

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

February 6, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes Horace W. Porter School Cafetorium

Board Members Present: Christopher Lent-Chairman, James Chakulski, David Crim, Kathy Tolsdorf – Vice Chairman, Lisa Napolitano

Board Members Absent: Karin Vertefeuille, Linette Dooley

Others Present: Lol Fearon-Superintendent, Barbara Wilson-Director of Student Services, Alyssa Gwinnell- Principal, Craig Huntington, Gary Littlefield, and Karen Woodward

I. **Call to Order** - Chairman Christopher Lent called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 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.
No comments were received.

IV. **Presentation**

Stakeholders support the district's challenging programs and are committed to the vision and mission.

- 2017-2018 Budget Presentation - There will be an opportunity for public input during the presentation.

Superintendent L. Fearon provided a PowerPoint presentation outlining the initial draft budget for 2017-2018. The school budget is currently at a 2.51% increase over the 2016-2017 budget. High school costs are projected to be down by 16% over last year. There are no proposals to increase staffing at H.W. Porter. One paraprofessional position will be eliminated due to a student aging out of Porter. Some of the items administrators focused on while preparing the budget include supporting the continuation of maintaining and improving current programs including co-teaching, improving student success and a commitment to class size. The budget supports a focus on integration of technology. Preschool revisions are underway for 2017-2018 which include the implementation of a full day preschool class. There will continue to be half day sessions as well.

Several factors that contribute to the budget include an increase in non-certified staff salaries, employee benefits and tuition as well as an increase in anticipated costs to the Town for magnet school students.

Reductions are expected in the following line items: professional services; occupational and physical therapy services and pupil transportation.

Our magnet school enrollment is currently at 51 students. Towns are carrying more of the burden to support statewide programs due to reductions in funding previously received from the State.

Enrollment projections for 2017-18 are approximately 413 students at H.W. Porter.

A.Gwinnell said kindergarten pre-enrollments are at 30 students. L. Fearon said projections indicate between 38-42 Kindergarteners for next year.

C. Lent asked for questions or comments from the audience. No questions or comments were received.

V. 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 January 3, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes*
- b) *Approval of Payment of Bills*
- c) *Approval of Co-Curricular Appointment to National Junior Honor Society, Brigid Keenan*
- d) *Approval – Revision of School Secretary Job Description*
- e) *Approval of Appointment of Mrs. Tammy Nye to School Secretarial Position*
- f) *Acceptance of Resignation from Ms. Kari VanOstrand*

D. Crim MOVED, L. Napolitano SECONDED to approve items a-f of the Action Consent Items. MOTION CARRIES 5:0.

VI. Action Items – Discuss and Act Upon

- a) *2017-2018 Budget Approval Timeline*

K. Tolsdorf MOVED, J. Chakulski SECONDED to approve the 2017-2017 Budget Timeline as presented. MOTION CARRIES 5:0.

b) *Approval of Superintendent's Mid-Year Evaluation 2016-2017* – L. Fearon is pleased with the emphasis on a public and transparent process and the relationship and thought that goes into the process.

K. Tolsdorf MOVED, L. Napolitano SECONDED to approve the 2016-2017 Superintendent's Mid-Year Evaluation. MOTION CARRIES 5:0.

VII. Reports of Board Committee

- Policy – The Policy Subcommittee will meet on 3/6/17 most likely prior to 6:30 p.m.
- Budget – No additional information was presented.
- Teaching and Learning – No information was presented.
- Ad hoc Committee on Future Needs – L. Fearon has been in touch with Eastconn concerning development of on-line surveys. The Ad hoc committee plans to meet with an Eastconn representative in the near future. L. Fearon has been meeting with team leaders, grade level teams, certified and non-certified union members to answer their questions concerning future needs.

VIII. Correspondence/Communications

- NSBA- School Boards as Stewards – This interesting article was written by a former Connecticut Superintendent, George Goens.
- Smith United – Chronicle Newspaper Picture – The Chronicle picture features one of our students. C. Lent said EO's United program is very successful and well represented. There are numerous typical peers who participate.

IX. Board of Education Upcoming Meetings

- *Future Meeting Dates:*
 - February 15, 2017 – Budget Subcommittee Meeting, 6:30, LMC Conference Room
 - February 27, 2017 – Public Hearing and Special Meeting, 7:00 p.m., H.W.P. Cafetorium
 - March 6, 2017, Policy Subcommittee (time to be determined) Budget Subcommittee, 6:30 p.m., LMC Conference Room
 - March 6, 2017 Regular Board of Education Meeting 7:30 p.m., H.W. P. Cafeteria
 - March 15, 2017 – Board of Selectmen and BOE Budget Presentations, 7:00 p.m. Yeoman's Hall
 - April 3, 2017, - Budget Subcommittee Meeting, 6:30 LMC Conference Room
 - April 3, 2017 - Regular Board of Education Meeting 7:30 p.m., H.W. P. Cafeteria
 - April 19, 2017 – Budget Public Hearing, 7:00 p.m., Yeoman's Hall

X. Superintendent's Report

- Update on Joint BOE/Town Maintenance Facility – L. Fearon reported there has been terrific communication from Mark Walter, Town Administrator. A revised cost saving plan has been proposed. Instead of creating a workshop at the back of the school, the Town proposes creating a maintenance area in the existing old fire house.
The trash bins at the back of the school will be covered with an awning type structure to address potential water run-off issues. Discussions have occurred concerning revamping the school entrance during the renovation process. The school parking area is slated for repaving and this would be a good time to consider options.
- Superintendent’s Annual Evaluation Document – BOE members thanked C. Lent for his proactive work on the document noting they are ahead of schedule.

XI. Future Regular and Subcommittee Agenda Items (Tentative)

a) *Budget 2017-2018 –*

XII. Columbia Board of Education Member Remarks

The future needs committee will be meeting within the next few weeks. L. Fearon is in contact with the Willington Superintendent who has completed a comparative report of per pupil expenditures over the last five years.

D. Crim thanked Administration for their prompt and appropriate response concerning recent events.

XIII. Executive Session – Motion to adjourn to Executive Session to:

a) *Discuss a matter of student discipline that may include confidential student information protected under FERPA, and*

b) *Discuss a personnel matter regarding the health of an employee.*

L. Napolitano MOVED, D. Crim SECONDED to enter into executive session at 8:15 p.m.

L. Napolitano MOVED, D. Crim SECONDED to leave executive session at leave executive session and adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m. MOTION CARRIES 5:0.

XIV. Adjournment

L. Napolitano MOVED, D. Crim SECONDED to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m.
MOTION CARRIES 5:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Tolsdorf,
Vice Chairperson/Secretary