Board of Education Regular Meeting  
October 8, 2019, 6:30 PM  
Middletown Common Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Members Present: Deborah Cain, Anita Dempsey-White, Chris Drake, Edward Ford, Sean King, Lisa Loomis, Cheryl McClellan, Jonathon Pulino, and Marilyn Rios

Others Present: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael Conner, Chief of School Operations and Communication Marco Gaylord, Chief of Administration Christine Bourne, Director of Pupil Services and Special Education Amy Clarke, Director of Technology Mike Skott, Director of Instructional Technology Michelle Gohagon, Director of Facilities Peter Staye, Manager of Transportation Mark Langton, Human Resources Representative Melaina Cossette, Finance & Resource Management Specialist Cheryl Walcott, Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Secretary Marcy Poppel, and fourteen (14) visitors.

Board Chair Drake called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM.

Chair Drake introduced the Board of Education’s new Student Representative Evan Davis, who is a senior at Middletown High School and will serve one year as the Student Representative.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

New Student Representative Evan Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION: Move to adopt the Agenda passed with a motion by Mr. Pulino and a second by Ms. Loomis — unanimous vote.

IV. DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

A. Recognition of Community Interview Committee for the Chief Academic Officer

Dr. Conner said this evening the Board of Education (BOE) will take action on the hiring a Chief Academic Officer (CAO). He shared the process, sharing the committee members who served on the hiring committee, which included more community member participation. They interviewed over 15 people. He asked the committee members in the audience to please stand and he thanked them for their time, dedication and willingness.

V. PUBLIC SESSION

Chair Drake explained the rules of Public Session.

No member of the audience addressed the Board.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Report of Student Representative

New Student Representative Evan Davis introduced himself and shared that he is a senior at Middletown High School. He shared upcoming activities which include MHS Spirit Week, door decorating, the Minority Student Coalition Homecoming Dinner, and the homecoming game and dance. Students are getting ready for the Pep Rally in November.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA
Chair Drake stated that Consent Agenda Item VII.G. Extended Field Trip – Middletown Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Trip is being removed from this evening’s Agenda as requested by the Advisor.

MOTION: Move to approve the Consent Agenda, as amended, passed with a motion by Mr. King and a second by Ms. McClellan – unanimous vote.

A. Minutes of October 2, 2019 BOE Special Meeting
B. Minutes of September 10, 2019 BOE Regular Meeting
C. Minutes of August 6, 2019 BOE Special Meeting
D. Extended Field Trip - MHS Crew Club Trip to MA 10-13-19
E. Extended Field Trip - MHS Senior Class Trip to NYC 10-24-19
F. Extended Field Trip - Lawrence Elementary School Trip to Sturbridge Village, MA 10-30-19
H. Extended Field Trip - MHS College & Career Center Trip to NYC 11-16-19
I. Extended Field Trip - MHS AP History Trip to NYC 12-11-19
J. Extended Field Trip - MHS BlueTube Trip to CA 3-29-20 to 4-4-20
K. Grants Status Report
L. Grant - Fund for Greater Hartford Bridge to Brilliance
M. Grant - Health Enhancement Community Initiative

VIII. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Financial Report
Chief of Administration Christine Bourne provided an overview of the Financial Statement. There were no questions.

1. Action on Line Item Transfer Report
Ms. Bourne provided an overview of the Line Item Transfer Report. There were no questions.

MOTION: Move to approve the Line Item Transfer Report passed with a motion by Mr. King and a second by Mr. Pulino – unanimous vote.

B. Facilities Department
Director of Facilities Peter Staye provided an update and responded to questions.

C. Personnel Report
Human Resources representative Melaina Cossette came forward and responded to questions.

D. Transportation Report
Transportation Manager Mark Langton spoke about the first month of bussing. He provided a road construction update. He responded to questions.
IX. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Dr. Conner said tonight is a celebration of individuals leaving. He recognized Board members Jon Pulino and Ed Ford Jr. who are running for Common Council, Chris Drake, Cheryl McClellan, and Marilyn Rios who are leaving the Board. He recognized Deborah Cain and Anita Dempsey-White who are running for re-election. Dr. Conner shared that Marcy Poppel is retiring after 15 years as Assistant to the Superintendent and Secretary to the Board of Education. The Board presented her a plaque and flowers. Dr. Conner presented Ms. Poppel flowers and a group photo was taken. Dr. Conner provided a token of appreciation and thanks to the 3 members leaving the Board. The forward-moving changes during these 3 Board members’ tenure will have a positive impact for future generations. Chair Drake spoke of his time on the Board and recognized the efforts of all Board members.

A. District News

X. COMMITTEES

A. Budget Committee

Committee Chair Sean King provided an overview of last evening’s Budget Committee meeting. Chair Drake thanked Mr. King for his efforts.

B. Curriculum Committee

Committee Chair Lisa Loomis stated there was no meeting held in September and the committee’s next meeting is October 17th at 4 PM. The discussion will be around proposed new high school courses.

C. Facilities Committee

Committee Chair Deborah Cain said the committee last met on September 18th. The next meeting will be October 16th at Snow School.

D. Policy Committee

Committee Chair Cheryl McClellan provided an overview of the last meeting held on Tuesday, September 17th. Discussions were around suspensions/expulsions, cell phones in classrooms, and graduation credits. The next meeting is October 15th at 8:30 AM at Technology Annex at 310 Hunting Hill Avenue.

E. Representative Reports

Chair Drake asked if anyone is doing anything in the community they want to share. Ms. McClellan said in the fall and spring the VFW and American Legion offer scholarships and she will email Dr. Conner the applications. Ms. Rios announced that there will be a Trunk or Treat at Macdonough School on October 26th from 5 – 8 PM. Mr. Pulino shared that there is a Poetry Contest for high school students with monetary prizes and winning poems will be published in a book. Interested students should go to the website poeticepower.com. The deadline is December 5th. Student Representative Evan Davis said the Drama Club is holding a fundraiser, having a free Halloween Town Movie Marathon on October 25th from 3 PM to 8:30 PM at the Santo Fragiljo Performing Arts. Donations are welcome. Mr. Ford Jr. shared that on October 24th there is going to be at Cross Street Church an amazing challenge called Soup Supper. He and several Board members will be servers that evening.

F. New Middle School Building Committee

Chair Drake stated he intends to continue with serving. He foresees changes to the makeup of the Board of Education and the Building Committee following the election. As a reminder, currently he is the Board of Education representative as well as former Board member Sheila Daniels. Chair Drake said he is happy to continue serving. He said committee members are Mayoral appointments approved by the Common Council. If the Board wishes to have a current Board of Education member on the committee, he will do whatever he needs to, add an additional person, or if he needs to step down he will be willing to brief a new
Board member he will, whatever the Board wishes. He reiterated his willingness to be on the committee until the doors of the new school open in August, 2021. The project will start with vigor in the next two months. Right now there is a lull in activity because we are in the middle of Phase I and Phase II. The next New Middle School Building Committee meeting is this Thursday at 6 PM at Central Office.

Chair Drake stated that as the BOE approved the Special Meeting Minutes tonight, tomorrow he will send our minutes of the BOE Special Meeting with a note to the Common Council, alerting them of the Board’s decision at the Special meeting regarding the naming of the new middle school. Chair Drake will copy BOE members on that correspondence. Mr. Pulino stated that he is running for Common Council and while going door-to-door some people feel that what the Board voted on is permanent and some people believe it goes to the Common Council. He thanked Board Chair Drake for bringing that up. Chair Drake said he will copy Board members on what he sends to the Common Council which will be in transition due to the upcoming election.

XI. ACTION ITEMS

A. Action on Appointment of Followed by Introduction of New Chief Academic Officer (CAO)

Dr. Conner said this evening the Board will vote on the appointment of a new Chief Academic Officer (CAO). He shared the rigorous interview process which started with 55 applicants from five different states, and then was narrowed down to 15 applicants. He thanked Mr. Pulino and Mr. King for their help. The community participated in the interviews of the 15 candidates. Six candidates were selected to move on to the second round. He thanked Dr. Steven Minkler of Middlesex Community College for hosting the second round of interviews of six candidates. The final round consisted of 4 candidates. Dr. Conner said finalist candidate, Dr. Magda Parvey, stood out. He shared her background which includes two Masters degrees and a Doctor of Education in Administration and Supervision. Currently, she serves as Interim Superintendent at The City School District of New Rochelle in New York.

MOTION: Move to appoint Dr. Magda Parvey as the district’s Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and authorize the Board Chair to execute her contract passed with a motion by Chair Drake and a second by Ms. Rios – unanimous vote.

Dr. Parvey stated she is honored to join our school district. She said it was a rigorous process. She stated what most interested her in the position is about the community involvement with the Strategic Operations Plan, as it is a joint effort which aligns with her belief as an educator. She feels it is about partnership and engagement with the community. She said she looks forward to learning and growing with the district.

B. Presentation and Action on the Food Services 3-Year Strategic Operating Plan

Janet Calabro, Director of Food Services provided an overview of the three-year Food Services Plan. What her department does is provide a basic human need to students. That starts before the education process takes place. She spoke of best quality of food and service - which is what this plan is all about. This Strategic Operation Plan (SOP) addresses Goal 2 Operations Systems and Structures. She shared the five aspects of the plan. One of the ultimate goals is to offer breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students in the district. The program is federally funded, not grant funded. She spoke of building sustainable student council committees at each school to get good, solid feedback. Also, she would like to create a media stream to have two-way feedback, bridge gaps, create more outreach services, with a concentration on food insecurity. She hopes to work with the Hunger Task Force, Amazing Grace, the Food Bank to bring resources together to reach as many families as possible.

She shared a new summer program held this past summer sponsored by the BOE Food Services Department, a summer feeding program for 9 weeks which was very successful. She said they served over 25,000 meals in 13 different sites, some on-site. Hot meals were served to children at five locations. They provided
satellite service to community locations including Shiloh Baptist Church, Crystal Lake, and the Wesleyan Girls STEM program. She hopes that next year the program will expand. She said the program is very sustainable. Ms. Calabro responded to questions about a survey, student involvement, and partnering with a culinary school such as Vinal Tech. Chair Drake stated he received rave reviews of the program. He stated he has seen a tremendous improvement in the food and recognized Ms. Calabro's efforts. He suggested consideration of a future focus on food waste and waste, in general, in our Food Services program, with inclusion of the Facilities Department and the City Sanitation Department. He said he also would like to see all district schools in the CEP program.

**MOTION:** Move to approve the Food Services 3-Year Strategic Operating Plan passed with a motion Mr. Pulino and a second by Ms. Rios – unanimous vote.

**XII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**A. New Items**

Dr. Conner stated that to support Goal 2 – Operations Systems and Structures we now have our chief structure completed. As was talked about two years ago leading to today, approving overall operation efficiencies, cross functionality in the context of deepening the collaborate networks to advance our strategic initiatives, as well as the strategic priorities in moving to have more department efficacy. Moving this office structure led by our three chiefs – some are restructured positions, some are new consolidated positions based off two existing positions from our previous budget, and the restructuring of the Associate Superintendent position to a Chief Academic Officer position. Dr. Conner formally introduced Marco Gaylord who will lead the Office of Operations and Communications and have four departments directly under his supervision and purview. He introduced our new Chief of Administration Christine Bourne. We are currently in the process of redesigning, or restructuring, or a new design to a Finance Officer, moving towards an equity model. For the Office of Teaching and Learning, Dr. Parvey will be leading several departments.

Board Member Edward Ford Jr. welcomed Dr. Parvey and stated that Councilman Phil Pessina, who could not be present tonight due to a family commitment, wished to publicly welcome and congratulate Dr. Parvey. He offered his assistance to her. He was very humbled to be asked by Dr. Conner to be on the Interview Community Panel.

Mr. Ford Jr. stated that as he is running for Common Council, and should this be his last BOE meeting, he wanted to take this opportunity to acknowledge this tremendous opportunity he was given to be a member of the BOE, and serve with each of the other 8 Board members, and to serve our students. It has been an honor to serve in that capacity. He spoke of meeting Student Representative Evan Davis and the many other awesome students along the way who are doing amazing things.

Chair Drake extended organizational assistance to the new Board of Education.
XIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 8:08 PM passed with a motion by Mr. King and a second by Ms. Rios – unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

[Signature]
Marilyn Rios
Secretary

MSR/mp