

These minutes were approved by the Torrington Board of Education on August 26, 2020.



Torrington Public Schools

SUSAN M. LUBOMSKI
SUPERINTENDENT

SUSAN B. FERGUSSON
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

School Improvement Committee Wednesday, March 11, 2020 6:00 P.M. Torrington Middle School

Minutes

1. Call to Order: 6:00 P.M.
2. Roll Call: John Kissko, Ellen Hoehne, Cathy Todor, Jessica Richardson, Nikki Fappiano, Fiona Cappabianca, Ronnie Gelormino
Also Present: Gary Eucalitto, Sue Lubomski, Sue Fergusson, Kim Schulte, Donna Labbe, Katie Gregory, Sarah Brewer, Rhonda Jackson
3. Approval of Agenda: Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve the agenda, second by Ms. Richardson. All in favor.
4. Approval of Minutes: Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Ms. Richardson. All in favor.
5. Public Participation: Ms. Svetz-Juliano shared information on her visit to Winsted Schools with regards to the interventions implemented to raise its test scores with support from its Alliance and Commissioner Network Funds.
6. Information Sharing/ Next Steps:
 - a. Host School Report, Communications, Informal Reports from Teachers, etc.
Mr. Kissko and Ms. Spino visited Torrington Middle School. Ms. Jackson noted they visited classrooms where students were working on STEM projects on Chromebooks and 3-D Projects. Students were creating infomercials. Music class students were using virtual keyboards and headsets. The school is at the end of a trimester and students are completing projects and coursework. A designated class greeter greeted them as they entered each class. Life skills class sells baked goods which the staff supports by purchasing. They visited a class with 27 students; each student was working independently on writing projects with the teacher editing in real time through the use of Google Docs. Ms. Gelormino noted she enjoys the use of this technology to help students improve their skills.
 - b. Reconsideration of Weightlifting/Yoga Course: Ms. Gregory and Ms. Brewer shared details on the course offering and how curriculum will be strictly secular. The committee agreed to approve the course the way it was presented.
 - c. Updates, Reports, Brief Discussions:

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- i. 2019-20 Board Goals – Sister Schools; PTO strategies to improve equity around funding are being implemented. Legislative; Ms. Cassidy attended the Education Public Hearing and presented testimony in favor of Social Emotional Learning in classrooms.
The district is using Social Media to communicate and engage the school community. The High School will be hosting a Secondary Ad Hoc Committee meeting on March 19th.
 - ii. System wide Focus Areas – Superintendent Lubomski shared a letter on COVID 19 that went home to parents. The district is taking a two week approach to setting guidelines but is aware that the situation is fluid. Attendance is impacted by illness.
 - iii. Alliance Update – Superintendent Lubomski shared a summary of Alliance District accomplishments. The following are areas of focus moving forward: 1. Increase capacity to implement Universal PreK by local providers through state grants. 2. Education Cost Sharing Grant 3. Focus on Policy that supports “Whole Child” needs
 - d. 2020 Distinguished Alumnus – Applications are coming in, full packets will be brought to the full board meeting in March.
 - e. Social Promotion, Philosophy and Practice – Ms. Fergusson shared articles and research on retaining students. Evidence does not support grade retention. There is no correlation in retaining and long term success. There is a correlation of retaining and negative impacts. Recommendation by professionals are for schools to look at more targeted promotion; Promotion Plus. The district is implementing a similar strategy.
7. Comments for the good of order: Members encouraged the public to attend the Board of Finance Meetings to support Board of Education Budget
8. Topics for Future Meetings:
- a. Social Promotion
 - b. Philosophy and Practice
 - c. SBAC
9. Adjournment: Ms. Hoehne made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Ms. Richardson. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:02 P.M.