

**BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

<u>WEDNESDAY</u> 6:00 PM December 20, 2023	Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria 185 Damascus Road Branford, CT 06405
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[Chair: Laura Troidle; Judith Barron, Adam Greenberg & Marie McNamara]

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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. Approval of Minutes
- IV. Discussion and Action Items
 - A. Community Updates
 - B. Update and Discussion of Social Media Metrics
 - C. Update and Discussion of Entry Plan
 - D. Discussion of and development of BOE Pledge
 - E. Discussion and development of Board Communication Plan
- V. Adjourn

TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC COMMENTS REMOTELY PLEASE CALL:

1 (646) 558-8656

Meeting ID: 815 6405 4671

Passcode: 812124

*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 be disruptive or verbally abusive shall not be permitted at the Board of Education meeting. 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.

12.20.2023

Memo

To:
BOE Communication
Committee

CC:
Branford Board of Education

From:
Christopher J. Tranberg, Ph.D.,
Superintendent of Schools

Re:
Entry Plan Summary

The superintendent's entry planning process was designed to support the transition of leadership for the Branford Public Schools and larger community. In addition to learning about the schools from various stakeholders, this process played an important role in the identification of the district's next level of work. Following a semi-structured protocol, significant time was dedicated to listening and learning to understand the assets, challenges and opportunities that exist across the Branford Public Schools.

The plan commenced with three broad goals designed to inform the strategies and actions supporting the goals of Branford's recently adopted Strategic Coherence Plan (SCP). Those goals included:

1. Establish open and honest communication and trusting relationships with a variety of constituents and stakeholders;
2. Deeply understand the Branford Public Schools; and,
3. Collaboratively plan for the future.

The plan was designed with three phases: 1. Listen and Learn, 2. Share and Build, and 3. Launch and Assess. The upcoming presentation of the revised SCP initiates the sharing and building phase. That phase will culminate with the sharing of school improvement plans early in the new year, thereby initiating phase three. The indicators of success in the SCP and those identified in the school improvement plans will support our ongoing assessment of effectiveness.

A majority of time in the entry planning process was dedicated to interviews and focus groups. Using the qualitative research approach of an interview guide, data were collected from hundreds of stakeholders including parents, students, staff and members of the larger community. Data were analyzed in several ways and synthesized in this memo with overall strengths and areas for growth by the largest subgroups.

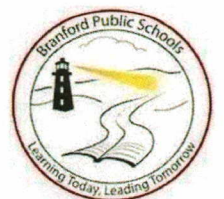
Subsequently these data were used to develop actions in support of the SCP goals articulated in the revised plan. The revised SCP was shared with the original committee for feedback and will be presented at the 12/20 regular meeting of the Branford Board of Education.

Branford Public Schools

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STRENGTHS	AREAS FOR GROWTH
STUDENTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diverse Learning Opportunities: Students appreciate the diverse range of academic and extracurricular activities available, acknowledging the system's commitment to catering to varied interests and learning styles. ● Supportive Faculty and Staff: There's widespread recognition for the dedication and support provided by teachers and staff members. Students value the guidance and mentorship they receive, fostering a positive learning environment. ● Inclusive Community Culture: The school system is praised for fostering an inclusive and supportive community where diversity is celebrated, creating an environment conducive to learning and growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhanced Mental Health Support: Students expressed the need for increased access to mental health resources and support within the school system, emphasizing the importance of addressing stress and mental well-being. ● Modernized Facilities and Resources: Feedback highlighted a desire for updated facilities and technological resources to align with evolving educational needs, ensuring students have access to cutting-edge tools and infrastructure for learning. ● Increased Communication Channels: Students expressed a desire for improved communication channels between the administration, faculty, and student body to better address concerns, share ideas, and foster a more transparent dialogue within the school community.
PARENTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Engagement and Support: Numerous mentions of community resources, support services, and a sense of belonging within various schools. ● Diversity and Inclusion: Appreciation for diverse student populations and efforts to celebrate different cultures and backgrounds. ● Responsive Teachers and Administrators: Positive feedback regarding teacher responsiveness, efforts of principals, and proactive communication in some instances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Academic Prioritization: Calls for a stronger focus on academics, higher student achievement, and more challenging curricular opportunities. ● Equity Concerns: Desires to balance equity across schools, address socio-economic disparities, and reframe challenging behaviors through better socio-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum. ● Improved Communication: Consistent requests for enhanced communication between principals, teachers, and parents,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School-Based Health Services: Acknowledgment of the presence and value of health centers within schools. ● Parental Involvement: Increased involvement observed in various schools, notably at events and through programs like PTA. 	<p>including better information dissemination and engagement strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curricular Enhancement: Need for a more comprehensive curriculum, including health education, varied course offerings, and more focus on diverse backgrounds and cultures. ● Infrastructure and Facilities: Issues related to facilities, technology usage, and concerns regarding facilities like lockers, bathrooms, and website functionality. ● Student Support Services: Calls for expanded mental health support, inclusion of programs like mentoring, and addressing social and emotional needs systemically.
<p>STAFF</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dedicated Staff: The commitment and passion of the staff stand out prominently. They're deeply invested in the students' well-being and education. ● Programs and Initiatives: Programs like the ACCESS Transition Program and PreK initiatives reflect the district's commitment to inclusive education and preparing students for life beyond school. ● Community Engagement: Strong relationships with families, an inclusive environment, and efforts to foster social connections within and beyond the district showcase a supportive community. ● Special Education Services: The district's special education services are highly regarded for their effectiveness, strong support, and positive impact on student progress. ● Professional Collaboration: Open communication, collaboration, and a willingness to embrace new learning opportunities among staff members foster a strong sense of community and professional growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resource Allocation: Concerns regarding staffing shortages, particularly with paras, administrative oversight, and the need for a more coordinated leadership structure, are evident. ● Curriculum and Professional Development: Challenges with curriculum alignment, PD effectiveness, and a lack of consistency in implementing initiatives and strategies need attention. ● Student Behavioral Support: Managing and supporting student behavior, especially with evolving needs and challenges, requires a more comprehensive approach and additional resources. ● Communication and Leadership Structure: There's a call for improved communication, clear leadership structures, and greater involvement of staff in decision-making processes. ● Instructional Strategies: The need for a more proactive approach to curriculum planning, assessment alignment, and a cohesive vision for the educational experience emerges as essential for growth.

BOE Pledge

The Branford Board of Education is committed to developing life long learners who are capable and confident, who contribute to their community and who succeed in a changing global society. We are here to ensure equal opportunity for growth and development for all Branford students, regardless of talent or ability, we are here to enact policies and adopt budgets which align with the key systems in support of student acquisition of global learning competencies through the implementation of the definition of deep learning, to communicate and engage with critical stakeholders so that they can be more meaningful partners in the support of student learning here in Branford.