

BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

DATE: December 20, 2023

LOCATION: Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria

SUBJECT: Board of Education Meeting

185 Damascus Road, Branford, CT

ATTENDANCE

HERE	ATTENDEE	AFFILIATION
Y	Peter Berdon, Chair	Board of Education
Y	Ellen Michaels, Vice-Chair	Board of Education
Y	Meaghan DeLucia, Secretary	Board of Education
Y	Judith Barron	Board of Education
Y	Adam Greenberg	Board of Education
Y	Marie McNamara	Board of Education
N	Ram Shrestha	Board of Education
Y	Shawn Tiernan	Board of Education
Y	Laura Troidle	Board of Education
Y	Clare Barnett	Student Representative
Y	Kimberly Caracondo	Student Representative
N	Iva Sekerovic	Student Representative
Y	Conor Spaulding	Student Representative
Y	Dr. Christopher Tranberg, Superintendent	Central Office
Y	Allison Moran, Assistant Superintendent	Central Office
Y	Don Neel, Chief Operating Officer	Central Office

Others present:

BUSINESS ITEMS

ITEM DESCRIPTION

CALL TO ORDER

- 01** Meeting was called to order at 6:36 PM by BOE Chair, Peter Berdon.

Mr. Berdon asked that everyone present this evening take a moment of silence for the recent unexpected passing of BOE member, Ram Shrestha's wife.

AGENDA CHANGES

There were no agenda changes made at this evening's meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Berdon stated that he and Boardmembers received communication from First Student and also several communications from various parents in connection with basketball.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Prins, Branford resident and former BOE member, spoke in support of the transportation contract that is being considered this evening, the Clean Energy Committee (compositions, accomplishments, certifications and becoming Climate Leaders), Branford Public Schools energy usage and the NetZero resolution.

Dr. Shirley McCarthy, Branford resident and Clean Energy Committee Chair, spoke in support of the transportation contract and decreasing fossil fuel use. Dr. McCarthy also cited several research studies regarding exposure to diesel exhaust.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS (Continued)

Sharon Hutner, Branford resident and Clean Energy Committee member, spoke in support of the transportation contract, and quoted Governor Lamont's statement on climate change, the efforts instituted by the Town of Branford, the advantages of electric school buses and the various school districts that have electric buses.

Bob Babcock, Branford resident, spoke about the Tisko and Murphy solar projects, commended the Board of their NetZero resolution and being pleased about Branford's consideration of going with electric schools.

Donna Laich, Branford resident and RTM member, spoke in support of the proposed transportation contract, her experience with driving an electric vehicle, the costs, services/maintenance and safety.

Melinda Torrelli, Branford resident and former First Student bus employee, spoke about her concerns regarding the transportation contract including the costs involved, how it will affect taxpayers and asked why is it starting with bus companies

Gregg Jerolman, Branford resident, discussed Dr. Tranbergs report, efforts being made, the Committee appointments, the reappointment of a Board member, political affiliations and congratulated Ellen Michaels and Marie McNamara for doing the right thing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 02** MOTION (Tiernan/DeLucia) to approve the minutes from the November 15, 2023 Full Regular BOE Meeting and the December 6, 2023 Full Special BOE Meeting.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

BOE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

Among the items that the BOE Student Representatives discussed in their this evening were; the BHS Hornets card for juniors and seniors for getting high honors and 95% attendance for quarter one including a Dunkin Donuts gift card, this week is spirit week, the winter pep rally, the December 8th pajama day fundraiser that raised money for children with cancer (approximately \$400 raised), last week's fall play (As You Like It), the issues discussed by the Principal's Advisory Committee, BHS groups and clubs spreading holiday cheer around the high school, the Excel Club Toy Drive, the class of 2024 gift card raffle, December music/choral concerts and Caroling and the Interact Clubs partnership with the Rotary Club to make sure that children have toys for the holiday.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Superintendent Tranberg began his report by welcoming back Laura Troidle and congratulating the BHS music program students (instrumental and choir) for their December performances and noted that the Music makers will have completed 22 performances this month. Dr. Tranberg also discussed the following; the BHS Be Vap Free in 2023 billboard contest winners, the CIAC feature story on Jelani and Akiel Lomotey, the RTM approval of the BEA contract and its unanimous support, the States changing of Kindergarten eligibility and updated guidance for families in January or February,

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SUPERINTENDENT REPORT (Continued)

the 2024-25 and 2025 school year calendars, the survey in last month's newsletter (what day families would prefer to have off) 71% of respondents chose to have the Wednesday before Thanksgiving off and the recent Central Office professional development.

PRESENTATIONS

A. Transportation Contract

Liz Sanchez, Sarah Skinner and Michael Borrino, from Zum Transportation provided a presentation on their services. Among the items they discussed were; the RFP (an electric fleet in 10 years), modernizing the fleet, the company's mission and background, Rita Narayan (Founder & CEO), student transportation (has not changed in 80 years - antiquated, low technology and costly), driven by one mission - to modernize student transportation, four core values (customer obsessed, this big and execute meticulously, do things the right way, build better communities), student centric transportation model, Zum's approach to drivers, end-to-end cloud based technology platform, the only 100% carbon neutral student transportation company in the US, what BPS can expect from Zum, helping district's break away from the status quo, a track record of excellence, BPS launch plan, proven track record of excellence, 100% carbon neutral fleet, top of the line AC fleet, vehicle types and numbers, emerging needs fleet, latest on board technology, having state of the art facilities, yard location, 3D site plan, 100% EV fleet transition (how they'll get there), large scale EV development capability, BPS Electrification Plan & Transition Timeline, 100% EV Fleet Conversion in 5 Years by SY' 28-29, having a handpicked local team, drivers - All School Bus Drivers are Certified, Trained Employees, great place to work - certified, workplace culture - sense of community and purpose, onboarding existing drivers and team, technology (parent/guardian, district administrator and driver experience), route optimization, real-time tracking and data, notifications, RFID cards, student-specific instructions, parent feedback and ratings, vehicle inspection and ride delivery, daily performance and service quality reports and the Zum App for parents/guardians. The Zum team concluded their presentation by answering Board member questions.

B. Superintendent's Entry Plan and 2023-2028 BPS Strategic Coherence Plan

In his presentation this evening, Superintendent. Tranberg discussed; a review of what the entry plan process was, summary of findings and making connections to the three goals that were initially presented in the Strategic Plan that was approved last spring, the new logo representing the Global Learning Competencies and making connections to our Mission and Vision, Core Beliefs (growth mindset, reflective practice, continuous improvement), Stakeholder Input Report (District assets vs. District issues according to report), Entry Plan Goals (provide time and space for open dialogue), the steps that Jonathan Costa went over with the committee last year, the timeline and overview established over the summer (listen and learn, share and build, launch and assess), stakeholder participation (all

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PRESENTATIONS (Continued)

meetings that occurred with different groups (BOE, staff, students, parents, community and town officials), the four questions asked of just about every person (what are you proud of, what do you find challenging, what do you wish could be undone and what do you hope for the future), students were asked additional questions (what is your favorite subject, SEL curriculum and food, timeline of other activities that happened (ex: riding on the bus and several other meetings with staff) guiding written documents that were reviewed and cross referenced (looking at the same asset and potential areas for growth), the path forward and the actions that go with each of the phases, the Strategic Coherence Plan (SCP) (three edits since it went out), the work that the SCP committee did last year, how data was analyzed, definitions (of goals, strategy, action and success indicator), Strategy 1 (actions and years we hope to accomplish), example of success indicators, overview of the 15 strategies (in 5 years - Goals I, II and III), keeping alumni connected and connecting the dots to move forward (through line - guiding documents, SCP, Superintendent's goals and school improvement plans). Dr. Tranberg concluded his report by thanking the members of the SCP committee.

STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Teaching & Learning Committee

Ms. Michaels stated at the last meeting the Committee went over data and our new data system, and also heard about new course recommendation.

B. Personnel & Finance Committee

Ms. DeLucia stated that the Committee heard about the new solar project (now completed), went over monthly expenditures, discussed the Special Education budget (which is exceeding costs but Mr. Cicarella and Mr. Neel are keeping a close eye on it) and the personnel report.

C. Policy Committee

Mr. Tiernan stated that the Committee met last Wednesday and reviewed four different items that will be up tonight for first reading.

D. Communication Committee

Ms. Troidle said that Committee met this evening and heard about community updates, social media metrics, an update and discussion on the Entry Plan and adopting a Board Pledge and the communications plan.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

03 A. To consider and if appropriate, vote to accept the proposed transportation contract

MOTION (DeLucia/Tiernan) to give administration permission to negotiate the terms of the contract within the scope of the proposal itself.

MOTION WITHDRAWN

04 MOTION (Barron/Tiernan) to table this discussion until next month's meeting.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Continued...

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DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS (Continued)

- 05 B. To consider and if appropriate, vote to approve the 2023-2028 BPS Strategic Coherence Plan**
MOTION (Troidle/Michaels) to approve the 2023-2028 BPS Strategic Coherence Plan as discussed in this evening's presentation.
MOTION WITHDRAWN

- 06** MOTION (DeLucia/Barron) to table this discussion until next month's meeting.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- 07 C. To consider and if appropriate, vote to approve new course proposals**
MOTION (DeLucia/Michaels) to approve the following new courses:
a. UConn Early College Experience (ECE) French 3268 Grammar and Composition
b. Human Rights - Empathy and Advocacy in a Changing World
c. AP Language Composition
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- 08 D. To consider and if appropriate, vote to approve donations**
MOTION (DeLucia/Troidle) to approve the following donations:
a. BHS Model Congress Donation (\$3,500)
b. WIS and BHS Lunch Program Donation (\$1,835)
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- 09 E. First Reading of Policies**
MOTION (Tiernan/Troidle) to approve the first reading of the following policies:
a. Policy 4475 Increasing Educator Diversity Plan
b. Policy 1000 Non-Discrimination
c. Policy 4600 Non-Discrimination
d. Policy 5000 Non-Discrimination
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

BOARD REPORTS

There were no Board reports presented this evening.

PTA REPORTS

There were no PTA reports presented this evening.

ADJOURN

- 10** MOTION (Troidle/DeLucia) to adjourn.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Mr. Berdon adjourned the meeting at 9:25 PM.

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DECEMBER BOE MEETINGS

(All meetings will take place in the WIS Cafeteria unless otherwise specified)

BOE Committee Chairs Meeting	December 7, 2023 at 5:00 PM (Virtual)
Teaching & Learning Committee Meeting	December 13, 2023 at 6:00 PM
Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting	December 13, 2023 at 7:00 PM
Policy Committee Meeting	December 13, 2023 at 7:30 PM
Communication Committee Meeting	December 20, 2023 at 6:00 PM
Full Regular Board Meeting	December 20, 2023 at 6:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Meaghan DeLucia
Secretary

Prepared by,
Kerry Eyrich