

BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

DATE: December 21, 2022

LOCATION: Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria

SUBJECT: Board of Education Meeting

185 Damascus Road, Branford, CT 06405

ATTENDANCE

HERE	ATTENDEE	AFFILIATION
Y	Peter Berdon, Chair	Board of Education
Y	Ellen Michaels, Vice-Chair	Board of Education
Y	Meredith Gaffney, Secretary	Board of Education
Y	Cristina Cantu	Board of Education
Y	Meaghan DeLucia	Board of Education
Y	John R. Prins	Board of Education
Y	Dr. Tim Raynor	Board of Education
Y	Laura Troidle	Board of Education
Y	Marie Watson	Board of Education
Y	Alya Bagdas	Student Representative
Y	Casey Maymon	Student Representative
Y	Rowan Rondinone	Student Representative
Y	Eyad Salem	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:

BUSINESS ITEMS

ITEM DESCRIPTION

CALL TO ORDER

- 01** Meeting was called to order at 7:57 PM by BOE Chair, Peter Berdon.

AGENDA CHANGES

- 02** A. MOTION (Troidle/Delucia) to add Discussion /Action Items A. Net Zero Resolution.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Brett Joly, District parent, thanked Mr. Goeler for being an excellent principal and wished him well in his retirement. Mr. Joly also discussed advocating for the SACC program, para positions that need to be filled, advocating for World Language (create a new position), making people feel more welcomed and more engaged.

Gregg Jerolman, Branford resident, stated that he wanted to echo Mr. Joly's sentiment regarding Mr. Goeler. Mr. Jerolman also discussed Mr. Goelers reassignment, being the only person coming to meetings, the Superintendent's retirement and a conversation that he had with BOE Chairman Berdon.

APPROVE MINUTES

- 03** MOTION (Prins/Delucia) to approve the minutes for the November 16, 2022 Full Regular BOE meeting.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

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RECOGNITION

A. Robin Goeler, MTM Principal

On behalf of the Board and Branford Public Schools Mr. Berdon and Superintendent Hernandez presented a proclamation to Robin Goeler, thanking him for his 34 plus years of service.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Berdon stated that there were no communications to make note of this evening.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Contingent on the BOE's approval of 2023 Meeting Schedule.

All January meetings will be Special Meetings.

A. Committee Chairs Meeting

Next scheduled meeting: January 5, 2023, 5:00 P.M., This meeting is held virtually.

B. Teaching & Learning Committee (Ellen Michaels, Chair)

Next scheduled meeting: January 11, 2023, 6:00 P.M., Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.

Ms. Michaels stated that at the last meeting these discussed new State Legislation on Writing K-3.

C. Personnel & Finance Committee (Meaghan DeLucia, Chair)

Next scheduled meeting: January 11, 2023, 7:00 P.M., Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.

Ms. DeLucia stated at this evening's meeting they talked about new ways to hire potential employees.

D. Policy Committee (Marie Watson, Chair)

Next scheduled meeting: January 11, 2023, 7:30 P.M., Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.

Ms. Watson stated that at the last meeting they voted to send the Transgender Non-Conforming Youth policy to the Board for approval

E. Communication Committee (Meredith Gaffney, Chair)

Next scheduled meeting: January 18, 2023, 6:00 P.M., Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.

Mr. Berdon stated that at the last meeting among the items discussed were; looking to engage in preparing periodic articles for The Sound, the Social Media update, the COVID update and holiday preparations.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

A. Strategic Coherence Committee

Next scheduled meeting: January 6, 2023, 8:30 AM., at the Blackstone Library.

Ms. Troidle stated that on January 6 the Committee members will be presenting their final recommendations and members met individually as teams.

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STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

Among the items the Student Representative's discussed this evening were; field trips and events being held, Spirit Week events, second pep rally of the year held, senior college decisions, therapy dogs at BHS, mental health awareness (held in Ms. Stackpole's Room), Mental Health Matters, facility dogs (trained to work in schools and hospitals), No Place for Hate (Freshmen asked 3 questions), the Language Program, the upcoming Quebec trip, French National Honor Society, student self-study languages, Spanish, Latin and French classes at BHS, improvements to bathrooms, BHS initial for vaping issues, gender neutral bathrooms and access.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

In his report this evening Superintendent Hernandez discussed the following; two initiatives - pilot program for water safety (along with YMCA and the Rec. Department), Branford Land Trust (letter of support) making trails accessible to those with mobility issues (District has 12 students with mobility issues), elementary teaching staff live coaching sessions, Friday will be an early release day, monitor website and social media for inclement weather, return from winter recess on January 3, 2023, Budget Survey opened until January 6, 2023, upcoming school celebrations and the RTM approval of \$400,000 to start design on Intermediate School Fields.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- 04 A. First Reading of Policy 5145 – Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth**
B. 2023 BOE Meeting Schedule

MOTION (DeLucia/Prins) to approve both Consent Agenda Items.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- 05 A. Net Zero Resolution**

John Prins discussed his recommendation for a Net Zero Resolution. Among the items Mr. Prins and Mr. Berdon discussed were; the Governors directive that by 2040 we reach certain benchmarks, Governmental initiatives to be done by 2040, federal money being put into programs for changing the way we use energy, the BOE making the commitment to children's futures as a Board, recommended changes/edits to the proposed resolution, requirements that the District should develop to reduce carbon emissions and on-site fossil fuels, legislation and the process for submitting a resolution for Board discussion. The Board tabled this item and will continue to discuss this resolution further at its next Board meeting.

- 06 B. Superintendent's Search Update**

Peter Berdon provided an update on the Superintendent's search. Among the items Mr. Berdon discussed were; Bob Ferguson has concluded his Board and Stakeholders meetings, the Stakeholders survey is still open, will be receiving a report in January, the vetting process, the number of candidates, establish salary ranges as a search committee (needs to be available upon request), and data received.

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07 C. Budget Priorities

The Board along with Superintendent Hernandez, Assistant Superintendent Sexton and Don Neel discussed the Boards budget priorities including; the ten categories (maintain current class size, fund expansion of Foreign Language Programming at WIS, maintain current extracurricular offerings, fully fund current summer programming, maintain K-12 academic intervention system, maintain K-12 social-emotional-behavioral support system, ensure competitive labor contracts, fund HVAC improvements toward Net Zero goal, provide health insurance savings without degradation of benefits, expand STEMCTE programing and other) and the goal of selecting four top priorities (emotional supports, class size, K-12 academic intervention, World Language tied with STEM)

BOARD REPORTS

- A. ACES – Ellen Michaels discussed the following; ACES holiday party (student note cards provided every year), voted on a new staff recruitment policy for paras (teamed up with local partnership with local agency), approved referral bonus, ACES along with LEARN approved for ARC program for Special Ed.
- B. CABE – John Prins, Peter Berdon, Ellen Michael and Meaghan DeLucia discussed the recent CABE/CAPSS convention. Mr. Prins also spoke about the Boards 2023 Legislative Priorities.

PTA REPORTS

- A. Laura Troidle discussed the JBS book sale, the pajama drive and events planned for next year.
- B. Meaghan DeLucia discussed the following for MRT; the Grinch visits, the poinsettia sale, the holiday market, Winter Holiday Music Assembly, Special Someone Date, CCMC Cancer Drive (pajama drive).
- C. Marie Watson discussed the MTM book fair, the holiday parade, the holiday shop for students, holiday mash-up assembly, a surprise good-by for Mr. Goeler, Meet and Greet with Sharon Weirsmen, the next meeting is January 10th.

ADJOURN

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

Mr. Berdon adjourned the meeting at 9:58 PM.

NEXT FULL BOARD MEETING:

January 18, 2022 at 6:30 PM, Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria

Respectfully submitted,
Meredith Gaffney
Secretary

Prepared by,
Kerry Eyrich