

**BRISTOL BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Bristol, Connecticut**  
**Wednesday, March 6, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**

The Bristol Board of Education regular meeting was held on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the Bristol Board of Education Auditorium located at 129 Church Street and via the Zoom Meeting Platform.

**PRESENT:** Commissioners: Russell Anderson, Jill Fitzsimons-Bula, Eric Carlson, Kristen Giantonio, Lorianne Osenkowski, Shelby Pons, Maria Simmons, Jennifer Van Gorder and Chair, Dante Tagariello

**ALSO PRESENT:** Dr. Catherine Carbone, Superintendent, Dr. Michael Dietter, Deputy Superintendent, Lynn Boisvert, Director of Finance and Erick Rosengren, Board Council Liaison

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Chair Tagariello called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and asked the audience to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Tagariello asked the audience to join him in a moment of silence for Joseph Nicolas Basile an 8th Grade Teacher, Guidance Counselor, and Administrator at Bingham, West Woods, Stafford, and Northeast from 1958 to 1994; Helen Lowe a Teacher at West Woods, Mountain View, and Northeast from 1967 to 1990; M. Eileen Inman an Elementary Teacher at Callen, Greene-Hills, South Side, and Hubbell from 1958 to 1998; and Charles "Chuck" Drury a Physical Education Teacher and Coach Citywide, Stafford and Bristol Central from 1970 to 1976.

**2. STAFF AND STUDENT RECOGNITION**

The Board of Education recognized students Michael Pinette and Samantha Ferenc from West Bristol for their winning submissions to the "I VOTED" sticker contest. Both Michael and Samantha were present in the audience to talk about their winning submissions. Congratulations to both students.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**February 7, 2024 – Regular Meeting Minutes**

On a motion by Shelby Pons, seconded by Kristen Giantonio;

*The Board of Education voted to approve the February 7, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes as written; with seven (7) Commissioners, Anderson, Carlson, Fitzsimons-Bula, Giantonio, Osenkowski, Van Gorder, and Pons in favor of the motion.* Commissioners Simmons and Tagariello Abstained.

**4. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Finance and Operations Committee**

Commissioner Carlson reported that all of the Finance and Operations items will appear later on the agenda.

**Policy Committee**

Commissioner Pons reported that the committee met and the items discussed will appear later on this evening's agenda.

**School, Family, and Community Committee**

Commissioner Simmons reported that the committee met and she shared information from the Relational Leadership Institute that she attended in Santa Fe New Mexico. They also looked at the work that the district is

### **School, Family, and Community Committee – cont'd**

doing with community engagement and the kinds of resources that are allocated district-wide by school. They looked at how we designate our resources as a district and may be looking at how we can bolster engagement while recognizing the great things that are already happening.

### **Student Achievement**

Commissioner Fitzsimons-Bula reported that the committee met on February 21<sup>st</sup>. The committee discussed and learned about three curriculums that will be presented this evening. They include Pre-K Music and Library, AP Pre-Calculus, and Grade 7 Mathematics. The next meeting will be held on April 17, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

## **5. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS**

### **Bristol Central High School**

BCHS Senior Student Representative, Isabel Paolino reported on Bristol Central High School activities. Highlights from her report included a sports update, students return from France, students departing this evening for the Italian exchange; Italian program interns teaching a lesson to South Side School scholars; Seal of Biliteracy testing is taking place; SAT and college application preparation is going on; school counseling is offering FAFSA workshops for parents; junior and senior prom preparations are ongoing, as well as AP exam preparation and seniors awaiting college decisions.

### **Bristol Eastern High School**

BEHS Senior Student Representative, Rita Gao reported on Bristol Eastern High School activities. Highlights from her report included a sports update, the Read-In in honor of Black History Month, a law enforcement presentation with a panel discussing various law enforcement careers; the coffee house hosted by the Performing Arts, students from the Quebec trip just returned, the Model UN trip to New York will take place next week, a Student Council blood drive, parent/teacher conferences are coming up, junior will be taking SAT's and seniors hearing back from schools and applying for scholarships.

## **6. CHAIR REPORT**

Chair Tagariello had no Chair Report this evening.

## **7. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

Dr. Carbone presented the monthly Superintendent Report. Highlights of her report included recognition of March being Board of Education Member Appreciation Month; Board approval of the FY' 25 Superintendent's Budget agenda item, proposed changes to the 2023-2024 calendar, waiving the 181 School Days rule at the secondary level and notification of the upcoming parent conference dates.

## **8. CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Tagariello called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, which included Items 8.1.a through 8.2.1.

On a motion by Kristen Giantonio, seconded by Shelby Pons;

***The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda (Items 8.1.a through 8.2.1.) as written.***

## **PERSONNEL**

### **8.1.a. Teacher Retirements - Effective June 30, 2024**

Curto, Betsy - MTV - Special Education Teacher

Greene, Michael - GH - Physical Education Teacher

Lefkovich, Barbara - EDGE PreK - PreK Teacher

Paghense, Bonnie - SSS - Grade 3 Teacher

Peterson, Cynthia - WB - Physical Education Teacher

**8.1.a. Teacher Retirements - Effective June 30, 2024 – cont'd**

On a motion by Kristen Giantonio, seconded by Shelby Pons;

*The Board of Education voted unanimously to accept the Teacher Retirements - Effective June 30, 2024, as written.*

**8.1.b. Teacher Resignations**

Jones, Kara - BEHS - Math Teacher - Effective June 18, 2024

Pechulis, Olivia - WB - Grade 3 Teacher - Effective June 18, 2024

On a motion by Kristen Giantonio, seconded by Shelby Pons;

*The Board of Education voted unanimously to accept the Teacher Resignations as written.*

**8.1.c. New Teacher Hires**

Belanger, Emily - ID - Special Education Teacher - December 28, 2023

Silas, Jessica - GH - Special Education Teacher - February 21, 2024

On a motion by Kristen Giantonio, seconded by Shelby Pons;

*The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the New Teacher Hires as written.*

**8.1.d. A-1 Resignation - Effective June 17, 2024**

Jones, Kara - BEHS - Math Department Head

On a motion by Kristen Giantonio, seconded by Shelby Pons;

*The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the A-1 Resignation - Effective June 17, 2024 as written.*

**8.1.e. A-2 Resignation - Effective June 17, 2024**

Jones, Kara - BEHS - Lancer Nation Tri-Coordinator

On a motion by Kristen Giantonio, seconded by Shelby Pons;

*The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the A-2 Resignation - Effective June 17, 2024, as written.*

**8.2. GRANTS**

**8.2.1 2024 Every Child Art Experience Grant - CT Office of the Arts and the Dept. of Economic Development**

On a motion by Kristen Giantonio, seconded by Shelby Pons;

*The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the 2024 Every Child Art Experience Grant - CT Office of the Arts and the Dept. of Economic Development as written.*

**9. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Written public comment was received and distributed to Board Commissioners from:

**PUBLIC COMMENT – cont'd**

Cheryl Thibeault – 73 Yarde Drive – Addressed the Board regarding allowing the sale of alcoholic beverages at Rockwell Theater.

**10. DELIBERATED ITEMS/DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORTS**

**10.1 FY 25 Superintendent's Recommended Budget**

Dr. Carbone presented the FY 25 Superintendent's Recommended Budget. The Superintendent's recommended budget of \$132,431,409, a 4.29% increase, was presented at the budget workshops held on January 16, 2024, and January 23, 2024, for the Bristol Public Schools for the 2024-25 School Year. On February 14, 2024, the Finance Committee received a budget of \$132,232,602, a 4.13% increase, and a reduction of \$198,807 to our worker's compensation line due to a better-than-anticipated renewal. The Finance Committee has approved the budget of \$132,232,602, which will be presented to the Board of Finance on Tuesday, March 26, 2024. Approval of this motion will result in the budget as presented becoming the Board of Education's Recommended Budget.

On a motion by Jennifer Van Gorder, seconded by Eric Carlson;

Questions and discussion followed regarding how much Alliance money the district received; did the district receive money for Northeast Middle School and why the budget was moved to the full board without discussion of the set-aside funds no longer being available.

***The Board of Education voted unanimously to accept and approve the Superintendent's Recommended Budget for the 2024-25 school year in the amount of \$132,232,602, which represents a 4.13% increase to the current operating budget and will present it to the Board of Finance as the Board of Education's Recommended Budget.***

**10.2. Healthy Foods Certification for the 2024-2025 School Year**

Lynn Boisvert, presented the Healthy Foods Certification for the 2024-2025 School Year. The Healthy Food Certification (HFC) statute (C.G.S. Section 10-215f) requires that each local board of education or governing authority (BOE) for public schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) each year must certify whether all food items sold to students (separately from reimbursable meals) will or will not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS). The BOE must complete a vote on the required motion language by July 1, 2024, or the BOE will not be eligible for HFC during SY 2024-25 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025).

**Healthy Food Option of HFC:**

On a motion by Shelby Pons, seconded by Kristen Giantonio, and;

***Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Bristol Board of Education unanimously voted to certify that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.***

**Combined Food and Beverage Exemption:**

On a motion by Eric Carlson, seconded by Shelby Pons;

***The Bristol Board of Education voted unanimously to allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring***

### **Combined Food and Beverage Exemption – cont'd**

*after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events, but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales.*

### **10.3. 23-24 School Year Calendar Revision - Waiver of 181 School Days Rule**

Dr. Carbone presented the 23-24 School Year Calendar Revision - Waiver of 181 School Days Rule. Due to inclement weather, on January 10, 2024, a delayed opening was called for the elementary and K-8 schools and a full closure was called for BAIMS, BPA, Chippens Hill, Northeast, Bristol Central, and Bristol Eastern. Based on Bristol Public Schools' 181 school days requirement, this closure, in addition to the other districtwide inclement weather closures, would change the tentative last day of school for BAIMS, BPA, Chippens Hill, Northeast, Bristol Central, and Bristol Eastern to Tuesday, June 18, 2024, following the completion of 181 school days. We are requesting that the Board of Education waive the 181 school days requirement for BAIMS, BPA, Chippens Hill, Northeast, Bristol Central, and Bristol Eastern, making the tentative last day of school Monday, June 17, 2024, upon completion of 180 school days.

On a motion by Eric Carlson, seconded by Shelby Pons;

*The Board of Education voted unanimously to waive the 181 school days requirement for BAIMS, BPA, Chippens Hill, Northeast, Bristol Central, and Bristol Eastern, making the tentative last day of school for the 2023-2024 school year Monday, June 17, 2024, upon completion of 180 school days.*

### **10.4. 2023-2024 School Year Calendar Amendment - 2024 Primary Day**

Dr. Carbone presented 2023-2024 School Year Calendar Amendment - 2024 Primary Day. The Presidential Primary will be held on Tuesday, April 2, 2024. Based on the 2023-2024 school year calendar, school is in session. As in the past, students and staff will not be in session while members of the public are in the school buildings to vote. The 2023-2024 School Year calendar will need to be amended to reflect that the students and staff\* will not be in session on Tuesday, April 2, 2024, due to the presidential primary. This amendment will change the tentative last day of school from Monday, June 17, 2024, to Tuesday, June 18, 2024.

On a motion by Shelby Pons, seconded by Kristen Giantonio;

*The Board of Education voted unanimously to amend the 2023-2024 school year calendar to add the April 2, 2024 Presidential Primary Day as a school closure resulting in a change in the tentative last day of school from Monday, June 17, 2024, to Tuesday, June 18, 2024.*

A question followed regarding the June 19<sup>th</sup> holiday and inclement weather causing another closing.

### **10.5. BECC Classrooms at the Former West Woods School (now Beals Senior Center) Returned to the City**

Dr. Carbone presented BECC Classrooms at the Former West Woods School (now Beals Senior Center) Returned to the City. Rooms at the BEAL Center, previously named West Woods School, were used for pre-kindergarten and alternative programs under the direction of the Bristol Board of Education since 1984. During the past forty years, as the district no longer needed the space at the BEALS Center, the Board of Education returned the use of space to the city. At this time, the last rooms, 13, 14, 15, 16A, 21, 22, 23, and 24 used by the Board of Education have been requested to be returned to the city to address the growing needs of the Senior Center and BBHD.

**BECC Classrooms at the Former West Woods School (now Beals Senior Center) Returned to the City – cont'd**

On a motion by Eric Carlson, seconded by Shelby Pons;

***The Bristol Board of Education voted unanimously to release the remaining classrooms numbered, 13, 14, 15, 16A, 21, 22, 23, and 24 at the former Westwood Schools, now known as the Beals Senior Center, back to the City.***

**10.6. Increasing Educator Diversity Draft Plan Submission - Alliance Grant (Carve-Out)**

Dr. Culkin presented the Increasing Educator Diversity Draft Plan Submission - Alliance Grant (Carve-Out). The plan as presented requires Board approval to be submitted to the Connecticut State Department of Education.

On a motion by Shelby Pons, seconded by Jennifer Van Gorder;

Questions and discussion followed regarding learning more about the plan, what practices we were following prior to the submission plan, where will exit interviews appear in the plan, is race is the only diversity category the plan will target; and how will we target other categories if they are not disclosed.

***The Bristol Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the submission of the Increasing Educator Diversity Plan to the Connecticut State Department of Education and authorize the Superintendent to formally approve any necessary changes, if such are required by the CSDE, prior to resubmission.***

**10.7. Main Street Foundation Donation**

Dr. Carbone presented the Main Street Foundation Donation Bristol Central High School has received a donation of \$50,000 from the Main Street Foundation David Greenleaf Community Support Fund to build a press box at Bristol Central High School football athletic fields. The Board of Education will need to vote to accept the donation. Bristol Central will come back to the board at a later date with specific plans for the press box construction.

On a motion by Shelby Pons, seconded by Kristen Giantonio;

***The Board of Education voted unanimously to accept the \$50,000 donation from the Main Street Foundation David Greenleaf Community Support Fund to build a press box at Bristol Central High School.***

**10.8. Innovate and Elevate Continuation Plan Approval**

Dr. Dietter presented the Innovate and Elevate Continuation Plan Approval. This is the 8<sup>th</sup> iteration of the Innovate and Elevate Continuation Plan. The plan was first implemented during the 20-21 school year. Revisions within the American Rescue Plan (ARP) and the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) require that Boards review the plan two times per year to maintain compliance with the receipt and allocation of funds. Since its last iteration, revisions to this document have included updating board members' names and making new isolation guidance released by the CDC which came out approximately one week ago.

On a motion by Shelby Pons, seconded by Eric Carlson;

***The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the Innovate and Elevate Continuation Plan as presented.***

**10.9. Office of Teaching and Learning Report - Fall Fine Arts Report**

Ken Bagley, presented the Fall Fine Arts Report. This informational report provided an update to the Board on the activities and accomplishments in the Fine Arts Department for the Fall.

### **10.10. Special Services Report**

Amy Martino presented the Special Services Report. As of February 1, 2024, 1,820 of the 8,100 enrolled Bristol students are identified as requiring Special Education programming. This enrollment reflects 22.47% of the total BPS student population. As of February 1st, 122 students with disabilities required out-of-district placements at private special education school programs. There are 81 students requiring special education services at other public out-of-district schools, including magnet schools. During the month of January 2024, 21.8% of newly registered students were identified as students with special education programming needs at the time of registration. One newly enrolled student during the month of February received their program and services at an out-of-district special education school program. During January there were twenty-five (25) 211 calls and eight (8) 911 calls.

## **11. CURRICULUM REVISION**

### **11.1. AP Pre-Calculus - New Curriculum**

Dr. Rechenberg presented the AP Pre-Calculus Curriculum. The curriculum was presented to the Student Achievement Committee for a first reading.

On a motion by Kristen Giantonio, seconded by Eric Carlson;

***The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the new AP Pre-Calculus Curriculum as presented.***

### **11.2. Grade 7 Mathematics - Revised Curriculum**

Dr. Rechenberg presented the Grade 7 Mathematics - Revised Curriculum. The curriculum was presented to the Student Achievement Committee for a first reading.

On a motion by Kristen Giantonio, seconded by Shelby Pons;

***The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the new Grade 7 Mathematics - Revised Curriculum as presented.***

### **11.3. PreK Music Curriculum**

Ken Bagley presented the PreK Music Curriculum. Mr. Bagley thanked teachers Nicole Tabak and Lauren Santiago for their work on this curriculum. The PreK Music Curriculum was presented at the Student Achievement Committee on 2/21/24 and passed for full consideration of the BOE. This curriculum will serve as a guide for the music enrichment of our PreK students at the Edgewood PreK Academy.

On a motion by Shelby Pons, seconded by Jennifer Van Gorder;

***The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the PreK Music Curriculum as presented.***

### **11.4. PreK Library Curriculum**

Jillian Romann presented the PreK Library Curriculum. The PreK library curriculum is aligned with the CT Early Learning and Development Standards. The units contain content that addresses four domains within the standards: Cognition, Language and Literacy, Mathematics and Science. The monthly themes are aligned with the PreK math curriculum and students will be working on skills such as describing attributes, sequence of events, making predictions and retelling stories. Mrs. Roman thanked Library Media Specialist, Sarah Lewis, for her work on this curriculum.

On a motion by Kristen Giantonio, seconded by Russell Anderson;

***The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the PreK Music Curriculum as presented.***

## **12. POLICY REVISION**

### **12.1. Policy 1326 - Community Board Operation**

Dr. Dietter presented Policy 1326 - Community Board Operation Revision. This is a new policy under Community Relations. This policy details the specific circumstances in which alcohol can be served at the Rockwell Theater. The policy presented represents the culmination of years-long collaborations among several entities and personal interest groups. The policy has been vetted by the Board attorney as well as the Policy Committee and was recommended to be forwarded to the full board for consideration.

On a motion by Shelby Pons, seconded by Jill Fitzsimons-Bula;

Questions and discussion followed regarding when and what kind of events will alcohol be sold; student participation in/at an event where alcohol is sold; liability of having alcohol served on school grounds; wear and tear of building with alcohol being sold; and staff inspection following an event to ensure the event does not disrupt the school day.

*The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve Policy 1326 - Community Board Operation as presented*

### **12.2. Policy 5144.4 - Recess Policy**

Dr. Dietter presented Policy 5144.4 - Recess Policy. 5144.4 is a revision to Recess and Discipline. This revision represents updates to the policy regarding the issuance of discipline that might coincide with recess. The policy was reviewed and vetted by the Policy Committee and it was recommended to be forwarded to the full board for consideration.

On a motion by Shelby Pons, seconded by Jill Fitzsimons-Bula;

*The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve revisions to Policy 5144.4 - Recess Policy as presented.*

## **13. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no New Business to come before the Board.

## **14. BUILDING/FACILITY REPORTS**

Peter Fusco, Facilities Director provided the monthly building reports:

### **Chippens Underground Storage Tank**

The new above-ground tank is being fabricated and it is expected to be installed by late Spring.

### **BAIMS**

There is nothing new to report. The negative air machines are still setup and the affected area is still under containment. We continue to work on a resolution and we have a call scheduled with the insurance company tomorrow afternoon.

### **NEMS Building Committee Report**

The budget increase was approved by the City Joint Board on February 13, 2024. We are currently working on the increase request at the State of CT. The site plan is scheduled to be reviewed by the Zoning Commission on March 11th. We have met with the interior design team and reviewed interior finishes.

### **ESSER/ARP**

Projects that are currently out to bid are:

- Fire Alarm Upgrades at Hubbell, Bristol Central and Bristol Eastern; also
- Boiler Replacements at Hubbell and Bristol Eastern.
- The Chippens Hill boilers will be going out to bid by next week.



**ESSER/ARP – cont’d**

At next month’s Finance and Operations meeting there will be a list of projects and pricing and the committee will decide what projects will get done based on available funding. SNE continues to work through the design and installation of the Building Management system districtwide.

**EDGEWOOD RENOVATION**

We are currently waiting on final approval from the State.

**BC/BE CULINARY ARTS PROJECTS**

We are currently waiting on final approval from the State.

**ATHLETIC FIELDS & SITE IMPROVEMENT**

We are working with Roger Rousseau on short term repairs that were identified in the engineer’s report.

**15. INFORMATION/LIAISON REPORTS**

Commissioner Simmons shared a report regarding activities at South Side School and Bristol Eastern High School. Commissioner Anderson shared a report about Stafford School activities.

**16. VOTE TO CONVENE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a motion by Eric Carlson, seconded by Jill Fitzsimons-Bula;

*The Board of Education voted unanimously to Convene Into Executive Session for a discussion concerning the Superintendent’s Contract/Employment (8:45 p.m.)*

Attorney Jessica Ritter, from Shipman and Goodwin will be joining the Executive Session.

**17. VOTE TO RECONVENE INTO PUBLIC COMMENT to vote on any matters from the Executive Session.**

**18. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business to come before the Board, the meeting should be adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Susan Everett*  
Recording Secretary  
Bristol Board of Education