



## Torrington Board of Education

SUSAN M. LUBOMSKI  
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

CHERYL F. KLOCZKO  
SUPERINTENDENT

### School Improvement and Community Relations Committee

#### Regular Meeting

Wednesday, August 5, 2015

355 Migeon Avenue

#### *MINUTES*

Members Present: John Kissko, Committee Chair; Bill Knight; Jessica Richardson

Also Present: Board of Education: Ellen Hoehne, Jim Lamoin

Administration: Susan M. Lubomski, Assistant Superintendent; Lynda T. Reitman, incoming Interim Superintendent; Eric Baim, Director of Secondary Education

1. Mr. Kissko called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call was taken.
3. Mr. Knight moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Richardson. All in favor.
4. Mr. Knight moved to approve the minutes of the meeting of June 10, 2015. The motion was seconded by Ms. Richardson. All in favor.
5. Board Goals: Mr. Kissko informed the members that he had received four suggestions from Board of Education members for the 2016-17 goals. He asked committee members if they had any suggestions. Ms. Richardson pointed out that her references were limited to the last two years of Board goals, and that she recommended that a few of those goals might still be relevant and worth keeping on the list: 14/15 "Policies and Bylaws," 15/16 "Marketing/Branding," and 14/15 "Implement a five year sustainable budget."

Mr. Kissko proposed his own suggestion, that the Liaison assignments be enhanced to include assignments to local legislators—three State representatives and two State senators.

Ms. Richardson asked if Goal #2 from 15-16 regarding curriculum revision based on Common Core had been addressed at all yet, and Mr. Kissko said it had not. Thus Ms. Richardson suggested maintaining that goal on the 2016-17 list as well.

Mr. Kissko shared the four goals he had received from other Board members. 1) Investigate ways to make the budget process more effective and less stressful, 2) Investigate ways to develop an effective strategy to market the Options program to parents and students who may or may not attend college, 3) Investigate ways and develop strategies to increase communication among parents, teachers,

administrators and Board members, 4) Develop strategies regarding the creation of sub-committees' and Regular Board Meeting agenda so that [the Board's] time together can be used more effectively and efficiently.

Mr. Kissko stated that it was not necessary for the committee to hold a vote at present on any goals, but that the suggestions discussed could perhaps be characterized as examples. He will review this meeting's suggestions and get back to members regarding wording.

6. NEASC: Mr. Baim gave an update on activities regarding New England Association of Schools and Colleges upcoming accreditation of Torrington High School. Core Values have been established (with input from the school governance council, parents, community members, staff and students) and accepted by the school community. "Tradition, Honor, Success" is the slogan. They are currently working on learning expectations (school wide rubrics), two of which have been completed and three of which are yet to be completed. Application will be made in the spring for the accreditors visit— schools may request a spring or fall visit, and in consultation with the steering committee, the administration and the superintendent, it has been decided to request a fall 2017 visit. A reply is expected around September of this year, at which point next steps can be planned. Collecting evidence will commence about mid-school year. Mr. Baim expressed that in total planning is going very well.

Mr. Baim showed two versions of Core Values signs, which will be prominently displayed in all rooms and areas of THS. The cost of 200 flyer sized and 100 larger sized posters was \$800.

Mr. Baim also mentioned that he has a plan to work with Jeff Zeiner of WGZB on a promotion plan.

Ms. Reitman expressed support for the thorough work Mr. Baim and the others have done.

7. Distinguished Alumnus Award: Mr. Kissko suggested that the committee may wish to review the process of selecting yearly the award recipient and that perhaps a form for nominations might be useful. Mr. Kissko asked Ms. Richardson if she would be interested in creating a form, and Ms. Richardson accepted and suggested that the form should contain concise criteria. Mr. Kissko agreed and also suggested former recipients might be listed as well.
8. Community Relations and "Marketing" TPS: Mr. Kissko led a discussion about the recent marketing efforts of the City of Torrington. Mr. Kissko, who sits on the city steering committee along with the Economic Development Commissions members, shared some highlights of a presentation and a kind of focus group that was held by consultants on July 15. He said that input from various communities has been very useful and that it would be the SIC's job to make recommendations on how the school system could be part of that effort.

Members had a discussion on what might be highlighted in the district in a promotional light. Culture (student art exhibitions, performance in the THS Little Theater, music), sports (Mr. Baim suggested vendors at sporting events which could liven up the atmosphere; Mr. Kissko pointed out that the turf field provides an enjoyable spectator experience), and community service (Ms. Reitman pointed out that student programs such as the THS Raider Rally bring in substantial charitable contributions). Ms. Hoehne stressed the good of eliciting ideas from the students in the district.

Mr. Kissko said the city plan is due to be announced in November, but that he would try to get permission to share the consultant's PowerPoint presentation with the SIC before that.

August 25, 2015 is the date of the next city steering committee meeting which will take place at City Hall.

9. Old Business: Mr. Kissko suggested that, in the interest of time, the topic of P.E. deference to academic courses be tabled as a discussion item. There was a bit of discussion regarding whether IEPs could be used to allow students to have P.E. requirements waved, but it was decided that the details of such a conversation would be talked about at a future meeting. Ms. Richardson said she would like the committee to be provided with statutory material regarding P.E. for the next meeting as material she has found online has been difficult to decipher in terms of what items are current or old.

Regarding the assessment of secondary education reorganization, Mr. Kissko stated that he is considering calling a meeting of the oversight committee, which is made up of Board Chair Ken Traub and members Fiona Cappabianca, Ms. Hoehne, and Mr. Kissko himself.

10. New Business agenda item “online summer offerings” was tabled due to time and that action on this issue is not timely.
11. Comments for the Good of the Order: Ms. Richardson expressed regret that there had not been more opportunities for the committee to meet over the summer.
12. Topics for Future Meetings: Online summer offerings, assessment of secondary education reorganization with a report on a meeting of the oversight committee, marketing, and P.E. deference
13. Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Knight and seconded by Ms. Richardson. All in favor.
14. Meeting adjourned 7:02 p.m.