

**BATTLE CREEK PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Regular Meeting  
September 28, 2020**

**Meeting held electronically pursuant to Executive Order 2020-15**

**Zoom identification number Meeting ID: 868 6339 1938**

**5:30 p.m.**

**PRESENT – BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Karen Evans  
Catherine LaValley  
Kyra Wallace  
Charlie Fulbright  
Jackie Slaby

**Absent**

Patty Poole-Gray  
Art McClenney

**Present – Administration**

Kim Carter – Superintendent  
Chandra Youngblood – Director, Elementary Education  
Anita Harvey – Director, District Transformation  
Monique Cheeks – Director, Student Services  
Nathan Hunt – Communications Manager  
Laura Ash – Executive Director  
Cheryl Johnson – Chief Executive Officer, Human Resources  
Wes Seeley – Director of Grant, Federal Programs and Adult Education  
Charles Lipsey – Director, Facilities and Operations

**Absent – Administration**

Deborah Nuzzi, Director, Secondary Education  
Mitch Fowler – Director, School Data Systems & Innovations  
Jeff English – Executive Director

**MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order by President Evans at 5:30 p.m. Karen Evans, Catherine LaValley, Kyra Wallace, Charlie Fulbright and Jackie Slaby were present.

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Vice President Catherine LaValley to approve the Consent Agenda Items as written.

Trustee Charlie Fulbright supported the Motion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken.

**Motion passed 5-0.**

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

President Karen Evans read aloud the Public Comments received.

The first comment was very lengthy. Public Comments are limited to three minutes each so this entire message exceeded the time allowed.

Virginia M Solis

8 New Moon Terrace N

Dear School Administration, Board Members or Decision Makers,

It has been a few weeks of this virtual learning and I am here to tell you: It is not working, and we are not ok.

I know, I know, I know.... "You're doing the best you can" right?

Wrong. Most of us, do not feel we are even being heard, let alone doing the best you can.

Have you experienced virtual learning? Like, really sat in a home with families struggling to make this work. Have you witnessed the meltdowns of both students and parents? The fights and frustrations of not understanding the days' agenda, or math lessons or technology failures? The onset depression kids are experiencing due to sitting all day, alone.

Have you sat in the home of families of multiple kids, only to see every child eat lunch ALONE?

Have recess ALONE.

Have snack ALONE.

It is absolutely heartbreaking and I feel held hostage in my own home. I cannot take my kids on a bike ride, or to the park for recess or on a picnic for lunch because every child has a unique schedule. Help me understand why all families are expected to be flexible with virtual learning, yet we could not have a 1-hour lunch break school wide.

If you have not witnessed this, then, I beg you to STOP telling us that you understand and start listening. Parents know what is best for their children, and we are going to fight to make things right.

Children belong in school. Together. Everyday.

Virtual learning was supposed to be an OPTION to families that felt unsafe reentering schools and as this can remain an option, live, in-person education is the only option for many of us.

Parents are not meant to be teachers, social workers, and principals in our own homes. Teachers are not supposed to work twice as hard, to make half the difference, with the same pay. Let me say that again:

Teachers are working TWICE as hard, to make HALF the difference, for the SAME pay.

Let that sink in, because if you truly feel that children are getting the same education virtually as they would in-person, you do not deserve a seat on the board and should immediately be banned from working in the education system.

Stores are open. Daycares are open. Restaurants are open. The fact that schools remain closed is baffling... (3 minute time limit mark)

President Evans thanked Virginia for her comments and noted if a response was needed the Superintendent's Office would get back to her.

Nikki

674 High Street

Why can't the board meet in person? These k-5 kids are.

President Karen Evans thanked Nikki for her comments and noted if a response was needed the Superintendent's Office would get back to her.

### **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

Motion by Vice President Catherine LaValley to approve the Consent Agenda items.

- A. Trust Fund/Comerica (Written only)
- B. Minutes of the Special Meeting on August 3, 2020, Work Session on August 10, 2020, and Regular Meeting on August 24, 2020
- C. Bills for the Month of August 2020
- D. Personnel Changes and Recognition of Retirees
- E. Finance Report

Trustee Charlie Fulbright supported the Motion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken.

**Motion passed 5 – 0**

### **REPORTS**

#### Contract for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Local Evaluator

Superintendent Kim Carter shared that it was with great pleasure she wanted to introduce our 21<sup>st</sup> Local Evaluator, Ms. Wendy Tackett. Superintendent Carter commented that Ms. Tackett has been with us for a while to help us make sure we understand the value of the programs we run.

Ms. Wendy Tackett shared the 2019-2020 Annual Evaluation Report and noted the following:

- A total of 459 students participated in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program last year and attended the program more than 1 day during 2019-2020.
- Five sites met the goal with a total of 66% of students earning “regular” status. This percentage was lower than usual due to COVID, but was average in comparison to the rest of the State. Ms. Tackett advised that most schools hit 65%.
- In looking at the impact of the services on students, attendance and suspension have improved, along with academic achievement and growth. A chart was provided in the Annual Report. Ms. Tackett used Ann J Kellogg as an example. The number in black was the average absences for Ann J, which in this case was 9. The number in gray was the average absences for those not participating in 21<sup>st</sup> Century services, which in this case was 9.5. The number in blue is the average absences for 21<sup>st</sup> Century students, which in this case was 6. In looking at the overall chart, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century numbers (in blue) were less than all other absences.

This data suggests there is a positive impact on school attendance when students participate in more than 90 days of programming.

School suspensions were also measured. A chart was provided in the Annual Report. The number in gray is the average suspensions for each building and the number in blue is the average absences for 21<sup>st</sup> Century students. Ms. Tackett noted the numbers are all over the board, some are higher for 21<sup>st</sup> Century students and some are lower.

This data shows there is a dramatic decrease in the percentage of students who received a suspension among those students who participated for more than 90 days in programming.

- A Chart was provided in the Annual Report showing NWEA Math results. The chart showed the 21<sup>st</sup> Century students were above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile for Mathematics compared to the rest of the students. This information also showed the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program is engaging students who are the most in need of support, especially those at Verona Elementary and Springfield Middle School. Post-Franklin Elementary had significant improvement from 2019 to Winter 2020.
- A Chart was provided showing NWEA Reading results. This chart showed significant improvement for Post-Franklin Elementary from 2019 to Winter 2020. The information also showed the program is engaging those students who are most in need of support at Level Park, Northwestern Middle School and Verona Elementary.
- Stride Academy encourages students to use the system 70 minutes or more per week to lead to a positive impact. Ms. Tackett reported Springfield Middle School really implemented the program the way it was supposed to be implemented, which showed a statistically significant and positive impact from correct implementation. She commented it was very exciting to see the impact.

Math and Reading Grades are showing improvement between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grades at Valley View Elementary.

- Credit Recovery provided the opportunity for 21<sup>st</sup> Century students to recover ½ credits each in various subject areas using online systems. While completion was lower this year because of COVID, 21<sup>st</sup> Century students earned a higher percentage of credits attempted (22%) than the rest of the students (16%). The most dramatic percentage was in language art credits completed by 21<sup>st</sup> Century students who earned 93% compared to the rest of the students at 8%.
- Recommendations from iEval are as follows:
  - Replicate successful student retention strategies at Ann J Kellogg, LaMora Park, Post-Franklin and Valley View
  - Consider other programing options
  - Incorporate a strong social emotional component
  - Expand on the initial success with Stride Academy

President Karen Evans clarified LP would be LaMora Park, not Level Park. Wendy Tackett thanked her for that clarification.

Superintendent Kim Carter thanked Wendy for the wonderful report, noting we greatly appreciate the work they are doing for us.

Larry Manley, Jr. discussed the Superintendent Recommendation and advised that Battle Creek Public Schools is the recipient of two 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) grants. These grant funds allow our District to operate before and after school programming in nine buildings.

He further discussed that to be in compliance with the grant rules, we must hire a local evaluator for the grant. This local evaluator is responsible to submit all required data to the Michigan Department of Education. The local evaluator must also provide the data and information to drive continuous improvement for the program.

Larry advised it was his recommendation that we utilize the services of iEval to provide local evaluation services for the BCPS 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program. Local evaluation is expected to measure progress towards meeting local program goals, objectives, as well as state and federal performance indicators. The evaluator is required to assist 21<sup>st</sup> Century projects to be compliant with the statewide evaluation and other requirements by the Michigan Department of Education. The process will include the collection and analysis of data from a variety of sources including, but not limited to, web-based data, standardized test scores, report card grades, focus groups, and surveys of students, teachers and parents.

Superintendent Kim Carter thanked Larry for his recommendation and indicated this matter would come back to the Board for a vote at the Regular Meeting on October 26, 2020

## BCCHS Career Academies Update

Vice President Catherine LaValley discussed the BCCHS Career Academies Council Virtual Meeting on September 22<sup>nd</sup> and reported it was a very productive meeting. She also shared the following information:

- The Council is made up of community partners, District Administration and community members.
- Minutes from this Council Meeting were included in the Board Packet.
- The established Bylaws for this Council approved 3-year terms for some Council members.
- Noah Hollander reported on the Career Academy Endorsements, which the Board approved a meeting or two ago. The 4 components of the Endorsements are: Digital Portfolio, Career Academies Programming, Pathway Internship and Pathway Related Courses. It was interesting to hear Noah's report about how the Digital Portfolio is happening in the remote learning environment. There are 30 minutes of live instruction sessions between 10:00am and 3:00pm and on Wednesdays, there is direct support from teachers between 8:00am and 10:00am, with career experiences starting as early as 8:00am. There are lots of teachers taking professional development project based learning about a particular career.
- A Career Fair is planned with presentations in-person if we get to Phase 6 of COVID. If not, a Virtual Career Fair will take place on December 9<sup>th</sup>. MI works is one of our community partners and will have a platform in how the Career Fair is set up.
- Battle Creek Unlimited, our Fort Custer partners, are short 167 employees at this time. They know flexibility is critical and are working with Advisory Boards, one for Health & Human Services and the other for Business & Engineering to support the needs for students and supporting the implementation of career courses offer.

Vice President LaValley noted a need for professional input and advocating on behalf of each Career Academy. The Advisory Board needs parent and student representation and 2 members from Engineering fields, 2 from Industrial Arts and 2 from Technology. The next meeting is in December and the Council hopes to put together volunteers for these Advisory Boards.

- It was a productive meeting and she is excited about their focus. She felt people were in good spirits, despite this being a time when we have to social distance. They haven't given up on their determination to move forward with the Career Academies.

President Karen Evans thanked Vice President Catherine LaValley for this update and asked if there were any questions.

Vice President Catherine LaValley said the Council welcomes any ideas of possible people to reach out to about the Business & Engineering Advisory Board. She herself has a few people in mind to contact, but she wants to continue involved community members.,

Secretary Kyra Wallace asked if there was a deadline for recommendations and who the recommendations should be sent to. Vice President LaValley replied any time before December and recommendations could be sent to herself, Sarah Kelley or Superintendent Carter.

#### Discuss 2020-2021 Superintendent's Goals

President Karen Evans discussed that back on September 21, 2020, Superintendent Kim Carter gave suggestions on what she felt would be good accomplishments and goals for this school year. President Evans noted these accomplishments/goals are totally in line with the BCPS Strategic Plan, as we have done for the last several years.

President Evans advised she is personally totally in agreement with everything Superintendent Carter suggested. She noted that Superintendent Carter noted she was not sure how to measure success for Goal #2 which is to reduced office visits and suspensions, inasmuch as students are not attending in-person. President Evans indicated she is good with not rating Superintendent Carter on that goal, but she is not the only one on the Board so she wanted to open this topic for discussion.

Trustee Jackie Slaby commented in looking at Superintendent Carter's recommendations, she doesn't see the strategies under the goals being recommended to be modified or the proposal for rating anything measureable. For example, Goal #3 is to implement strategies to recruit highly qualified staff. Her question is how will the Board measure that at the end of the year? By percentages, increases; what is deliverable here. That goes for Goal #5 to improve family involvement and engagement. How will the Board measure that? Trustee Slaby noted she would be interested in hearing from Superintendent Carter about her thoughts on how the Board will evaluate these things at the end of year. Superintendent Carter advised that she would submit evidence to support the deliverables were met. Trustee Slaby referenced Goal #2 and inquired if the evidence to support the deliverable for this goal might be submitting the plan or evidence that shows the staff directory, events we attended for recruiting, etc., is that what Superintendent Carter is thinking? Superintendent Carter replied yes, it could be any or all of the above.

Superintendent Carter further noted the Board asks what steps have been taken in support of these goals. In the past, she has provided a portfolio of how she implemented strategies and worked with staff to meet the goal.

President Karen Evans asked Trustee Jackie Slaby if that answers her questions. Trustee Slaby commented she thinks when we just look on the guidance that is shared, without evidence, the Board puts themselves in a position of deeming if it is sufficient evidence and each Board Members perspective will be different. She would feel more secure asking Superintendent Carter to do specific things and evaluating based on those.

Trustee Slaby inquired how the Board would evaluate improving family involvement/engagement. Would that be based on one event or providing information about several events planned and a summary of the outcome? She commented that she is trying to better understand what "evidence" means and how the Board will look at each piece of evidence.

President Karen Evans said the Board needs to set up the Superintendent Goals and keep them broad enough so Superintendent Carter can do her job. COVID challenges the standard evaluating process, but gives us an opportunity to be creative and do things that are best for kids and students and not tie Superintendent Carter down by getting too specific. Allow room for her to be creative and for her staff to be creative.

President Evans noted that reports about various matters are provided throughout the year on the different activities going on and it is the Board's own responsibility to keep up on those reports. Trustee Slaby indicated she was not suggesting the staff not be allowed to be creative, what she is asking from fellow Board Members is how do we do our job by keeping the Superintendent accountable, by having measureables? Are we just evaluating based on an event and no one showed up. Or do we look at attendance to understand what the District implements and it is effectiveness? She is not okay with saying it is okay because it was offered, if nothing beneficial came from it.

Vice President Catherine LaValley thanked President Evans and Trustee Slaby for the ideas put forth. She said in looking at the Strategic Plan, the key strategies are listed and some of these might be things Trustee Slaby could look at for the Superintendent's evaluation. Vice President LaValley noted that each goal has some key strategies that guide the Board to make sure the goal is addressed. She asked what Trustee Slaby thinks about those strategies? Trustee Slaby commented that she doesn't have that information in front of her at this time. Vice President LaValley referenced Goal #5 being to build families and strategies that address local needs. She thinks this goal is met by building trust through ongoing dialogue and refining District programs that dialogue results in.

Trustee Slaby asked if the Board will continue to keep performance measures in place, that is great; or are they modifying those same metrics to measure a goal, or developing something else for a modified goal? Trustee Charlie Fulbright commented that to answer Trustee Slaby's question, for him it would be beneficial to use a "both and" approach, i.e. measure based on the strategy but also the planning on the strategy. Trustee Fulbright noted the Board and Superintendent Carter cannot control COVID or the opportunity to offer/participate in events as a result. We can't rely on what COVID will present.

Trustee Slaby said that was getting too specific. She is not recommending the Board talk about events and attendance at gatherings. She said whatever the District decides to do (zoom event, newsletter to parents, etc.), the Board should evaluate what Superintendent Carter did to develop it and evaluate on that. There needs to be a measureable. For example:

- For improvement on a website, she can't just say "I made a website". There needs to be a measureable to say a website was created, how many people have gone to the website, how many are staying on the website, returning to the website.

Trustee Slaby commented she had not been involved with any other performance evaluation that was not involved with measures to be evaluated.



Superintendent Carter clarified in discussing processes and performance goals, there is one completely tied to academic performance and others that lead to improvement across the District not tied to academic performance.

Vice President Catherine LaValley mentioned we have AIR doing surveys and offering a report before the Board does Superintendent Carter's evaluation in June. She asked Trustee Slaby if that was considered as accountability? Trustee Slaby said it could, if the Board has the AIR Report before the evaluation. Vice President LaValley indicated the Board can insist they have it before the Superintendent evaluation, noting that last year things were really messed up due to COVID.

Superintendent Carter advised the AIR Report is not a process used for her evaluation and she will not say it should be used. Tying the AIR Report to her evaluation would change the outcomes of the AIR Report. The purpose of the AIR Report is to evaluate if the District is making progress toward the work to be done for the WKKF Grant. The AIR Report is not used for evaluating teachers, principals, or the Superintendent.

Superintendent Carter noted even the School Board Association does not recommend broad surveys be used for evaluations. Evaluations are done based on setting goals that are tied to strategic plans and based on outcome of performance and progress.

Trustee Jackie Slaby mentioned the survey for world class infrastructure for teachers. Superintendent Carter said the District will continue those.

Secretary Kyra Wallace clarified when she looked at what was sent to her for Board Notes, she considered it to be suggestions of things to change as it relates to progress goals and nothing changing for performance goals.

Vice President Catherine LaValley commented she agreed with Superintendent Carter's idea of a healthy organization culture when it comes to discipline, further noting that it could be left blank this year because of the strange year we have begun for school.

President Karen Evans commented she doesn't have a problem leaving that blank, but if leaving it blank lowers Superintendent Carter's overall evaluation, then the Board should look at what was brought over from previous years.

Vice President Catherine LaValley stated it is not anyone's fault the Board cannot evaluate that goal this year. She indicated we don't know what the future brings for this year and the Board is required to do an evaluation; and the Board should have goals that will benefit students and staff and help Superintendent Carter manage the work to be done for the District to prosper.

Secretary Kyra Wallace commented it made sense what President Evans said to use what was said last year so as not to change; if the evaluation is calculated based on the number of goals, then just not have the same number of goals and divide by one less. Vice President Catherine LaValley and President Karen Evans said that makes sense. When it comes time for the evaluation, the Board needs to make sure it doesn't lower Superintendent's Carter overall rating.

Vice President Catherine LaValley suggested checking with the MASB about the part or parts of the evaluation not being a goal for this year.

President Karen Evans asked if there was any other input on Superintendent Carter's goals. None was expressed.

President Evans asked if the Board needed to vote on the Superintendent Goals this evening. Vice President Catherine LaValley recommended voting at the October Work Session. This would give Board members some reflection time and allow the two missing Board Members this evening time to reflect and ask questions about what was discussed, if needed. Superintendent Kim Carter said that sounded like a good plan.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

President Karen Evans read aloud the Public Comments received.

Heather

Freedom Lane

I think the bus drivers are doing an amazing job with keeping our kids safe, teachers and staff are keeping our kids safe, but the bus drivers are going above and beyond for these students, how come they never get recognized by Battle Creek public schools? They are on the front lines and don't have the space the like a class room does to keep kids separated, kudos to all of the bus drivers. Our bus driver Mary has gone above and beyond for our children at liberty commons, she's very loving with the children and politely reminds them as they get on the bus to keep their hands to themselves as she sanitizes them, she's always on time morning and afternoon

Toni Ardis

242 Oriole Drive Battle Creek 49037

My daughter, Shayla, and I participated in the desk give-a-way at the former Urbandale Elementary building. Thank you to Charles Lipsey, Nate Hunt and all of the volunteers for a well organized operation. Over 400 desks were given out, most in the first 75 minutes. Recipients were all grateful to receive desks. An amazing event full of Bearcat Pride!

President Karen Evans thanked Heather and Toni for their comments.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS**

Superintendent Kim Carter made a point of thanking Food Service, teachers, support staff and the many individuals working daily to provide the best education possible for students. She noted it is not perfect and does not meet everyone's needs as they may hope, due to COVID, but we are committed to providing the highest quality education for every student we serve.

BCPS Virtual Academy is up and running and we are trying to work through the kinks. We will be hiring a Technical Assistant to support families for success. Our Remote Learning teachers are doing tremendously well working in an unfamiliar situation. Superintendent Carter thanked Secondary teachers who are working strategically to connect with all families and make sure students have some sort of connection. This includes providing social emotional support for all students, even those in the Virtual environment.

We have been doing face-to-face instruction for several weeks now and it has been an amazing journey with staff and students. We are prioritizing health and safety. Superintendent Carter discussed that quarantine does not mean there is a positive case in a school it means we are getting ahead of any potential spread in classroom. Once a student or staff has tested positive, or a family member poses a risk, quarantine occurs to insure there is no spread and to mitigate the risk to the rest of the students in school.

Superintendent Carter shared the District is working on a Response Plan to ensure continued learning in the event a classroom is quarantined and how to distribute Chrome Books for learning at home. Hot spots will be available as needed in our effort to eliminate anything getting the way of student success.

Our Protocol is to follow the recommendation of the Health Department and Superintendent Carter reported we have conversations with the Health Department almost daily. Once the Health Department gives a recommendation, we follow their recommendation and allow them to advise us on what needs to be put in place. Robocalls went out about the quarantine of some of our schools. If individuals did not receive a call, they should confirm we have their information or updated information on file.

Superintendent Carter closed by thanking all staff who are working hard to continue learning.

### **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Vice President Catherine LaValley made the following comments:

- She congratulated the BCCHS Football Team on a great win and it was exciting to see the second extra point kicker get the extra points. She noted students, coaches and fans were all following the protocols, which was important to see happening.
- She congratulated all the efforts our sports teams are doing.
- Volleyball and Swimming events are taking place this evening with more on Saturday. She noted it is hard on students and coaches, but well done, keep up the great work and take one day at a time.
- She participated in the MASB September 15<sup>th</sup> seminar. Jeff Cobb reported the 2020-2021 budget is on its way to coming together. She learned from the seminar that advocacy is everyone's job, especially as Board Members because they are voted into office. Revenues have come in better than expected and the Governor sent the 2020-2021 budget ahead of the September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. She encouraged individuals to take time to talk to legislators or their aides about positive issues, as well as concerns or if you have questions and need further information on legislative issues coming forward.
- The Hall of Fame Fundraiser Spaghetti Dinner (take out) will be held on October 27<sup>th</sup> from 4:30-7:30pm at Barista Blues. The cost is \$15 per meal. Tickets are not needed and payment will be accepted at the door.

- Like Superintendent Carter, she would like to say thank you to the BCPS staff who continue to trouble shoot with the Virtual Academy. It is wonderful to how people are working together so no one is left alone. She wished Good Luck to the District with the MAP testing for K-5 students this week.

President Karen Evans mentioned the MASB Fall Conference will be virtual this year. It will be the first weekend in November; she believes November 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>, and it is free. She advised we need delegates for the Delegate Assembly and she thinks all of the Board Members can be representatives this year. President Evans will clarify this with the MASB and send an email to Board Members.

President Evans thanked everyone in the District for all their hard work and doing their job in a way it has never done before - keeping kids first and foremost in our mind.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:38pm.

Submitted by  
Patti Worden

Kyra Wallace  
Board Secretary