

Regular Meeting
KILLINGLY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Wednesday, September 11, 2024
7:00 PM
KILLINGLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS' CENTRAL OFFICE, 79 WESTFIELD AVE.
CONFERENCE ROOM A

MINUTES

Present: Susan Lannon, Laura Dombkowski, Meredith Giambattista, Laura Lawrence, Kevin Marcoux, Kelly Martin, Misty Murdock, Kyle Napierata, Danny Rovero.
Student Board Members: Phillip Purcell and Melody Hutchinson.

Guests: Superintendent Susan Nash, Assistant Superintendent Jeff Guiot and Recording Secretary Keely Doyle.

1. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairperson Susan Lannon called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. ROLL CALL-See above

3. REPORT BY STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS

Phillip Purcell & Melody Hutchinson shared news and activities happening at the schools. Some of those highlights are the following.

KIS: The new schedule is up and running. The transition from last year's schedule to this year's is very smooth. The new KIS community mantra is "positivity, respect, and kindness."

KMS: 4th grade students who were temporarily housed at Westfield Ave., have moved back to the KMS building. The Scholastic Book Fair and Open House on September 4th was well attended.

KCS: In the Early Experience preschool classrooms, 23 students have acclimated well to KCS through play and hands on learning opportunities. KCS administration will host on Friday, September 20th at 9:00am and is open to all parents.

Goodyear Early Childhood Center: Open House on Tuesday August 27 was successful and well attended. Students are enjoying some new playground equipment installed over the summer.

KHS: Freshmen attended *Freshman Dinner* and orientation on August 28 with 300 freshmen & family members participating. Upper classmen student members of the LINK Crew members welcomed and supported freshmen on their first day. There is a half-day on Friday, September 27th. This will be a Wellness Day for all students to participate in activities and learn about the importance of well-being. KHS theme for the year: *Be Kind and Be Connected*.

4. **RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

A. KPS Paraeducator of the Year, Michelle Pion

Director of Pupil Services Elise Geary introduced Killingly Public Schools' Paraeducator of the Year, Michelle Pion. Michelle has been with Killingly Public Schools for 19 years and currently serves at the high school in the Transition program. Michelle is a leader among her colleagues. Students see her as a mentor. She is most deserving of this honor.

B. KPS Teacher of the Year, Marcia Farquhar

Superintendent Nash introduced Killingly Public Schools Teacher of Year, Marcia Griffiths. Marcia has worked in Killingly for over 27 years. She has served in different roles over her many years in Killingly, including Pupil Services Assistant Director. Marcia works at the high school as a special education teacher. Many colleagues whom Marcia has worked with over the years, feel that she makes a positive impact and has made a difference in many student's lives. Marcia is very dedicated and committed to the district and her students and was the perfect candidate for this honor.

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Linda Trahan accompanied by Michele Phaiah (Michele did not speak) expressed disappointment regarding what happened to a graduate from last years Class of 2024. The student's goal was to earn the rank of either Class Valedictorian or Salutatorian. The student was not made aware of policy related to grade point averages and half-year classes and was also mis-informed of her ranking very late in the school year by a former guidance counselor. Consequently, the honor and accolades of being the class Salutatorian was mistakenly given to another student, laying the sole financial burden of college tuition on the student. The student has rectified this with UCONN, reconciling a 4-year scholarship. Ms. Trahan asked that this be looked into so this never happens again.

6. **TOWN COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT**

Michelle Murphy, Town Council Liaison to the Board of Education shared that the Town will be working on procuring a new design to upgrade the sewer plant. The dredging at the Owen Bell pond is complete. On Sept. 21 at 1:00pm the newly developed Vision Committee will meet at the library, and residents are urged to join the committee to share their visions for the Town. Killingly Parks and Recreation will have many events during the month of October and all events will be on the Town's website. The town has received a federal grant to fund repairs to four bridges.

7. **BOARD CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE & LIAISON UPDATES**

A. Curriculum Committee

B. Facilities Committee- Danny Rovero mentioned that the KHS track and tennis courts look beautiful

C. Fiscal Committee-No updates to report.

D. Personnel Committee- No updates to report.

E. Policy Committee- Anticipate the next meeting on Sept. 18

F. Bullying AdHoc Committee- Laura Lawrence shared that the committee met during the summer. The next meeting will be held on October 7 at 7:00 pm. They have made progress on making it easier for students report bullying with new signs in place at the schools.

G. Mascot AdHoc Committee- Kevin Marcoux shared that there are no updates and conveyed that this adhoc committee has served its course and perhaps the committee should be dissolved. Superintendent Nash suggested that maybe the Board could have the Town historian present at a future Board meeting and delve deeper into the town's history. She welcomed any suggestions from Board members.

8. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

A. System Object Report

A System Object report was included in the Board's packet for review. Manager of Business Affairs, Christine Clark conveyed why there was not a monthly financial narrative at this time, explaining that she is still in the process of entering all new hires and re-aligning salaries.

9. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION OF TRANSFERS OVER \$10,000

A. Transfer for KHS science teacher between KHS teacher salary accounts (\$53,835.46)

B. Transfer for Student Information Systems Coordinator salary & benefits (\$73,925.93)

C. Transfer for KMS Social Emotional Learning (SEL) paraeducator between paraeducator accounts. (\$22,955.18)

D. Transfer for exchange of KCS SEL para-educator with Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) between local budget and grant funding. (\$44,213.20)

E. Transfer for KMS teacher's desks and chairs. (\$11,917.36)

MOTION: by Kevin Marcoux, seconded by Kyle Napierata to approve all transfers, 9.A, 9.B, 9.C, 9.D, and 9.E

Yes- 9, Unanimous

Motion Carries

10. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

A. Back to School Update

Superintendent Nash shared some keynotes that she presented to staff at convocation.

She spoke about the power of assumption, especially through social media and how sometimes assumptions can be wrong and negatively affect the district.

She feels that there have been some unfair assumptions regarding the District.

Superintendent Nash is working to change the negativity, especially on social media and is leading a social media campaign with positive messages.

B. CHR Update

CHR continues to offer many services and comprehensive clinical assessments or screenings for students up to 17 years of age and families at KHS, KIS and KMS. Flyers have been posted for personalized, short-term behavioral healthcare services. Families can scan the QR code and submit a fillable consent form from a cell phone. Families are then contacted to schedule an intake.

C. Hiring Update

The district is in good shape this year with filling vacancies as opposed to past years. There is a Speech and Language Pathologist and Psychologist vacancy and a few paraeducator openings. The district can always use more bus drivers, especially to cover callouts.

D. Bullying Update

Signs are now displayed in the schools that display a QR code. The QR code provides students immediate access to forms to report bullying or various types of harrasment. Students may remain anonymous through this reporting system but if they remain anonymous, it may slow down the follow-up process.

E. School Behavioral Expectations Update

Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Jeff Guiot introduced and familiarzed Board members with the Behavioral Expectation Matrix. The matrix specifies student discipline infractions and consequences. The focus is to have better and consistent language between KIS and KHS. The matrix reflects what the consequence is for each type of infraction and it addresses repeated offenses by the same student. The matrix defines age appropriate disciplines and is linked to student handbooks.

Kelly Martin asked if there will be any policy changes related to cell phone use and multiple same student out-of-school and in-school suspensions. Superintendent Nash replied that these subjects will be discussed at the next policy committee meetin.

F. Transportation Update

Superintendent Nash conveyed that assumptions were made that privatizing our transportation department would be more efficient and cost effective. Killingly Public Schools District is 1 of 6 districts in Connecticut that operate their own transportation department. Therefore, a transportation efficiency study was conducted by Mr. Rich LaBrie, of Alliance Education Associates LLC. Alliance Education Associates LLC partners with school districts to evaluate, and provide transportation recommendations.

Mr. LaBrie gave a summary of the audit. The audit is driven by data and many factors are taken into consideration to determine efficiency or inefficiency. Some factors are manual vs. computerized routing, student loads, population density, distance between schools and road infrastructures.

The audit showed that if the District were to outsource it transportation services, it would incur higher expenses and ancillary costs. The District does not have enough drivers and vans to provide all of the required out-of-district transportaton and out-of-district special education transportation. The District incurs less expense to outsource some bus runs as opposed to provide all out-of-district special education transportation.

The audit disclosed that maintenance of older buses is a significant expense to the District. It is recommended that the district have a consistent capital plan for purchasing new buses or vans. Conversations have started with the Town Manager regarding a capital plan that would include replacement of buses. It was also recommended that the District invest in resources to recruit and retain spare drivers to cover daily absences. In conclusion, the audit report indicated that the district regular transportaton operation to be efficient.

Kyle Napierata asked Mr. LaBrie what the costs are for new buses and if leasing would be cost effective.

11. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. June 26, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes
- B. September 2024 Student Enrollment
- C. September Employee of the Month Nomination

- D. KHS Marching Band Trip Request to the Big E in Springfield, MA on 9-13-24
- E. KHS Marching Band Trip Request to Woonsocket, R.I. Autumn Fest on 10-14-24
- F. KHS Marching Band Trip Request to UMASS Stadium in Amherst, MA on 10-26-24
- G. KHS Vocational Agricultural FFA Trip Request to Big E in Springfield, MA on 9/14/24

Chairperson Susan Lannon asked that the Board add a field trip to the consent agenda as consent item 11.H for one FFA student to go to the Big E., in Springfield to participate in the Ag-Science fair.

MOTION: by Misty Murdock, seconded by Danny Rovero to add the KHS, FFA field trip request to the consent agenda as consent item 11.H.
Yes-9, Unanimous
Motion Carries.

At this time, Kelly Martin questioned why Board Shout-outs (recognizing staff members) was not included on tonight's agenda and if Shout-outs will continue. Ms.Lannon said she would like to add this to the next agenda so all Board members could weigh-in about a process for Board members and a possible schedule.

Kevin Marcoux asked to pull item consent agenda item A.

MOTION: by Kevin Marcoux, seconded by Misty Murdock to approve consent items 11 B, C, D, E, F, G, and H.
Yes- 9 Unanimous
Motion Carries.

Susan Lannon asked to approve consent item 11.A
Yes- 8
Abstain 1, Kevin Marcoux
Motion Carries.

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: by Misty Murdock, seconded by Kyle Napierata to adjourn.
Yes- 9 Unanimous
Motion Carries.

The September 11, 2024 Board of Education meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Keely Doyle,
Recording Secretary