

Ashford Board of Education
Meeting Minutes – February 16, 2017
7:00 p.m.
District Office Conference Room

Note: Per C.G.S. §10 – 218, Board of Education meeting minutes are provided in a draft format within 48 hours of the date the meeting was held. With the exception of motions and votes recorded, these minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote of the Board. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at a regularly scheduled meeting, noted in the meeting minutes, and so voted upon.

Call To Order

Chair J. Rupert called the meeting to order at 7:16 pm. Present were members J. Rupert, M. Matthews, L. Donegan and K. Rourke. Also present were Superintendent Dr. J. Longo, Principal T. Hopkins, Asst. Principal G. Dukette and recording secretary J. Barsaleau. Unable to attend were board members K. Warren and J. Calarese. Member J. Lippert attended at the Ashford Board of Finance meeting in lieu of attending this meeting. Present in the audience were R. Aubrey, K. Kouatly, R. Haeger, K. Winot, S. Winot and J. Lindsay.

Student STEAM Presentation

Students Tyler Kouatly, David Lindsay, Julia Haeger and Kaden Winot shared a STEAM based power point presentation about Costa Rica that they had created in 5th grade Spanish class. Each student narrated a portion of the presentation and spoke of the enjoyment they had in taking part in this assignment. Board members were very impressed with the student's presentation and spent some time asking students about the subject and working collaboratively.

Persons to be Heard

None

a. Comments Concerning Items on the Posted Agenda

None

Communications

Members were sent an electronic communication from S. Morytko concerning student media storage and the academic calendar page of the website.

A letter was received from the Putnam Board of Education concerning an opportunity for area superintendents and board chairs to meet and discuss district collaboration on 2/27 at EASTCONN. Dr. Longo and M. Matthews will attend.

Approval of Minutes: 02/02/2017 (special and regular)

Tabled

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Longo distributed hard copies of the most recent budget narrative and a draft of an article for submission to the Ashford Citizen. Members are asked to email any changes/suggestions/edits as soon as possible. Copies of the narrative must to be forwarded to the Board of Finance next week.

Receipt of Administrative Reports (Principal, Asst. Principal, Director of Pupil Personnel)

Reports from each administrator were sent to members in advance for review. Any questions should be directed to the appropriate administrator. Discussion followed concerning international travel opportunities, scheduling, transition to high school/student success planning and informational website updates.

New Business

Old Business

a. Capital Improvement Committee Report

J. Rupert and J. Lippert attended the 2/8 meeting of the committee. All purchases and projects submitted by various boards and commissions will be sent to the Board of Finance. Discussion of the board of education's tech ed space renovation request and bus purchasing followed.

b. FY 18 Budget Worksession

Members held extensive discussions of the governor's budget proposal and its potential effects to boards of education and municipal budgets. Review of the latest FY 18 narrative followed, some edits were noted. Any additional commentary or editing must be completed no later than Thursday of next week.

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The next regular meeting date is 3/2/17. The regular meeting will not be held as scheduled, as the Board will be presenting the FY 18 budget to the Board of Finance. The next regular meeting will be 3/16/17.

Second Opportunity for Public Comment

None

Superintendent Evaluation (Executive Session, Action Anticipated)

This item was tabled by mutual consent and will be added to the next regular meeting agenda.

Motion to adjourn the meeting (9:14 pm) made by K. Rourke, seconded by L. Donegan and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Jennifer Barsaleau
Recording Secretary

Ashford Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes – February 2, 2017

6:15 p.m.

District Office Conference Room

Note: Per C.G.S. §10 – 218, Board of Education meeting minutes are provided in a draft format within 48 hours of the date the meeting was held. With the exception of motions and votes recorded, these minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote of the Board. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at a regularly scheduled meeting, noted in the meeting minutes, and so voted upon.

Call To Order

Board Chair J. Rupert called the special meeting to order at 6:28 pm. Present were members K. Rourke, K. Warren, J. Calarese and J. Lippert. Unable to attend were M. Matthews and L. Donegan.

Superintendent Evaluation (Executive Session Anticipated)

Motion made by K. Rourke (6:29 pm) to enter into executive session for the purpose of evaluation of the Superintendent. Motion seconded by J. Calarese and carried unanimously.

Present: J. Rupert, K. Rourke, J. Calarese, J. Lippert and K. Warren

Motion made by K. Warren to exit executive session, motion seconded by J. Calarese and carried unanimously.

Action

There was no action taken.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting (6:55 pm) made by J. Rupert, seconded by K. Rourke and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Kay M. Warren
Secretary

Ashford Board of Education
Meeting Minutes – February 2, 2017
7:00 p.m.
District Office Conference Room

Note: Per C.G.S. §10 – 218, Board of Education meeting minutes are provided in a draft format within 48 hours of the date the meeting was held. With the exception of motions and votes recorded, these minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote of the Board. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at a regularly scheduled meeting, noted in the meeting minutes, and so voted upon.

Call To Order

Chair J. Rupert called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. Present were members J. Rupert, J. Lippert, J. Calarese, K. Warren and K. Rourke. Also present were Superintendent Dr. J. Longo and recording secretary J. Barsaleau. Present in the audience were residents M. Caye, K. Zulick and R. Zulick. Also present was L. Dyer. Unable to attend were board members L. Donegan and M. Matthews.

Persons to be Heard

M. Caye stated that the part time paraprofessional position was being filled by one person, and is now being covered by substitute personnel. She was directed to discuss any concerns with the administration.

a. Comments Concerning Items on the Posted Agenda

None

Communications

Included in the BOE packet was an employment law letter and summaries of policy recommendations from counsel and notification letter awarding Ashford School a \$500 Educational Alliance Grant.

Approval of Minutes: 01/19/2017

Motion made by K. Warren to approve the meeting minutes of 01/19/2017, motion seconded by J. Lippert and carried with one abstention (K. Rourke).

Superintendent's Report

a. Business Manager Search Update

1. Staff Appointment

Dr. Longo reported that he had extended an offer of employment to Lisa Dyer, and she has accepted the Board's offer. Mrs. Dyer brings considerable experience to our district; Dr. Longo asked that the board appoint her to the position of Business Manager.

Motion made by K. Warren to appoint Lisa Dyer to the position of part time School Business Manager, motion seconded by J. Calarese and carried unanimously.

The board welcomed Mrs. Dyer to Ashford.

b. FY 18 Budget Preparation

The second draft of the FY 18 Budget Narrative was sent to members by email. It was noted that the document watermark should have been updated to 2/2/2017. The members suggested several edits and formatting adjustments that will be made to the document. The next draft and will be sent to members prior to the next meeting for review. Dr. Longo asked that any additional comments or suggestions be sent as soon as possible to him via email for inclusion in the revised narrative.

New Business

a. Approval of AFIS Memorandum of Understanding

The Board of Education is required by CT General Statute 10-220 to enter into an agreement with State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) permitting the submission of fingerprint cards to the Automated Fingerprint Identification Systems (AFIS), and to receive back criminal history information concerning its employees. Brief discussion followed.

Motion by J. Lippert to accept the Automated Fingerprint Identification System Agreement for Fingerprint Card Submissions, by and between the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection and the Ashford Board of Education. Motion seconded by J. Calarese and carried unanimously.

Motion made by J. Rupert to add to the agenda item 6b, Discussion and Authorization of Change of the Ashford Board of Education Banking Institution. Motion seconded by K. Rourke and carried unanimously.

KeyBank currently holds bank accounts administered by the Ashford Board of Education. When informed by KeyBank that service fees would begin to be applied to the Board's accounts effective March 1st, Lalaine San Diego contacted the bank and requested that fees be waived. The request was denied. Ms. San Diego then contacted area banks to discuss account transfers. Liberty Bank is convenient to the school and will not charge the board any fees for the set up and transfer its accounts to their institution, nor will there be any monthly service fees incurred.

Motion made by J. Lippert that the Ashford Board of Education authorize the dissolution of its relationship with KeyBank effective no later than February 23, 2017; and further authorizes the transfer of accounts held by the Ashford Board of Education to Liberty Bank effective no later than February 24, 2017. The accounts that are to be transferred from KeyBank to Liberty Bank on or before the dates specified and the individuals who are authorized to sign for these accounts are:

Ashford PTO

Ashford Hot Lunch Program

Ashford Student Activity

Ashford Scholarship

Christopher Bizilj Memorial

Mildred Bicknell Scholarship

Beverly Duffy & Lisa Hassett

Karen Samperi & James P. Longo

James P. Longo & Lisa A. Dyer

James P. Longo & Lisa A. Dyer

James P. Longo & Lisa A. Dyer

James P. Longo & Lisa A. Dyer

Motion seconded by K. Warren and carried unanimously.

The board expressed its appreciation to Ms. San Diego for taking the initiative in researching and finding an amenable solution.

Old Business

a. Approval of 2017-2018 Ashford School Calendar

Dr. Longo reviewed options with school staff concerning the days of the week that Election Day and Veteran's Day are observed in November 2017. Ashford School will be closed to students and staff on November 6th in observance of the Veteran's Day holiday, and closed to students on November 7th, Election Day, as required. On the legal Veteran's Day holiday school will be in session. Events and activities related to the observance of Veteran's Day will be planned.

Motion made by K. Warren to approve the 2017-2018 Ashford School calendar as presented. Motion seconded by J. Lippert and carried unanimously.

b. Capital Improvement Committee Report

J. Lippert reported on the last committee meeting. Items discussed were the purchase of a 2-position wheelchair accessible school bus, renovation of the former technology education space, unexpended educational funds and classroom and library ceiling projects. Dr. Longo noted that he has frozen the budget.

c. Second Reading of Policies (Series 1000: Sexual Offenders on School Property; Pesticide Application on School Property; Prohibition Against Smoking; Series 3000: IDEA Fiscal Compliance w/Regulations; Series 6000: IDEA Alternative Assessments)

Motion made by K. Warren to approve the policies as prepared by counsel. Motion seconded by J. Calarese and carried unanimously.

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The next regular meeting date is 2/16/17. A special meeting will be called for 6:15 pm for Superintendent Evaluation. Regular meeting agenda items include FY 18 budget, administrative reports, capital committee report, second reading of policies, Cubesat update and executive session for superintendent evaluation.

Second Opportunity for Public Comment

M. Caye addressed some portions of the draft narrative needing clarification.

Superintendent Evaluation (Executive Session, Action Anticipated)

This item was tabled by mutual consent; a special meeting will be posted for February 16th.

Motion to adjourn the meeting (9:02 pm) made by K. Warren, seconded by J. Lippert and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Jennifer Barsaleau
Recording Secretary

Ashford School
BOE Principal's Report – Troy C. Hopkins
February 16, 2017

Ashford School Goals

- Promote creativity, student choice, and critical thinking through the implementation of interdisciplinary curriculum, following the concept of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics), which applies to the real world now and in the future.
- Improve informative and positive communication throughout the Ashford community to assist in student success in all areas.
- Develop and implement programs and practices to improve all students' academic and social skills.

Vision and Mission Statement

We are in the process of analyzing input from our vision and mission statement survey. Below are some positive comments from the survey.

Survey prompt: "One more thing you would like to say":

- Great STEAM initiatives
- Our teachers are fantastic and such a benefit to our school. Continue to support them and provide a great environment where they can do the best job they can.
- Thank you for working so hard.
- The school is going in the right direction.
- Love the positive energy in the building.
- I am very pleased with my child's education at Ashford School and the benefits they have had from living in a small town. I grew up in a city and would never want my child to experience what I did.
- Ashford School is a really nice school and any kid would be lucky to come here.
- You guys are doing a great job.
- This is the best school ever.
- Your teachers really care about the students and go above and beyond their duties in the classroom.
- The after school clubs are fantastic! There are so many opportunities and choices for students and it is very convenient that it is after school. Thank you!
- The teachers are amazing!!
- I liked that the teachers were nice to me in the years.
- While my experience with the school is limited (just 2 years), I've been very satisfied. Art, music and science at lower grades is key. Special programs like the invention convention and satellite building are amazing beyond what a couple words could summarize.
- I enjoy the wonderful opportunities I have at Ashford School!
- You are the best school ever and I don't think anything in the world will change that.

STEAM – Our Interdisciplinary, Project-Based Learning Initiative

A look at student work – Grade 5 students will present their Central American animal project to the BOE.

A possible experiential learning opportunity that involves travel has been discussed among our Spanish teachers, Julia Rhubin and Rebecca Aubrey, Lisa Donegan and me. Before proceeding further, we would like approval for the BOE to assess interest among students and their families. Based on travel experience and significant knowledge in planning similar trips, we have identified a possible trip to Costa Rica over April vacation in 2018. This trip or another chosen trip would allow students to learn through experience, including Spanish language, culture, art, and environmental sustainability. The trip would be funded entirely by families and fund raising.

Ashford School
BOE Assistant Principal's Report – Garrett J. Dukette
February 16, 2017

Writing

Over the past few weeks, every core grade-level teacher received in-house PD on writing. This PD was facilitated by our teacher experts who have attended the weeklong Writing Project at Teachers College, sponsored by Columbia University. This PD focused on awareness and use of critical components of Writing Pathways. Specifically:

- Mini-lessons
- Small- and Large-Group conferencing
- Using the Writing Pathways tools
 - Anchor charts
 - Learning Progressions
 - Student Checklists
 - Rubrics
 - Etc.
- Winter writing benchmarks will be completed over the course of the next two weeks.
 - Results will be used to identify writing gaps and areas of weakness

Moving forward, I will be working with the Math Committee to identify how we can increase literacy and writing across mathematics. In preparation for this discussion, I have provided our reading intervention teachers as well as our 6-8 math teachers with a copy of the article: It's a Different Kind of Reading: Two Middle-Grade Teachers' Evolving Perspectives on Reading in Mathematics, by: Helen Doerr and Codruta Temple

Curriculum and Instruction

- As part of my administrative growth, I have undertaken a revision of the school schedule for the 2017-2018 school year. Based on the needs and feedback of the 7th and 8th grade team, I was able to create a draft schedule that provides an additional 25 hours of academic time for the core 7th and 8th grade subjects of ELA, Math, Social Studies, and Science.
 - In addition, I have been working to provide all staff members with an opportunity to see the draft schedule in order to provide feedback and guidance based on their particular needs.
- Work to finalize vertical curricular articulation will occur across Social Studies and Spanish beginning in the next few weeks.
- The Curriculum Committee has identified a focus for the end of this year and beginning of next year: grades PK-4 will revise standards based grading to ensure report card grading reflects where students should be at critical points throughout the year. The goal is to ensure we are providing clear and accurate information to our parents.

Student Motivation and Behavior

- Since the January 17 PD, restorative circles have been occurring across the building.
- At the February 7 faculty meeting, grade four presented to the staff the positive impact on restorative circles for their team including:
 - Impact on student behaviors
 - Nuts and bolts of how they run their circles
 - Subject-matter of the discussions

Gifted and Talented

- Continued work towards Type-2 enrichment Clusters for trimester three
- Early focus on Career Fair (to take place in May)

Communication

- At this point, we have called home for 40+ Pawsitive office referrals

Director of Pupil Personnel Service Report

February 2017

Submitted by: Cynthia Ford

2016/2017 School Year:

- **Special Education Update:**

- Number of students to date who qualify for special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in grades Prek-8: 58 (14% of our population)
- We have had three students test out to date and two new students met criteria to be added this year.
- Number of students who have moved into district this year: 5
- Number of intensive needs (requiring high number of hours for special education, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Speech and Language): 22
- Number of students that moved into district are intensive in services: 5
- 3 students are either outplaced or educated out of district (STEM Academy in Windham)
- 6 students were outplaced last year or educated at the STEM Academy and 3 of those outplaced students met criteria to be brought back into our school and have been successful.
- **Hiring Update for K-3 Part-time Paraeducator:** The posting has been up since beginning of January externally. We posted it internally in December. We have gotten no interest in the position as of February 10, 2017.

- **504/ Intervention Update:**

- Students receiving intervention services are not always students that are in the S.I.T. process. Some students may need intervention for one specific skill but overall are doing well in the specific area.
- **Math Intervention:** Note: 5-8 intervention teacher teaches an 8th grade Math class.
 - K grade: 8 students (fluid, depending on skills)
 - 1st grade: 6 students plus 7 in enrichment (fluid, depending on skills)
 - 2nd grade: 10 students plus 10 in enrichment (fluid, depending on skills)
 - 3rd grade: 8 students (fluid, depending on skills)
 - 4th grade: 5 students (fluid, depending on skills)
 - 5th grade: 8 students (fluid, depending on skills)
 - 6th grade: 5 students (fluid, depending on skills)
 - 7th grade: 7 students (fluid, depending on skills)
 - 8th grade: 7 students (fluid, depending on skills)

- **Reading Intervention:**
 Note: 5-8 intervention teacher teaches reading to some 7th and 8th grade students opposite a Spanish class. The K-4 intervention teacher assists with reading groups in grades 1 and 2.
 - K grade: 4 students (fluid, depending on the skills)
 - 1st grade: 9 students (fluid, depending on the skills)
 - 2nd grade: 7 students (fluid, depending on the skills)
 - 3rd grade: 7 students (fluid, depending on the skills)
 - 4th grade: 4 students (fluid, depending on the skills)
 - 5th grade: 2 students (fluid, depending on the skills)
 - 6th grade: 3 students (fluid, depending on the skills)
 - 7th grade: 8 students (fluid, depending on the skills)
 - 8th grade: 7 students (fluid, depending on the skills)
- **Student Intervention Team Meetings (S.I.T.):** 28 students in grades PreK – 8 are being tracked through our SRBI process, meeting every four to six weeks to check progress towards goals and decide next steps.
- **Number of students who qualify for special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and require 504 plans:** 42 students.
- About 32% of our population are identified as at risk (part of our S.I.T. process), require special accommodations under 504 or qualify for special modifications under Special Education. This supports the need to continue the level of early intervention we are currently doing to assist and support our at-risk students along with providing the legal responsibilities under IDEA and ADA. Spending money on services in district rather on legal fees benefits our students directly.
- **Professional Development:**
 - The February 21st PD day an Epilepsy Training will take place for a number of our staff. There will also be more De-escalation training on our March PD for our bus drivers and additional staff who have been unable to attend or still need a refresher.

Personal and Professional Goals:

1. Plan and implement appropriate professional development for all faculty and staff in the areas of at risk population and those labeled with disabilities.
2. Continue to improve upon my leadership skills by attending conferences put on by national, state and local organizations to ensure the most accurate information and practices are put into place at Ashford School in the area of Special Education.
3. Continue to ensure lines of communication between the entire department is clear, direct and supportive to all stakeholders.



Technology use and school calendar

1 message

Steve Morytko <smorytko@yahoo.com>

Sat, Feb 11, 2017 at 2:49 AM

Reply-To: Steve Morytko <smorytko@yahoo.com>

To: "James P. Longo" <jplongo@ashfordct.org>, Troy Hopkins <thopkins@ashfordct.org>

Cc: Jennifer Barsaleau <jbarsaleau@ashfordct.org>, Garrett Dukette <gdukette@ashfordct.org>, Jennifer Zotti <jzotti@ashfordct.org>

[Please submit as public comment at the next BOE meeting.]

BOE members,

I recently wrote to Mr. Hopkins and Mrs. Zotti regarding an issue using technology that occurs frequently in my son's classroom and no doubt others too. Both replied and we're hopeful that Mrs. Zotti has found a temporary solution that may resolve media problems for my son but I'm not sure if the solution has been extended to other students.

The use of removable flash drives as a storage media by students is somewhat unreliable and too often leads to documents created by the students becoming inaccessible and unrecoverable because: they may not follow a strict protocol when removing the media; or more often, even if they do follow the proper protocol, their documents become inaccessible and lost forever for unknown (to teacher and student alike) reasons. This is particularly frustrating for the students who end up wasting significant time and effort on important documents - not to mention the teachers time spent trying to help them. External media is particularly prone to file corruption and other hazards and the younger the student the more likely the strict protocols for use won't be followed. External portable media can also be easily lost or misplaced resulting in a similar scenario. Fortunately safer and more reliable solutions exist and are widely used by some students at Ashford School.

Students using Google Classroom, apparently only available to 5th grade and up, don't need to use external media and have the capability of accessing their documents, and every revision of it, from virtually anywhere they would like including school, home, their workstation, tablet, or phone. This capability should be extended to all students at Ashford School that create electronic documents (second grade (?) and up). From an early age students learn to sign on to Lexia so signing in to Google Classroom shouldn't be an obstacle. There are numerous other benefits for teachers, students, and parents made possible by using a portable classroom technology system too. I would strongly encourage the school to move away from using inherently unreliable media and adopt the much more reliable and safe Google Classroom cloud storage system or similar technology as soon as possible. I'm sure students and teachers alike will benefit greatly as a result. I am hopeful the BOE will lend whatever support is necessary to an effort to remedy this problem and enhance the experience for fourth grade and younger students and all others involved.

Also, I would like to suggest that a dated addendum be added to the Academic Calendar pages on the school website that reflects the current number of snow days that need to be

added to the school year so that everyone can make summer plans accordingly. It can be difficult to remember how many days school has been cancelled for snow or other reasons. I realize that BOE formally adopts the academic calendar which shouldn't have to change if someone simply adds a few highlighted lines including: an update date; the current number of cancellation days; and perhaps the new expected last day. This should take little effort and would be very helpful to all.

Incidentally the front page of the website links directly to the [original PDF \(http://ashfordct.org/documents/updated-2016-2017-ashford-school-calendar.pdf \)](http://ashfordct.org/documents/updated-2016-2017-ashford-school-calendar.pdf) of the academic calendar and is *not* identical to the version linked from the website menu at **School Information / Academic Calendar** (<http://ashfordct.org/school-info/academic-calendar/>) which was last updated 1/17/17. Ideally both documents would be the same and carry the updated information found on the latter.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Steve Morytko

Steve Morytko
Ashford CT



Animales de Centroamérica 5th Grade Spanish Project

Presentation to the Ashford Board of Education
February 16, 2017



Overview

- We got to pick any animal from Central America we wanted
- We researched the animal and wrote a paragraph about it in English
- We also got to choose any kind of visual for the animal we wanted
- We made sheets with 15 body parts on it in Spanish
- Our classmates quizzed us on the body parts
- We had a rubric to tell us what we needed to do

Sample Animal Paragraph

Ocelots are very interesting creatures. They come from the animal family Felidae. Their main habitat is in the forest, but many other ocelot habitats include places like grasslands, scrubs, and areas with lots of vegetation. Ocelots are carnivores, meaning they eat meat. These meats include things like fish, mice, frogs, and much more. Full grown ocelots are double the size of a house cat, which is pretty small. In Mayan legend, one god had a brother who had the body of a human, but the head of an ocelot. In the 1980's, ocelots were at risk of extinction, but thanks to humans, they have no risk of being extinct any time soon.

Works Cited

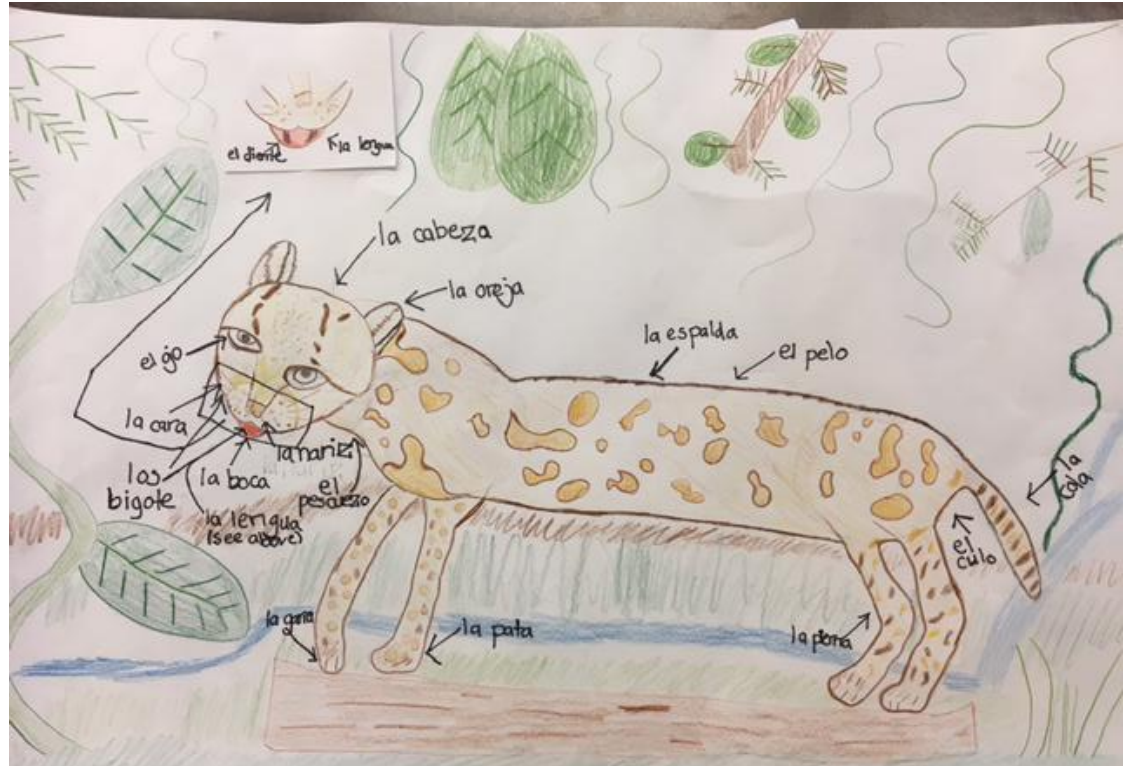
"Are Ocelots an Endangered Species?" *Animals - Mom.me*. Web. 02 Feb. 2017.

"Ocelot." *Costa Rica*. 06 July 2012. Web. 27 Jan. 2017.

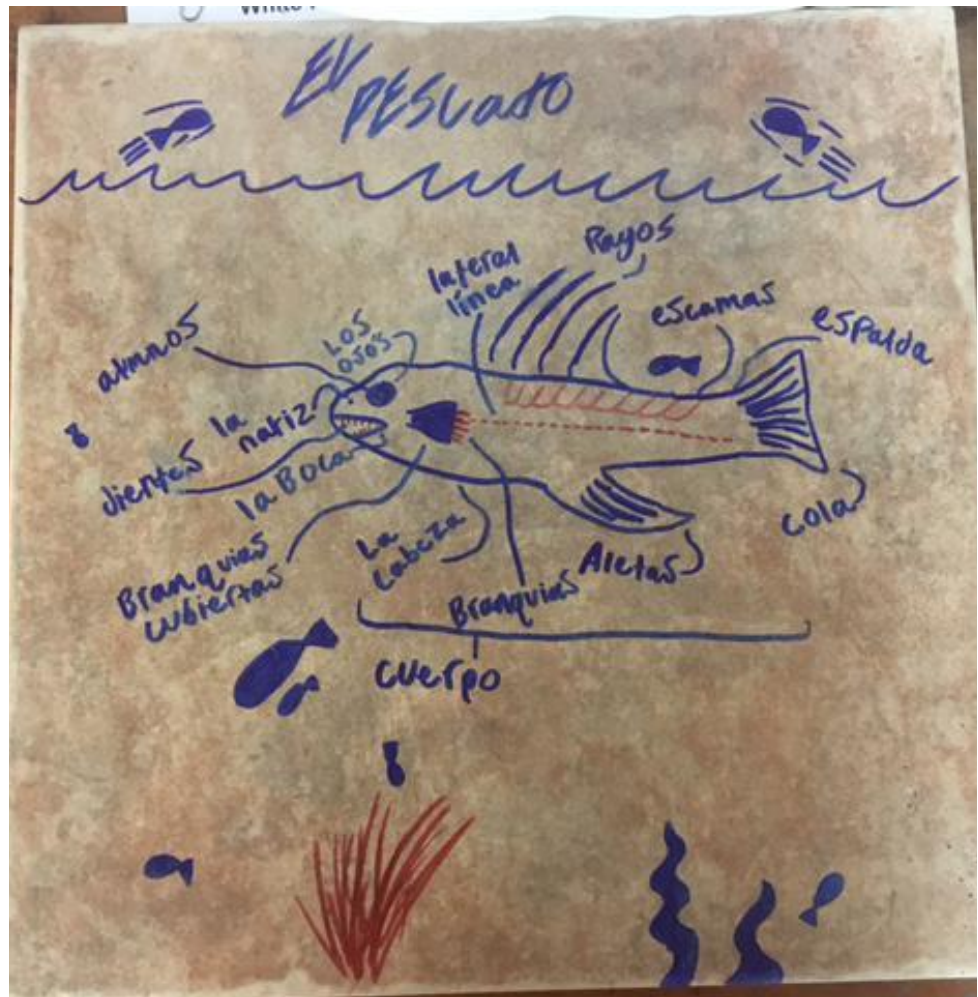
"Ocelot." *The Animal Facts*. Web. 27 Jan. 2017.

Sample Projects

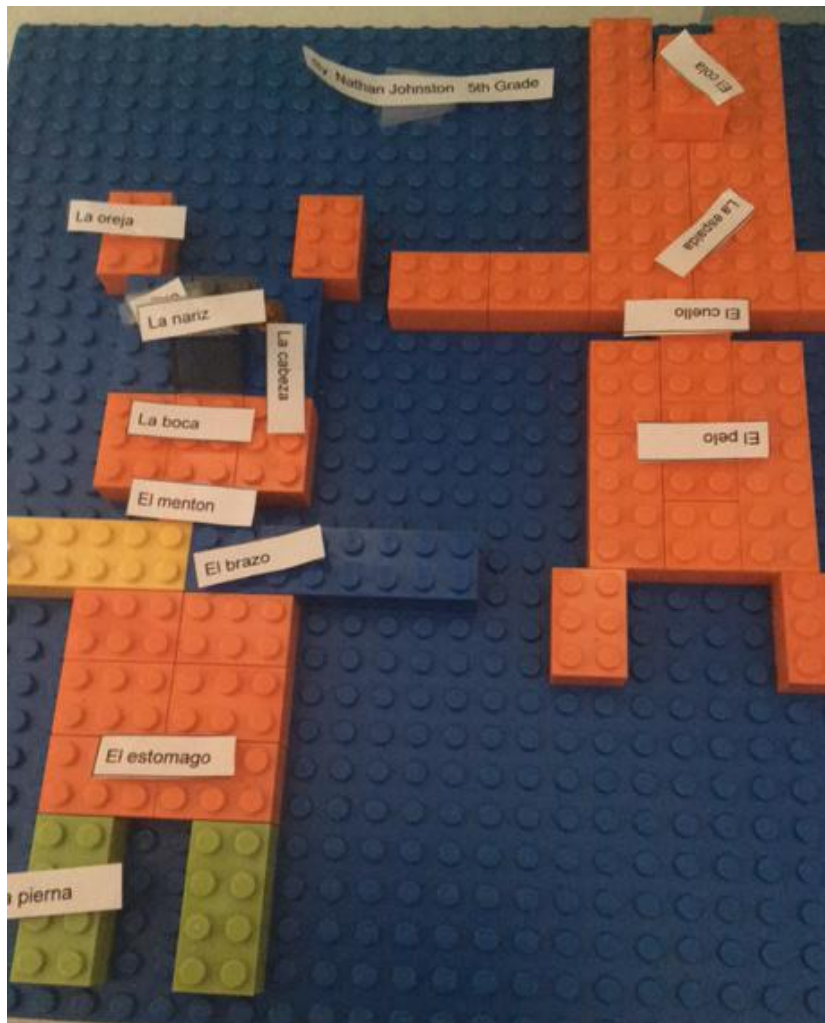
Poster Drawing



Painting on tile



Legos



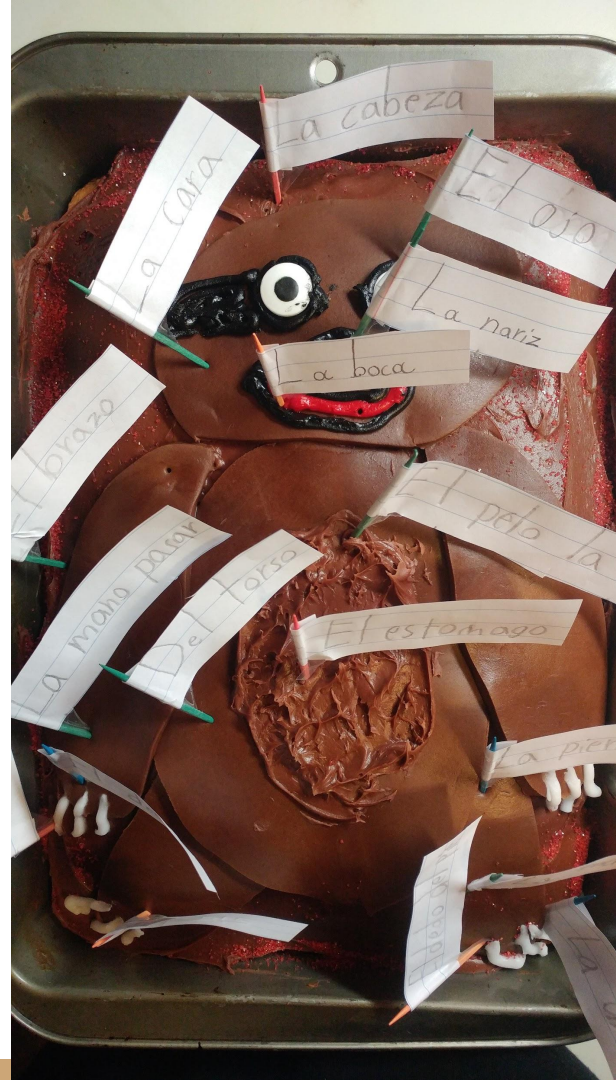
Clay



Cookie sculpture



Cake sculpture



Partes del Cuerpo

¿Dónde esta ...?



Why study another culture and language?

- Julia- We should study Spanish because it could help us in the future. I want to travel for adventure and to see amazing cultural things and animals, and I would need to know Spanish to see many different countries.
- David- It is very important to learn the 2nd most used language in the world. It is helpful to know it to teach immigrants or for many other jobs.
- Kaden- It is important to travel to see how people live differently in different parts of the world.
- Tyler- It is important to learn about another language because sometimes we run into people who only speak Spanish.

Conclusion

- I hope you enjoyed this overview of our project
- Thank you for listening!



PUTNAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board of Education Office

152 Woodstock Avenue

Putnam, CT 06260-1432

Phone: 860-963-6900 • Fax: 860-963-6911

www.putnam.k12.ct.us

Rec'd 2-8-17

William J. Hull

Superintendent of Schools

Nancy T. Cole

Business Administrator

Kristine B. Drew

Director of Special Education

Donna M. Maynard

Curriculum Director

February 1, 2017

Mr. James Rupert, Board Chairperson
Ashford Public Schools
440 Westford Road
Ashford, CT 06278-1113

Dear Mr. Rupert:

I am writing to invite you to a meeting of EASTCONN area superintendents and Board of Education members to discuss school district collaboration. This meeting grew out of an initial discussion of a small group of Board Chairs and superintendents that met to discuss how districts can work together in an era of diminishing resources. Attendees felt that it was essential that districts increase their collaboration to meet their core mission of educating all students. Enclosed are the notes from this initial meeting. This initial working group also thought that it was essential to invite additional school districts into this important discussion. The next meeting is planned for February 27th at 6:30 PM at EASTCONN, 376 Hartford Turnpike, Hampton, CT. In order to maintain a highly functioning group, we ask that districts send no more than three representatives to the February 27th meeting. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to Carol Klemyk at EASTCONN 860-455-1565 or cklemyk@eastconn.org. We look forward to continuing the discussion.

Sincerely,

Michael Morrill
Chair
Putnam Board of Education

Paula Colen
Executive Director
EASTCONN

William Hull
Superintendent
Putnam Public Schools

Monday, January 9, 2017: **Northeast Area School District Collaboration** held at EASTCONN Central Office - 376 Hartford Turnpike, Hampton, CT

Present:

Mike Morrill - Putnam
Bill Hull - Putnam
Lol Fearon - Columbia
Joe Reardon - Union
Steve Cullinan - Pomfret
Kathleen Cerrone - Pomfret
Victor Toth - Woodstock
Michael Bernardi - Woodstock

Linda Loretz - Eastford
Christopher Lent - Columbia
Robert Angeli - Lebanon
Al Vertefeuille - Lebanon
Ken DiPietro - Plainfield
Doug Smith - Plainfield
Paula Colen - EASTCONN

Purpose of Meeting:

To ascertain if there are additional ways for districts to work collaboratively to maximize available resources while maintaining, increasing and/or expanding programs and services to the students in Northeast, Connecticut.

AGENDA

- What is the mission of schools?
- What are the obstacles to this mission?
- What are current examples of district collaboration?
- What are potential new areas of collaboration?
- What are next steps?

Each district shared a mission statement. Although using different words they all were similar in intent:

- To assist and provide the environment and resources to help every student achieve their fullest potential.
- Prepare students to lead healthy lives and become productive members of the community and workforce.
- To provide appropriate educational experience to the entire student community.
- To meet the needs of children as they present them and prepare them to be successful active citizens in the 21st Century.
- To prepare students for success in personnel growth, achievement and social interaction; to promote civic responsibility; to enable student to meet their full potential as productive members of society.
- To prepare students to be productive, active contributing citizens: this includes building social skills, problem skills as well as basic academic skills.
- To prepare students for success in postsecondary education career and life opportunities.
- Educate students for the 21st century to be good citizens; help students reach their potential.
- Foster student's personal responsibility, 21st century skills, global and cultural awareness and citizenship.

The group brainstormed a list of obstacles which hinder our ability to implement our mission:

- Shifting responsibility for educating DCF/DDS students.
- Declining enrollment.
- Budget constraints.
- Federal/state laws and regulations.
- Impacts of poverty.

Next Steps:

- Invite additional EASTCONN superintendents and Board chairs to participate in this initiative (Group felt it was imperative that there be Board of Educating participation in this effort).
- Plan for a February meeting to include additional participants.
- At next meeting prioritize efforts and identify a couple of "low-hanging" items that can be accomplished in a relatively short timeframe as well as at least one item that is longer-term.
- For each of the identified items develop an Action Plan for achieving.

- Criteria to consider when prioritizing:
 - Cost savings
 - Quality improvement
 - Removal or lessening of identified obstacles to meeting our mission

- Parking Lot items:
 - Think about a couple of things that you have implemented that have provided cost savings
 - Think about a couple of things you need to do something about

- Prior to next meeting names of those in attendance at the meeting will be shared along with a list of all EASTCONN districts.