

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**

**Tuesday, January 20, 2026**

**BRS South Assembly Room**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Lawrence, called the meeting to order (7:01 PM).

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Steven Lawrence, Chair; Lynn Piascyk, Vice Chair; Sarah Beth Del Prete, Secretary (7:04 PM); Jackie Cappiello; Megan Conaster; Jeff Hughes; Dr. Michael Strambler (7:02 PM); Saurabh Vilekar and Erin Williamson.

**STAFF:** Christopher Montini, Superintendent; Analisa Sherman, Principal; Matthew Madruga, Cheryl Tafel, Assistant Principals; Carrie Borcharding, Special Services Director; Donna Coonan, Director of Business Services/ Operations and Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – an email was received regarding inclusion of Three Kings Day in the student calendar.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOTION #1 – CONSENT AGENDA**

Move that we approve the consent agenda as presented. (Piascyk/Strambler)

**IN FAVOR:** Messrs. Hughes, Lawrence; Ms. Cappiello, Ms. Conaster, Ms. Piascyk, Dr. Strambler and Ms. Williamson

**ABSTAIN:** Mr. Vilekar

***MOTION PASSES 7-0-1***

Ms. Del Prete arrived (7:04 PM)

**Superintendent Report** – Superintendent Montini extended congratulations to the new Board members and officers. As part of the 2026/27 budget presentation, and in context to other town department calculations, the removal of benefits adjusts the overall increase to 3.1%. Several legislative priorities include the increase of ECS funding, elimination of the Kindergarten waiver, full funding of the SpEd Excess Cost Grant, shifting the responsibility of Open Choice PPT's to the sending district, shifting home schooling oversight to the CSDE / RESC instead of the local level, and modifications / timeline adjustments to the Clean Air Act transportation emission requirements.

**School Climate Update** – Recent legislative changes shifted the focus from bullying to challenging behavior and from a reactive to proactive approach. The plan developed in accordance with the CSDE rubric addresses each of the five standards. The Board adopted School Climate Policy 5131.911 at their May 20, 2025 meeting. The district is committed to promoting a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning, that is free from threat, harassment, and any type of challenging behavior in a school environment in which students feel safe, supported, engaged, and helpfully challenged that is optimal for learning and healthy development.

The School Climate Coordinator is Assistant Principal Madruga and the School Climate Specialist Assistant Principal Tafel. In addition, a School Climate Committee comprised of teachers, specialists and parents assist in the training requirements, review of survey data, development of restorative practices and aligning the work with Responsive Classroom strategies and CARES initiatives. The School Climate Committee revised the *Challenging Behavior Reporting, Investigation and Response Process Notification Forms* replacing previous *Bullying Investigation Forms*. In accordance with the CT School Climate Standards, the new plan adheres to:

1. A shared vision and plan for promoting and sustaining a positive school climate that focuses on prevention, identification, and response to all challenging behavior.
2. Adoption of policies that promote:
  - a. a sound school environment that develops and sustains academic, social, emotional, ethical, civic, and intellectual skills; and

- b. a restorative school environment focused on overcoming barriers to teaching and learning by building and supporting meaningful school-wide relationships, and intentionally re-engaging any disengaged students, educators, and families of students in the school community.
3. Identified practices prioritized and supported to:
  - a. promote learning and the positive academic, social, emotional, ethical, and civic development of students;
  - b. enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities;
  - c. address barriers to teaching and learning; and
  - d. develop and sustain a restorative infrastructure that builds capacity, accountability, and sustainability.
4. Create a school environment where everyone is safe, welcomed, supported, and included in all school-based activities.
5. Create a restorative system that cultivates a sense of belonging through norms and activities that promote social and civic responsibility and a dedication to cultural responsiveness, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Results of the 2024/25 climate survey designed for students in Grades 3-6 were shared. It was noted that while questions were similar, the survey was different from surveys conducted by Panorama in previous years and lack the national benchmark comparison factors. There was also limited staff (58) and parent (106) participation. Adjustments to allow for enhancement of student answers, opportunities for parent completion during conference times as well as the timing of dissemination will be explored.

*BRS Update* – Ms. Sherman noted the positive feedback and improvement on the Tools for Schools initiative, HMH small PLC group work, the December Winter Concert, TAG testing, the Mad Science Fire & Ice event, the annual book swap the week of January 26, the PTO sponsored Read-a-Thon February 2-6 and Friday morning Grade 2 hallway singing.

*Facilities Committee* – Mr. Hughes reviewed the January 8 meeting, which noted completion of Radon testing, HVAC filter changes, installation of two Annihilare cleaning units and replacement of a failed chiller computer board. Also, as current classroom thermostats are no longer manufactured, an upgrade replacement plan is in process.

*Finance Committee* – Mr. Lawrence noted there is a current surplus of \$71,000 with minimal changes from last month. With all sped para vacancies filled with the exception of one, hiring is parallel to what was originally budgeted.

*Policy Committee* – Ms. Williamson presented the policies currently under 30-day review for adoption.

**MOTION #2 – POLICY 2000** Move that we adopt Policy 2000 – Concept and Roles in Administration as submitted. (Williamson/Piascyk **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #3 – POLICY 2100** Move that we adopt Policy 2100 – Administrative Staff Organization as submitted. (Williamson/Strambler **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #4 – POLICY 2111** Move that we adopt Policy 2111 – Equal Employment Opportunity as submitted. (Williamson/Conaster **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #5 – POLICY 2112** Move that we adopt Policy 2112 – Professional Development as submitted. (Williamson/Cappiello **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #6 – POLICY 2120** Move that we adopt Policy 2120 – Organization Chart as revised. (Williamson/Strambler **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #7 – POLICY 2121** Move that we adopt Policy 2121 – Lines of Responsibility as revised. (Williamson/Piascyk **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #8 – POLICY 2130** Move that we adopt Policy 2130 – Job Descriptions as submitted. (Williamson/Conaster **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #9 – POLICY 2131** Move that we adopt Policy 2131 – Superintendent of Schools as revised. (Williamson/Conaster **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #10 – POLICY 2131.1** Move that we adopt Policy 2131.1 – Appointment of Designee for Superintendent as submitted. (Williamson/Hughes **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #11 – POLICY 2140.1** Move that we adopt Policy 2140.1 – Superintendent Succession as submitted. (Williamson/Strambler **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #12 – POLICY 2210** Move that we adopt Policy 2210 – Administrative Leeway in Absence of Board Policy as submitted. (Williamson/Hughes **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #13 – POLICY 2220** Move that we adopt Policy 2220 – Representative and Deliberative Groups as revised. (Williamson /Del Prete **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #14 – POLICY 2230** Move that we adopt Policy 2230 – Reports and Recordkeeping / Control and Communication Channels & Systems as revised. (Williamson/Hughes **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #15 – POLICY 2231** Move that we adopt Policy 2231 – Policy and Regulations Systems as revised. (Williamson/Conaster **Unanimous**)

**MOTION #16 – POLICY 2400** Move that we adopt Policy 2400 – Evaluation of Administrators and Administration as revised. (Williamson/Strambler **Unanimous**)

*CABE Liaison* – Ms. Del Prete extended an invitation for Board members to attend CABE Day on the Hill on March 11, as well as two upcoming webinars on February 25 *Deep Dive into the Budget Process* and March 19 *Best Practices for Financial Oversight*.

*Upcoming Meeting Presentations* – Presentation of the 2026/27 Budget to the BOS / BOF on January 27 at 6:00 PM. The regular February 23 meeting will be held in the BRS South Assembly Room at 7:00 PM and will include a presentation on STEAM. Committee meetings are as follows: Policy – February 2 at 4:30 PM, Curriculum – February 4 at 4:00 PM and Finance – February 9 at 4:30 PM all in the Superintendent’s Conference Room.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Certified Staff Retirements**

Superintendent Montini noted the accomplishments of Mr. Chase since his hire in 1997 and during his 28 years of service as a classroom teacher in Grades 4, 5 and 6 to BRS Students.

**MOTION #17 – CERTIFIED STAFF RETIREMENT (CHASE)** Move that we accept the retirement of Daniel Chase effective June 30, 2026 with regret. (Piascyk/Del Prete **Unanimous**)

Superintendent Montini noted the achievements of Ms. Simoniello since her hire in 1997 and during her 28 years of service as a Special Education teacher to BRS students.

**MOTION #18 – CERTIFIED STAFF RETIREMENT (SIMONIELLO)** Move that we accept the retirement of Susan Simoniello effective June 30, 2026 with regret. (Piascyk/Conaster **Unanimous**)

The Board extended a sincere thank you to both for their service.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** 8:23 PM (Piascyk/Hughes **Unanimous**)

Recorded by Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.