

**BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Communication Committee Minutes**

**DATE:** June 9, 2021

**LOCATION:** Branford High School Dining Commons  
185 East Main Street, Branford, CT

**SUBJECT:** Communication Committee

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**ATTENDANCE**

HERE	ATTENDEE	AFFILIATION
Y	Meredith Gaffney, Committee Chair	Board of Education
Y	Peter Berdon	Board of Education
N	Joanne Borrus	Board of Education
Y	Cristina Cantu	Board of Education
N	Chad Edgar	Board of Education
Y	Ellen Michaels	Board of Education
Y	Dawn Perrotti	Board of Education
Y	John Prins	Board of Education
Y	Dr. Tim Raynor	Board of Education
Y	Hamlet M. Hernandez, Superintendent	Central Office
Y	Rachel Sexton, Assistant Superintendent	Central Office

Others present:

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**BUSINESS ITEMS**

**ITEM DESCRIPTION**

**CALL**

- 01** Meeting was called to order at 6:55 PM by Committee Chair, Meredith Gaffney.

**APPROVE MINUTES**

- 02** MOTION (Berdon/Raynor) to approve the minutes from the May 12, 2021 Communication Committee meeting.  
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

**AGENDA CHANGES**

- 03** MOTION (Raynor/Berdon) to add Discussion with the Community to the agenda.  
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

**DISCUSSION/UPDATE ITEMS**

**04 A. COVID-19 Update**

Among the items that Superintendent Hernandez discussed were; the number of cases in the District (precipitously decreased), what we will be doing during the summer and working, Fair Haven Community Health (vaccination clinic during Summer Enrichment and BHS program), ESSER III (public engagement). Mr. Hernandez also stated that the guidelines for Fall have not yet been published by the State. He anticipates to see them during the summer. Mr. Hernandez stated that once we have the updated guidance it will be shared with parents.

Superintendent Hernandez stated that the Summer Enrichment program for grades 1-5 will now be held at Sliney School due to increased interest in enrollment. To combat the heat, Joe Carbone, Facility & Grounds Supervisor, will be putting in split units (A.C.) on the third floor and cafeteria at Sliney. The program is being held at Sliney because of the start of the Solar Program at Tisko and Murphy Schools.

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**DISCUSSION/UPDATE ITEMS (Continued)**

**05 End-of-the-Year Celebration**

Superintendent Hernandez reported that the elementary schools end-of-the-year celebrations will commence on the June 16<sup>th</sup> (early dismissal) and will be held outdoors. On June 17<sup>th</sup> the Intermediate Schools end-of-the-year event will be held in the parent drop-off loop. Branford High School's graduation will be held on June 18<sup>th</sup> on the football field. 800 people are expected to be on the field, socially distanced. There are 200 graduates with an allowance of four guests per student. In addition, two tickets were given per family for seating in the grandstand. The wearing of face masks will be required for all events.

**06 B. Walsh Intermediate School (WIS) Project Update**

Superintendent Hernandez discussed the fields. Among the items that he discussed were; the course of action for the BOE to consider (Feasibility Study), the project continues to be on schedule with the exception of the pool (January 2022 the latest), the tremendous amount of site work being done over the summer (restoration of fields, landscaping and bus loop), the distinction between programmatic needs of the fields vs. the town's needs (goes beyond purview of BOE), a motion for the BOE to direct the Administration to engage in analysis, having a consultant do a feasibility study (what types of fields/complex we need) and the need for fields to be returned to exactly what they were before construction.

**07 Summer Meals**

Superintendent Hernandez stated that Chartwells Director, John Turenne, and his staff continue to do an incredible job, not only for school based programs but for external programs. Mr. Turenne recently met with external organizations that will be availing themselves to the summer meals program. Mr. Turenne continues to accommodate and make sure that school based and the community at large is supported. The meals program will be supporting the YMCA, Park & Rec. Department, Killams Point, the animal shelter, and the kitchens at JBS and Branford High School. Superintendent Hernandez concluded by saying that this is our 5<sup>th</sup> year in summer meals and it is a great program that we are able to utilize during the summer.

**PUBLIC COMMENT/DIALOGUE WITH THE COUMMNITY ON DISCUSSION UPDATE ITEMS**

Megan Delucia, District parent, spoke about the summer enrichment program, the Infinite Campus Survey and survey's in general, the town pitching in funds for fields and the WIS baseball field/current parent loop.

Neil Sullivan, District parent, thanked the BOE for holding this evening's meeting. Mr. Sullivan also spoke about remote meetings, the Survey performed by Panarama, air conditioning at summer programing and delaying the Solar Project.

Jennifer Orlando, District parent, spoke about the District's fields, the timing of a feasibility study, collaboration with the Park & Rec. Department, and a field/maintenance budget collaboration that was done in the Guilford School District.

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**PUBLIC COMMENT/DIALOGUE WITH THE COUMMUNITY ON DISCUSSION UPDATE ITEMS**

(Continued)

Gregg Jerolman, Branford resident, thanked Superintendent Hernandez for accommodating some of his FOIA requests. Mr. Jerolman also discussed the WIS project including the fields and pool, the Superintendent's "management style", the Superintendent's review and Superintendent Hernandez's responses at a past meeting.

Laura Green, District parent, asked about the continuation of free school lunches and spoke about a letter that was sent to staff.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**08** MOTION (Berdon/Raynor) to adjourn.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Ms. Gaffney adjourned the meeting at 8:08 PM.

The next Communication Committee Meeting will be held on  
August 11, 2021, at 6:30 PM at Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria

Respectfully submitted,  
Meredith Gaffney  
Secretary

Prepared by,  
Kerry Eyrich