

# MINUTES OF THE REGULAR WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Monday, December 21, 2020

Via WebEx <https://woodbridgeps/j.php?MTID=m495231f43cd2a1d0ea192068b185ad5e>

Meeting Number (access code): 146 335 3949

Meeting Password: SF9AGBsG88W

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Piascyk, Chair called the meeting to order (7:11 PM).

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ms. Lynn Piascyk, Chair; Mr. Daniel Cowan, Ms. Lor Ferrante Fernandes, Mr. Jeff Hughes, Ms. Joyce Shavers, Vice Chair, Dr. Michael Strambler and Dr. Jeffrey Townsend.

**STAFF:** Dr. Jonathan Budd, Superintendent; Cheryl Kiesel, Special Services Director; Al Pullo, Director of Business Operations/Services; Analisa Sherman, Principal; Doreen Merrill, Assistant Principal; and Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** Ms. Christine Syriac, Interim Superintendent; Sandy Stein, BOS; Linda Acheson, Arianne Buzzard, Megan Cofrancesco, James Crawford, Kristen DeManche, Christa Demetro, Jeanne Dempsey, Madison Eucalitto, Carrie Fanelli, Lisa Farnen, Kim Franklin, Peter Halsey, Allison Lemieux, Monique MacDonald, Kathy Marlor, Jean Molot, Visna Ngov, Jason Nolan, Lori Patrick, Tim Rourke, Meghan Saunders, Nancy Smerekanicz, Heather Trofimchik, Michelle Waldron, Sarah Wislocki, Cathy Zdrowski, Teachers; Jennifer Cooper, Janet Criscuolo, Wendy Glynn, Suzanne Sugarmann, CSEA; Marsha Ackerman, Chrissy Anton, Nicole Chick, Josh Davis, Michael Fitzgerald, Pua Ford, Michelle Goglia, Ruchi Jain, Meetings Meetings, Aimee Meacham, Jane Roddy, Allison Schaefer, Bettina Thiel, Call-In Users 1-7, 12037, community.

Chair Piascyk extended a warm welcome to Superintendent Budd who officially started on December 14, 2020 as well as working behind the scenes in the prior two weeks.

Chair Piascyk extended a sincere thank you to Ms. Christine Syriac who served as the Interim Superintendent from August 10 until December 14. Ms. Syriac was acknowledged for her leadership and commitment to staff and the BRS community during unprecedented times in education and will be deeply missed.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – None

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **MOTION #1 – CONSENT AGENDA**

Move that we approve the consent agenda as presented.

Dr. Townsend

Second by Mr. Cowan

**UNANIMOUS**

**Superintendent Report** – Superintendent Budd thanked the Woodbridge community for the warm and gracious welcome and noted that BRS is an outstanding model of what can happen when a community works together on behalf of children. It was noted that highlights of our Kindergarten program will be featured on a Channel 8 segment of “What is Right About Schools” in early January. During the past couple of weeks, meetings have been conducted with 78 staff members and all nine Board members as well as several parent forums with approximately 60 participants. Several consistent themes emerged inclusive of the strength of the BRS community, continued development / improvement of curriculum, consistent communication systems, support for all learners across the continuum and improvement of the remote learning/teaching component. It is anticipated that adjustments and restructuring of the remote learning program will occur in January. Questions were raised relative to the defining “flex” Fridays, tracking of student instruction hours to ensure compliance with the 900 hour CSDE mandate, shifting of professional development resources to better serve the remote learning environment and clarification of needs and expectations for staff as well as students.

### Authorization to Hire

As required, when a change in superintendent occurs, the incoming superintendent is authorized to hire all staff in accordance with Connecticut General Statute 10-151(b).

### **MOTION #2 – AUTHORIZATION TO HIRE**

Move that we authorize Dr. Jonathan S. Budd to hire staff for the Woodbridge School District in accordance with Connecticut General Statute 10-151(b) effective December 14, 2020.

Ms. Ferrante Fernandes

Second by Mr. Hughes

**UNANIMOUS**

2021/22 Calendar – Superintendent Budd presented the 2021/22 calendar developed in collaboration with BOWA. Slight variations involve professional development activities, i.e., November 23 with Orange and Bethany in session while Woodbridge has to adhere to the WEA Contract. Each of the BOWA boards has adopted their respective calendars at their regular December meeting. The draft proposal was modified to move the Open House for Kindergarten to September 2 as unanimously requested by the Kindergarten team.

### **MOTION #3 – 2021/22 CALENDAR**

Move that we approve 2021/22 Calendar as modified.

Ms. Shavers

Second by Ms. Ferrante Fernandes

**UNANIMOUS**

BRS Report – Ms. Sherman noted the school-wide read, the special spirit day activities (Pajama Day, Crazy Hat/Sock Day and Ugly/Crazy Sweater Day), the remote learners beep and greet and the recent distribution of report cards.

Upcoming Meeting Presentations – 2021/22 Budget – it was suggested that specific increases in special education versus general education be delineated, population changes identified and contractual obligations versus discretionary funding be clearly stated.

Facilities Committee – Mr. Hughes reviewed the December 11 meeting. The next meeting is January 8 at 7:30 AM.

Finance Committee – Ms. Shavers noted the recent capital budget presentation to the town and the authorization by the Town to include the DWing and Library roof refurbishment. The current budget deficit includes \$18,000 for the cafeteria, and out-of-district placement costs. The January 11 meeting will focus on the 2021/22 proposed budget presentation.

Curriculum Committee – Dr. Strambler noted this committee met on December 16 with a presentation on remote instruction, celebrating successes, maintaining collaboration and identification of strategies that focus on social emotional learning to gauge performance and growth. This Committee will meet on the third Thursday at 4:30 PM with next meeting being January 21.

Policy Committee – Dr. Townsend presented the four policies under 30-day review for adoption – 4118.237 (Masks – Staff), 5114.8 (Masks – Students), 4000.1 (Title IX - Staff) and 5145.44 (Title IX – Students). It was expressed that the mask policies should be incorporated as rules into the Student Handbook and not adopted as policies and the Title IX policies should reflect the stronger standard of “Clear and Convincing Evidence” and not the “Preponderance of Evidence” as recommended by Board Counsel and CABE.

### **MOTION #4 – ADOPT POLICIES**

Move that we adopt Policies 4118.237 (Masks – Staff), 5114.8 (Masks – Students), 4000.1 (Title IX - Staff) and 5145.44 (Title IX – Students).

Dr. Townsend

Second by Dr. Strambler

**IN FAVOR:**

Ms. Ferrante Fernandes, Mr. Hughes, Ms. Piascyk, Ms. Shavers, Dr. Strambler and  
Dr. Townsend

**AGAINST:**

Mr. Cowan

***MOTION PASSES 6-1-0***

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Staff Retirements** – Dr. Budd presented four certified staff retirements and three non-certified staff retirements. Those retiring upon conclusion of the 2020/21 school year include: Jeanne Dempsey (34 years), Peter Halsey (26 years), Lori Patrick (24 years), Jean Molot (16 years), Jill Brostrom (34 years), Judy Mays (17 years) and Marie Sposa (32 years). Only the four certified staff retirements necessitate Board action.

**MOTION #5 – CERTIFIED STAFF RETIREMENTS (DEMPSEY, HALSEY, MOLOT, PATRICK)**

Move that we accept the retirements of Jeanne Dempsey, Peter Halsey, Jean Molot and Lori Patrick effective June 30, 2021 with regret.

Mr. Cowan  
Second by Ms. Ferrante Fernandes  
**UNANIMOUS**

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

**MOTION TO ADJOURN: (8:17 PM)**

Dr. Townsend  
Second by Ms. Shavers  
**UNANIMOUS**