

**Minutes**  
**Special Board of Education Meeting**  
**December 9, 2019**  
**7:30 p.m.**

Board Members Present: Linette Dooley, Christopher Lent, Michael Maziarz and Kathy Tolsdorf  
Board Member Absent: James Chakulski, Jr., David Crim and Joseph Napolitano

Others Present:

Mrs. Bacon, Mark Bacon, Greg Bugbee, Kelly DeForest, Riley DeForest, Superintendent Maria Geryk and Kevin Quinn

**I. Call to Order**

Superintendent Geryk called the meeting to order at 7:43 p.m.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

Superintendent Geryk stated the Recognition of Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents' Award winners will be presented at this time, rather than following the election of officers. The award recipients, Riley DeForest and Mark Bacon, are present. These awards are based on community service and service to others, academic prowess (relative to ability), and leadership service to the school community. The Superintendent's Student Award Recognition Program is designed to allow Superintendents to move beyond the academic achiever who routinely receives recognition, and to use their discretion and understanding of the students to reach a wider spectrum, not often, or perhaps never, considered as stars.

Riley DeForest is a diligent student at Porter. She is a quiet leader, a great role model and group member in all her classes. She is the president of the National Junior Honor Society and has helped plan and carry out various school community initiatives. Riley participates in the Porter Mentor program, giving her the opportunity to build relationships with younger students to help bridge the gap between elementary and middle school students. She is part of the Principal Advisory group, a voice for the students in planning school wide activities. Riley is also an active participant in school sports as a three-season athlete as a member of the cross country, basketball and softball teams. In addition, Riley is an active member of the local Girl Scout troop. Riley's solid commitment to her academics, her kind attitude and her quiet leadership make her a natural for this award. Riley came forward to be congratulated by the Board members and have her picture taken.

Mark Bacon is a hard working student who demonstrates time and time again that he holds his education to the highest priority. Mark is very busy outside of school. He is currently a first class Scout, being heavily involved in Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts since first grade. Mark is also a 4H Club member. Through his participation in these two activities, he is involved in many community service projects outside of school. At Porter, Mark has been a model athlete as a member of both the fall cross country and spring track programs since sixth grade. Mark volunteers with another student to put up and take down the school's America flag every day. He demonstrates a commitment to his education by being focused in class and always pushing himself to improve. Mark's dedication and commitment to his academics, his school community, his community organizations and his team demonstrate that he exemplifies the qualities of a CAPSS Award winning student. Mark came forward to be congratulated by the Board members and have his picture taken.

**III. Election of Officers**

a. Election of Chairperson

Ms. Tolsdorf nominated Mr. Lent. Mr. Lent said he would be proud to take on this role again.

Ms. Tolsdorf MOVED, Mr. Maziarz SECONDED to nominate Mr. Lent as Chairperson.  
MOTION CARRIES 4:0

b. Election of Vice Chair/Secretary

Ms. Dooley nominated Ms. Tolsdorf. Ms. Tolsdorf thanked her for the nomination, but stated she has enjoyed doing this in the past, but her schedule is such that she may not be able to do this in the way she would like. She declined being considered for this opportunity.

Chairman Lent nominated Mr. Maziarz as Vice Chair/Secretary. Mr. Maziarz said he did not expect this, but he would be very interested and he would accept this responsibility and opportunity at this time.

Chairman Lent MOVED, Ms. Tolsdorf SECONDED to nominate Mr. Maziarz as Vice Chair/Secretary.  
MOTION CARRIES 4:0

c. Committee Assignments

Discussion ensued and it was decided to maintain assignments currently in place. Therefore the committee assignments are listed below:

Policy – David Crim, Linette Dooley and Mike Maziarz

Budget/Finance – Jim Chakulski, Jr., Joe Napolitano and Kathy Tolsdorf

Teaching and Learning – David Crim, Linette Dooley, Mike Maziarz and Kathy Tolsdorf

Fiscal Policy Board Representatives – Chris Lent, Mike Maziarz with Kathy Tolsdorf as substitute

Community Engagement – Jim Chakulski, Jr., Mike Maziarz and Joe Napolitano

**IV. 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.

No one wished to be heard.

**V Presentation**

**Greg Bugbee – Novus, IT Security Assessment Report**

Mr. Bugbee opened his presentation by stating Novus is the technology provider for Horace Porter School. His division does not provide day to day support. He does consulting and cyber security specifically. A year ago he started assessing cyber security at Porter. Assessing a school district is in

the area of his expertise as he was the IT Director of Killingly recently. He had also been a Board of Ed Chairman.

Issues pertaining to security and compliance in schools include the fact that technology changes have outpaced our ability to create policy, implement safeguards, and raise/maintain awareness. K-12 school systems have a lot of valuable data, making them an attractive target, particularly if they have cyber insurance and a mechanism to pay ransomware. K-12 school systems are subject to multiple compliance standards at both the state and federal levels, with Connecticut having some of the strictest data privacy standards in the country.

The cyber security assessment examined systems that support the operations of the school; store, process or transmit student data; store, process or transmit personally identifiable information of staff, students or others with business related to the school. Examples include Google classroom, Office 365, Frontline education systems, business office software, telephone system, network hardware, servers and workstations, etc. 45 threats were identified. Mr. Bugbee said this type of evaluation is being completed by other districts throughout the state and they are addressing similar results.

Alexa is an example that was discussed. If installed, it records every single piece of information in that classroom. They are not safeguarding the data a school system needs for privacy. A \$50 piece of equipment could greatly impact a student in the future.

Data is valuable. If we have social security numbers on file, or health record information, they are part of a person's identity. Mr. Bugbee said an individual's identity is worth approximately \$1,200 on the dark web. We need to protect our identity from being exploited.

Mr. Bugbee said an example of how data may be exploited is if a student writes a paper expressing an opinion. While that student may form a different opinion based on maturity and what is learned and experienced over time, that initial opinion could be used against that student at a later time in their life. This evaluation, and resulting steps taken, will hopefully prevent such a scenario from occurring.

Evaluation criteria included confidentiality (What type of data is the system storing, processing or transmitting? What regulations apply to that data? What is the impact if the data became lost or stolen?), integrity (What would the impact be if the data was altered?) and availability (What is the impact to the school if the system went down?).

Additional evaluation is of process (What is the process associated with the data or system?), policy (Are policies available to provide guidance for the use of data and governance of the systems?) and procedure and awareness (Are expectations clearly defined and are community members aware of their roles and responsibilities to the security and privacy of the data and the operation of the system?).

The frameworks evaluated against were:

CT Student Data Privacy Act, COPA (Child Online Protection Act), CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act), FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), CT Record Retention standards, FOIA (Freedom of Information Act), HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and CJIS (Criminal Justice Information Systems) – background checks

Key findings of this evaluation:

CT Student Data Privacy Act compliance

Process needs to be created for ongoing data and system governance

Applications need to be reconfigured with updated security and privacy practices

Training programs need to be developed for safe data handling

Digital stewardship curriculum needs to be created for alignment with CIPA

To address the gaps, these steps have already been taken:

A governance committee has been developed and the first meeting was held in October. It is comprised of teachers, administration, special education staff and technology team members. First action items include taking an inventory of technology containing student data, process for technology evaluation and staff training. Ongoing items include alignment between curriculum and technology, updated guidelines for technology use, suggested policy language regarding social media and acceptance use, as well as digital citizenship curriculum. It was already decided there will be an Office 365 license upgrade and mobile device management.

Mr. Bugbee spoke of the technology evaluation criteria. What is the purpose of the technology? Is there a business or educational need that the technology supports? He shared the other criteria the governance committee will consider when applications are reviewed. He concluded his presentation with ongoing remediation items: updating of security protocols, data handling processes and focus on people and process. Following the presentation Mr. Bugbee answered Board members' questions.

Superintendent Geryk thanked Mr. Bugbee for all the work he has been doing. She looks forward to continuing this very important initiative with his assistance.

## **VI. Action Items (Consent)**

A consent agenda is presented by the Chairman at the beginning of the 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.

Ms. Tolsdorf MOVED, Mr. Maziarz SECONDED to move a. Approval of November 4, 2019, Regular Board of Education Minutes to section VII. Action Items (Discussion & Action) and include the words "and to authorize the Board Chairman to sign these contracts" at the end of item d.

Approval of Bolton and Region 19 High School Contracts 2020-2030.

MOTION CARRIES 4:0

Ms. Tolsdorf MOVED, Mr. Maziarz SECONDED to approve the Consent agenda as amended:

b. Payment of Bills

c. Appointment of Mr. Michael Beckwish, Grade 7-8 Math Teacher

d. Approval of Bolton and Region 19 High School Contracts 2020-2030 and to authorize the Board Chairman to sign these contracts

e. First Reading, Policy 1002, Policy 1008

f. Acceptance of Retirement Request, Ms. Janet Denley, Grade 5-6 Social Studies Teacher

g. Acceptance of Retirement Request, Ms. Sandy Rij, Enrichment Teacher

MOTION CARRIES 4:0

Chairman Lent congratulated and welcomed Mr. Beckwish to Porter School. He also wished both Ms. Denley and Ms. Rij well in their retirement. Superintendent Geryk shared this sentiment, stating these retiring teachers engage their students and will be missed. She also said she looks forward to Mr. Beckwish starting. His being a high school teacher will be advantageous because he will know what is expected of students exiting middle school.

## VII. Action Items (Discussion and Action)

### a. Superintendent Mid-Year Evaluation

This will be assessing the past six months. Chairman Lent will receive input from all Board members to include in the evaluation. This may be incorporated in the working session they will have with Nick Carusso.

### b. BOE Self-Evaluation

Responses are due December 20. They may be made directly to Nick Carusso. He compiles the responses, which will be reviewed while working on Board goals.

### c. Approval of November 4, 2019, Regular Board of Education Minutes

Ms. Dooley MOVED, Ms. Tolsdorf SECONDED to amend November 4, 2019, Regular Board of Education Minutes as follows:

1. Page 1 – Correct spelling of *Linette* Dooley
2. Page 2 – Fifth paragraph, second sentence to read, “Ms. Rutledge *stated* this . . .”
3. Page 4 – Second paragraph to include added item i. to the Action Items (Consent). It will read, “. . . effective Dec. 1, 2019; ~~and~~ h. Motion to ratify . . . authorize Board Chairman to sign; *and i. Approval of the Superintendent’s residency recommendation*”
4. Page 4 – Correct V. Action Items to VI. Action Items
5. Page 7 – First paragraph, third sentence to read, “*She would like to see Columbia compared to other communities in our DIRG.*” And fourth sentence to read, “*It is not the primary goal of testing to compare yourself to others, but it is still important to see how we measure up to others outside our community so when they go off into the world they should be ready to compete.*”

MOTION CARRIES 4:0

Mr. Maziarz MOVED, Ms. Dooley SECONDED approval of the November 4, 2019, Regular Board of Education Minutes as amended.

MOTION CARRIES 4:0

## VIII. Reports of Board Committees

### Policy

This committee met earlier this evening. There was first reading of Policy Regarding Possession of Deadly Weapons or Firearms and Prohibition Against Smoking. The second reading will be January 7, 2020.

### Budget

This committee also met earlier tonight. Bills were reviewed. Current status remains on track. We reviewed additional capital improvements. The tri-board meeting will be next week. The Board of Education, Board of Selectmen and FIPAC will meet to discuss the upcoming budget preparation.

#### Teaching and Learning

This committee did not meet. We will meet again in January or February.

### **IX. Correspondence/Communications**

- a. EASTCONN Memo – Amendment of Eastconn’s By-Laws

- b. Review Memo to First Selectman, Steven Everett re: Donations

Superintendent Geryk said Novus is working with the district to identify laptops that are no longer needed or do not meet storage capacity requirements. She proposes donating these to families who would be able to use them. Novus would strip the computers of everything except basic programs. There would be no continuing district responsibility for maintenance of them. Superintendent Geryk said Canterbury also expressed an interest in receiving donated computers.

Old student sport jerseys are being removed from inventory. Options of what to do with them was discussed. One option is to allow students to purchase them for a nominal cost as a memento. This will be evaluated and possibly pursued.

- c. Chronicle Article 11/22/19, Porter School Integrates Art Into Other Classrooms

Superintendent Geryk said art being integrated into the classrooms is very well received by teachers. They are very excited about it.

- d. Chronicle Article, Forum Focuses On Vaping and Teens

There was discussion about how prevalent this concern is in the schools.

- e. Chronicle Article, New Math Solution

Superintendent Geryk said this is another fine article from Lisa Massicotte highlighting what new strategies and programs are taking place in Porter School.

### **X. Board of Education Upcoming Meetings**

- a. Future Meeting Dates:

Tuesday, January 7, 2020, 6:30 p.m. Subcommittee Meetings, LMC

Tuesday, January 7, 2020, 7:30 p.m. BOE Regular Meeting, HWP Cafetorium

BOE Retreat – Date to be rescheduled from 1/7/2020

Tri-Board Meeting, Wednesday, December 18, 2019, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

**XI. Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Geryk shared the status of the website being updated. She has been working very closely with the vendor, expressing frustration with the slow pace of the vendor. However, she expects it will be ready in the near future for Board members, staff and parents to try to navigate before its formal release.

**XII. Columbia Board of Education Member Remarks**

Ms. Dooley thanked Chairman Lent for being Chairman again and thanked Mr. Maziarz for accepting the nomination to be Vice Chair/Secretary.

Ms. Tolsdorf shared her experience at the CABE convention.

Mr. Maziarz thanked Chairman Lent for being Chairman. He also expressed his well wishes to Ms. Denley and Ms. Rij. He welcomed Mr. Beckwish to Porter.

Chairman Lent thanked everyone for entrusting him to serve as Chairman again. He shared he was interviewed for an article about various boards and committees in town. It was to inform the reader of the purpose and goals of the Board.

**XIII. Adjournment**

Mr. Maziarz MOVED, Ms. Dooley. SECONDED to adjourn.  
MOTION CARRIES 4:0

The Board adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christopher Lent, Chairman