

**APPROVED
MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
March 22, 2016**

PLACE:

Darien Board of Education
Meeting Room
7:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Harman, Chair; Mesdames McNamara, Stein, Zuro and Hagerty-Ross; and Messrs. Burke, Dineen, and Martens.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Ms. Sullivan.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

Dr. Dan Brenner, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Susie DaSilva, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Ms. Shirley Klein, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education and Student Services; Mr. Michael Feeney, Director of Finance and Operations; Ms. Marjorie Cion, Director of Human Resources.

VISITORS:

Approximately 20.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Harman called the meeting to order at 7:41 p.m. The next Regular BOE meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 6, 2016.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Mr. Harman thanked everyone for coming out for the Facilities Tour. Mr. Harman said that he was waiting for confirmation on a work session with the BOF on March 31st.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Scott Overbeck came forward and thanked Dr. Brenner for the new plans for the DHS athletic fields. He said that he lives closest to the field and was supportive of the plan. He said that there should be an acceptable plan for everyone involved. The positives outweigh the negatives.

Ms. Justine Stewart came forward and said that she had lived in Darien for 16 years and has 5 children in the Darien Public Schools. (See attached.)

Ms. Jerre Skeats came forward and said that she had two children that have gone through the schools. She said that she had seen the fields improve and would like to thank Dr. Brenner for his leadership. She thanked him for his thoughtfulness and future vision. Ms. Skeats said that she also would like to thank the Board.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Brenner mentioned this was his first official tour of the District facilities with the community and he was pleased with all those who turned out. He thanked everyone for their efforts.

The high school counseling center has been recognized as the best counseling center in the State. Dr. Brenner reminded everyone that there was no school on Good Friday and there would be Professional Development on Monday, so the students have a long weekend. Dr. Brenner said that the high school play, *Singing in the Rain*, was excellent and gave a shout out to those involved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**** MS. STEIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 9, 2016 SPECIAL MEETING AND EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

**** MR. DINEEN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 9, 2016 SPECIAL MEETING AND EXECUTIVE SESSION AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MR. DINEEN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 9, 2016 REGULAR MEETING.**

**** MS. MCNAMARA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Board Committee reports at this time.

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

A. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON DARIEN HIGH SCHOOL SECOND SEMESTER ENROLLMENT DISTRIBUTION REPORT (File # 2478)

Dr. Brenner said that Principal Dunn would be presenting the report. She then reviewed the data in the spreadsheets.

B. FURTHER DISCUSSION ON MASTER PLAN – FIELDS (File #2479)

Dr. Brenner then narrated a PowerPoint presentation with the proposed changes for the various projects. Stadium East and the new parking loop are scheduled to begin construction this summer. He cautioned everyone that last summer was a dry summer and that if it rains a great deal this coming summer, the construction could be delayed.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **As we add the Stadium East field, there will be more vehicles. Where did people park this weekend?** (Dr. Brenner said that the attendees were directed to parking areas. There was parking by the gymnasium. He pointed out that the ultimate goal was to have people parking where they were supposed to be parking.) b) **Would you speak about the grass tennis field and the turf field at Middlesex?** (Dr. Brenner said that the freshman athletes were already using that

field. However, he pointed out that the field needs work and will be in better shape.) c) **What about the grass field at the high school?** (Dr. Brenner said that it would be used as a small sized practice field.) d) **Is this partnering including the expense of the police and putting out the cones?** (Dr. Brenner said that they were partnering in the expense and that DYLAX was fully committed to this plan. It is a community facility and the District never wants to be in a position where an emergency vehicle could not get through.) e) **What about the dogs?** (Dr. Brenner said that one of the police officers was telling people about the policy for dogs.) f) **Would you review the reasons why the two tennis courts are facing different directions?** (Dr. Brenner said that there have been conversations about the type of surface and where the sun will be. There are rules about where the home plate for baseball could be, along with how the football fields can be located. The courts are situated to fit the space. It is better than it was but it is not optimum.)

Mr. Harman said that if anyone from the public had questions, they should send them to him to pass along.

Dr. Brenner said that the next step would be to come back for approval for the plan in concept. This is part of the District partnering with the DAF. This allows the DAF to continue to fund raise. Ms. Hagerty-Ross expressed concern about what would happen if there were issues that happened which would prevent part of the project from being completed during the advanced design stage. Dr. Brenner explained that the DAF has to fund raise with the acknowledgement that the Board could reject one of the various projects. He said that he wanted to see Stadium East and the turn-around completed before starting any of the other projects. Ms. Hagerty-Ross asked whether there should be a sense of the Board in terms of the overall projects because there were no specific details. Dr. Brenner said that he was trying to do this in a way that would allow the DAF to fund raise without infringing on the Board's authority. He pointed out that there were a number of hurdles for the running track, but if the EPC says "no" to the running track, that would be the DAF's issue.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **In thinking about the concept of the Master Plan, the Administration has come to the Board and said that this would be great in a perfect world. There are many things that have to be considered along the way. The projects would be subject to the approvals and eventually approved by the Board.** (Dr. Brenner said that there was no decision to be made tonight. He said that he would speak with the District's Counsel to discuss the concept of raising funds for a plan that may or may not be able to be implemented.) b) **To clarify, is it the funds that the Board will be receiving or the projects?** (Dr. Brenner said that it would be the project and it would be critical to make sure that the project ends up being what the District expects. With the oval, there was a meeting every Tuesday morning with Mr. Lynch, Mr. Feeney and Mr. Manfredonia to update everyone about all the developments. There were no surprises when using this process.)

C. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACCEPTANCE OF CONTEMPLATED GIFT FROM DARIEN HIGH SCHOOL BOYS LACROSSE PARENT GROUP (File # 2480).

Mr. Manfredonia came forward to present the item to the Board.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **Are the coach buses being used in lieu of the school buses?** (Mr. Manfredonia said that for the longer trips, the team has requested a coach bus. The team picks up the difference between what the school bus would cost and the cost of the coach bus.) b) **I know the girls recently had their fundraiser. Have you received any information from them?** (Mr. Manfredonia said that the total amount was not as high as the boys.) c) **Is there a gift coming forward?** (That is something we have to discuss with Dr. Brenner about future gifts. Dr. Brenner said that this was something that was being reviewed very closely and he expected to share some information about the process of accepting gifts in the

next six weeks. However, until then, the gift process will remain as it has in the past. The expectation is that there will be some changes.) d) **There have been struggles with issues of equity and fairness.** (Dr. Brenner said that he wanted to be completely transparent and the District was in the midst of an audit for the process of how the funding is managed. Once that is completed, he will be reporting to the Board on this.) e) **Is there any indication that the boys are getting things that the girls aren't?** (Dr. Brenner replied that all these things are being addressed inside of the process audit.) f) **Should we wait on this for when the girls get their gifts if we are buying gloves for next year?** (Dr. Brenner said that the film editing would be covering both the boys and girls teams. The coach bus is different. Mr. Manfredonia said that the policy remains the same for any team that wants the coach bus as opposed to the school bus. The team picks up the difference.)

Dr. Brenner suggested that the gift be accepted and that the Administration hold on to the funds until the Title IX questions are answered.

**** MS. STEIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONTEMPLATED GIFT FROM DARIEN HIGH SCHOOL BOYS LACROSSE PARENT GROUP AND THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL HOLD ON TO THE FUNDS UNTIL THE TITLE IX QUESTIONS ARE ANSWERED.**

**** MS. MCNAMARA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

D. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED RECOMMENDED REVISIONS TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES (Files #2481, 2482 and 2483)

- **Hiring of Certified Staff**
- **Hiring of Non-Certified Staff**
- **Policy Regarding Holds on the Destruction of Electronic Information and Paper Records**

Ms. Cion said that these policies were in process last year. The policies are already being implemented.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **Regarding the Darien Public Schools' Hiring Process for District and Building Level Administrative Staff, is that an administrative regulation?** (Ms. Cion said that she had placed them all under one number, but they could be separated out into two different regulations. It was noted that it was actually a regulation.)

ACTION ITEMS

A. PERSONNEL ITEMS (File # 2484)

- i. Appointments**
- ii. Resignation/Retirements**

Ms. Cion said that there was a updated version of the action items due to some additional resignations. The administration would like to post those as soon as possible, so updated versions of the list were given to the Board members.

**** MS. HAGERTY-ROSS MOVED TO APPROVE THE UPDATED PERSONNEL ACTION REPORT DATED MARCH 22, 2016 AS PRESENTED.**

**** MS. ZURO SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jill McCammon of Old Kings Highway South came forward and asked about the first hiring policy. She said that she liked the idea of diversity but wondered why race, geographic location and experience were mentioned, but not gender. Ms. Cion said that the District does not discriminate on that basis but it could be added.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. HAGERTY-ROSS MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
**** MR. BURKE SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Schneider Zuro
Secretary