbia is attracting more families and we are getting students back from magnet schools. The excellent prek program brings in quite a few families.

L. Napolitano would like to remove payment of bills from the consent agenda and include it as an action to discuss and act upon.

C. Lent said he enjoyed the teacher and staff welcome.

H) Adjournment

K. Vertefeuille MOVED, D. Crim SECONDED to adjourn the regular meeting of the board of education at 9:45 p.m. and to hold a non-meeting including the superintendent for the purposes of a discussion of negotiations strategy.

MOTION CARRIES 6:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katherine Tolsdorf,
Columbia Board of Education Vice Chairman