

TO: CREC Council and Superintendents
FROM: Greg J. Florio, Ed.D.
DATE: September 14, 2020

CREC
Council Meeting Minutes
9/16/20
11:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
ZOOM Meeting

(Info to follow in the Appointment Invite)

COUNCIL MEMBERS	CREC ATTENDEES
Donald Harris -Bloomfield	Greg Florio - CREC
Chris Davey- Bolton	Sandy Cruz-Serrano -CREC
Christopher Wilson - Bristol	Tim Sullivan -CREC
John Scheideler - Canton	Amy Karwan - CREC
Joyce Hall - Enfield	Aura Alvarado - CREC
Kate Carey- Trull – East Windsor	Regina Terrell - CREC
Julie Thompson – Glastonbury	Jeff Ivory - CREC
Mark Fiorentino - Granby	Heather Tartaglia- CREC
Kim Oliver - Hartford	Mason Thrall - CREC
Darryl Thames – Manchester	
Merrill Gay –New Britain	Patricia McCarthy – CABE
Becky Tyrrell - Plainville	Namakula Edwards – Parent Senate Representative
Meg Scata - Portland	Senae Graham – Student Representative
John Vecchitto – Region #10	
Laurie Boske – Rocky Hill	
Lydia Tedone - Simsbury	

Anne Kirkpatrick - Somers	
Anitha Elongo – South Windsor	
Maureen Sattan - Suffield	
Bobbie Hughes-Granato - Wethersfield	
David Furie - Windsor	
Patricia King – Windsor Locks	

I. CALL TO ORDER and APPROVAL of MINUTES

A. 6/17/20 Council Meeting

MOTION: Motion to approve the June 17, 2020 minutes made Joyce Hall, seconded Tyron Harris, and passed unanimously.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

III. PRESENTATIONS to COUNCIL

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Merrill Gay reported that the Finance Committee met via ZOOM on 9/9 and reviewed the exhibits to be discussed, and motion for approval later in this meeting.

Also, Chris Wilson mentioned that the Policy Committee would be meeting today following the adjournment of this council meeting.

A question was asked on Transition to Employment Services – Aura stated that the program is currently on virtual mode. Placement Tests and surveys were done in person in July following with CDC guidelines. The program will start late September to early October with an in-person class size of 12-16 participants.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. 2019-2020 Revised Programs

- 1) CREC Greater Hartford Academy of Arts (GHAA) (Attachment A)
- 2) CREC Discovery Academy (Attachment B)
- 3) Transition to Employment Services (Attachment C)

B. 2019-2020 New Program

- 1) Re-Center Inter-district Cooperative Grants Program (Attachment D)

C. 2020-2021 Continued Programs

- 1) Ana Grace Arts Academy (Attachment E)
- 2) CREC Academy of Aerospace and Eng. Elementary School (Attachment F)

MOTION: A motion was made by Bobbie Granato-Hughes seconded by Merrill Gay, and passed unanimously to approve all items under Consent Agenda Section A through C.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Florio talked about the Opening of Schools and what we are seeing. He introduced Heather Tartaglia as the new Director of Student Services as Deb Richards has retired.

Heather Tartaglia talked about the start of schools for Special Services which took place late August-early September and students back in their buildings. She states a good start with a limited number of distance learning other in building 5 days a week.

Dr. Florio thanked the leadership team for their great work.

Tim Sullivan spoke on Magnet Schools and stated CREC did not go with a Hybrid Model but decided on the full 5-day class schedule with parents having the choice if they want to send their children in-person. Large 42% to learn 5 days at home and so we created the CREC Distance Learning Academy for them. We have specific teachers working with the Elementary students which include more synchronize learning, more timeline task so families do not feel as they being alone to fend for themselves. At the secondary level able to put zoom calls in every classrooms so teachers teaching about 8-9 students in class and 8-9 students by zoom at the same time. Some staff has decided to stay home due to pre-existing conditions or are at high risk. Some of these teachers can teach from home. Doing well, enroll is great. Happy to have most of the students returning and working on a few attendance issues but working on this on a case-by-case basis. We were able to provide each student that requested a device and a hotspot to access distance learning. A packet was sent to all elementary students with resources and supplies for their distance learning classes. We have about 10,000 between staff and students and no community spread within our building. There have been 9 positive test based on home or their community situation. We feel good to have isolated those cases quickly.

Dr. Florio spoke about the Teacher Residency Program and stated that 11 or 12 participants are currently in CREC Classroom teaching this year. The 2nd cohort is in the works and Marlene Lovavio is currently working with RESC and different organizations to try to get the State to get involve to expand this program beyond CREC. The program is costly but a great investment. Trying to get funding for 8-10 additional cohorts (120-150 participants) the cost for this addition would be about \$10 million.

Dr. Florio - Open Choice has began. There has been changed in oversight – Deb. B. will continue to oversee the division but Kristina Jordan will now be in charge of day-to-day operations and Deb B. will be involved with legislative work.

Another challenge for students who are currently at home with distance learning was getting their meal. We at CREC are currently providing their meals and parents are picking up here at CREC Central by providing their ID. A lot of hard work behind the scenes but should get easier.

Dr. Florio thank Sandy Cruz Serrano and her team for all their hard work. Spoke about the CREC Headstart Program. She stated the team was very busy in August. Teams interviewing and hired 73 staff members for 3 different sites: Locust Street, Enfield St, and Blue Hills in Bloomfield. The program call for 426 slots with partners Catholic Charities, The Village, and ACES. Today is the first day for Bloomfield with virtual getting family acquainted with staff, procedures. Amazing staff. The start of the program in the building will be the middle of next week. Currently, 310 slots are filled but staff still working with applications and certifications of students so no openings are anticipated but will be a waitlist.

Dr. Florio wanted to thank Aura Alvarado and her team for the Back to School block party was a hit again. We handed out about 1200 backpack. This year it consisted of a drive by as folks would stay in their vehicles and the backpack was placed in their vehicles. Also, FallStaff was done virtually and a hit.

Dr. Florio stated he had several meetings with Council Members over the summer and a lot of good ideas and suggestions were provided. Some of the suggestions as follows: Keeping Council meeting Virtual or atleast to attend virtually, creation a standard or Ad Hoc committee for reviewing the CREC Constitution and also the creation of a School Committee for Magnet Schools and programs in 2021.

VII. COUNCIL CHAIR'S REPORT

Chris Wilson suggested keeping Council Meeting in the ZOOM platform as there is Seems to be more participation. He wanted to read a letter that he received from Fran Rabinowitz regarding Dr. Greg Florio. She was expressing her appreciation for his leadership and participation.

Chris also spoke about the Bylaws- Constitution and the committee. Anne Kirkpatrick will be one of the Council Members and Chris is asking anyone that would like to be on that committee to let Gloria Dieppa know via email. He states that this committee will only require 2-3 meetings to accomplish.

VIII. DELIBERATED ACTION

A. New Business

VII. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Patrice McCarthy – informed the council members that there will be a special session early next week with specific topics. These sessions will only be 1-day sessions with limited agenda. The regular session will start in January still not sure if they will be in-person or virtual.

VIII. REPORTS

- A. Financial Report (Attachment G) - **Sandra Cruz-Serrano** presented the financial report. Sandy informed the council members CREC will be preparing for 3 different audits in the Fall.

IX. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Chris asked council members to share any barriers during their individual districts hybrid or distance learning upon school reopening. The following members provided some examples **Laurie Boske** – allowing teachers to enroll their children to RHPS, **Bobbie Hughes-Granato** - Childcare, **Julie Thompson** – Allowing teacher to enroll their children, **Merrill Gay** – EC Alliance – Childcare under-enrolled and concerns about children eating lunch in classrooms without masks, **Lydia Tedone** – they opened their town child care center for teacher and state employees, **Don Harris** – great start 60% in-person and 40% distance 2 days in 3 at home he also thanked all who participated in the CABE conference this summer greatly attended. He also informed everyone that he was nominated and selected to NSBA DIRE Committee, **Anne Kirkpatrick** – reported 2 + cases in somers also stated contact tracking very complicated and takes time and also informed that they had raised the rate for substitute teachers from \$92 to \$125., **John Vecchitto** – reported all in-person classes to about 20% elementary decided to opt-out. Region doing very well following guidelines from CDC, **Kate Carey-Trull** – reported issues with internet overload having students and staff on at the same time. Currently using See Saw and Teams for Learning, **Joseph Scheideler** – 2 day in 3 off with 80% in school and 20% opted out, **Kim Oliver** – there have been a few cases and also the issue with the cyber attack causing delay in start of school. There are about 8000 students in class and about 10,000 doing remote learning. Still lots of issues with daycare., **David Furie** – reported no cases as of yet. 2 days in 3 days out with a possible return to FT in class on October 5th. The biggest issue with them has been teaching leaving whether they retired or just left leaving larger of numbers in the classroom due to shortages in teachers., **Darryl Thames** – on block schedule. They are managing 3 positive or suspected cases (due to contact w/bus, students, and faculty) very challenging times, **Anitha Elango** – Hybrid block schedule, using Seesaw and Google, and no positive cases, **Joyce Hall** – Childcare with supervision offered to employees not a free program but a great option and getting very popular as the word gets out, **Pat King** – Hybrid and block schedule, 1 positive case but limited contact as it was 1st day of school. Providing child care for staff and are monitored. Total of about 10 slots offered.

X. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION: A Motion made by John Vecchitto and seconded by Don Harris and passed unanimously to adjourn the Council Meeting at 12:54 pm