

Regular Meeting
KILLINGLY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Wednesday, February 28, 2024
7:00 PM
Killingly Town Hall, 172 Main St.
2nd Floor, Community Mtg. Room

MINUTES

BoE Members Present: Laura Dombkowski, Susan Lannon, Meredith Giambattista, Laura Lawrence, Kevin Marcoux, Kelly Martin, Misty Murdock, Kyle Napierata, Danny Rovero. Student Board Member, Melody Kettle.

Others Present: Superintendent Dr. Susan Nash-Ditzel, Assistant Superintendent, Jeffrey Guiot, Recording Secretary, Keely Doyle

- DRAFT
1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
 2. **ROLL CALL- See above**
 3. **BOARD SHOUT-OUTS** Meredith Giambattista gave a shout out to Dave and Becky Burgess and all members of the Danielson Lions Club for their unwavering support and dedication in many, many different community events.
 4. **REPORT BY STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS**
Melody Kettle gave the Board updates on various building events and news. The following are some of the events taking place in the district.

GECC: Classrooms are preparing Purposeful Play scenarios by building background knowledge about their scenario topic and creating their very own supermarket and home improvement stores.

KCS: On Tuesday, March 12th, KCS is hosting kindergarten orientation. Families will learn about the new birthdate requirement as well as other schooling options.

KMS: Read Across America Week starts on Monday, March 4th at KMS. There will be guest readers, activities, and a Spirit Week celebration. Board of Education are invited to come and read to children The Koala Choir, Coding and Robotics Club, and Dungeons and Dragons have continued with their year-long enrollment. New clubs include Space club, team sports and games club, book club and Wacky Science.

KIS: No report

KHS: Class of 2025-26 held a Winter Dance on February 23 and it was well attended. Great Things Happening Here assembly will be held on March 4 and teachers and students will be recognized. Blue T-shirts are being sold to support Autism Awareness Month in April. The Killingly Robotics Team won at the Southern Robotics

Regional Championship Competition. The boys basketball team won the state tournament. Parent and teacher conferences will be held on March 11.

5. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

A. February Employee of the Month-Reilly Allen

Reilly Allen is a SEL Specialist at KMS and she works with many students. Reilly is 2018 graduate of Killingly High School. She takes on multiple, additional responsibilities and creates trusting relationships with students and staff. Reilly has been employed a short time in this role, but she has already made a lasting impression with her unwavering professionalism and dedication.

B. Rebecca Pond and FFA Students: In Celebration of FFA Week.

FFA students, Abigail Anforth, Noah Reinhart, Kaylee Baker and Sydney Mullen handed out gifts to the Board in celebration of FFA Week.

The students spoke enthusiastically of the FFA program and everything it offers. Many FFA students participate and compete with other FFA Chapters. Students participate in public speaking matches among other events. Exploring Ag Days is celebrated every year with many student-led activities. FFA upper classmen form support groups for incoming freshmen. FFA students raised 300\$ through ticket sales to the Corn Maze and food items are also collected at this event for local food pantries. Many FFA students volunteer at local farms, food pantries, animal shelters and benefit from all these experiences. 38 students received their Greenhand Degree which is a stepping stone to other FFA degrees that students earn.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Tammy Wakefield expressed her concerns about creating an adhoc committee especially due to the economic pressure for many families in the community. An adhoc committee will cost them more money but instead of forming an adhoc committee the Board should find ways to pay for essential services, instead of focusing on their personal agendas.

Norm Ferron read a statement on behalf of Ulla Barclay who was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

Some items of concern were: the public not getting answers regarding adding an agenda item and an illegal vote at the January 10 Board meeting; not getting clarification regarding procedural issues of a 2/3 majority vote; the S & G letter of engagement not being available for review to all Board members prior to the vote; violating by-laws.

Cherie Monte expressed her concerns regarding procedures taken to enter into a new contract with Shipman & Goodwin. The letter of engagement for S & G should have been given to all Board members. What reason was given to Attorney Stevenson to end her contract? Ms. Montie questioned the legality of the vote taken to enter into a contract with S & G. Why wasn't the whole Board given the chance to read the contract? If another lawyer is needed because of conflict of interest, it will end up costing more money. Politics has no place here.

Michelle Murphy shared that she was confused about the 2/3 vote and why didn't the process of getting new legal counsel go out to bid. S & G legal costs should be made public. This issue should be addressed in a public meeting. Business transactions should be more transparent.

Ian McDonald shared that his kids have attended KCS and KMS and he is impressed with the teachers.

In the past, the mascot issue shed a negative light on the district. The attraction to enroll new students from sending districts suffered. We need to build on what we have and be proud of what we have in Killingly.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. February 14, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes
- B. KHS Field Trip to Sturbridge Village on March 7, 2024

- C. David Rollinson- French/Spanish Club Trip Request to France, Spain during Spring Break, 2025
- D. Dr. Robert Polselli- Trip Requests to US National Robotics Competition in Council Bluffs, Iowa- March 19-March 24, 2024 and World Robotics Championship in Dallas, Texas, April 24 – April 28, 2024

MOTION: by Kyle Napierata, seconded by Kevin Marcoux to pull consent items 7 A,C & D for for discussion.
Unanimous-All in favor, Motion Carries

MOTION: by Meredith Giambattista, seconded by Misty Murdock to approve 7.B KHS Field Trip to Sturbridge Village.
Unanimous- All in Favor. Motion Carries

Kelly Martin noted that on the Consent item, 7.A, February 14, 2024 minutes, on page 7, under agenda item 15, that the count of “No” votes of 5 was incorrect, and the number of votes be corrected to 4.

MOTION: by Kevin Marcoux, seconded by Misty Murdock to approve 7.A Feb. 14 minutes with edit.
Unanimous- All in Favor, Motion Carries

MOTION: by Kevin Marcoux, seconded by Kelly Martin to approve the KHSFrench/Spanish Club Trip Request to France, Spain during Spring Break, 2025
Unanimous- All in Favor, Motion Carries

Dr. Robert Polselli informed the Board that his trip request to the US National Robotics Competition in Council Bluffs, Iowa is not needed because the KHS Robotics Team just recently won a competition and qualified for the World Robotics Championship. He also clarified that the date should be corrected to April 23 through April 28, 2024, not March. He asked that the Board consider approving only the World Robotics Championship Dallas, Texas trip request.

MOTION: by Misty Murdock, seconded by Laura Lawrence to approve the trip request to the World Robotics Championship in Dallas, Texas.
Unanimous- All in Favor, Motion Carries

8. DISCUSSION OF STRATEGY REGARDING PENDING CLAIMS AND LITIGATION: STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION HEARING CONCERNING 10-4b COMPLAINT (Proposed for Executive Session)

MOTION: by Kevin Marcoux, seconded by Misty Murdock to enter executive session with invitation to Attorney Rich Mills, Attorney Peter Noonan, Attorney Andreana Bellach, Superintendent Dr. Nash and Assistant Superintendent Jeffrey Guiot.
Unanimous- All in Favor, Motion Carries

The Board entered executive session at 7:49 p.m.

The Board came out of executive session and resumed the meeting at 9:37 p.m.

9. BOARD CHAIR AND COMMITTEE & LIAISON UPDATES

- A. Curriculum Committee
- B. Facilities Committee
- C. Fiscal Committee
- D. Personnel Committee
- E. Policy Committee

Fiscal meeting to further discuss the 2024 budget is tomorrow at 6:15 pm.

Personnel committee will be meeting soon. Para negotiations take place on March 7 and nurses negotiations are also anticipated.

10. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

- A. Discussion and Possible Action to approve an additional \$7,823.00 from the Non-Lapsing Account to complete the replacement of the bleachers at KMS.

Superintendent Nash-Ditzel gave rationale for requesting additional funds from the non-lapsing account. She reminded the Board that funding for this project was previously approved to come out of the non-lapsing account but the project was not able to start because of renovations. The gym is also being used as a music classroom during renovations. A new quote was secured and additional funds are needed due to rising prices.

MOTION: by Kyle Napierata, seconded by Kevin Marcoux to use an additional \$7,823.00 from the non-lapsing account to complete the replacement of bleachers at KMS.
Unanimous- All in Favor, Motion Carries

11. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO FORM AN ADHOC COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS SCHOOL MASCOT

Board Chair, Susan Lannon shared that an adhoc committee is a temporary committee and it would be charged with discussing the school mascot. Mascot defined as any imagery, logo or wording. In 2019 the mascot was voted on and it changed but in 2020 that vote was overturned and the mascot was reinstated. People on both sides have expressed frustration. The adhoc committee needs to work with community. Currently, a \$94,000 grant is not made available to the district because of the mascot name. The adhoc committee should discuss options and bring back recommendations to the Board. Those interested in serving on the adhoc committee should contact Ms. Lannon within the next week. The adhoc committee will be comprised of 3-4 members. Kyle Napierata mentioned that grants can always change and the loss of a \$94,000 grant should not have that much influence on the matter of a mascot. Kelly Martin suggested that this be postponed after budget season.

MOTION: by Kevin Marcoux, seconded by Misty Murdock to form an adhoc committee to discuss the school mascot and to bring recommendations to the full Board.
Roll Call Vote
YES-6, Meredith Giambattista, Laura Lawrence, Kevin Marcoux, Misty Murdock, Danny Rovero and Susan Lannon.
NO-3, Laura Dombkowski, Kelly Martin, and Kyle Napierata.
Motion Carries.

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: by Kyle Napierata, seconded by Misty Murdock to adjourn at 9:57 p.m.
Unanimous, Motion Carries.

Respectfully submitted by,
Keely Doyle
Recording Secretary