

# BOARD OF EDUCATION

COLUMBIA, CONNECTICUT



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

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

**April 11, 2016**  
**Special 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, Christine Sposito, Karen Caputo-School Social Worker/Administrative Intern, Brenda Desmarais, Co-Advisor NJHS, Peter Meshanic, Sarah Meshanic, Hunter Meshanic, Peggy Earnest, Danielle Earnest.

**I. Call to Order**

C. Lent called the April 11, 2016, Special Meeting 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.

Christine Sposito, 62 Doubleday Road spoke to the BOE regarding her concerns of class sizes and the number of homerooms going from three homerooms this year in first grade to only two homerooms for second grade for the next school year.

**IV. Celebration of Excellence**

*At Porter School our students are empowered to lead and to demonstrate civic responsibility.*

- ***Congratulations to Danielle Earnest & Hunter Meshanic***  
*Connecticut Association of Schools Middle Level Scholar-Leaders*

Mrs. Gwinnell, Principal, gave an overview of the criteria for the award being handed out. Chris Lent and Lol Fearon handed the awards to the recipients and pictures were taken.

**V. Presentation – Update on Co-Teaching Model and Professional Development (Postponed to May 2)**

*Presenters: Amy Drowne & Emily Muro-Trexler, Eastconn*

**VI. Discussion of Revisions to the 2016/17 Columbia Board of Education Budget & Possible Vote**

L. Fearon went over the reductions to the revised BOE 2016/17 budget.

K. Tolsdorf **MOVED**, L. Napolitano **SECONDED** a motion to approve the revised 2016-17 Board of Education Budget in the amount of \$12,565,797.00 as presented.

K. Vertefeuille wanted it noted for the record that the budget reduction is very risky with the removal of funds from our special education tuition line.

L. Napolitano understands that the decrease protects the MBR but is also a risk.

K. Tolsdorf noted that the MBR is going up dramatically due to unanticipated expenditures in the current fiscal year.

BOE members continued discussion.

C. Lent stated that the budget is still up for public discussion on April 27, 2016 and individuals will be able to make their concerns heard.

**MOTION CARRIES 7:0.**

## **VII. 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) *March 7, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes Approval*
- b) *Letter of Resignation of Mary-Kate Farley, Director of Student Services.*

D. Crim **MOVED**, K. Tolsdorf **SECONDED** a motion to approve action items (a) and (b) as presented.

**MOTION CARRIES 7:0.**

## **VIII. Action Items – Discuss and Act Upon**

- a) *Payment of Bills Approval*

J. Chakulski **MOVED**, K. Tolsdorf **SECONDED** a motion to approve action item (a) dated 4/11/16 as presented.

The BOE had some questions on bill items which were answered by L. Fearon and B. Ciurylo.

**MOTION CARRIES 7:0**

- b) *2015/2016 Budget Transfers Approval*

L. Fearon gave an overview of transfers. There was some discussion with the BOE.

L. Napolitano **MOVED**, K. Vertefeuille **SECONDED** a motion to accept Budget Transfers dated 4/11/16 as presented, and to ask L. Fearon to contact the First Selectman to schedule a town meeting in May to address the supplemental appropriation.

**MOTION CARRIES 7:0.**

## **IX. Superintendent Evaluation Process**

L. Fearon explained the evaluation process. There was some discussion. It was decided that Mr. Fearon will have his self-evaluation done by Monday, April 18, 2016, the BOE will have responses back by the following Monday, April 25, 2016 to the Board Chairman, Chris Lent, and on May 2, 2016 there will be an Executive Session meeting. C. Lent and L. Dooley will be part of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Superintendent Evaluation.

## **X. Correspondence/Communications**

- a) *Mr. Fearon to Carmen Vance & Earnest Sharpe – Non-Lapsing Account Proposal – MOA 3/11/2016*
- b) *Town of Columbia Annual Report for the Year Ending June 30, 2015*

## **XI. Board of Education Subcommittees**

- Future Meeting Dates:
  - April 13, 2016 – Fiscal Policy Board Meeting, 8:30 a.m. H.W. Porter LMC Conference Room
  - April 27, 2016 (Wednesday) – Public Budget Hearing, 7:00 p.m. Town Hall
  - May 2, 2016 – Policy Subcommittee Meeting, 6:30 p.m. H.W.P. LMC Conference Room
  - May 2, 2016 – Regular Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 p.m. H.W.P. Café
  - May 24, 2016 – Annual Town Budget Meeting, 7:00 p.m. H.W.P. Café
  - June 7, 2016 (Tuesday) - Teaching & Learning Subcommittee Meeting, 6:30 p.m. LMC Conf. Room
  - June 7, 2016 (Tuesday) –Regular Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 p.m. H.W.P. Café

## **XII. Superintendent's Report**

- The district has been chosen to be part of the Special Education Desk Audit. There will be 15 randomly chosen cases in special education given to the state by SASID number. Those cases will be reviewed for compliance. The district would then receive a report.
- Completed an audit to review all certified staff on their certifications and assignments. We received a clean bill of health on that certification.
- All staff received mandated reporter DCF training.
- The state determined that we do not need to submit our evaluation plan for standardized testing as we do not have substantial changes going forward.
- Brenda Desmarais, co-advisor of the NJHS presented some pictures of the recent NJHS breakfast for local firefighters. The breakfast went really well and the firefighters appreciated the time and effort of the students. The firefighters stated that no one had ever done that for them in the past.
- Porter Point newspaper was given to the BOE. It is a new club at Porter as an afterschool program.
- A copy of the recent FIPAC article in the Chronicle was distributed.

## **XIII. Future Regular and Subcommittee Agenda Items (Tentative)**

- 6140 – Curriculum – May 2, 2016
- 6141 – Curriculum Design/Development/Evaluation – May 2, 2016
- 6143 – Curriculum Guides – May 2, 2016
- 3516.12 – Asbestos Control – Policy Subcommittee – May 2, 2016
- 3524.1 – Pesticide Application – Policy Subcommittee – May 2, 2016
- 3524.2 – Green Cleaning Program – Policy Subcommittee – May 2, 2016

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

K. Vertefeuille complimented art teachers, Mrs. MacDonald and Mrs. Shive, and NJAHS for the outstanding art show this school year. There was more art this year and better than ever.

**XV. Adjournment**

K. Vertefeuille **MOVED**, K. Tolsdorf **SECONDED** a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m.  
**MOTION CARRIES 7:0.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Katherine Tolsdorf,  
Columbia Board of Education Vice Chairman