City of Derby - Board of Education Meeting

September 4, 2018 6:30 PM
Derby Middle School Cafetorium
73 Chatfield Street

Attendance Taken at 6:32 PM:

Present Board Members:
Mr. Jim Gildea
Mr. Kenneth Marcucio
Mrs. Debra Borrelli
Mr. Dan Foley
Mr. George Kurtyka
Mrs. Janine Netto

Board members not present:
Mrs. Laura Harris was excused
Mrs. Rebecca O'Hara was excused
Mrs. Casey Picheco was excused

I. Call to Order
I.a. Opening Ceremonies
I.b. Roll Call
I.c. Additions/deletions to the agenda -There were no changes to the agenda.

II. Public Participation
Shannon Mesek sent an email to the Board regarding weather related school delays or cancellations and the resulting end of year going later into June.

> "I have a concern as a parent and community member that I would like to address. Each year that my son has been in school the weather has gotten worse. I am not going to question how severe weather days are called; however there are a few suggestions that I would like the school board to consider due to the increasing number of severe weather days each year. According to scientists this trend will only increase due to climate change and I would like to see the Derby school district be proactive on this. Also I would like to see a more consistent school calendar that parents and teachers alike could more easily plan around.
>
> First the calendar for the school year does not really account for severe weather days. This as a community (teachers, students, and parents) makes it difficult to plan. For example for FY18-FY19, the calendar has the last day of school June 7th. This is unrealistic since every year we have severe weather days. Why not do a school calendar accounts for severe weather days (3-5 of them)? This way people can plan accordingly and it is a more realistic schedule. End school June 14th instead with 5 built in school days.
>
> I know the question may be what if we don't use all the days. Then at the bottom of the schedule it could say if one snow day is left by April 1 then the students get a day added to Memorial Day or something. I would be more than happy to provide an example if requested.

This would account for severe weather days more realistically than the current schedule. Furthermore, it would make exams and planning easier for both parents and teachers.

Secondly, in FY17-FY18 the school calendar said if more than 5 days were taken April break would lose a few days? I believe that this should be followed if it is on the schedule; however in FY 17-FY18 this was not followed. At the last minute a survey was sent out (March) and then a decision was made to not use April break. People make vacation plans in the spring and summer well in advance. This last minute change is inconsiderate to those families that had plans. Furthermore why state this if it wasn't implemented? I believe it is also on the FY 18-FY19 calendar that this may be used if over 5 days but I believe if it's on the schedule it should be followed or removed.

Thirdly, severe weather is often known in advance except for tornadoes. Can the school district do remote teaching or send work home in advance? Most schools are canceling the night before and news reports talk about it day in advance. Technology makes it easier to post assignments on line. Even if people don't have access, sheets and material could be set home. In some states some schools trying remote teaching to account for these increase severe weather days? Could Derby do this?

The school calendar is difficult because it is tentative on everything even though we know that severe weather happens in CT. A more realistic and permanent school schedule would be helpful to working parents and teachers.

Originally the February break was partially removed to handle severe weather days, but it has not been enough. These are just a few suggestions I have. I would gladly be willing to discuss these suggestions and many more if this is an issue that the school board can address."

Ms. Mesek noted that she understands that teachers contracts may restrict current changes but maybe something can be discussed in the future negotiations. She noted that many of the bad days seem to happen in March and maybe spring break could be shifted. She noted that it is a period of 38 days to spring break, the longest stretch in the calendar and she can see in her child the need for a break. She thanked the members for their attention to this matter.

III. Executive Session

Motion Passed: Motion. The Board of Education enter into Executive Session to review the appointment list and resignations, and the Superintendent of Schools is invited to attend at 6:42 PM. with a motion by Mrs. Janine Netto and a second by Mr. Dan Foley.

Mr. Jim Gildea - yes
Mr. Kenneth Marcucio - yes
Mrs. Debra Borrelli - yes
Mr. Dan Foley - yes
Mr. George Kurtyka - yes
Mrs. Janine Netto - yes

Without objection the Board returned to open session at 7:05 p.m.

IV. Interim Athletic Director

Motion Passed: Motion. The Board of Education approve the appointment of Matthew Bradshaw, Interim Athletic Director, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools with a motion by Mrs. Janine Netto and a second by Mr. Kenneth Marcucio.

Mr. Jim Gildea - yes
Mr. Kenneth Marcucio - yes
Mrs. Debra Borrelli - yes
Mr. Dan Foley - yes
Mr. George Kurtyka - yes
Mrs. Janine Netto - yes

V. Social Studies Teacher
This agenda item was not discussed.

VI. Long term Substitute Health Teacher
Motion Passed: Motion. The Board of Education approve the appointment of Samantha Santore, Long Term Substitute Health Teacher at Derby Middle School as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools with a motion by Mrs. Janine Netto and a second by Mr. Dan Foley.

Mr. Jim Gildea - yes
Mr. Kenneth Marcucio - yes
Mrs. Debra Borrelli - yes
Mr. Dan Foley - yes
Mr. George Kurtyka - yes
Mrs. Janine Netto - yes

VII. Appointment List
Motion Passed: Motion. The Board of Education approve the appointment list, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools with a motion by Mrs. Janine Netto and a second by Mrs. Debra Borrelli.

Mr. Jim Gildea - yes
Mr. Kenneth Marcucio - yes
Mrs. Debra Borrelli - yes
Mr. Dan Foley - yes
Mr. George Kurtyka - yes
Mrs. Janine Netto - yes

VIII. Resignations
Motion Passed: Motion. The Board of Education accept the resignation of Michelle Ferro, Reading Tutor, Irving School, with regret and best wishes, with a motion by Mrs. Janine Netto and a second by Mr. George Kurtyka.

Mr. Jim Gildea - yes
Mr. Kenneth Marcucio - yes
Mrs. Debra Borrelli - yes
Mr. Dan Foley - yes
Mr. George Kurtyka - yes
Mrs. Janine Netto - yes

Motion Passed: Motion. The Board of Education accept the resignation of Lydia Altamirano, ESL Assistant, Irving School, with regret and best wishes, with a motion by Mrs. Janine Netto and a second by Mr. Kenneth Marcucio.

Mr. Jim Gildea - yes
Mr. Kenneth Marcucio - yes
Mrs. Debra Borrelli - yes
Mr. Dan Foley - yes
Mr. George Kurtyka - yes
Mrs. Janine Netto - yes

IX. Administrator's Reports
Mr. Ciccarini reported the opening at Bradley School went well and they will be focusing on relationship building in the school.

Ms. Misset reported that the opening at Irving School went well and doing kindergarten orientation a little differently this year worked out very well making their first day go smoothly. The walking school bus started today and went well. Tomorrow is the back to school bash.

Mrs. Caggiano reported that the Derby Middle School had a great opening with music going and selfie boards for picture taking. Periods 3 & 4 were rotated to allow for more advisory time with the students.

Mr. Pascale reported that the Derby High School switched up the opening day with the teachers directing the pep rally and festivities. It was a great start to the school year.

Mrs. Sheridan reported for Mrs. Conway that Red Raider University opening went very well.

Mr. Bradshaw, new Interim Athletic Director, noted that he has already met with the coaches and is also working on finalizing the rosters and schedules. He looks forward to this new opportunity. He has attended many activities and will continue to get to know everyone.

Mr. Ray Coplin, new High School Assistant Principal looks forward to building relationships with the students.

X. Next Generation Science Standards
Mrs. Jennifer Olson explained that the Science Standards were adopted in Connecticut in 2015 and are a new way of teaching science for grades K-12. This is a new vision for science education. Efforts are to get the students hands on with the intent for better understanding. They will be allowed to think on their own and act more like scientists and investigators as they decipher the science before them. The process involves all grades and is a progression in learning. Science will no longer be a stand alone concept but will be infused in Math, Reading and Writing. The students will be presented science at each grade as per their level of knowledge. The CREC will be developing the curriculum as it is a lengthy process.

XI. Theory of Action/Core Beliefs
Dr. Conway requested a motion to approve the area of action and core beliefs as per the Board's work during the retreat last spring. There is more work to do to develop the strategies for the theories of action. They will go out with every document sent and will be included in the school accountability plans.

Motion Passed: Motion. The Board of Education approve the Theory of Actions statements for 2018-2019 as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools, with a motion by Mrs. Janine Netto and a second by Mr. George Kurtyka.

Mr. Jim Gildea - yes
Mr. Kenneth Marcucio - yes
Mrs. Debra Borrelli - yes
Mr. Dan Foley - yes
Mr. George Kurtyka - yes
Mrs. Janine Netto - yes

XII. 2018-2019 School Calendar

The calendar was presented as informative only and will be further discussed at the Policy Committee meeting set for September 18th. Dr. Conway noted that this is the first year statutorily that the district can get away from the regional calendar. Past legislature had envisioned a state educational calendar but it has since been determined to forgo such implementation. The only requirement is for 180 days.

Mr. Foley and Mr. Marcucio indicated that they were opposed to starting school before Labor Day. They would rather go further into June. The August start appears to have no benefit to the students. Dr. Conway noted that the early start was first initiated when CMT and CAP testing was occurring in October and the intent was to give teachers and students as much time as possible for preparation to take the tests. Mrs. Borelli concurred with starting after Labor Day as August still has very hot and humid weather and being in the classrooms can be a safety issue.

Mr. Marcucio stated that he felt that half days do not provide sufficient learning for the students as does the full day and suggested that the practice of calling early dismissals or scheduling half days be reconsidered.

XIII. Adjourn

Motion Passed: Motion. The Board of Education adjourn its meeting at 7:47 PM passed with a motion by Mrs. Janine Netto and a second by Mr. George Kurtyka.

Mr. Jim Gildea - yes
Mr. Kenneth Marcucio - yes
Mrs. Debra Borrelli - yes
Mr. Dan Foley - yes
Mr. George Kurtyka - yes
Mrs. Janine Netto - yes

Karen M. Kemmesies

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Karen M. Kemmesies
Recording Secretary

Minutes are subject to approval at the next Board meeting.