



Board of Education Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 13, 2020 at 7:00 P.M.
Virtual Meeting via Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87515264589?pwd=VWZsM1ZlNEdkYXdKTzEzdFA2RDNlZz09>

Meeting ID: 875 1526 4589

Passcode: 6LB7Jb

Dial In Number

(929) 205-6099

Meeting ID: 875 1526 4589 Passcode: 566651

Attendance: D. Harris, Chair	Present
D. Bolton, Vice Chair	Present
H. Frydman, Secretary	Present
R. Ike	Present
L. Easmon	Present
T. Moore	Present
F. Bogle-Assegai	Absent

Also Present: J. Thompson, Superintendent

W. Guzman, Chief Operations Officer

B. Silver, Assistant Superintendent of Accountability and Performance

S. McCann, Chief Academic Officer

J. Robinson, Director of Technology/Human Resource Coordinator

A.M. Cullinan, Curriculum Consultant

W. Shepard-Bannish, Director of Student Support Services

E. Pierce, District Grants Specialist

W. Casper, Director of Facilities/Transportation Coordinator

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 7:04 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All rose to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Opening Statement

Howard Frydman, 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 – September 15, 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 September 15, 2020 regular Board meeting, as presented.

The motion passed unanimously.



5. Recognitions

A. Staff – Recognition of new Adult Education Director, Mr. Rodney Powell

Dr. Bethany Silver, Assistant Superintendent of Accountability and Performance introduced the new Director of Adult Education, Mr. Rodney Powell.

B. Community – Recognition of United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut

Dr. James Thompson, Jr., Superintendent of Schools recognized the United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut for the donation of school supplies.

6. Public/PTO Comment

Lynn Weisel, 17 Maple Edge Drive

Question asked about location of previous minutes. Krista Cherry will follow up with her.

7. Superintendent's Report

A. Superintendent's Update

Dr. James Thompson, Jr. provided an update to the Board of Education members on the status of the schools. Dr. Thompson noted at this point in the school year, we have a renewed focus on academics and assessment. Work is being done to update the district's three-year Plan of Excellence to reflect expectations and benchmarks for academic growth, student achievement, and African-American curriculum.

Dr. Thompson gave reports in the areas of local health data trends, technology, personal protective equipment, transportation, meals, and communication. He shared the district's next steps:

- To review the district's contingency plan to respond to any scenario in which a school or the entire district would have to transition to a five-day Enhanced Distance Learning Plan.
- To have principals to review school contingency plans again to ensure their staff and students are fully prepared if a decision is made to transition.

L. Easmon inquired if the district is considering going full-time in-person after the holidays. Dr. Thompson stated no decision has been made to transition at this time.

B. Health and Safety Update

Wendy Shepard-Bannish, Director of Student Support Services and COVID-19 Liaison reported on local and state COVID-19 positivity rates. The CT State Department of Education (CSDE) monitors data and reports on their webpage.

The state has reported that of the positivity cases reported, 421 are students and 143 are staff members.



In correspondence with the West Hartford/Bloomfield Health District, the local data indicates the district is appropriately meeting the health and safety needs in a Hybrid model. Hybrid models allows Bloomfield to adhere to the secondary factors recommended by the CSDE and allow for appropriate contact tracing without closing programs.

Bloomfield Public Schools had three positive cases with no close contact.

L. Easmon inquired about the half day schedule and why it is being utilized.

D. Bolton asked if there is a percentage point that would cause us to move to a distance learning model. The state has provided metrics but has not given a definitive number relative to positivity rates. Bloomfield is currently at 12.1.

She also asked what is accounting for the differences in Bloomfield's and the state's data points. Mrs. Shepard-Bannish stated it was a difference of one day and shows how quickly data can change.

D. Harris inquired if a positive case rolls off the list? Wendy Shepard-Bannish noted the weekly number is based on the week's data.

C. Technology Update

John Robinson, Director of Technology/Human Resources Coordinator provided an update on the district's technology goals.

The district has 1,100 Chromebooks on back order and are expected in November. On October 13, 2020, 400 Chromebooks from another vendor arrived at the Board of Education and will be distributed.

The district distributed 48 internet hotspots and received vouchers for one-year Comcast Essentials program.

IT department installed 150 web cameras for teachers. There is a possible donation from Pratt and Whitney of used laptops.

L. Easmon asked how we will prioritize the distribution Chromebooks. The IT department asked principals to provide a list of high and moderate needs. The new Chromebooks can replace those that are considered technically obsolete.

H. Frydman inquired about grants. It was noted that Elisa Pierce is the District Grants Specialist and monitors available grants.

D. Financial Report – September 2020

Mr. William Guzman, Chief Operations Office reported on the financials as of September 2020. He noted that 20.74% of the adopted budget has yet to be expended or encumbered.



Mr. Guzman noted on the one-page report, major account 01 Certified Salaries is over expended as they have yet to book receivables for Special Education out-of-town services we provide.

On the one-page summary, 03 Employee Benefits, the balance is because the district has yet to make payments for the pension and OPEB.

Pupil Transportation shows a balance of \$2.9 million because the funds for Dattco and Access have yet to be encumbered.

Major account, 08 Tuition shows a balance as the funds for out-of-district special education tuitions and magnet school tuitions have yet to be encumbered.

L. Easmon referred to page 5 and top of page 6, inquired how the numbers are totaled. Mr. Guzman clarified there are 3 subaccounts, if added they total the major account. He noted the subaccounts are listed above the total of the major account.

8. Old Business

A. Hybrid/Enhanced Distance Learning Update

Ms. Stacey McCann, Chief Academic Officer provided an update to the Board members on the status of the Hybrid and Enhanced Distance Learning. Ms. McCann shared strengths and areas of focus identified by instructional leaders for each of the schools. Our goal is to have 100% student engagement.

Enrollment data, strengths, areas of focus and anecdotal information was shared for each school.

Ms. McCann shared information relative to the next level of work for the district, such as strengthening the Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI) process. Teachers are becoming more comfortable with technology use and the district continues to incorporate social/emotional curriculum.

H. Frydman asked if compared to a regular school year, are we able to determine if students are on-track or regressing. Dr. Thompson noted the district will be conducting several key assessments to assess the students prescribed progress. The district will share the results of these assessments with the Board.

L. Easmon inquired about the small number of bus riders and if the number has increased. The ridership has stabilized. The district is waiting for the state to respond if the Executive Order for bus contracts extends into 2020-2021 and then bus routes can be reevaluated.

D. Bolton asked to can hear a report on the fluctuating numbers between Hybrid and Distance Learning at the next Board meeting.



9. New Business

A. 2020-2021 Alliance Grant Approval

Elisa Pierce, Distract Grants Specialist noted this is a yearly approval as required by the Alliance Grant. This grant provided additional supports at the schools. This year there was an increase to the amount.

A motion was made by D. Bolton and seconded by R. Ike for the Bloomfield Board of Education to approve the Alliance and Priority School District Grant Application for Bloomfield in the amount of \$1,290,338 as presented.

The motion passed unanimously.

B. Alliance Districts School Buildings Grant

William Guzman, Chief Operations Officer, presented information on the Alliance District School Buildings Grant. The grant is to help districts with facilities upkeep. The intent of this program is to fund projects that would not otherwise qualify for school construction grant projects under state law.

The grant includes projects such as calibration of outside air filters/sensors, replacement of promethean boards, and repair damaged snow guards at building entrances.

A motion was made by D. Bolton and seconded by R. Ike for the Bloomfield Board of Education to approve the General Improvements to Alliance Districts' School Building Grant Application in the amount of \$477,600, as presented.

The motion passed unanimously.

10. CABA Updates

Don Harris confirmed the November CABA Convention has been canceled. There will be a one-day convention for the spring.

11. Board Comments

R. Ike stated that Mr. Robinson gave a good staffing update last month and would like to get a copy of that. Mr. Ike encouraged the district to continue the good work during this time.

L. Easmon welcomed Mr. Powell to the district. She praised the physical education and music teachers for getting the students engaged.

T. Moore congratulated Mr. Powell as the new Director of Adult Education. He thanked Mrs. Shepard-Bannish for the health and safety update, so he can share information. He reminded the community to vote at the election on November 3, 2020.

H. Frydman commended the district on making it to October 13th. The Board members miss the school events. Essential staff has done an excellent job and applauded them.



D. Bolton thanked Dr. Thompson and his team for their presentations. Looking forward to the work under the new Adult Education Director. Ms. Bolton encouraged young people to vote.

D. Harris echoed the comments of his colleagues and encouraged people to vote on November 3rd. He welcomed Mr. Powell.

12. Adjournment

At 8:39 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by R. Ike and seconded by H. Frydman.

The motion passed unanimously.

H. Frydman, Secretary

J. Thompson, Ed. D., Superintendent