



BLOOMFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION – SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday, February 18, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Bloomfield Board of Education

1133 Blue Hills Avenue

Board Room

Attendance: D. Harris, Chair Present
D. Bolton, Vice Chair Present
P. Davis, Secretary Present
R. Ike Present
H. Frydman Present
L. Easmon Present
T. Moore Present

Also Present: J. Thompson, Superintendent
W. Guzman, Chief Operations Officer
S. McCann, Chief Academic Officer
B. Silver, Assistant Superintendent of Accountability and Performance
J. Robinson, Director of Technology/Human Resource Coordinator
E. Pierce, District Grant Specialist
D. Greco, Director of Accounting
D. Moleti, Principal, Bloomfield High School

1. Establishment of a Quorum and Call to Order

D. Harris determined a quorum was present and the Bloomfield Board of Education Regular meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All rose to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Opening Statement

Patricia Davis, Secretary, welcomed all attendees. The purpose and process of the Board of Education meeting was stated.

4. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting – January 14, 2020

A motion was made by D. Bolton and seconded by R. Ike for the Bloomfield Board of Education to approve the minutes from the January 14, 2020 regular board meeting, as presented.

The motion passed unanimously.

5. Recognitions

A. Students – Rotary Student of the Month

Dr. James Thompson, Superintendent recognized and congratulated the January and February Rotary Students of the Month. The January Rotary Student of



Month is a 6th grade student at Carmen Arace Intermediate School and the February Rotary Student of Month is an 8th grade student at Carmen Arace Middle School.

B. Parents and Community – Lions Club Peace Poster Contest

Ms. Sue Stocker introduced the two winners of the Lions Club Peace Poster contest and presented an award.

The Lions Club is one the largest service organization in the world. The Peace Poster Contest is an initiative that encourages children worldwide to express their vision of “peace” in the art realm.

Theme of this year’s peace poster contest was “Journey of Peace”.

6. Presentations

A. Student Representative Report – Bloomfield High School

The student representatives from Bloomfield High School (BHS) shared a PowerPoint presentation with members of the Board with reports on academics and recent events at the high school.

Some recent highlights include the celebration of Black History Month with a performance on February 29th, SAT preparation for high school juniors, BHS Lecture Series exploring various career paths, and a showcase of the winter concert.

The student athletes has been very successful with the high school basketball teams heading to the playoffs, the boys and girls track teams winning the Class “S” Championship, and the first home game for the Unified Sports team.

Upcoming events include a performance by the Voices of Inspiration on March 6th at the First Cathedral Church and a field trip to Harlem on April 6th.

7. Public/PTO Comment

Kenneth McClary, 2 Wedgewood Drive

Kenneth McClary thanked Dr. Thompson for the response to his inquiry about the budget. He inquired if there was a copy of the proposed budget to follow along with this evening’s presentation. Mr. McClary asked about the data on the Next Generation Accountability report in EdSight (from the State Department of Education). He stated the district is trending downwards and asked if the district is focusing on Tier I instruction. He also noted the data showed a high number of suspensions at the high school and the trend causes him concern.

Mr. Harris noted for record that tonight is the first presentation of the budget to the Board of Education and the document will be available online to view following the meeting.



Marianne Stone, 12 Valley View Drive

Marianne Stone addressed concerns with the Middle School and her child being bullied. She further shared she has a good rapport with Dr. Ellis but is concerned about not being communicated with following an incident involving her son.

8. Superintendent's Report

A. Black History Month Activities

Dr. Thompson reported on upcoming events in observance of Black History Month. Bloomfield schools will be hosting a variety of activities focused on the culture and contributions of African Americans throughout US History.

9. Old Business

A. Policy for a Second Reading

1. Conduct and Discipline - 5131

Mr. William Guzman, Chief Operations Officer, presented a second reading of policy 5131 – Conduct and Discipline.

This policy was reviewed by the Policy Committee at meetings on October 29, 2019 and for a second reading on January 28, 2020. The initial reading of this policy was presented to the full Board on November 12, 2019.

The revisions to this policy are in compliance with Public Act 19-91, Section 9. The edits on page C of the policy show that an expellable offense must be both (1) a violation of Board policy; and (2) be either seriously disruptive of the education process or endangering persons or property.

A motion was made by D. Bolton and seconded by R. Ike for the Bloomfield Board of Education to approve the adoption of policy 5131 – Conduct and Discipline.

The motion passed unanimously.

B. Revision to the 2020-2021 Academic Calendar

Mr. William Guzman shared a revised 2020-2021 academic calendar with the Board. The revised calendar moved the June 9, 2021 teacher professional development day to two half days, October 21, 2020 and March 10, 2021. The June 2021 professional development date was moved as it was contrary to the Bloomfield Educational Education Association contract.

A motion was made by D. Bolton and seconded by R. Ike for the Bloomfield Board of Education to approve the revised 2020-2021 academic calendar, as presented.

The motion passed unanimously.



10. New Business

A. Presentation of Superintendent's Proposed 2020-2021 Budget

James Thompson, Jr., Superintendent presented the 2020-2021 Superintendent's Proposed Budget. Dr. Thompson shared that this spending plan is a correction year for the school district.

Dr. Thompson noted the budget addresses high needs issues identified Bloomfield classrooms and compliance with special education requirements that needs to be remedied.

The 2020-2021 budget proposal of \$47.67 million represents an overall increase of \$4.25 million, or 9.78% over the current-year budget.

The 2020-2021 key drivers are rising costs in tuition for students with special needs and magnet school students, health insurance, staff salaries, and transportation.

Dr. Thompson noted the budget provides resources to support student achievement.

Mr. Guzman introduced a summary of the Superintendent's proposed budget and reviewed the major cost drivers.

Over Dr. Thompson's ten year tenure, the average increase per year is 2.19%. The first four years, he requested a 0% increase.

Mr. Guzman reviewed the change (in dollars and percentages) on slide 8 of the presentation for all major accounts. He noted the major cost drivers as salaries (4.5%), employee benefits (2.53%), and tuition (1.38%) on slide 9.

The two major transportation providers will have contractual increases in 2020-2021 of 5.5% for Dattco and 2.5% for Access. The bus providers agreed to a 0% increase in 2019-2020 to provide relief to the budget. By contract, the certified staff Bargaining Units will also have salary increases (BEA 1.7% and BAA 2%). Also included in the proposed budget are the recommendations for thirty (30) new positions, as outlined in slide 10 that will address high needs and special education compliance.

Mr. Guzman noted page 7 with the Revenue Summary for 2020-2021. He also pointed out page 70, the Executive Summary that reports on the expenditures by the fourteen major accounts. In addition, Mr. Guzman shared information relative to the new certified and non-certified positions, as detailed on pages 71 and 73 of the proposed budget book.

Within the Executive Summary, each major account section has a description as to why the account has an anticipated increase or decrease for 2020-2021.



Mr. Guzman stated that the entire budget can be reviewed by line item starting on page 92 of the booklet.

There will be special meeting on February 27, 2020 for public comment.

Individual workshops will be scheduled for all Board of Education members to review the budget and ask questions.

B. Policy for an Initial Reading

1. Adult Education - 6200

Dr. Bethany Silver, Assistant Superintendent of Accountability and Performance shared an initial reading of Policy 6200 – Adult Education.

This policy was presented to the Policy Committee on January 18, 2020 and aligns with Connecticut General Statutes 10-221 (B).

This is a good practice policy and was recommended by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE). The policy notes that no tuition shall be charged for residents who enroll in adult education classes for elementary and high school completion, Americanization and United States Citizenship, and English for adult with limited English proficiency.

11. CABE Updates

Don Harris reported that the Hartford Area Superintendents Association (HASA), Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), and Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) will be jointly hosting a Legislative Breakfast on February 20, 2020 at the State Capitol.

Mr. Harris attended the 2020 National School Board Association (NSBA) Advocacy Institute in Washington D.C. in early February. School board members from across the country gathered on Capitol Hill to influence the new legislative agenda. One central topic was special education costs.

CABE Day on the Hill will be held on March 11, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. at the Bushnell.

12. Board Comments

R. Ike noted he attended the Regional Legislative Breakfast on January 24, 2020. Informative issues, such as special education costs, were shared with local senators and representatives. Mr. Ike also noted several Black History Month events he attended.

H. Frydman congratulated the Lions Club Peace Poster contest winners and the Rotary Students of the Month. He encouraged members of the community to participate in the Board meetings.

L. Easmon thanked the audience for coming out. She noted she will be studying the proposed budget. She encouraged the community to review it as well. Ms. Easmon commended the Rotary Students of the Month and the student athletes on their successes.



T. Moore shared his appreciation of the teachers and principals for the number of events in observance of Black History Month.

P. Davis shared that an anonymous letter was received by the Board and stated it is important to not send letters anonymously. She noted that the district has to concentrate on the Kindergarten classroom and to catch students early. Ms. Davis stated the importance of early literacy and her desire to make sure young students are getting an appropriate head start. She stated an effort has to be made to ensure teachers are getting support, especially in Kindergarten. Ms. Davis referenced the anonymous letter and shared that it is important kids are getting a quality education and the curriculum should be comparable to districts in surrounding towns. Ms. Davis stated some elementary schools were in need of computers and she reached out to Senator Murphy's office through a program 15 computers were donated to Bloomfield. As Equity Chair of ABC Ms. Davis provided books to Bloomfield schools through Literacy Café with a grant.

D. Bolton congratulated the students who received recognitions. She also shared that she attended the opening of the professional development on February 18, 2020 and was very impressed with Dr. Foster's speech. Ms. Delores mentioned the budget process is very important of the Board and she takes it very seriously.

D. Harris noted the proposed budget will still need to go before the Town Council and stated money can only be stretched so far.

13. Adjournment

At 8:20 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by R. Ike and seconded by T. Moore.

The motion passed unanimously.

D. Harris, Chair

J. Thompson, Ed. D., Superintendent