

BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

DATE: January 26, 2022

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

SUBJECT: Board of Education Meeting

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 | Meaghan DeLucia | Board of Education |
| Y | Dawn Perrotti | 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 | Sushant Kunwar | Student Representative |
| Y | Grahm Reynolds | Student Representative |
| N | Abbygail Shaw | Student Representative |
| Y | Veronica Smith | 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: Jonathan Costa, EdAdvance Assistant Executive Director

BUSINESS ITEMS

ITEM DESCRIPTION

CALL TO ORDER

01 Meeting was called to order at 7:26 PM by BOE Chair, Peter Berdon.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Gregg Jerolman, Branford resident, spoke about staff turnover, the recent survey and leadership.

Matt Rettig, District parent, spoke about the survey questions, meaningful conversations and responses, the East Shore District Health Department, a plan for mask options. Mr. Rettig also read a statement regarding masks, COVID and mental health. He concluded by stating that the teachers were doing a “fantastic job.”

Christina Rooney, District parent, spoke about communication for guidelines, the Governor’s Executive Order ending the mask mandate, mask usage, misinterpretations, her daughter’s experience and lasting effects.

Stephanie Ducharme, District parent, spoke about her daughter’s experience at lunch, advocating for children, parent feedback, help for parents, safety guidelines, masks and funding,

Jamie Kovecsis, District parent, spoke about the mask policy and guidelines, who decides on what masks to wear, types of masks, handwashing, available bathrooms, use of hand sanitizers and portable sinks.

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COMMUNICATIONS

Peter Berdon stated that an email was forwarded to the Board regarding the CAFE Legislative Breakfast.

AGENDA CHANGES

- 02** MOTION (Prins/Raynor) to add a report from the Clean Energy Committee to this evening's agenda as requested by Mr. Prins.
APPROVED (Perrotti and Raynor abstained)

APPROVE MINUTES

- 03** MOTION (Prins/Perrotti) to approve the minutes for the December 15, 2021 Full Regular BOE meeting minutes.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

PRESENTATION

A. EdAdvance

Among the items that Jonathan Costa discussed in his presentation were; EdAdvance's Mission, the strategic process, prospective on the class of 2021, three change challenges (grieving the loss of normal, impacts on digital acceleration and understanding one size no longer fits all), District-wide planning a backwards design (what we want, what we are doing already and what we need to do), systems coherence, two big ideas that work together, strategic planning vs. coherence planning, Regional School District 17's vision of the graduate, designed for a "just in case" curriculum/designed for a "just in time" curriculum, elements of rigor, coherence is supported by assessment (measure what you value, value what you measure), definitions, the gap, summary reflections, what we need to do (four strategies), common timeline and costs.

BOE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

In their report the student representatives discussed; enjoying this evenings presentation and looking forward to its implementation, BHS extra-curriculars (winter sports; girls basketball, boys hockey, wrestling and basketball), Model Congress is preparing for Harvard Model Congress (taking place in-person and in Boston) next month, the winter edition of Caliope, the senior college application process, the BHS recycling initiative and midterms (new approaches and new schedule).

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT/WIS PROJECT UPDATE

In his report, Superintendent Hernandez discussed; the Legislative Breakfast (hosted by Branford Public Schools with food provided by Class Act students), his presentation this mornings of picture tour of WIS to the Rotary Club, staff and student attendance, budget survey priorities (parent/guardian, staff and the Branford community), the upcoming vaccination clinic (February 6), vaccinations are encouraged but not mandated, currently the District is following the masking mandate (not tied to funding in anyway), the District is well poised and can pivot with any mandate changes regarding masking, the Superintendent's Budget Presentation and Budget Workshops, budget needs to be submitted to Town by March 1st.

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DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

04 A. 2022-2023 School Year Calendar

Superintendent Hernandez discussed the planning process and development of the committee for the 2022-2023 school year calendar with the Board. Meaghan Delucia was appointed the BOE representative on the calendar committee.

05 B. Capital Projects

Among the items that Superintendent Hernandez discussed were; the BOE becoming familiar with the five year capital budget, major different items that come in to play, indoor air quality enhancements at two elementary schools, dollars for the following year at WIS for fields (dovetail into what the town will do), supply chain issues for air enhancement over the summer, and documents in the budget book (overview of where our buildings are).

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ACTION ITEMS

Matt Rettig, District parent, spoke about State Representatives decision making, the decision to go back to school last year, Board decisions, leaving tonight hopeful, parents concerns for kids, his disappointment over the last couple of years, teachers going above and beyond and how his son advancement.

Jennifer Orlando, District parent, spoke about last week's PTA meeting, appreciating teacher leadership, her son and daughter's experience, working together collaboratively and communication.

Christina Rooney, District parent, thanked Superintendent Hernandez for tonight's information. Ms. Rooney also spoke about attendance percentages, tracking and the COVID dashboard,

Gregg Jerolman, Branford resident, spoke about a copy of the District org. chart, this evening's presentation, engaging another entity for a study and best management.

STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Communication Committee (Meredith Gaffney, Chair)

Next scheduled meeting: February 9, 2022, 6:00 P.M., Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.

B. Personnel & Finance Committee (Dawn Perrotti, Chair)

Next scheduled meeting: February 9, 2022, 7:00 P.M., Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.

C. Policy Committee (Tim Raynor, Chair)

Next scheduled meeting: February 16, 2022, 6:00 P.M., Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.

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

Next scheduled meeting: March 9, 2022, 6:00 P.M., Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria.

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BOARD REPORTS

- A. ACES – Ellen Michaels stated that ACES was hit hard with COVID (24.5% positivity) but as of January 19th the numbers were improving,
- B. BECC – Meredith Gaffney reported that BECC is taking a look at its strategic role.
- C. CABE – John Prins discussed the CABE Legislative Breakfast.
- D. Clean Energy - John Prins spoke about education and children, contacting the Town if interested in working with the Committee and hands on participation through projects.

FUTURE ITEMS

- 1. Inviting PTA Reps to a future meeting.
- 2. Address survey offline or agenda items.
- 3. Masking policy discussion.
- 4. Discussing the usage of a Yondr Pouch.

ADJOURN

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

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

Respectfully submitted,
Meredith Gaffney
Secretary

Prepared by,
Kerry Eyrich