



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Minutes – Special Board of Education Meeting – September 17, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Mr. D. Goldson, President. The meeting was held in Gateway Center, 2nd floor Board Room, New Haven, Connecticut.

Present: Mr. D. Goldson, President; Ms. Y. Rivera, Vice-President, Dr. T. Jackson-McArthur, Secretary; Mayor T. Harp, Dr. E. Joyner, Mr. M. Wilcox

Guest: Atty. Melissa Kauffman, BOE legal counsel

Absent: Dr. C. Birks

Student Members: Mr. N. Rivera, Ms. L. Arouna

Discussion of Process for Superintendent's Evaluation

Mr. Goldson commented we are here this evening to start the Superintendent's evaluation process. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the timeline and to have the process complete by September 30, 2019.

Mr. Goldson commented that they will find in their packets, a timeline and flow chart as well as a copy of the Superintendent's contract, for informational purposes. Each member is to complete their individual evaluation over the next week. We have to get this done by September 30th.

Mr. Goldson stated that today we will focus on the process so that we all understand it, talk about the timeline, and over the next week complete it so that we can have a discussion in executive session at our Board meeting on September 23rd.

Dr. Joyner suggested that they set specific deadlines for specific tasks. He feels that the first thing we have to agree on is to set a standard for our rating; will it include a label and a narrative. Mr. Goldson told him that the document does include both a label and a narrative and there are four standards, a section for comments and/or a narrative. Dr. Joyner said we must set a specific rubric that would include a rating and follow up narrative to justify the rating. What we do individually is a mirror for the combined document. A discussion took place.

Mr. Goldson asked Dr. Joyner what he suggests we do if a board member refuses to fill out the comment section. Dr. Joyner said that would probably be a problem and he explained why in detail. He thinks that everyone will have some comment that could substantiate their rating and we should ask them to do that. He suggested we ask counsel.

Mr. Goldson introduced Atty. Kauffman, our legal counsel whom we hired a couple of months ago to help us through this process. He asked her if there is an obligation for any Board member to answer any of these standards and is there an obligation to substantiate their rating with any comments or evidence.



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Atty. Kauffman stated what their obligations are, come from both the contract and the Superintendent's Evaluation Process document that everyone agreed to. Each of those speaks to an executive session as a group completing this process. As for commentary, the contract specifically says what the Board may provide to the Superintendent, in writing, specific examples of deficiencies and that is what you are required to follow.

Mr. Goldson said when the six of us combine our documents we should have enough to provide evidence one way or another on each of the standards. To a question by Mr. Goldson relating to individual ratings, Atty. Kauffman stated that your obligation is to do this as a group. Mr. Goldson, for clarity, said so the final document that we present to the Superintendent has to be a group agreed upon document. Atty. Kauffman commented that is correct.

Ms. Rivera asked when you say an agreed upon document, isn't this document that we are working on that document. Mr. Goldson explained this is the document that we will follow for the evaluation, what we give to the Superintendent is a combination of all of our evaluations into one document. Ms. Rivera said this doesn't have a numbers rating system referred to by Dr. Joyner. Dr. Joyner said it does and he explained.

Dr. Joyner commented that the reason he suggested that each Board member should comment is because the final document has to be a composite of our collective thinking and the agreements we reach around a final rating for each area. If Board members can come to the table in executive session with evidence that would justify the rating, it would make it a lot easier and be in accordance with what the final document should look like. Dr. Joyner explained further.

Ms. Rivera asked how we would resolve disagreements. Dr. Joyner responded we have to vote on it as a body and the majority rules. If we have a difference of opinion, we would have to take a vote. It would make sense for us to have evidential justification for our votes; he gave an example and explained.

Ms. Rivera then asked if these discussions would take place in executive session and then the decision would be made at the full Board meeting. Mr. Goldson remarked we can't take a vote in executive session so that is correct. Hopefully, we would walk out of executive session with a decision. Atty. Kauffman commented once you have the final document and have followed all the processes through you would vote to adopt the evaluation. To a question by Mr. Goldson, Atty. Kauffman answered they would present it to the Superintendent after they have voted.

Dr. Joyner enumerated each step of the process they would take. He commented that when we complete the final document we would have within the document evidence that should satisfy reasonable people of how we came to our conclusions. It is an evidence based evaluation.



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Mr. Wilcox commented that he agrees that there is an expectation that we can back up the reasoning for whatever rating that is given by someone and he explained. He hopes that everyone is taking this seriously and pulling the evidence together to back up what they are saying so we can have a good discussion as we nail it down as a group.

At this time Mr. Goldson noted, for the record, that Dr. Jackson-McArthur and Mayor Harp joined the meeting. He went over what they have discussed thus far.

Mr. Goldson suggested that they have an executive session on the 23rd at our regular Board meeting where we present our individual evaluations and then work on developing a combined document. This would mean that we would try to shorten the regular meeting so we can do this or we schedule a special meeting another day after the Board meeting to give ourselves enough time to do that.

Dr. Joyner said that we should cut out as much time as we can from the regular meeting but as a contingency, schedule a special meeting. He continued with his thoughts. It might be important to have the special meeting very soon after the September 23rd meeting.

Dr. Jackson commented is it correct to say that we are taking this home to do it ourselves and then hand it in and the lawyer compiles it. Mr. Goldson said no we compile it together at the special meeting. He suggested that we schedule a special meeting before or after the meeting on the 23rd. After some discussion it was determined to schedule a special meeting for the 24th to complete the process, and then have a meeting with the superintendent on the 25th to present the document to her. Mayor Harp noted she could not make the 25th so they changed it to the 26th, if needed. The meetings will be at 5:30pm. A discussion took place on where to hold the special meeting because the parking is terrible on Meadow Street. A discussion took place.

Dr. Joyner summarized what they had agreed to. Between now and the 23rd we are to do an individual appraisal of our perception of the Superintendent's performance; it is recommended that we provide evidence of our ratings; September 23rd at 5:30pm, at Celentano, we are going to have a group appraisal and executive session; as a contingency we are going to schedule special meetings on the 24th and 26th in case we cannot get all the business done in that timeframe.

Mr. Goldson amended, we will hopefully complete our appraisals on the 23rd, present the document to the Superintendent on the 24th. If we cannot complete the process on the 23rd, we will complete it on the 24th and present it to the Superintendent on the 26th. Dr. Joyner reiterated we are going to present the document to the Superintendent at the next meeting after we complete our Board appraisal.



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Ms. Rivera stated that there is a Citywide Parent meeting at 5:30pm on the 26th at Wilbur Cross. Dr. Jackson suggested that if we need a meeting on the 26th, we can have it at Wilbur Cross which will allow parents who are interested to cross over to our meeting.

Dr. Joyner remarked he thinks it is a win, win. He stressed that this is the most important item that this Board has faced to date. We have to give it our undivided attention and we shouldn't allow anything from keeping us from doing our best effort. He thinks we should have the meeting at Celentano and get it done, not at Wilbur Cross. He explained his position.

Mr. Wilcox agreed with the importance of this and maybe one solution is the Transportation 101 Workshop that the Citywide Parent Team is having is from 6-8:00pm and if we meet at 5:00pm that could happen. He understands the importance of this, so perhaps we can get things done on the 23rd and 24th and we won't need a meeting on the 26th. Some of the folks on Citywide are people who are very involved in our district.

624-19
Approve Meeting at
Wilbur Cross H.S.

On the motion by Mr. Goldson, seconded by Ms. Rivera, it was voted by roll call with one nay from Dr. Joyner, to hold a meeting on September 26th at 5:00pm in Wilbur Cross High School, if necessary.

625-19
Adjournment

On the motion by Mr. Goldson, seconded by Dr. Jackson-McArthur, it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginger McHugh

Recording Secretary

“A video of this meeting is available on nhps.net, Public Meetings”