

**BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE: June 16, 2021**

**LOCATION: Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria  
185 Damascus Road, Branford, CT 06405**

**SUBJECT: Board of Education Meeting**

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**ATTENDANCE**

HERE	ATTENDEE	AFFILIATION
Y	John R. Prins, Chair	Board of Education
Y	Ellen Michaels, Vice-Chair	Board of Education
Y	Meredith Gaffney, Secretary	Board of Education
Y	Peter Berdon	Board of Education
Y	Joanne Borrus	Board of Education
Y	Cristina Cantu	Board of Education
N	Chad Edgar	Board of Education
Y	Dawn Perrotti	Board of Education
Y	Dr. Tim Raynor	Board of Education
Y	Hanna Bloomquist	Student Representative
Y	Carly Pierre-Louis	Student Representative
N	Aldin Aksamovic	Student Representative
N	Patricio Banegas	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:

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**BUSINESS ITEMS**

**ITEM DESCRIPTION**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

**01** Meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by BOE Chair, John Prins.

**PRESENTATION**

A. 2019-2020 CABA Student Leadership Award

John Prins and Superintendent Hernandez recognized the following 2019-2020 CABA Student Leadership Award recipients:

- Avery Clouse, WIS
- Nishat Zahan, WIS
- Hailey Brunner
- Daniel DeCerbo-O'Brien

B. 2020-2021 CABA Student Leadership Award

John Prins and Superintendent Hernandez recognized the following 2020-2021 CABA Student Leadership Award recipients:

- Peyton Gaudreau, WIS
- Dante Dilegge, WIS
- Alisa Gueco, BHS
- Carter Shannon, BHS

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**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Jennifer Orlando, District Parent, spoke about fields, funding and remaining funds, a feasibility study, property assessments and John B. Sliney School.

Wayne Cooke, Branford resident, discussed national students and their possible agendas and a letter that he wrote to the Board.

Roger Maldonado, District parent, discussed the use of facemasks.

Stephanie Carvin, District parent, spoke about block scheduling at BHS.

Gregg Jerolman, Branford resident, apologized for his interaction with a guest at the last BOE meeting. Mr. Jerolman also discussed the Chairman’s communication, awaiting feedback, a break at the last BOE meeting and the BOE Retreat.

Brett Joly, District parent, thanked teachers for their hard work. Mr. Joly also discussed the services of FRC and the SACC program.

**APPROVE MINUTES**

- 02** MOTION (Raynor/Borrus) to approve the minutes as amended from the May 19, 2021 Full Regular BOE Meeting.  
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

**AGENDA CHANGES**

- 03** A. Add Action Item E for discussion/action - As permitted by Bylaw 9311, temporary board approval of *Policy C1902 Health and Safety Protocols Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic* - effective July 1, 2021 to cover summer programming and to allow the board time to go through the formal adoption process for the 2021-22 school year.
- 04** B. Add Action Item F for discussion/action – To direct the Superintendent of Schools to engage professional services in order to conduct a feasibility study of the WIS fields, including coordination with appropriate Town Departments.

Tim Raynor discussed Bylaw change for 9325.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Prins stated that he has received communications over the last month from community members regarding heat and the fields.

**BOE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT**

Hanna Bloomquist and Carly Pierre-Louis stated that they were very happy to be attending this evenings meeting in person. Together Hanna and Carly discussed Project Graduation, senior events at BHS and being thankful to be able to have these events. They concluded by thanking the BOE for the opportunity to serve on the Board.

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### SUPERINTENDENT REPORT/WIS PROJECT UPDATE

In his report, Superintendent Hernandez, discussed the following: Custodian negotiations, discussions with the BASS and Nurse unions, District end-of-the-year celebrations, the upcoming retiree celebration, BHS graduation, BHS student engagement with the principal and his team, the rationale behind the relocation of Summer Enrichment to Sliney School, COVID-19 mitigation measures, the summer and free meals programs, his June 1<sup>st</sup> interview with a local pastor regarding diversity, equity and inclusion (can be seen on YouTube), the District's Climate Survey, a public comment regarding a heat study (a review of District records did not produce one). Superintendent Hernandez asked the Board to consider the motion to conduct a field usage study. Mr. Hernandez concluded his report by discussing a comment regarding school construction balances. He stated that the Board does not have jurisdiction over these funds as it is done through the Pubic Building Commission who meets regularly.

### DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

#### 05 A. 2021-22 Calendar Adjustments

a. MOTION (Borris/Berdon) to adjust the 2021-22 school year calendar to reflect September 8, 2021 as the first day of school, no school on September 16, 2021 (Yom Kippur) and to extend the school year to reflect June 17, 2021 as the last day of school.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

06 b. MOTION (Gaffney/Raynor) to adjust the 2021-22 school year calendar to read no school on October 11, 2021 for Columbus Day/Indigenous People's Day.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

#### 07 B. ESSER Grant

Superintendent Hernandez and Assistant Superintendent Sexton provided a summary of the ESSER II of grant allocations by priority. Among the items they discussed were:

- Priority 1: Academic Supports, Learning Loss, Learning Acceleration, Recovery
  - a. Goals – recovery of learning (math, literacy) and Academic supports for growing EL population.
  - b. Focus Areas - Acceleration of learning, bilingual/TESOL supports and expanded summer programming.
  - c. Strategies – Professional learning and reduction of adult: student ratios in key grades/content.
- Priority 2: Family and Community Connections
  - a. Goals - Increased family engagement/students connectedness and decreased chronic absenteeism.
  - b. Focus Areas – District communication and support for and partnership with families.
  - c. Strategies – District Communication Specialist, family Academies, and family liaison.

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**DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS (Continued)**

- Priority 3: School Safety and Social-Emotional Well-being of the “Whole Student” and of our School Staff
  - a. Goals – Student and staff physical health & safety and decreased disciplinary incidents.
  - b. Focus Areas – Social distancing measures and use of de-escalation strategies and restorative practices.
  - c. Strategies Optimization of physical space & provision of physical barriers, professional learning and staffing to support use of restorative circles for conflict-resolution.
- Allocations by Priority: Priority 1 – 71.8%, Priority 2 – 16.3% and Priority 3 – 11.9%

**RECESS**

The board took a recess at 8:48 PM and returned to regular session at 8:55 PM.

**08 C. Citizens Claim Concerning BOE Member Conduct**

MOTION (Berdon/Raynor) to adopt the procedural rule based on information received for proceeding.  
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

MOTION (Berdon/Raynor) in the affirmative move to open up an investigation and continue on with a hearing.

MOTION DENIED

**09 D. First Reading of Policies**

MOTION (Raynor/Berdon) to move the amended policies 4000.1 – Personnel Title IX – Prohibition of Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment and 5145.44 – Student Title IX – Prohibition of Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment to the Full Board for a second reading.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

**10 E. Policy C1902 - Health and Safety Protocols Related to the COVID-19**

MOTION (Raynor/Berdon) to extend policy C1902 to cover summer programming and to allow the board time to go through the formal adoption process for the 2021-22 school year.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

**11 F. MOTION (Michaels/Perrotti) to direct the Superintendent of Schools to engage professional services in order to conduct a feasibility study of the WIS fields, including coordination with appropriate Town Departments.**

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

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### PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ACTION ITEMS

Jennifer Orlando, District parent, spoke about the citizen's complaint and capital expenditures.

Gregg Jerolman, Branford resident, spoke about Columbus Day and professional misconduct.

Kate Marsland, Branford resident, thanked the Board for improved communication. Ms. Marsland spoke about ESSER funds, gay rights and Indigenous People/Columbus Day.

### STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. Communication Committee (Meredith Gaffney, Chair).  
Next scheduled meeting: August 11, 2021, 6:30 PM, Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.
- B. Personnel & Finance Committee (Dawn Perrotti, Chair).  
Next scheduled meeting: August 11, 2021, 7:00 PM, Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.
- C. Teaching & Learning Committee (Ellen Michaels, Chair).  
Next scheduled meeting: August 11, 2021, 7:00 PM, Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.
- D. Policy Committee (Chad Edgar, Chair).  
Next scheduled meeting: Wednesday, August 18, 2021, 6:00 P.M., Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.

### BOARD REPORTS

- A. ACES – Ellen Michaels did not have anything to report this evening.
- B. BECC – Meredith Gaffney discussed the BECC survey that was sent via email and also their need for volunteers.
- C. CAFE – John Prins reported that CAFE's budget was passed unanimously, upcoming DEI material, Board recognition requirement updates, CAFE's August Leadership meeting.

### FUTURE ITEMS

- A. Discussion on PTA inequities
- B. Amending the language for policy 9325
- C. Schedule of BOE meeting topics

### ADJOURN

12 MOTION (Michaels/Borrus) to adjourn.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Mr. Prins adjourned the meeting at 10:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Meredith Gaffney  
Secretary

Prepared by,  
Kerry Eyrich