

BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

DATE: March 20, 2019

LOCATION: Branford High School Lower Media Center
185 East Main Street, Branford, CT

SUBJECT: Board of Education Meeting

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PRESENTATION

Mary R. Tisko School Principal, James O'Connor started this evening's presentation by stating that children should take the lead to grow and learn. He then invited two Tisko students, Ben and Cody, to the microphone to welcome parents, staff, BOE Members, Superintendent Hernandez, Assistant Superintendent Sexton and the Branford Community to their school and encouraged those in attendance to view the sensory wall and look for the good bulletin board. Mr. O'Connor stated that when Tisko was invited to present at this meeting he along with the help of teachers, Jody Budz and Kate Mascelli, at this presentation as a great civic opportunity and also as to "what we could bring to the meeting and what students could learn about." He continued by saying that last June when the National Climate Survey the scores came in very good, we have a lot of great thoughts, but we found that in the areas of social and emotion safety and wellbeing we found an area that we could improve and grow on. Over the last year the teachers got together on a day that was not a work day and they worked on mindfulness as practitioners (staff) and they also wanted to work restorative practices in the classroom. He stated that Restorative Practices are practices that foster healthy relationships and promote positive discipline and Mindfulness Practices are activities that increase self-awareness and the ability to be fully present in the moment. Mr. O'Connor showed a video put together by Ashley Brown and Tisko students discussing what is mindfulness?

As part of tonight's presentation several Tisko students spoke about different experiences and techniques used in their classrooms. Nate, spoke about gratitude journals, the check-in, breathing and other practices. Ryon, acted out mindful breaths with movement. Luke, a student from Mrs. G's class, spoke about anchors and how they help to bring your focus back to one thing. Jane and Gabby, spoke about rainbow breathing and gratitude journals. Kaitlin spoke about the use of the sing bowl in her classroom. Madelyn, spoke about the use of a peace corner in her classroom. Stella spoke about affirmations and how they work. Casen spoke about the morning check-in. Benny talked about why "we do our morning check-ins." Cody spoke about mantra breathing. Cameron finished by performing a mindful practice exercise.

Mr. O'Connor continued the presentation by discussing the benefits of these practices. He stated that they are; active, well-rounded citizens – improved mood and improved physical health, more energy; self-directed learners – increased concentration and focus and higher productivity; critical thinkers – better problem solving, more creative and more resilient and lastly effective communicators and collaborators – deeper, more meaningful relationships. He stated that there are three different entities of this and multi-year development. He stated on the teacher side there is building based PD, grade level meeting work, look for the good, reading All are Welcome book as a school, the mindfulness wall (resource board) in the teacher's room, supporting transgender students training and regular support and ideas shared through email. For support staff he discussed Look for the Good and supporting transgender students training. On the student side there are morning meetings, restorative circles, Look for the Good, reading All are Welcome book as a school and mindfulness activities in classrooms. Mr. O'Connor also showed a video of Tisko student, Griffin, using the Sensory Path. He spoke about the Kindness Bags that Ms. Mascelli's class worked on. Mr. O'Connor also explained that Ms. Mascelli's class worked on this project as a community service activity to build empathy and for students to see themselves as a

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PRESENTATION (Continued)

Mr. O'Connor discussed Look for the Good which was brought to Branford 3 years ago, expanded throughout the district and gratitude campaign, daily sticky notes, you matter lets and the gratitude spot larger part of the community. Tisko students, Elaina and Tessa, explained that they gave bags to the Columbus House in New Haven, containing supplies, to keep people healthy and safe. Some of the items in the bags were hats, shampoo and ponchos. The students also made encouragement cards with kind words such as courage, believe and you matter, that were included in the bags.

Tisko student, Nate, concluded the presentation by thanking everyone for coming, saying that "we enjoyed having you hear, and we hoped that you enjoyed learning about mindfulness at Tisko."

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

Because of prior commitments the student representatives were not available to attend this evenings meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT/WIS NEXT GENERATION UPDATE

Superintendent Hernandez reported that drills for the month have and are being conducted, there are 4 schools that will be completing their drills before the end of the month. He stated that the schools have been doing an exceptional job with this. Superintendent Hernandez discussed the recent successes of the BHS Dance and Hockey Teams. He also discussed the upcoming Climate Survey by stating that we are using the data from last year to drive this year's survey. Mr. Hernandez also discussed CABA Day on the Hill, he stated that it was held today in Hartford and along with Mr. Prins, BHS sent the 9th grade class officers. The District's FY 20 Operating and Capital Budget will be presents to the Board of Finance tomorrow night. Superintendent Hernandez also reported that tonight is the opening of the BHS play The Addams Family and next week the WIS play Honk will be held. Superintendent Hernandez ended his report by stating that the WIS parent conferences were held this evening and that he heard that they were well attended.

Superintendent Hernandez provided an update on the WIS construction project. He started by saying that the project is on schedule and moving along without any turbulence. Mr. Hernandez also stated that the BOE and Public Building Commission joint meeting is tentatively slated for April 1st and that a Doodle Poll for BOE member availability has been started.

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DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. First Readings

MOTION (O'Connor/Ehrhardt) to send the following policies on for the second reading:

- a. 5131.91 - Conduct
- b. 6146 – Graduation Requirements
- c. 6163.3 – Live Animals in the Classroom

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Continued...

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CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

A. Project Lead the Way Program Approval

MOTION (O'Connor/Sharkey) to adopt the Project Lead the Way Program as presented and discussed at the January and March 2019 Teaching & Learning Committee Meetings.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

B. BHS Graduation Requirements Commencing 2023

MOTION (O'Connor/Prins) to adopt the new graduation requirements as presented and discussed at the January and March 2019 Teaching & Learning Committee Meetings.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ACTION ITEMS

There were no public comments made during this portion of the meeting.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Communication Committee (Joanne Borrus, Chair). Next scheduled meeting: Wednesday, April 10, 2019, 6:00 P.M., Branford High School Lower Media Center.

B. Personnel & Finance Committee (John O'Connor Chair). Next scheduled meeting: Wednesday, April 10, 2019, 6:30 P.M., Branford High School Lower Media Center.

C. Teaching & Learning Committee (John Prins, Chair). Next scheduled meeting: Wednesday, April 10, 2019, at 7:00 P.M., Branford High Lower Media Center.

D. Policy Committee (Ellen Michaels, Chair). Next scheduled meeting: Wednesday, April 24, 2019, 6:00 P.M., John B. Sliney Elementary School, 23 Eades Street, Branford, CT.

BOARD REPORTS:

ACES – Ellen Michaels was absent from this evenings meeting.

BECC – Dawn Perrotti stated that the BECC has been busy handing out 1,000 copies of the book *What it means to be Kind*. The will also will be hanging art work in the area merchant windows, April 7-12.

CABE – John Prins stated that CABE Day on the Hill was the focus for CABE this week.

PTA MEETINGS

BHS - John O' Connor & Shannen Sharkey

Scheduled Meetings: No set meeting schedule.

WIS – Joanne Borrus, Dawn Perrotti & Betsy Regan

Scheduled Meetings: Regular meetings have gone to twice a year – none scheduled at this time.

WIS PTA Executive Board Meetings: All Meetings are 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. at WIS
March 20, April 17, and May 15, 2019

JBS – Maria Ehrhardt & Shannen Sharkey

Scheduled Meetings: All meetings take place in JBS Library
April 3 @ 6:45p, May 2 @ 3:45p, and June 3 @ 6:45p

Tisko – Michael Krause & Betsy Regan

Scheduled Meetings: Not known at this time.

Murphy – Ellen Michaels & John Prins

Scheduled Meeting: All meetings to be held in the MTM Café at 7:00 PM
April 16, and May 21, 2019

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

- 05** MOTION (Krause/Sharkey) to adjourn into Executive Session. Chairman Krause moved the meeting into Executive Session at 8:17 PM to discuss the Superintendent's Mid-Year Review.

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION/ADJOURN

- 06** MOTION (Perrotti/Sharkey) to return to Regular Session. The meeting returned to Regular Session at 9:14 PM with no action taken.
- 07** MOTION (Perrotti/Prins) to adjourn. Chairman Krause adjourned the meeting at 9:14 PM

**The next Full Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 24, 2019,
at 7:00 PM at John B. Sliney School, 23 Eades Street, Branford, CT.**

PLEASE NOTE: Parking for Board Meetings held at Branford High School Lower Media Center is in Lot C. Access to meetings is through the F3 library doors.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Regan
Secretary

Prepared by
Kerry Eyrich