

The Bolton Board of Education held its regularly scheduled business meeting on November 14, 2013. The following board members were in attendance: Karen Bergin, Matthew Giuffre, John Hambrook, Rich Hayes, Trace Maulucci, Joe Muro and Ron Rousseau. Superintendent Kristin Heckt, and BHS Student Representatives Zoe Ounpuu-Adams and Jacob Dayton were also present.

- A. Call to Order – Chair Karen Bergin called the meeting to order at 6:30 M.
- B. Celebration of Excellence – Departing BOE members John Hambrook (12 years), Trace Maulucci (8 years) and Joe Muro (4 years) were recognized for their dedicated service to the Board of Education. State Senator Steve Cassano presented each member with an Official Citation from the CT General Assembly in recognition of their service to the schools and community of Bolton. First Selectman Robert Morra, Superintendent Kristin Heckt, BOE Chair Karen Bergin, and former Superintendent Paul Smith also offered words of their appreciation for the contributions of each member during their tenure as BOE members. Each member also spoke to express their gratitude for being elected to serve as a member of the BOE and encouraged the new board to continue the vision and mission of providing the best education to all Bolton students. A reception in the BHS lobby preceded the meeting.
- C. Comments from the Audience – none
- D. Additions to Agenda – Superintendent Heckt requested that item G.1 be moved up in the agenda.
- E. Routine Business Items
  - 1. Communications to Board Members – Karen Bergin received a request from the Bolton Community Education Foundation to reschedule the December 12 BOE meeting as it conflicts with the Mark Shriver event in the BHS Student Commons. BOE members agreed to change the BOE Business Meeting date to Wednesday, December 11, 2013. Mrs. Bergin also received a copy of a letter from PTA Vice President Krystn Ledoux to BOE member Ron Rousseau with a request that the letter be read into the record. After a brief discussion on the appropriateness of reading the letter, it was noted that the Board is obligated to do so when asked. The letter was read and may be found at the end of this document as a permanent part of these minutes. After the letter was read, Ron Rousseau stated he called the CTPTSA as a citizen, identified himself as a BOE member because it is a matter of record, and asked for information.
  - 2. Approval of Minutes – October 10, 2013 – John Hambrook presented a **motion** to approve the minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trace Maulucci; MUP.
  - 3. BHS Student Representatives – Zoe Ounpuu-Adams provided an update on BHS fall sports. Both Girls and Boys Cross Country finished 2<sup>nd</sup> for the season. Trevor Chambers, Evan Jaworski and Samantha Nyser were selected for All State and Samantha Nyser qualified to compete for All New England. The Girls Soccer team was eliminated in the State quarter finals. The Boys Soccer team is playing in the Class ‘S’ championship game Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM at Middletown High School. The Bolton Booster Club provided a fan bus to the semi-finals and will also provide a fan bus to Saturday’s game. The BHS Boys Soccer team, coached by Ray Boyd, won the championship in 1993 and current BHS Boys Soccer Coach, Brian Dube, was a player on that team. Work on the girls softball

dugouts has begun, again sponsored by the Bolton Booster Club, and they should be completed mid-December. BHS students have and will continue to participate in various CT Association of Schools Leadership programs. Jacob Dayton provided information on the activities involving visiting author Jon Clinch, author of Finn; classroom visits, a musical journey of Mark Twain's life performed by the Rosewood Ensemble and a community "meet and greet" which were sponsored by the Bolton Community Education Foundation. The Pops concert was held on October 24<sup>th</sup> and the BHS Band and Choral concerts will be on December 5<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, respectively. The National Honor Society will also hold a future blood drive. Zoe also noted that two BHS students lost a parent this month and school support activities have been ongoing.

4. Board of Education Committee Reports

- a. Community Partner Relations – Joe Muro reported the committee did not hold a meeting, but has been communicating electronically. The district newsletters were released on target and will continue on a quarterly basis. Superintendent Heckt added that copies were electronically sent to all BCS and BHS families through the School Messenger system and copies were also sent to 8<sup>th</sup> grade families in Columbia. Paper copies were also given to the Town Offices, Bentley Memorial Library and the Senior Center. Mrs. Heckt will be meeting with First Selectman Bob Morra and Administrative Officer Joyce Stille to determine how best to make this newsletter available to the community at large. John Hambrook asked if we had a stipend position available to involve the students in the preparation of the newsletter and that will be looked into. Karen Bergin thanked Joe Muro for his efforts in this initiative and his contributions to the improvements of the Columbia/Bolton connection.
- b. Curriculum – John Hambrook reported the committee met with Sarah Malinoski, Director of Curriculum and Technology Instruction, to discuss the upcoming test format and how to address the technical components with particular regard to the younger grade level students. Karen Bergin thanked John for his leadership and dedicated service to the Board over the last 12 years.
- c. Finance – Joe Muro reported the committee did not meet, but asked Kusal Huynh, Director of Finance, to provide an overview of the financial statement. A \$9K interdepartmental transfer was made to cover unexpected actual and anticipated athletic event costs. Kusal will provide information on the expenses to date from these funds. Superintendent Heckt noted that a more defined line item will be in the 2014-2015 budget to better identify and track these transfers and expenses.
- d. Personnel – The committee met and discussed personnel issues.
- e. Policy – Matt Giuffre reported the committee met and is working its way through the 9000 Series, Bylaws of the Board. Superintendent Heckt presented a 1<sup>st</sup> read of information on the costs and services associated with CABA hosting our policies online.
- f. Pupil Services – Trace Maulucci reported that the committee met and the SPED faculty is fully staffed and the Director of PPS, Beth Goldsnider, has budget information ready to be submitted to Superintendent Heckt.

5. Community Meeting Reports / Board of Education – Trace Maulucci reported the District Safety Committee met and will focus on school evacuation protocol. Rich Hayes reported that Buildings and Grounds met twice this month and will provide information next month. Karen Bergin reported there were two CAPA Committee

meetings. John Hambrook reported that he will be attending the monthly CREC Council meeting next Wednesday and invited any current or new Board members to join him. He also left the CREC Council Handbook with Chair Bergin. Karen Bergin also reported that an additional meeting of the Joint Boards has not yet been scheduled.

6. Superintendent of Schools Report

- a. Joint Board Meeting Follow-up – Superintendent Heckt wanted to review and discuss the BOE’s next step in preparation for the next Joint Board. Karen Bergin would like to meet in December so as to include new members. The CAPA committee will meet on November 26<sup>th</sup>. Superintendent Heckt will contact the Board of Selectman and Board of Finance to request that the Joint Board meeting be scheduled after December 11<sup>th</sup>.
- b. Amended Bolton Professional Learning and Evaluation Program – Superintendent Heckt reviewed the document changes that had been sent electronically to BOE members and requested their required approval. John Hambrook motioned to approve the document as amended; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trace; MUP. Superintendent Heckt provided her reasoning for keeping the training in-house and noted that there is still no further information on the state requested testing waiver. John Hambrook noted that the district is ahead of the game on these initiatives.

Superintendent Heckt also shared that she received recent information from the State Department of Education that Bolton High School is ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the state for Career and Technical Assessments and teacher Wendy Scott accepted a plaque on behalf of the school. Mrs. Heckt thanked Ms. Scott and the BHS staff for their efforts in achieving this recognition. A communication was also received from Columbia Interim Superintendent, Mark Winzler, stating that Columbia will not extend their contract with Windham High School and that effective with the 2014-2015 school year, E.O. Smith and Bolton high schools will be the only two options for Columbia students. Superintendent Heckt also stated that Governor Malloy announced that the Bolton School district was awarded \$51K of the \$103K security grant requested. These funds are issued as a reimbursement to expenses paid and Superintendent Heckt will contact the Board of Selectman and Board of Finance to work out details of funding the proposed CAPA project. This grant combined with existing allocated CAPA money should cover the needed security upgrades for BCS. Further discussion of allocated funds will be held at the next CAPA committee meeting. Superintendent Heckt also offered her congratulations to all of the fall athletes and their coaches.

F. Unfinished Business

1. Second Read – 2014-2015 School Calendar – Superintendent Heckt shared that, based on survey results from parents, staff and PTA feedback, she recommends that Draft 2 of the 2014-2015 school calendar be approved which changes the early dismissal PD days from Thursdays to Fridays with the exception of the one scheduled in April which will remain on a Thursday because of the Good Friday holiday. She also shared that teachers feel very strongly that 3 days were needed for parent-teacher conferences. John Hambrook presented a **motion** to approve Draft 2 of the 2014-2015 School Calendar; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joe Muro; MUP.

2. Field Projects – After discussion it was agreed that this will be requested to be an agenda item at the next Joint Board meeting. Chair Bergin will facilitate that request with any others that might be determined in the future.
  3. Breakdown Meetings – After discussion, it was agreed that Superintendent Heckt would continue her current practices in response to Board and/or public requests for information which would continue to include “breakdown meetings” with administrators as necessary.
  4. Audience Follow-up – It was agreed that the name and address will be requested and recorded of all members of the audience who formally address the Board with comments. Any follow-up to those comments is at the discretion of the Superintendent.
- G. New Business
1. Italy Trip, Spring 2015 – BHS Latin teacher, Paul Giblin, requested permission for the trip and information on the itinerary, travel arrangements and est. costs was provided. A **motion** to approve the trip was presented by John Hambrook; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trace Maulucci; MUP.
  2. Resignation – Superintendent Heckt presented the resignation of BCS SPED teacher, Elizabeth Ramans and read a letter of retirement from Grade 1 teacher, Robin Feeney. A **motion** to accept the resignation was made by John Hambrook; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trace Maulucci; MUP. A **motion** to accept the retirement was made by John Hambrook; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joe Muro; MUP. John Hambrook commented on the extraordinary career of Mrs. Feeney and that she will be missed.
- H. Future Business – Matt Giuffre noted for clarification and agreement that agenda items will be added by Board vote.
- I. Executive Session – A motion to adjourn into Executive Session was presented at 8:00 PM by John Hambrook; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trace Maulucci; MUP
1. Personnel – There was discussion on stipends for BHS and BCS newsletters, as well as a personnel matter. The Board came out of Executive Session by consensus at 9:25. John Hambrook presented a **motion** to approve the following stipend positions: BHS Newsletter, BCS (6-8) Newsletter and BCS (PK-5) Newsletter; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trace Maulucci; MUP.
- J. Adjournment – A **motion** to adjourn was presented by John Hambrook; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trace Maulucci; MUP.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Boyd  
Board Clerk



everychild.onevoice.

November 3, 2013

Mr. Ronald Rousseau  
Bolton Board of Education  
72 Brandy Street  
Bolton, CT 06043

Dear Mr. Rousseau,

I am writing today on behalf of the Executive Board of the Bolton PTA in regard to a recent complaint you made to the Connecticut Parent Teacher Student Association (CTPTSA) alleging that the Bolton PTA has violated State of Connecticut election laws.

On Friday, November 1, 2013, Bolton PTA President Katherine Gallé received a call from Mr. Don Romoser, President of the CTPTSA. He advised Mrs. Gallé that he had received a call from you and that you identified yourself as a member of the Bolton Board of Education. You subsequently alleged that the Bolton PTA may have violated Connecticut State Elections Law and that our 501(c)(3) status may be in jeopardy because the Bolton PTA is engaging in the prohibited endorsement of candidate for the town's November 5<sup>th</sup> municipal elections. Specifically, you alleged that we have illegally endorsed and promoted the candidacy of Katherine Gallé and Alison Romkey; both current members of the Bolton PTA Executive Board.

Since you identified yourself as a member of the Bolton Board of Education in your call to the CTPTSA, I am copying the entire Board of Education on this response, because it is unclear to me if you were acting in any official capacity when making your complaint. Also, please note that after conveying the substance of her conversation with Mr. Romoser to the Bolton PTA Executive Board, Mrs. Galle recused both herself and Mrs. Romkey from any further involvement regarding the PTA's response to you in this matter.

As we are both well aware, any 501(c)(3) is expressly prohibited from engaging in the endorsement or promotion of specific political candidates by both federal and state election laws. When Mrs. Gallé and Mrs. Romkey informed the Executive Board of the Bolton PTA of their intentions to declare their candidacy, we held an immediate session of the Executive Board at which we agreed to take several measures to ensure that the Bolton PTA was in no way promoting or endorsing the candidacy of either candidate.

Specifically, Mrs. Gallé placed a call to the CTPTSA to inquire as to whether Mrs. Romkey and she needed to resign from the Bolton PTA Executive Board during the period of their candidacy.

They were advised that they could continue to serve on the Executive Board, but that they could never use the PTA as a means of furthering their candidacy. The entire Executive Board is well aware that the Bolton PTA is a non-partisan organization with a politically diverse membership and that we cannot advocate on behalf of or endorse any candidate during a national, state or municipal election.

The Bolton PTA next took the step of removing both Mrs. Gallé and Mrs. Romkey from any decision making processes regarding how the Bolton PTA and particularly, the Legislative Advocacy Committee, would provide parents with information regarding the municipal elections. The Bolton PTA Legislative Advocacy Chair, Mrs. Christina Morra-Tiu, and I immediately removed Mrs. Romkey and Mrs. Gallé from any and all communications regarding the elections. Ultimately, the remaining members of the PTA Executive Board opted not to hold a candidates forum as we have done in the past, because they are generally poorly attended by the public. Instead, the Legislative Advocacy Committee crafted a questionnaire that was disseminated to all candidates for the Bolton Board of Education simultaneously. All candidates received the same three questions and were given the same deadline to submit their responses. All five candidates submitted their answers and the answers were compiled into a single document and distributed to all email addresses contained in the Bolton PTA's online email distribution system, published on our Facebook page and posted on our website. At no point did any candidate have prior knowledge of the questions we were submitting to them, participate in their development or see the answers before they were made available to the public.

When the Bolton Republican and Democratic Town Committees decided to hold a joint Candidates Forum on the evening of October 30, 2013, the Bolton PTA sent out an email blast to our membership advising them of the bi-partisan Candidates Forum. This communication and subsequent rebroadcasts of the same information made no reference to any specific candidate. This was also posted on our Facebook page and the PTA website.

If there are specific ways that the Bolton Board of Education or any Bolton resident feels that the Bolton PTA has violated federal or state election laws during this election cycle, I would welcome anyone to contact me, or any other member of the Bolton PTA Executive Council, directly so that we can address these alleged violations. We take these allegations very seriously, but we strongly deny that we have promoted or endorsed the candidacy of any person running for any office in the Town of Bolton. Not only would we not risk our 501(c)(3) status by engaging in such activities, but we would never jeopardize isolating any of our valued members by promulgating a specific political viewpoint.

After speaking with Mrs. Gallé, Mr. Romoser from CTPTSA verbally advised Mrs. Gallé that it did not appear we had in any way violated election laws and that he would issue a formal letter on the matter. In fact, he also commented that it appeared we had done more than most PTA's to ensure that we in no way were violating election laws by removing Mrs. Gallé and Mrs. Romkey from any and all correspondence regarding our legislative activities for the current municipal elections.

In closing, I would like to say that each member of the Bolton PTA Executive Board serves in a volunteer capacity and we dedicate countless hours each year to enriching our schools and ensuring that parents have factual information about issues that are important to them. We find the allegations that we are willfully or unintentionally promoting or endorsing the candidacy of any particular Bolton candidate to be baseless and offensive. As private citizens, we each have our own political affiliations and friendships. In this capacity, we are certainly allowed to support whichever candidate is best aligned with our own beliefs and values.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (860) 604-8688 or by email at [khledoux@gmail.com](mailto:khledoux@gmail.com) at any time to further discuss this matter or any other concerns that you or any other Bolton resident may have about the PTA's role in the upcoming municipal elections.

Sincerely

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Krystn H.

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Vice President, Bolton

PTA

On behalf of the Bolton PTA Executive  
Board

Cc: Karen Bergin, Chair, Bolton Board of Education  
Matthew Giuffre, Vice Chair, Bolton Board of  
Education John Hambrook, Member, Bolton Board of  
Education Richard Hayes, Jr., Member, Bolton Board  
of Education Trace Maulucci, Member, Bolton Board  
of Education Joseph Muro, Member, Bolton Board of  
Education Alison Cole, Bolton PTA Executive Board  
Arin Rumovicz, Bolton PTA Executive Board  
Christina Morra-Tiu, Bolton PTA Executive  
Board Kelly Ross, Bolton PTA Executive Board  
Karen Smyth, Bolton PTA Executive Board  
Pam Halenar, Bolton PTA Executive Board