

BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
Communication Committee Minutes

DATE: January 9, 2019

LOCATION: Branford High School Lower Media Center
Branford, CT

SUBJECT: Communication Committee

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ATTENDANCE

HERE	ATTENDEE	AFFILIATION
Y	Joanne Borrus, Committee Chair	Board of Education
Y	Michael Krause, CIC	Board of Education
N	Maria Ehrhardt	Board of Education
Y	Ellen Michaels	Board of Education
Y	John O'Connor	Board of Education
N	Dawn Perrotti	Board of Education
Y	John Prins	Board of Education
Y	Elizabeth Regan	Board of Education
Y	Shannen Sharkey	Board of Education
Y	Hamlet M. Hernandez, Superintendent	Central Office
Y	Rachel Sexton, Assistant Superintendent	Central Office

Others present:

BUSINESS ITEMS

ITEM DESCRIPTION

CALL

01 Meeting was called to order at 6:07 P.M. by Committee Chair, Joanne Borrus.

APPROVE MINUTES

02 Motion (Michaels/Krause) to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2018 Communication Committee Meeting.
Approved Unanimously

DISCUSSION ITEMS

03

A. Website Update/Future Meeting Locations

Superintendent Hernandez stated that he wanted to start by providing a follow-up on the website. He stated that at the last meeting, Mrs. Mingrone, indicated that training would take place for her staff and it has. In addition, principals have been oriented and we have started to move content from the old website to the new one. Next month, although it would not be live, we will be able to show it to the Board so they could see how it is starting to materialize as we start the migration.

Superintendent Hernandez also discussed having future meetings at different school locations. He stated that he and Mr. Krause looked into changing the locations and there are no restrictions from a posting perspective. The posting piece has to do with the date of the meeting not the location. This was verified by the Town Clerk. So the Board has a chance to discuss and check their calendars and also so that they can look at the order that they want to do the meetings in. Superintendent Hernandez continued by stating that February is primarily a budget month. March has the Annual Art Show and ELL Night, and he would to coordinate it so that we are already in the same buildings. This can be worked on with Mrs. Borrus through her committee, it can be announced at the Full Board Meeting with a follow-up in Communication Committee. Superintendent Hernandez stated that he would like to put out a communication with parents.

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B. WIS Construction Project Update

Superintendent Hernandez starting by saying that this is a general update as to where we are in the process. We are currently erecting steel for the Central Office portion of the building. The goal of the firm is to pour concrete on slab by the end of January. He stated that today would have been a perfect day to pour. He went on to explain that once you get to a certain temperature there are many things that prevent us from pouring concrete. He continued by saying that he wanted the Board to know that we are progressing. The weather, other than the rain, has been cooperative. We lost seven days due to rain. This does not translate to being seven days behind schedule, it just means that we lost seven days of iron workers erecting steel. The steel should be done by the end of this month. Hopefully tomorrow or Friday the beam will be put inside the building for the kids to sign. Raeanne Reynolds is aware that this is happening and is working to have her staff and students sign the beam. Superintendent Hernandez said that he asked the construction firm if historically these are big ceremonies and they said that it is an iron worker's tradition and not usually huge like a ribbon cutting or ground breaking but none-the-less on the day they erect the beam, we will live stream the event so that the kids can see it. Superintendent Hernandez said that he will let the Board, Commissioners and other Dignitaries know when this will take place so they can attend if they'd like. It will take place inside the fence and on-lookers will be on the outside of the fence for liability reasons. It will be exciting to see the kids' faces. The beam will be the last piece to be erected, which is pretty significant.

Superintendent Hernandez said that he and Chris Toussaint, from Fusco, spent 40 minutes with WIS staff, giving an update and answering questions. There was also a section called "the rumor mill" to address what is out there that people are talking about and to give accurate information. At this meeting there was a general level of excitement and it was very successful meeting. Superintendent Hernandez stated that he hopes to replicate it several more times as the year nears to a close.

Superintendent Hernandez also spoke about this time last year and the planning of the public outreach sessions surrounding transportation, the nurses station and reception area. We now need to start preparing the parent community for Phase 2, which means this summer the gym will be abated and not available, which is a big part of Phase 2. Also, important is parents understanding that their child and the students of WIS, will be part of a transition this time next year. Meaning they will literally be going from one building into a new building, part of the building gets isolated and becomes a huge containment area. Superintendent Hernandez also stated that he feels it is important to replicate what we did last year with outreach. The content will be different but the outreach should be replicated. This is an important part of planning.

Superintendent Hernandez stated that the abatement that we have done with the EPA and the State and periodic air quality testing over the break came back positive, meaning that we can occupy the building.

Superintendent Hernandez finished his report by showing the Board pictures of what is happening at the site. He showed pictures of the Central Office area, the bus loop, the main entrance for students and a view of the three stories. He concluded his report by saying that Raeanne Reynolds and her staff should be amended for orchestrating drop off and arrival.

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B. WIS Construction Project Update (Continued)

Among the Board's questions and comments during this section were: Will the tennis courts be replaced and would students and teachers be asked to come and share their experience with the change management piece. Mr. Prins also stated that he would like to bookmark a presentation for the next CABA Convention. Mrs. Regan stated that through her own experiences, she felt that the drop off was working very well, security guards are amazing. She also recognized the presence seen outside and the safety by the sheer number of personnel, and the overall effort to have teachers visible. She noted that the kids don't notice that its exceptional, it is part of the culture which she attributed to the Core Four initiative.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments made at tonight's meeting.

03

ADJOURNMENT

Committee Chair, Joanne Borrus., adjourned the meeting at 6:38 PM.

The next Communication Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 13, 2019,
at 6:30 PM Meeting at Branford High School, Lower Media Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Regan
Secretary

Prepared by,
Kerry Eyrich