

BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
Communication Committee Minutes

DATE: March 13, 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 (via telephone)	Board of Education
N	Maria Ehrhardt	Board of Education
N	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
N	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 6:04 P.M. by Committee Chair, Joanne Borrus.

APPROVE MINUTES

02 MOTION (Prina/Regan) to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2019 Communication Committee Meeting.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

03 **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

A. Walsh Intermediate School (WIS) Project Update

Superintendent Hernandez started his report by showing pictures of the progress taking place at WIS:

Among the pictures shown were:

- A storm drain line being installed.
- The south elevation concrete slab of the administrative offices. Superintendent Hernandez stated that the concrete slab on grade for the entire building has been completed and the second floor light weight concrete has been poured. On the third floor there are two pours left and hopefully they will be done tomorrow.
- The metal track framing installation for walls and studs. Superintendent Hernandez stated that we will actually start to see partitions go up in the month of April.
- A concrete slab from earlier in the month. Superintendent Hernandez noted that this slab is now complete.
- A finished concrete pour. Superintendent Hernandez stated that this gives an idea of what the concrete looks like when it is done.
- Fire hydrant installation. Superintendent Hernandez stated that this is a big step as we will be occupying the new wing this time next year and all safety features need to be in place.

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A. WIS Construction Project Update (Continued)

Superintendent Hernandez continued his update by stating that early next week the Board will receive some background information on furniture, fixtures and equipment (F, F & E). There will be a joint meeting between the BOE and the Public Building Commission to look at all of the information regarding the F, F & E. Superintendent Hernandez asked the Project Team to put together documents so that the BOE members can come to Central Office at their leisure to look at prior to the joint meeting as it is such a voluminous package it cannot be done in one BOE meeting. Superintendent Hernandez stated that we are under a tight time-line and this is not something that the Board can vote on without looking it over. Superintendent Hernandez stated that he encourages the BOE to look the material over as it covers the furniture that will be in classrooms. He reminded the Board that the classrooms are being built without mill work, this was a decision that was made early on so that areas will be very modular with teachers having room for storage. Superintendent Hernandez stated that he would be remiss if he didn't mention the great work that Tom Pisani, Keith Spaar and Donna Mingrone have done. Superintendent Hernandez finished his update by stating that the Board will need to take action by voting to approve the SCG 042 Form for the F, F & E package to move forward to go out to bid in a timely process so that we can procure equipment, receive it, inventory it and start putting it into the new building. He stated that everything is carefully sequenced. Financially we have submitted our second reimbursement, so far we have received one reimbursement from the State and once we receive the second reimbursement we can then submit a request for the third payment. Superintendent Hernandez concluded by saying that we are on schedule and the State says that they will send reimbursement within 45 days, but he cautioned they are sometimes a little bit lagging.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Hernandez stated that he had a few public service announcements. He started by saying that today we had 69 students take the exams for the Seal of Bi-Literacy, which is phenomenal. He stated that he wanted to acknowledge the work that Rachel Sexton, Ashley Marinaro, Kim Volkens, Jennifer Tucker and Marian Montano, have done collaboratively to identify students. Rachel Sexton added that the District offered the opportunity to any student who might be able to test to a certain level of proficiency required in a language other than English. She continued by saying that the Team did an incredible job communicating with families letting them know about the opportunity and setting up the tests. There were two different tests depending on the language. Some were computer based and some were by phone call. One test that we are using is the same at the collegiate level that is used to become a translator. She stated that it was an interesting process, it was exciting to have kids involved with it. She concluded by saying that she hoped to report the results back to the Board soon.

Superintendent Hernandez stated that the breakdown for the tests was as follows.

- 47 – Spanish
- 2 – Arabic
- 5 – French
- 23 – Latin (written)
- 1 each – Italian, Albanian, Ukrainian and Nepalese

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (Continued)

Among the questions that Board members asked were:

- What was the grade level? The answer was Juniors and Seniors
- What is the norm with other schools? This is new to the State, there really aren't any norms yet.

Superintendent Hernandez continued his report by stating that Rachel Sexton and our team has worked on encouraging students to take the AP Exams with 13 out of 41 students availing themselves to take it. This is the first year that based on socio economic status students won't have to pay for the test. He stated that his was a good bench mark for us and we will continue to monitor this as we have a fair amount of kids taking AP classes we would like to see the AP exam rate increase.

Superintendent Hernandez continued his report by stated that the BHS Hockey Team prevailed in the semi-finals 6-1 and will be going for the State Title on Monday.

Superintendent Hernandez discussed the Annual Woman in Engineering Program that was held today at BHS. He stated that there was a hub of activity for young woman at BHS. He observed a group of individuals under the direction of Mrs. Talpey's husband (a construction professional) and his colleagues doing the calculation to set frames, building walls and do the mathematical layouts. This was achieved by giving students problems to work together collaboratively. On the other side of the Media Center, Fusco Corporation was explaining sustainability on major construction projects as well as finding electronics on prints for different buildings and also giving students the experience of reading prints. This was led by Fusco's sustainability person for the WIS Project, Nora Rizzo. Ms. Rizzo also has a social work background. She spoke with the young ladies about how she made a career change. Chris Toussaint from Fusco also worked with the students. Superintendent Hernandez concluded by saying it was great experience for the kids and overall was a great day, even though attendance was a bit lower because of testing.

Superintendent Hernandez finished his report by saying that the next full regular BOE meeting will be held at Mary R. Tisko School on March 20th and the full regular BOE meeting will be held on April 24th at John B. Sliney School.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

04

ADJOURNMENT

Committee Chair, Joanne Borrus., adjourned the meeting at 6:25 PM.

The next Communication Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 10, 2019,
at 6:00 PM Meeting at Branford High School, Lower Media Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Regan
Secretary

Prepared by,
Kerry Eyrich