

## Kent Center School Board Of Education

Minutes **DRAFT** – November 7, 2018

The Kent Center School Board of Education held its regular meeting on Wednesday, November 7, 2018 at 5:30pm in the Kent Center School library. Present were: Chairman Marty Lindenmayer, CiCi Nielsen, Melissa Cherniske, Dana Slaughter, Principal Michelle Mott and Assistant Superintendent Lisa Carter. Also present were KCS educators Marci Saunders, Ane Starr, Nancy Ackerman, Casey Burke and Kathleen Robey as well as KCS students, parents, members of the public and press.

Call to order – Marty Lindenmayer called the meeting to order at 5:52pm.

**Pledge of Allegiance****1. Approval of Agenda**

- a. Marty Lindenmayer made a motion to strike out item 11d related to the NARCAN policy as this is still being worked on.
- b. Marty Lindenmayer called for a motion to approve the agenda; Melissa Cherniske made the motion to approve; Dana Slaughter seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

**2. Approval of October 3, 2018 meeting minutes**

- a. Marty Lindenmayer called for a motion to approve minutes of the October 3, 2018 regular meeting.
- b. Melissa Cherniske made motions to correct her last name to Roth-Cherniske, add students to the meeting's attendance, and to record her abstention from voting on the alternation representative to the Region 1 Board of Education.
- c. Cici Nielson made a motion to correct Gonzo Garcia-Pedroso's attendance from present to absent.
- d. Marty Lindenmayer called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes with these revisions; Melissa Cherniske made the motion to approve; CiCi Nielson seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

**3. Public Comment**

- a. Marty Lindenmayer open up the meeting to allow for any public comments.
- b. One parent had questions regarding grading practices and whether there are specific guidelines for when teachers must enter initial grades. This parent has experienced significant delays in posting grades and is concerned that the marking period will come to a close without a full understanding of how her child is doing in class. Michelle Mott assured this parent that there were guidelines for teachers to submit grades but noted there is a distinction between assessments in Math versus ELA and that could potential cause some delay. Michelle further assured this parent that she would look into the matter and stated that the assessment process should take place as soon as possible.

**4. Recognition of Those Who Contribute to KCS - Melissa Cherniske**

- a. Melissa Cherniske presented a pin to Mr. George Woodin in special recognition for his contribution to KCS in repairing the sound system in the gymnasium before the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grade play production. Specifically, she noted, George worked around the school schedule and the rehearsal schedule so he didn't displace any classes and instruction. He took a difficult and potentially stressful situation and handled it in a manner that allowed for the KCS staff not to worry about the outcome. George installed a new, custom-made multi-pin adapter for the snake on the sound system. He soldered and shrink-wrapped audio pin connectors onto wires. This unit allows for instantaneous connection of 16

microphone cables and 2 speaker cables at once. Thank you George for your time, talent and diligence.

#### **5. Focus on Student Learning- 8th grade French students**

- a. KCS teacher Linda Miller, along with 8<sup>th</sup> grade students Zoey Greenbaum and Linnea Saxton, discussed the French program at KCS where it is a regular part of the curriculum in grades 3-8. She handed out materials and showed a very short video that demonstrated 5<sup>th</sup> graders speaking in French together. Zoey and Linnea put on a short skit conversing entirely in French. Madam Miller also mentioned that several former students have declared themselves French majors in college as a result of their experience with the language while at Kent

#### **6. Written Communication**

- a. Marty Lindenmayer read a letter from 1<sup>st</sup> grade teachers Nancy Ackerman and Rebecca da Silva concerning the new window project and expressing their thoughts and requesting glass and not panels at the top of the windows. This letter was also signed by 7 teachers of KCS. When asked to speak, Nancy Ackerman stated that many teachers were concerned about the new window project and the potential loss of learning opportunities regarding nature. A copy of this letter has been filed. Marty Lindenmayer thanked her and all the teachers for sharing their thoughts and input.
- b. Marty Lindenmayer discussed a letter he received from the Housatonic Regional Teachers Association asking for the Board of Education to consider a list of questions to Region One High School Board. He further mentioned that the Board of Education had pretty much already come up with appropriate questions to consider.

#### **7. Region One Report - Melissa Cherniske**

- a. Melissa Cherniske read highlights from her report, specifically mentioning the application for a grant regarding a fencing project as an increase security measure with a meeting to be held next week to approve its design and location. A full copy of this report has been filed.

#### **8. Committee Reports:**

- a. Facilities and Safety - Marty Lindenmayer
  - i. Marty Lindenmayer reported that there was a building committee meeting in late October to look at requirements for a grant regarding safety at schools in order to change the entry into KCS. Right now, visitors enter and have immediate access to the school with necessarily going through the office. They will proceed with a plan to enhance the main entrance doors and will be presenting a design and work on the grant to allow this change to happen. The due date to declare a filing is December.
  - ii. Final things regarding the new window project will take place at this meeting tonight.
  - iii. There are some continuing issues with the heating in KCS and the building committee will be looking at that again to perhaps replace the heating system.
- b. Budget - CiCi Nielson - NO REPORT
- c. Wellness - Gonzo Garcia-Pedroso
  - i. Gonzo was no present, however, a written report has been filed.
- d. ABC Meeting- Marty Lindenmayer
  - i. Marty Lindenmayer stated that the highlight of their meeting was the evaluation of the Superintendent who is currently on a three-year contract. They are working with Dr. Vogel on a performance review to define goals and expectations. He expects to have final goals and objectives identified this month. They are also reviewing last year's evaluations and performance of administrators to ensure they are carried out.
- e. IT - Gonzo Garcia-Pedroso – NO REPORT
  - i. Marty Lindenmayer reiterated that they are still looking to enhance IT and steps necessary to achieve a healthy IT community.

- f. Community Relations Committee - Marty Lindenmayer
  - i. Marty Lindenmayer spoke about the PTO committee and how there are no teachers assigned to it. He urged to have teachers involved as a way to enhance communication.
  - ii. Marty Lindenmayer also noted that KSC will be hosting veterans in the classroom on Friday in honor of Veterans Day with the school sponsoring their lunch.

## **9. Administrative Reports:**

- a. Principal's Report - Michelle Mott
  - i. Michelle reviewed the SBAC results with a presentation, noting one summative assessment and its alignment with Common Core. A discussion on the merits and effectiveness of the SBAC occurred. Michelle also noted the success of Grandparent's Day, volunteers from Marvelwood, and that Mark Scozzafava will be filling in for Mike Salinger until June. A full copy of this report has been filed.
- b. Superintendent of Schools' Report - Pam Vogel, Superintendent
  - i. Pam Vogel was not in attendance but Lisa Carter noted the Superintendent Goals that were listed, the continuing work on a task force regarding the awareness of opioid and substance abuse problems and a means of prevention. A full copy of this report has been filed.
- c. Assistant Superintendent of Schools' Report- Lisa Carter, Assistant Superintendent
  - i. Lisa reviewed the Federal Grant applications submitted and that the entitlement grant awards continue to be flat or lower than in previous years. Lisa also mentioned the Alpine system that was purchased to be used by all teachers to access and analyze student data. A fully copy of this report has been filed.

## **10. Business:**

- a. Board approval of KCS Window Project budget and final plans and specification (action anticipated)
  - i. Al Jacunski presentation on the window project, which includes the replacement of windows but does not include installation of air conditioners. He noted that nothing can be attached to a drop ceiling, and assured that the amount of window that will still be available will bring in a lot of light. Al noted that the bottom third will be 4 feet high and the top third will be 2 feet high. He also discussed the state requirements regarding eligible and ineligible estimate fees that center around amount of space. The total cost to the Town of Kent is a little higher than initially agreed to as figures float due to adjustments. He hopes the project will go out to begin the bidding process by January 2019.
  - ii. Marty Lindenmayer called for a motion to continue the plan for the new window project.
  - iii. Melissa Cherniske recommended giving the teachers one more opportunity to review this information regarding the shades, the air conditioning, and any potential loss of viewing from classroom.
  - iv. Teachers present at the meeting reiterated the importance of those classroom windows for multiple purposes including amount of light and educational learning.
  - v. Martin Lindenmayer called for a motion on the specifications and plans of the window project; CiCi Nielson made the motion to approve; Melissa Cherniske seconded the motion; the motion passed 3-1 with Dana Slaughter opposing.
  - vi. Martin Lindenmayer called for motion to approve the window project budget; Melissa Cherniske made the motion to approve; CiCi Nielson seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.
- b. Appointment of Region One Board of Education Kent Representative (action anticipated)
  - i. Melissa Cherniske spoke of looking long and hard for a Region One Representative, preferably a parent with students at KCS. Melissa nominated Heather Strid for this position.

- ii. Town of Kent resident Ed Epstein commented that Heather doesn't have to serve on a committee if she chooses not to, and reminded her that she does not answer to the superintendent but that the superintendent answers to her as the Region One Representative.
- iii. Marty Lindenmayer called for a motion to elect Heather Strid as the Region One Representative; Melissa Cherniske made the motion to elect Heather; CiCi Nielson seconded the nomination; Heather Strid was approved unanimously.
- c. Nomination and selection of KCS Board of Education member vacancy (action anticipated)
  - i. There was discussion around the Rob Ober vacancy and the nomination process from Republican Town Committee. Marty Lindenmayer recommended looking at the names under consideration, including the two from the Republican Town Committee, and to hold a special meeting to interview and meet the candidates. Melissa advocated selecting parents who have children at KCS as it is important to have them represented. The Board has the option to nominate anybody they like, not just for the Republican Town Committee, and that person will serve until the time of the next election, which is November 2019.
  - ii. Marty Lindenmayer called for a motion for the Board of Education to canvass as a nominating committee; Melissa Cherniske made the motion; Dana Slaughter seconded the motion; the motion passed 3-0 with CiCi Nielson abstaining.
- d. Establishing KCS Board of Education regular meeting schedule for calendar year 2019 (action anticipated)
  - i. Martin Lindenmayer called for a motion to pass the Board of Education meeting dates for 2019; Melissa Cherniske made the motion; CiCi Nielson seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

## 11. Public Comment

- a. Marty Lindenmayer opened the meeting to allow for any public comments again.
- b. One parent expressed concern about an after school program for ½ days and asked if there had been any coordination between KCS and the local nursery school. Michelle Mott spoke about an original survey had been put out about shortened days and lack of child care, noting there were many complaints but that the nursery school was not a good fit.
- c. Another parent followed up from the earlier comment on a timeframe for the grading process and asked whether there has been given any thought to the possibility of reassessments. She is concerned about the amount of time teachers dedicate to reassessment, as a lot of time teachers are required to do other things which limits their time to reassess. Michelle Mott stated that teachers are utilizing academic resources and strictly following reassessment guidelines. She also thanked this parent for speaking out as her input is very important. CiCi advocated having a shared doc regarding the NYP so teachers can stay on top of student needs. Dana inquired about the after school academic program and whether it is working. Michelle Mott stated that the program is going well with only one teacher right now as there has been no need to have two teachers. She reiterated that the after school academic program is great for getting activities done before assessments.
- d. Melissa asked whether it would be possible to go paper free, as the Region One Board does, and instead have a Google doc that includes instant corrections and links available to all. Ed Martin, Board of Education clerk, agreed with Melissa regarding this issue, noting the substantial amount of paper that is used – and wasted – as a result of current procedures.

## 12. Adjourn

- a. Martin Lindenmayer called to adjourn the meeting at 7:50pm; CiCi Nielson made the motion; Dana Slaughter seconded the motion; the motion to adjourn passed unanimously.