

**NORWICH BOARD OF EDUCATION
Norwich, Connecticut**

**APPROVED MINUTES OF:
February 14, 2017
REGULAR BOARD MEETING – BOARD OF EDUCATION
KELLY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM**

PRESENT: Aaron Daniels, Dennis Slopak, Angelo Yeitz Jr, Dr. Yvette Jacaruso and Joyce Werden.

ABSENT: Susan Thomas, Robert Aldi, Margaret Becotte and Kevin Saythany

STAFF: Abby I. Dolliver, Superintendent
Dr. Thomas J. Baird, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment
Athena Nagel, Business Administrator
Mary Donnelly, Director of Student Services & Special Education
Amber Longolucco, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent
Administrators, Principals and Teachers

MEDIA: The Day, The Norwich Bulletin, WICH/WCTY/WNLC

Aaron Daniels called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and a quorum was declared.

Mr. Daniels asked Angelo Yeitz to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: Made by Dennis Slopak (seconded by Joyce Werden) to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2017 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON:

Mr. Daniels reported on his recent visit to Uncas Network School. He noted that several Board members were not present due to illness and/or family obligations. He asked the Board to observe a moment of silence for Margaret Becotte's daughter who recently passed away.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Susan Goldman of 35 Sherwood Lane urged the Board to vote yes to move forward the Facilities Project of renovating four schools as new. The Board needs to invest in the schools to increase property values and attract families. She asked that they give the public the opportunity to vote.

Sheila Hayes of 288 Central Avenue asked the Board to reconsider the facilities motion in an effort to lower taxes by consolidating schools. She thanked Dr. Yvette Jacaruso and Joyce Werden for attending the Dr. Grace Sawyer Jones event. Upcoming Empty Bowls events to benefit the St. Vincent de Paul Place: 3/2/-Integrated Day Charter School & 4/28-Three Rivers Community College.

Christie Gilluly of 39 E. Town Street, a former NPS employee, thanked the Facility Review Committee for all their efforts. Colchester Public Schools is a local example of how consolidated schools work

well. She warned the Board not to consider the “mega-school” option due to the fact that 2,750 children would be in one building at the same time. She urged the Board to reconsider option D to renovate as new four existing schools so that the citizens of Norwich would still get that community feel that they desire in their schools.

Heather Romanski of 297 Scotland Road urged the Board to carefully consider how they proceed with the Facilities Review project in regard to current magnet themes, safety, and the empty school buildings that would be left behind.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT:

Mrs. Dolliver reported on:

- Enrollment
- 2017-2018 NPS School Calendar
- Center for School Change team in the district
- School Based Health Centers
- Invitation to Griswold BOE meeting 3-13-17 (CT School Finance Project)
- Senator Murphy visit to NPS
- Norwich student art work display at City Hall
- Budget Information Forum: April 20, 2017 at 10:00 am & 6:00 pm at Kelly Middle School
- Gathering of Hearts & Minds-Uncas School-January 13, 2017
- 32nd Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration-NFA
- Nine certified staff retiring at the end of this school year (Connie Labasi, Mary Ellen Blanchard, Mary Cholewa, Gwynne Griffin, Susan Ferland, Mary Redmond, Pat Ennis, Bonnie Easter & Leslie Cassinari)

Windham Technical High School Principal, Mark Ambruso spoke to the Board about adding Windham Tech as a high school option for Norwich students.

Thomas Dufort gave the Board an update on the Norwich Transition Academy.

Principal Donna Funk & Mahan Staff were recognized as one of four schools in Connecticut for the National Blue Ribbon Schools award as an Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing School.

Teacher, Regina Markovitz introduced four Kelly Middle School students (Nyasias Young, Eshoha Kadambaya, Zachary Morris and Chloe Rubin) who recently participated in a math competition at the Coast Guard Academy and are part of an afterschool club called Math Counts.

MOTION: Made by Dennis Slopak (seconded by Yvette Jacaruso) to approve the 2017-2018 school calendar. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Made by Joyce Werden (seconded by Yvette Jacaruso) to approve Windham Technical High School as an additional high school choice for students. Motion passed unanimously.

DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES:

Mayor Deb Hinchey spoke about the Facilities Review Committee in regards to why the committee was formed as well as the need to look at the renovation of aging school buildings as a cost savings to the City. She spoke about the long term savings the project would provide if four existing schools were renovated as new. The Board needs to invest in their schools to attract employable people making good wages to the city. The City supports the project and she urged the Board to move the project forward so that the people of the city can make their choice through the voting process.

COMMITTEES:**Facilities Review Committee**

Dennis Slopak spoke of the advantages to one main campus. The Department of Administrative Services has exclusions on the “renovate as new” option. He voted not to move the project forward at the last meeting because of the reimbursement rate and the cost to the City. He thinks the voters should be able to choose which option they want to proceed with. Aaron Daniels stated that the Board needs to think about which option best utilizes the funds available. He believes the “renovate as new” four existing schools best serves the students and the future generations of Norwich. Abby Dolliver stated that the Board needs to be very careful how it proceeds with another vote to make sure it is done legally. Joyce Werden & Yvette Jacaruso stated that they did not feel it was appropriate to revote on the issue with so few Board members present. Aaron Daniels stated that a Special Meeting will be held to discuss this further and vote on the project.

Policy Committee

The next Meeting is on February 28, 2017 at 4:00 pm in the Kelly Middle School community room. The following policies were presented for First Read:

- Policy#0000-District Vision, Mission and Goals
- Policy#4212.4-Health Examination
- Policy#6162.51-Student Privacy
- Policy#5114-Student Discipline
- Policy#6121-Non-Discrimination-Students
- Policy#5118.1(a)-Homeless Children and Youth
- Policy#-Policy & Administrative Regulations-Section 504 & Title II

MOTION: Made by Angelo Yeitz (seconded by Dennis Slopak) to vote on the following policies in one motion (#5119, #5115, #4134, #5541). Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Made by Angelo Yeitz (seconded by Joyce Werden) to approve the following policies: Policy#5119-Student Use of Computing System, Policy#5115-Confidentiality and Access to Student Records, Policy#4134-Social Media, Policy#5541-Fundraising Activities. Motion passed unanimously.

Budget/Expenditure Committee

Athena Nagel updated the Board on the Budget Expenditure meeting that was held prior to the Board meeting. She discussed the 2017/2018 Draft Budget including a 2.5% increase in NFA tuition, tuition paid to other schools, grants, Blue Cross costs as well as transportation and utility forecasts. There are now 50.33% of positions funded by grants.

Transportation Committee

Athena Nagel reported that there have been staff and substitute shortages at First Student due to the flu and stomach bug. The current contract with First Student will run through 2018 so future needs of the district will need to be considered and discussed.

Teacher Evaluation/Professional Learning Committee

Dr. Thomas Baird reported on the Professional Learning Survey, mid-year evaluations as well as a recruiting and retention sub-committee.

GRANT UPDATES:

Dr. Thomas Baird gave updates on:

- Extending Learning grant
- State Afterschool Grant
- Uncertainty of federal grants
- Clean Uniform Grant
- Food Corp Grant
- Community Foundation of Eastern CT-Summer Program Grant
- School building grants/repairs
- LEARN/MSAP grant

LIAISONS:**Integrated Day Charter School Liaison**

Joyce Werden reported that Sheila Hayes has joined the IDCS Board. The next meeting will be held on March 15, 2017.

Otis Library Liaison

Dr. Yvette Jacaruso reported that Director Robert Farwell is doing well following surgery. The recent Smithsonian exhibit that Otis Library hosted on evolution was well attended.

BOARD REPORTS:

Angelo Yeitz reported that he completed Ethics Training at his workplace.

MOTION: Made by Yvette Jacaruso (seconded by Joyce Werden) to adjourn the meeting.
Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angelo Yeitz Jr.

Angelo Yeitz, Jr.,
Secretary