

MINUTES – C.E.S. REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING
September 5, 2019

PRESENT:

Chris Hocker - EASTON/REG. 9 (**President**)
 VACANT - MONROE
 Maria Naughton - NEW CANAAN
 Barbara Mitchell-
 Meyer - NORWALK (Arrived @ 3:35 PM)
 Margaret Stamatis - RIDGEFIELD
 Tom Minotti - SHELTON
 Jackie Pioli - STAMFORD (Arrived @ 3:15 PM)
 Mike Ward - TRUMBULL (**Secretary**)
 Karen Kleine - WESTPORT (**Vice President**)

ABSENT:

Sybil Allen - BRIDGEPORT
 Christa McNamara - DARIEN
 VACANT - FAIRFIELD
 Jennifer Dayton - GREENWICH
 Jeff Parker - EASTON/REG.9 (Alt.)
 VACANT - MONROE
 Andy George - STAMFORD
 Vincent Faggella - STRATFORD
 VACANT - WESTON
 Debbie Low - WILTON

C.E.S.:

Present: Charles Dumais, Chris La Belle, Esther Bobowick, Mark Ribbens, Anna Nelmes-Stoughton, Peggy Sullivan, Mike McGrath, Stephanie Wanzer

GUESTS:

Carrie Evans, Barbara Stevens

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND VERIFICATION OF QUORUM: President Chris Hocker called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. Quorum was verified. Chip Dumais introduced new Director of Special Education, Dr. Michael McGrath. Chris Hocker and the Board welcomed Mike to C.E.S.
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: On a motion by Tom Minotti and seconded by Mike Ward, the minutes of the June 6, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved.
- III. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:
 1. Dr. Dumais introduced Carrie Evans, C.E.S. Teacher of the Year and Barbara Stevens, C.E.S. Paraeducator of the Year. Both Carrie and Barbara teach at Six to Six Magnet School and will represent C.E.S. at a ceremony in Hartford in the

1 late Fall. Carrie and Barbara gave a short overview of their teaching careers. The
2 Board offered their congratulations to both women.

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4 2. Stephanie Wanzer, President of the C.E.S.E.A., welcomed everyone back for the
5 new school year and thanked the Board for their past support and wished
6 everyone a good year.

7
8 IV. CONSENT AGENDA: On a motion by Mike Ward and seconded by Tom Minotti,
9 the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved by the Council.

10
11 V. 2020-21 Calendars – First Read: The school program and employee calendars
12 for 2020-21 were distributed for review. Calendars will be on the October agenda for
13 final approval.

14
15 VI. Connecticut Statewide Drug and Alcohol Testing Consortium Policy: Peggy
16 Sullivan reviewed the policy requirements for compliance for C.E.S. to remain in the
17 consortium. On a motion by Jackie Pioli and seconded by Margaret Stamatis, the
18 Council unanimously voted to adopt the Connecticut Statewide Drug and Alcohol
19 Testing Consortium Policy as presented.

20
21 VII. REPORTS

- 22
23 1. **Representative Council President**: Chris Hocker welcomed everyone back for
24 the new school new. No further report.
- 25
26 2. **Executive Director**: Chip welcomed everyone back after the summer break.
27 Chip highlighted a few items from his written report: Chip and Jeff Kitching from
28 EdAdvance worked with the Western CT Regional Efficiencies Group which is
29 analyzing the costs of special education services for the area. Utilizing the
30 services of the RESCs is most economical resolution. Chip also reported that he
31 was asked to accept the nomination to the Universal Service Administrative
32 Company Board of Directors. Chip explained the USAC is an independent, not-
33 for-profit corporation designated by the FCC as the administrator of universal
34 service. Some areas of work that C.E.S. will be focusing on this year are the
35 Eastern Fairfield County Diagnostic Center (enrollment is coming in and is
36 expected to pick up later this month); the possibility of a lower Fairfield County
37 Special Education Program (in 3 years); in-district special education support
38 administrator support, (beyond aspirant and induction); coaching; high quality
39 instructional support; paraeducator/substitute training and transportation. Chip
40 encouraged Board members to contact him any time with questions, concerns or
41 suggestions.
- 42
43 3. **Associate Executive Director**: Chris La Belle welcomed everyone back for the
44 new school year. Openings at all of our programs went very well. Chris referred
45 the Board to his highlights for further hiring details. Regarding some legislative
46 changes: Public Act 19-4 raises the minimum wage over the next 5 years. Chris

1 advised that districts should be looking at substitute rates to be sure they are in
2 compliance with the law. Public Act 19-25, paid Family Medical Leave Act, does
3 not impact Connecticut school districts. CT continues to fall under the federal
4 law unless we collectively bargain paid FMLA into contracts. Public Act 19-16
5 requires school districts to train all non-supervisory employees in Sexual
6 Harassment awareness training. We must now also notify employees by email
7 about the training within 3 months of employment. The new diagnostic center is
8 half staffed at this time; it will be fully staffed as more students are enrolled. Chris
9 mentioned that on November 12th PDS division will be holding a Training of
10 Trainers for Sexual Harassment Awareness if districts would like to send staff to
11 become certified in this training. A new bullying policy is in the works at the State
12 level coming out in 2021.

13
14 4. **Director of Professional Development Services:** Esther Bobowick reported
15 that there are many trainings happening in the fall using four lenses: Culture,
16 Curiosity, Coaching and Capacity: “Curiosity” - discussing relevance, why am I
17 learning this; “Coaching” – supporting district staff internally; “Capacity” – building
18 internal support in your districts via training of trainers. Regarding the “Culture”
19 aspect – Esther advised that she and staff member George Coleman will be
20 working on selecting a presenter for a program grant from the C.E.S. Foundation:
21 “Moving towards Excellence, Rigorous Academics and Culturally Responsive
22 Pedagogy.” This grant will allow PDS to offer a day for our districts to come and
23 learn about culturally responsive pedagogy and how to improve curriculum
24 materials to be reflective of our values for diversity. Please see written highlights
25 for further updates.

26
27 5. **Director, Regional Center for the Arts:** Dr. Mark Ribbens welcomed everyone
28 back. Initial staff meetings at RCA focused on important policies which included
29 the safe school climate plan, bullying, suicide prevention and student
30 expectations. The welcome back meeting for RCA staff was held on September
31 3rd. Mark explained that he along with RCA staff have recognized that a lot of
32 students who come to RCA have experienced some sort of trauma in their lives.
33 Teachers indicated that it’s getting increasingly harder to engage these students.
34 Over this past spring, Mark reported that he met with Esther to share some ideas
35 he came up with to help these students and together they have developed a
36 program entitled “Fostering Resilient Learners” which will be implemented this
37 year. Mark also reported that RCA was recently awarded two program grants
38 from the C.E.S. Foundation to have artists in residence. In the fall, Justin Cimino
39 will work with the theatre students in a program called “Clowning...for a Moment.”
40 In the spring, Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) will be working at in a school
41 residency program called “Creative Performance/Creative Practice: An
42 Interdisciplinary Artistic Collaboration.”

43
44 6. **Director, Six to Six Magnet School:** Anna Nelmes-Stoughton reported that Six
45 to Six had a wonderful opening. Student enrollment is at approximately 460,
46 preschool through grade 8. New staff members are listed in Anna’s report and

1 lastly, Anna also expressed her gratitude to Carrie Evans and Barbara Stevens,
2 C.E.S. teacher and paraeducator of the year.
3

4 **7. Director of Finance & Operations:** Peggy Sullivan reviewed her written report
5 which included the final unaudited budget summary for July 1, 2018 through June
6 30, 2019. The auditors are in house beginning this week. Detailed fiscal
7 information including revenue summary is contained in the report. Chip thanked
8 both Peggy and Facilities Manager, Louis Fronte, for finishing the capital projects
9 on time and at/or under budget.
10

11 **8. Director of Special Education:** Dr. Michael McGrath gave a brief overview of
12 his career before coming to C.E.S. Mike indicated that his very happy to be here.
13 Mike reported that since he came on board on August 1st, he has been meeting
14 with the program administrators, the Bureau Chief for Special Education from the
15 State Department of Education and with the Directors of Special Education from
16 our member districts. Written report was prepared by former director Dr Mike
17 Regan who retired as director of Special Education and is now working as the
18 program development consultant for the Eastern Fairfield County Diagnostic
19 Center. Mike encouraged Board members to stop by to visit the new center any
20 time between 8-4 p.m., at 7 Cambridge Drive, Trumbull across the street from the
21 Regional Center for the Arts building.
22

23 **VIII. ADJOURNMENT TO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

24 **Recommended Resolution:** On a motion by Karen Kleine and seconded by
25 Margaret Stamatis, the Board adjourned to Executive Session at 4:21 p.m., to
26 discuss the status and strategy concerning pending litigation. The Board invited
27 Chris LaBelle to remain for this discussion. The Board returned to regular session
28 at 4:26 p.m.
29

30 **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

31 On a motion by Mike Ward and seconded by Maria Naughton, the meeting was
32 adjourned at 4:34 p.m.
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35 Respectfully submitted,

36 *Barbara Pace*

37 Barbara Pace

38 Recording Secretary