

## BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

**\*\*This meeting will be live streamed\*\***

**Next Full Regular BOE Meeting: August 19, 2020**

**WEDNESDAY**

**6:00 PM\***

**June 17, 2020**

**\*Please Note Time Change**

### FULL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING AGENDA

#### Branford Public Schools Mission and Vision Statement

Nurturing students and citizens who develop a deep commitment to learning today and leading tomorrow is the central goal of Branford Public Schools.

#### AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Comment
- III. Approve Minutes
- IV. Agenda Changes
- V. Communication
- VI. Student Representative Report
- VII. Superintendent's Report/WIS Next Generation Update
- VIII. Public Comment
- IX. Board Reports:
  - ACES – Ellen Michaels
  - BECC – Dawn Perrotti
  - CABE – John Prins
- X. Adjourn

**This Board of Education meeting is being conducted remotely in accordance with State of Connecticut Executive Order No. 7b, issued by His Excellency Ned Lamont**

To access and listen to this meeting please go to [www.branfordschools.org](http://www.branfordschools.org) and click on the link:

***TO WATCH BOE MEETING VIDEOS, CLICK HERE***

**TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC COMMENTS PLEASE CALL:  
1 (260) 218-1403 (PIN: 916459019)**

***When participating by telephone please mute your phone when joining the meeting and unmute your phone when you are ready to speak.  
This can be done by pressing \*6 on your phone's keypad.***

#### **Rules Governing Public Comments:**

- Three minutes will be allotted to each speaker. The Board may modify this limitation at the beginning of a meeting if the number of persons wishing to speak makes it advisable to do so. (Board Bylaw 9325)
- Conduct intended primarily to disrupt the Board of Education meeting shall not be permitted. Any speaker who engages in such conduct will be warned and allowed to correct such conduct. If the speaker continues to engage in the disruptive conduct such will be grounds for termination of the speaker's privilege to participate in public comment and may be deemed grounds for removal from the meeting site.
- All speakers must identify themselves by name and address.

**SPECIAL BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES**

DATE: May 14, 2020 LOCATION: Branford High School Lower Media Center  
185 East Main Street, Branford, CT  
SUBJECT: Board of Education Meeting Page 1 of 2

**ATTENDANCE**

HERE	ATTENDEE	AFFILIATION
Y	Shannen Sharkey, Chair	Board of Education
Y	John R. Prins, Vice-Chair	Board of Education
Y	Meredith Gaffney, Secretary	Board of Education
N	Joanne Borrus	Board of Education
Y	Chad Edgar	Board of Education
Y	Cristina Cantu	Board of Education
Y	Maria Ehrhardt	Board of Education
Y	Ellen Michaels	Board of Education
N	Dawn Perrotti	Board of Education
N	Riyanshu (Riya) Bam	Student Representative
Y	Mia Josephy-Zack	Student Representative
Y	Minsok Lee	Student Representative
Y	Hamlet M. Hernandez, Superintendent	Central Office
Y	Rachel Sexton, Assistant Superintendent	Central Office
Y	Don Neel, Chief Operating Officer	Central Office

Others present: First Selectman, James Cosgrove, Jim Finch, Town of Branford Finance Director, Branford Clean Energy Committee Members; Bob Babcock, Shirley McCarthy, Gregory Ames, Elena Cahill, Mackey Dykes, Sharon Huttner and Michelle Sember

**BUSINESS ITEMS**

**ITEM DESCRIPTION**

**This meeting was conducted remotely in accordance with State of Connecticut Executive Order No. 7b, issued by His Excellency Ned Lamont**

**CALL**

01 Meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM by BOE Chair, Shannen Sharkey.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments made during this section of this evenings meeting.

**PRESENTATION**

**A. Overview Branford Clean Energy Committee**

Superintendent Hernandez introduced the Branford Clean Energy Committee to the Board and discussed their work. First Selectman Cosgrove, gave an overview of what the Town has accomplished by taking on a number of initiatives that have had financial and environmental benefits. Branford Clean Energy Committee Co-Chairs, Bob Babcock, Shirley McCarthy along with the members of the Branford Clean Energy Committee gave a presentation that provided an overview of who they are and what the committee hopes to accomplish.

Continued...

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**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Celia Toche', District parent, thanked the Board for keeping "us informed while working through these difficult times." She also discussed the clean energy initiative and said that she would like to see "more thought and research done."

**DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM**

**02 A. 2020-21 Adult Education Program Enhancements Project Application**

MOTION (Prins/Michaels) to approve Superintendent Hernandez signing the 2020-2021 Adult Education Program Enhancements Project Application.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

**03 B. Flex Learning Update**

Superintendent Hernandez began by saying that we could not be doing what we are doing without the support of families. He also stated that he wanted to acknowledge the tremendous work of our staff. We have had to revamp the school district on a dime, with very short notice.

Rachel Sexton provided an update on BPS Flex Learning. She discussed the parent survey questions and results, the dates of the survey and the amount of students represented, decision making going forward into the summer, satisfaction around what teachers were doing, live interactions, adaptability of teachers and school leaders, the theme to pay attention to (more consistency), the power of teacher personal connections, learning goals, capturing student progress, addressing student learning gaps, supporting teachers, social/emotional support for students, and approaching summer and fall.

When asked about their experience with flex learning, BOE Student Reps, Mia and Minsok, stated that they thought that flex learning has gone well and classes have been pretty consistent. Mia stated that AP teachers have been very helpful providing resources. This is the first year that AP exams will be online. They have felt supported and gave an example of how parents on Facebook have started an Adopt a Senior page.

**ADJOURN**

**04 MOTION (Gaffney/Prins) to adjourn.**

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Ms. Sharkey adjourned the meeting 7:54 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Meredith Gaffney  
Secretary

Prepared by,  
Kerry Erich

## BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

DATE: May 20, 2020 LOCATION: Branford High School Lower Media Center  
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### ATTENDANCE

HERE	ATTENDEE	AFFILIATION
Y	Shannen Sharkey, Chair	Board of Education
Y	John R. Prins, Vice-Chair	Board of Education
Y	Joanne Borrus	Board of Education
Y	Cristina Cantu	Board of Education
Y	Chad Edgar	Board of Education
Y	Maria Ehrhardt	Board of Education
Y	Meredith Gaffney	Board of Education
Y	Ellen Michaels	Board of Education
Y	Dawn Perrotti	Board of Education
N	Riyanshu (Riya) Bam	Student Representative
Y	Mia Josephy-Zack	Student Representative
N	Minsok Lee	Student Representative
Y	Hamlet M. Hernandez, Superintendent	Central Office
Y	Rachel Sexton, Assistant Superintendent	Central Office
Y	Don Neel, Chief Operating Officer	Central Office
Y	Charles Cicarella, Director Student Services	Central Office

Others present:

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### BUSINESS ITEMS

#### ITEM DESCRIPTION

**This meeting was conducted remotely in accordance with State of Connecticut Executive Order No. 7b, issued by His Excellency Ned Lamont**

#### CALL TO ORDER

- 01 Meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM by BOE Chair, Shannen Sharkey.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

- 02 Celia Toche, District parent, thanked the WIS staff for how smoothly the locker cleanout went. She also asked the Board for more notice regarding big decisions.

#### APPROVE MINUTES

- 03 MOTION (Prins/Gaffney) to approve the minutes from the April 6, 2020 Full Special BOE Meeting.  
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY
- 04 MOTION (Prins/Gaffney) to approve the minutes from the April 22, 2020 Full Regular BOE Meeting.  
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

#### BOE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Mia Josephy-Zack, stated that today the BHS teachers surprised the students by putting lawn signs on their lawns. The teachers also decorated their cars and took pictures with students. Mia noted that social distancing was practiced while this was all happening. Students were assigned their culminating projects. She explained that this is the end of the year equivalent of a final and that these will go on until the end of the year.

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### **SUPERINTENDENT REPORT/WIS PROJECT UPDATE**

Superintendent Hernandez began by saying that the Superintendent's Report would start by presenting the reports that are normally given at the Personnel & Finance Committee Meetings. Mr. Hernandez then turned the meeting over to Don Neel to present the Monthly Expenditures Report.

Mr. Neel reported that the pupil services fund is 83.4% committed, general operations is 88.9% committed, for a consolidated fund commitment of 87.9%. Mr. Neel stated that while we still have some expenses and purchases to make, he expects to have some significant savings in transportation. He also stated that we along with council are working with our transportation company, and are getting a little frustrated. We have reached a conceptual agreement with the First Student Rep. but have yet to get an agreement inked. Once that happens we will have significant savings. Mr. Neel concluded by saying that residuals will be greater than normal, but it is premature for us to give a number as it is a very fluid situation. The budget is in safe position, we are managing our residuals and he will report them to the Board when we have something more definitive.

Mr. Cicarella reported that some adjustments that we thought would happen, are most likely not going to. This makes our residuals to currently be at \$140,000. Some placements that were supposed to happen and held in abeyance through the PPT process have seen some adjustments to reflect \$29,000, which was removed from tuition expenses. This increases amounts by a little bit (\$30,000). He cannot envision it going further than that. Mr. Cicarella concluded by saying that he is in direct contact with service providers, trying to make sure that we can plan accordingly for the type of invoices that they will be sending us.

Mr. Neel presented the Personnel Report. He stated that the Talent Services team has been very production in the virtual department. They are doing some great work using software to automate and expand some of our evaluations and sexual harassment training. He also stated that open enrollment began this week. Mr. Neel commended Connie Turkington, Payroll Supervisor, and Tom Pisani for the wonderful job that they did implementing the mobile Timeclocks application.

Superintendent Hernandez reported that last night the BOE's FY 21 budget was approved as recommended by the Board of Finance without any reductions. He stated that as a reminder there were some adjustments made regarding our medical self-insurance based on a joint rating. The budget passed at 3.14%. Mr. Hernandez also reported that the Capital Budget also went through with minor adjustments made at the Education Committee level. He concluded by saying that he was very happy with the budget as presented.

Superintendent Hernandez discussed the Cares Act. He stated that the Board is eligible to apply for approximately \$303,000. We are waiting to receive criteria from the State.

Superintendent Hernandez stated that he along with BHS staff and Assistant Superintendent Sexton distributed approximately 240 lawn signs to seniors. He felt it was a nice thing to do for our seniors and in the near future there will be other signs and acts of appreciation for these students. Mr. Hernandez stated that he wanted to acknowledge that this is a hard time for our seniors and we want to support

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### **SUPERINTENDENT REPORT/WIS PROJECT UPDATE (Continued)**

them. He has met with public health officials and BOE leadership to talk about concepts around graduation. He hoped to have it finalized by Memorial Day. The BHS Team is working very hard to make sure that we meet all standards of public health and align to the Governor's Executive Order. Most importantly it needs to be safe for everyone to participate because what we are dealing with is very serious.

Superintendent Hernandez discussed other school activities. He stated that WIS is preparing a plan to acknowledge our 8<sup>th</sup> graders. He and Assistant Superintendent Sexton met today with the elementary planning team to discuss plans for our 4<sup>th</sup> graders to look at a virtual and in person piece. Anything planned will be discussed with our Public Health.

Superintendent Hernandez concluded his report by discussing the results from the recent flex learning survey. He stated that the results will be sent out to parents in an update. Mr. Hernandez stated that we realize to get parent input was very important. Assistant Superintendent Sexton discussed the following: parent survey goals (parent voice, input and feedback, the process (420 surveys completed for 525 students), connectivity and satisfaction overall, District communication, school and teacher support and communication, structure and balance, quality, work load, rigor, themes, and short term assignments. Ms. Sexton stated that the scale used was 1 to 5, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. The notification of the survey to parents was sent out by the Superintendent and school principals. The survey was available April 23 through May 9.

Superintendent Hernandez concluded by saying this is a dynamic situation in which we need to continually communicate, evaluate and look for feedback and embrace the growth mindset.

In use update on the WIS Project, Superintendent Hernandez reported that:

- Demo of the old instructional area is complete.
- Some abatement continues in the old locker room/pool area.
- There are some structural challenges as well as some old piping in the pool area that most likely needs to be replaced. The Building Committee is exploring different options to remedy the challenges that we face.
- The first week of June will probably see the process of a large excavation project (putting in water retention). People will not have access to front or parent loop.
- We continue to work with the office of school grants at the State level to get progress payments. They've slowed down and we are still awaiting payment from our last submittal which was about three weeks ago. This ties into the Town's cash flow and we are working with Michele Dixon, from the State and will reach back out to hear regarding status of our payment.

Superintendent Hernandez concluded by saying that to date the project remains on schedule, on budget and we are hoping to accomplish some things this summer that were scheduled to take place next summer.

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**DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM**

- 05 BOE involvement in the Branford Clean Energy Committee/Member Appointment**  
Superintendent Hernandez discussed his recommendation to the BOE to enter into a non-binding letter of intent to pursue available Clean Energy Programs. Ms. Sharkey appointed Mr. Prins to be the BOE member on the Committee.

MOTION (Gaffney/Prins) to approve the BOE entering into a non-binding letter of intent to pursue available Clean Energy Programs.

**06 B. Second Reading**

- a. MOTION (Ehrhardt/Gaffney) to approve the second reading of policy 5112 - Ages of Attendance.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- b. MOTION (Gaffney/Ehrhardt) to approve (with typo correction) the second reading of policy 5141.5 – Suicide Prevention and Intervention.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Celia Toche', District parent, discussed the Clean Energy initiative and encouraged the Board to consider their options.

Jennifer Alexander, District parent, discussed the Ad Hoc Committee. She inquired about the recent parent survey results, how parents and public input will be taken into account, and her concerns about next year (input and information).

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- 07** Ms. Sharkey adjourned the meeting into Executive Session at 7:17 PM. All Board members present at this evening participated in this session.

**RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION**

- 08** MOTION (Prins/Gaffney) to return to Regular Session.  
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Ms. Sharkey return the meeting to Regular Session at 7:44 PM.

**DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM**

- 09** MOTION (Prins/Gaffney) MOVED, that the Board extend the contract of employment with Hamlet Hernandez as Superintendent of Schools, through and including June 30, 2023.  
APPROVED (Cantu abstained)

Continued...

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**ADJOURN**

**10** MOTION (Prins/Gaffney) to adjourn.  
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Ms. Sharkey adjourned the meeting 7:48 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Meredith Gaffney  
Secretary

Prepared by,  
Kerry Erich