



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

New Britain Board of Education Special Meeting

May 16, 2020 – 9:00 AM | Virtual Meeting

Call to Order and Roll Call

Call to Order

Mr. Merrill Gay, President of the New Britain Board of Education, called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

Board Members Present

Ms. Monica Dawkins, Mr. Merrill Gay, Mr. Anthony Kane, Ms. Diane Leja, Mr. Nicholas Mercier, Ms. Annie Parker, Ms. Diana Reyes, Ms. Nancy Rodriguez, Ms. Gayle Sanders-Connolly, Dr. Violet Jiménez Sims

Board Members Absent

None

Executive Session

Mr. Mercier motioned to go into executive session at 9:05 AM to discuss items 2A (Approve Administrative Appointment), 2B (Discuss City of New Britain, Common Council Resolution – Creation of School District Savings Fund), and 2C (Discuss Upcoming Collective Bargaining Agreements), seconded by Ms. Parker. Superintendent Sarra, Mr. Kevin Kane (Chief Financial Officer), Ms. Maryellen Manning (Director of Personnel and Talent Development), and Mr. Manuel Zaldivar were invited into executive session. Motion carried unanimously.

Continuation of Meeting

The meeting resumed in open session at 9:45 AM.

New Business

Personnel: Approve Administrative Appointment

Submitted by Ms. Nancy Sarra | No Subcommittee Review

- **Mr. Manuel Zaldivar, Elementary School Principal at Chamberlain Elementary School, effective July 1, 2020.** Currently Interim Elementary School Principal at Chamberlain Elementary School. The salary is \$138,313 and the funding source is local funding.

Mr. Mercier motioned to approve the administrative appointment of Mr. Manuel Zaldivar to Elementary School Principal at Chamberlain Elementary School, seconded by Ms. Sanders-Connolly. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Sanders-Connolly motioned to amend the agenda to move item 2N (New Britain High School Graduation Update) up to precede item 2D (Chamberlain School Project and Feasibility Study Update), seconded by Ms. Parker. Motion carried unanimously.

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New Britain High School Graduation Update

Superintendent Sarra and Mr. Michael Foran, Assistant Superintendent, provided an update with regard to potential plans for the New Britain High School graduation exercises. Mr. Foran outlined two plans which both involve virtual formats with an emphasis on safety and adherence to social distancing guidelines. The first plan follows a “drive-in movie” theme with students and their families attending graduation in their cars in the parking lot of Veterans Stadium on July 30 and July 31st. This event would be by invitation only with students specifically assigned to one of four graduation sessions divided over the course of the two day period. Times are to be determined. Due to parking lot capacity, families will be limited to one car per family and attendees will be instructed to remain in their cars during the course of the ceremony. The ceremonies will be streamed virtually and projected on screens in the parking lot as well. The alternative plan would be to livestream the graduation ceremony and have students and their families view the broadcast remotely from their homes. Superintendent Sarra and Mr. Foran will provide additional updates to board members, staff, students and families as the plans proceed.

Chamberlain School Project and Feasibility Study Update

Mr. Raymond Moore, Chief Facilities and Special Projects Officer, Mr. Chuck Boos, Mr. Fred Khericha and Mr. Paul Dominov presented an update with regard to the Chamberlain School project and feasibility study. Mr. Boos, Mr. Khericha and Mr. Dominov are representatives of Kaestle Boos Associates of New Britain. Mr. Moore discussed the challenges they are facing with this project in terms of trying to fit needed educational programming into the building while also working within the parameters of the state’s space standards for renovating schools. Mr. Dominov presented an overview of three options being explored for renovation of Chamberlain School. The first option involves renovation of the existing building which will not meet all of the current programming needs. The second option would involve an addition renovation including removal of the existing media center and construction of a two-story addition in its place. The third option would also involve removal of the existing media center and construction of a two-story addition, but would add a new front door in that location. Mr. Fred Khericha spoke about asking the state for a space waiver since Chamberlain will still exceed space standards with its existing footprint (88,000 sq. ft.). Mr. Moore stressed the importance of looking at “big box areas” (media center, cafeteria, gymnasium and auditorium) in the building and finding creative ways to make multi-purpose use of the space.

Mr. Moore and the feasibility team will be meeting with administrators to discuss the state’s space standards, class lists, and programming needs of Chamberlain on Monday, May 18, 2020. Following this meeting they will make an appointment with the state to discuss space standards. Mr. Moore said that he expects the feasibility study to be completed on or about June 30, 2020.

Open School Projects Update

Mr. Kevin Kane, Chief Financial Officer, presented an update on the district’s open school projects. Mr. Kane reported that the state has received all of the necessary paperwork from us to proceed with closing out our thirteen open school construction projects. As of May 6, 2020, nine of these projects are in audit and some have been closed already. The city received a check a week ago for one of the projects and more money is anticipated as the projects are closed out by the state.

Operations: Approve Bid Award to Food Service Management Company for the Operation of Consolidated School District of New Britain’s Food Service Program

Submitted by Ms. Ann Alfano | No Subcommittee Review | Funding Source: N/A Cafeteria Fund

The Consolidated School District of New Britain posted a request for proposals for the purpose of entering into a contract for the operation of the district’s food service program. The district’s food service program includes the following programs: National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The food service management company will assume responsibility for the efficient management and consulting service of the food program including, but not limited to: menus, purchasing, receiving, storing, setting up cafeteria lines, counter service, cleanup, sanitation, training, hiring and supervising personnel, and presenting food in a way to create optimum student participation.

In accordance with State of Connecticut and USDA guidelines, the district Food Service Committee reviewed and evaluated the

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bid proposals received. The committee consisted of six members, Michael Foran, Kevin Kane, Damon Pearce, Alejandro Ortiz, Ann Alfano, and Stephanie Noto. The committee used the USDA bid evaluation forms to evaluate the three bid responses received and recommend that the Board award the bid to the highest scoring vendor, Whitsons Culinary Group effective July 1, 2020.

The bid responses, committee evaluation documents, and contract are being reviewed by the State Department of Education. The State must approve the proposal and contract prior to its execution. The contract is for a five-year period with the option to renew every year.

The total is N/A and the funding source is N/A Cafeteria Fund.

Mr. Mercier motioned to approve the bid award to Whitsons Culinary Group for the operation of the Consolidated School District of New Britain's Food Service Program, seconded by Ms. Parker. Motion carried unanimously.

Academics: Approve Purchase Order and Bid Waiver for Ultrasonic Cleaning Machines (\$131,899.00)

Submitted by Ms. Leona Clerkin | No Subcommittee Review | Funding Source: Superintendent Local Funds 101090223200 56110

The purchase of Ultrasonic Cleaning Machines are a necessary expense in light of the recent COVID-19 outbreak and to ensure a long life for our expensive band instruments. Unlike suburban district that rent less than 10% of instruments to students, CSDNB rents band instruments to approximately 90% of students in grades 4 through 12. Regular maintenance, including Ultrasonic cleaning, would help to ensure that diseases are destroyed and cannot be transmitted through the rental of one of our instruments, and that instruments are well maintained for years to come ensuring our investment. Through the cleaning and sanitation process, we can allay fears of parents and students who rent instruments through our schools. The Save the Music Foundation and the National Association of Music Education (nafme) all recommend regular cleaning of instruments in order to control the spread of communicable diseases. These machines will pay for themselves over time and will help to keep our students healthy.

The total is \$131,899 and the funding source is Local Funds 101091125900-57346.

Mr. Kane motioned to approve the purchase order and bid waiver for Ultrasonic Cleaning Machines in the amount of \$131,899.00, seconded by Mr. Mercier.

Mr. Mercier motioned to refer this item to the Finance Subcommittee for review at their next meeting, seconded by Ms. Sanders-Connolly.

Roll call vote:

- ***Gay –Nay***
- ***Mercier – Aye***
- ***Jimenez Sims –Nay***
- ***Dawkins –Nay***
- ***Kane –Nay***
- ***Leja –Aye***
- ***Parker – Nay***
- ***Reyes – Nay***
- ***Rodriguez – Aye***
- ***Sanders-Connolly – Aye***

The motion failed with 4 votes in favor and 6 votes against.

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Ms. Sanders-Connolly motioned to refer this item to the Finance Subcommittee for review at their next meeting, seconded by Ms. Leja.

Roll call vote:

- **Gay – Aye**
- **Mercier – Aye**
- **Jimenez Sims –Nay**
- **Dawkins –Nay**
- **Kane –Aye**
- **Leja –Aye**
- **Parker – Nay**
- **Reyes – Aye**
- **Rodriguez – Aye**
- **Sanders-Connolly – Aye**

The motion carried with 7 votes in favor and 3 votes against.

Academics: Approve Purchase Order and Bid Waiver for Technology and Classroom Furniture for Art Department (\$62,487.23)

Submitted by Ms. Leona Clerkin | No Subcommittee Review | Funding Source: Local Budget NBHS - \$50,000, FA - \$12,487.23 Fine Arts Local –Clerkin / NBHS Local – Pearce 101096322074 57345 – Fine Arts Instrument Equipment

In order to provide more technology based instruction and to update the Art Department, both in terms of a technology-based Class and to update with new furniture, a reallocation of funds is necessary. Both Mr. Pearce and myself have set aside funding to bring the art department up to date. In terms of classroom environment, new furniture will be purchased to create a welcoming classroom environment. To prepare the Art Department for the future with the addition of a Digital Arts Class, the purchase of appropriate technology required to run such a class. Technology-based art instruction is an exciting and needed addition to the course selection for students at NBHS. The course is current with trends in education and jobs in the field of Art and Marketing.

The total is \$62,487.23 and the funding source is Local budget NBHS - \$50,000, FA - \$12,487.23 Fine Arts Local - Clerkin / NBHS local - Pearce 101096322074 57345 - Fine Arts Instrument Equipment

Mr. Mercier motioned to refer this item to the Finance Subcommittee for review at their next meeting, seconded by Ms. Sanders-Connolly. Motion carried unanimously.

Academics: Approve Purchase Order and Bid Waiver for Foundations Training Materials from Wilson Language Training Corp. (\$21,139.16)

Submitted by Ms. Amy Anderson | No Subcommittee Review | Funding Source: 2020 – IDEA 611 – Instructional Supplies 202096912002 56110

In partnership with family and community, the Consolidated School District of New Britain works to provide the best personalized and comprehensive whole-child education so our students will be prepared for, and positively contribute to, a profoundly different future. Starting in 2020-2021 we will be implementing Foundations into 5 elementary schools across the district in grades K-2. Our in-house Foundations coach/trainer will train teachers in Foundations next year. The attached price quote is for the required resources for teachers who will be trained in the 2020--2021 school year. K-2 Sped and EL teachers will also be trained and receive materials.

The total is \$21,139.16 and the funding source is 2020-IDEA 611 -Instructional Supplies 202096912002 56110.

Ms. Sanders-Connolly motioned to approve the purchase order and bid waiver for Foundations training materials from Wilson Language Training Corp. in the amount of \$21,139.15, seconded by Mr. Kane. Motion carried unanimously.

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Finance: Approve Purchase Order for S.P.I.R.E. Program Instructional Materials and Professional Development (\$12,683.60)

Submitted by Ms. Donna Clark | No Subcommittee Review | Funding Source: 2020 – IDEA 611 202096912002 56110

S.P.I.R.E.® is a research-proven reading intervention program for your lowest performing students. It is designed to build reading success through an intensive, structured, and spiraling curriculum that incorporates phonological awareness, phonics, spelling, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension in a systematic 10-step lesson plan.

This program purchase aligns to the District Strategic Plan by providing training and feedback to special education teachers, which in turn will improve teacher practices, and result in student academic gains.

The total is \$12,683.60 and the funding source is 2020 - IDEA 611 202096912002 56110.

Mr. Mercier motioned to approve the purchase order for S.P.I.R.E. Program instructional materials and professional development in the amount of \$12,683.60, seconded by Ms. Parker. Motion carried unanimously.

Finance: Approve Purchase Order for Boardmaker Online Instructional Materials (\$19,036.65)

Submitted by Ms. Donna Clark | No Subcommittee Review | Funding Source: 2020 – IDEA 611 202096912002 56110

Boardmaker Online is a complete system for delivering personalized instruction and therapy while also measuring student progress. It is also the one special education solution that supports your entire team. This curriculum program aligns with the District Strategic Plan by providing instruction which is differentiated, engaging and relevant. Training and feedback will be provided to special education teachers and teacher practices are expected to improve, which will result in student academic gains. This program will be utilized by all PreK special education teachers, KEY K-5 special education teachers and associated related service providers.

The total is \$19,036.65 and the funding source is 2020 - IDEA 611 202096912002 56110.

Mr. Mercier motioned to approve purchase order for Boardmaker Online instructional materials in the amount of \$19,036.65, seconded by Ms. Sanders-Connolly. Motion carried unanimously.

Finance: Approve Purchase Order for Unique Learning System Instructional Materials (\$18,375.61)

Submitted by Ms. Donna Clark | No Subcommittee Review | Funding Source: 2020 – IDEA 611 202096912002 56110

Unique Learning System is a one-of-a-kind program designed specifically to give students with complex learning needs meaningful access to the general education curriculum. From one convenient, cloud-based platform, educators deliver differentiated, standards-aligned content enhanced by powerful assessments, data tools and evidence-based instructional support. Students from pre-K through transition have the advantage of consistent high-quality instruction, a motivating interactive learning environment, engaging symbol support and a path to independence.

This curriculum program aligns with the District Strategic Plan by providing instruction which is differentiated, engaging and relevant. Training and feedback will be provided to special education teachers and teacher practices are expected to improve, which will result in student academic gains. This program will be utilized by KEY classrooms at the secondary level, and the Pathways classes K-12.

The total is \$18,375.61 and the funding source is 2020 - IDEA 611 202096912002 56110.

Mr. Mercier motioned to approve purchase order for Unique Learning System instructional materials in the amount of \$18,375.61, seconded by Ms. Sanders-Connolly. Motion carried unanimously.

Discuss Board of Education and City Hall Tech Task Force

Mr. Mercier and Mr. Prokop, Chief Information Officer, gave an update regarding the work of the city-wide Technology Task Force. This task force is comprised of members of the school district and the community with the goal of finding the most efficient and cost-effective way to bring Wi-Fi access to all New Britain students who cannot connect to the internet. Mr.

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Mercier reported that the task force had a productive first meeting on Wednesday. The city and school district will be exploring what resources there are in the city in terms of outbuildings and locations where we could potentially install some Wi-Fi access spots. Mr. Mercier stated that the task force concluded that any model for expanding access is going to have to be a hybrid model that includes finding locations to install hot spots, getting devices out to families in hard to reach areas, and tapping into existing city infrastructure. Mr. Prokop added that since the last meeting they have received encouraging responses from a number of different companies they reached out to in order to further explore the various ways to mesh the network together.

Discuss Possible Gender Neutral Policy for 2021 NBHS Graduation Regalia

Mr. Mercier motioned to refer this item to the Policy Subcommittee for review at their next meeting, seconded by Ms. Sanders-Connolly. Motion carried unanimously.

Discuss Contingency Plan for Fall Instruction

Superintendent Sarra shared a document with board members outlining the goals, design, and guiding documents of the Reopening Task Force. The task force will meet formally for its first session on May 22, 2020. Reopening goals and planning will align with the Governor's Executive Orders and the corresponding reopening phases that we are determined to be in. Superintendent Sarra discussed her expectations for the five subcommittees she created providing a detailed timeline of preparation. She also outlined the functions of the Reopening Steering Committees which will be formed by May 21st. Superintendent Sarra expects to have a solid plan developed and in place by July 24th. Summer enrichment programs will remain virtual. Superintendent Sarra emphasized the critical importance of getting internet access to all of our students that still need it. Updates on the progress of the Reopening Task Force will be provided on an ongoing basis.

Mr. Mercier recommended that several board members might serve on each of the task force subcommittees in order to effectively bring information back to the full board.

Closing and Adjournment

Mr. Mercier motioned to adjourn at 12:50 PM, seconded by Dr. Jiménez Sims. Motion carried unanimously.