

**Regular Meeting  
Stafford Board of Education  
Stafford Elementary School Cafetorium  
Limited In-person Meeting and Electronic Meeting- via Zoom  
April 12, 2021, 6:30 p.m.**

**Board Members Present (in person):**

- Ms. Kathy Bachiochi
- Mrs. Jennifer Davis
- Mr. Mike Delano
- Mrs. Andrea Locke, Secretary
- Ms. Laura Lybarger
- Mr. George Melnick
- Ms. Sonya Shegogue, Chairperson

**Also Present (virtual, except as noted):**

- Mr. Steven Moccio, Superintendent of Schools (in person)
- Mr. Steven Autieri, Director of Curriculum and Instruction (in person)
- Mr. Jonathan Campbell, Assistant Principal, Stafford Middle School
- Miss Allie Curtin, Student Representative
- Mr. Ryan Duffy, Student Representative
- Mrs. Peggy Falcetta, Principal, Staffordville School
- Mr. Dean Fortin, IT / Network Coordinator (in person)
- Ms. Anna Gagnon, Principal, West Stafford School
- Ms. Beth LaPane, Supervisor of Building Services
- Ms. Trish Lustila, Director of Pupil Services
- Ms. Mary Claire Manning, Principal, Stafford Elementary School
- Ms. Susan Mike, Principal, Stafford Middle School
- Ms. Diane Peters, Business Manager (in person)

***The meeting agenda and copies of all Board meeting materials were posted on the district's website ([www.stafford.k12.ct.us](http://www.stafford.k12.ct.us)) prior to the meeting, in accordance with the requirements for electronic meetings. Audience members were able to participate by phone utilizing the phone number provided on the meeting agenda. The recording of this meeting is available on the district website.***

**Item I. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum**

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

**Item II. Pledge of Allegiance**

Ms. Shegogue led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Item III. Secretary's Report- Approval of Minutes**

Regular Meeting, 03/29/2021

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Melnick, that the Board approve the Secretary's Report for the regular meeting held on 03/29/2021. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Ms. Lybarger, and Mr. Melnick voted for the motion, which carried.

**Item IV. Consent Agenda**

- A. **Obsolete Equipment- Staffordville School and Stafford Elementary School**
- B. **2019-2020 Bills and Grants- 03-30-2021, \$200.00**
- C. **2020-2021 Bills and Grants- 03-30-2021, \$36,828.92**

Ms. Lybarger made a motion, seconded by Ms. Bachiochi, that the Board approve the items listed in the consent agenda, as presented. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Ms. Lybarger, and Mr. Melnick voted for the motion, which carried.

**Item V. Correspondence**

**A. Board Meeting Reminder**

Ms. Shegogue read the Board meeting reminder that was posted on the agenda.

Item VII.A.- Student Recognition- Grand Prize Winner for the Anti-Vaping Contest, was moved up on the agenda.

Mr. Moccio stated that in alignment with one of the long-term strategies as outlined in the district's Strategic Education Framework, accomplishments of Stafford's students and staff will be celebrated. He said that Miss Kaylah Pellegrino, was the grand prize winner, chosen from the grade level winners, in the Anti-Vaping / E-Cigarette Campaign Contest. Mr. Moccio thanked Officer Middleton for organizing the contest and event, as well as making the students aware. He also thanked his fellow judges for their time.

Mr. Moccio introduced Officer Middleton who outlined the details of the grant-funded contest. He said that three prizes were awarded per grade level, with one grand prize winner chosen. Miss Kaylah Pellegrino, Stafford Middle School Eighth Grader, was chosen as the grand prize winner. Miss Pellegrino shared her presentation with the Board members and audience. She was also presented with an award certificate. Miss Pellegrino was previously awarded an additional \$100.00 prize.

**Item VI. Board Reports**

**A. Student Representatives' Report**

Miss Curtin and Mr. Duffy provided updates from each of the schools, as well as the athletic and music departments.

**B. Negotiation Committee (Chairperson- Andrea Locke, Jennifer Davis and Sonya Shegogue)**

Mrs. Locke reported that the negotiation committee reached a tentative agreement with the non-certified union in a relatively short period of time. The agreement still needs to be ratified by the members of the union. She said that the negotiation process was difficult because funding is tight this year. Mrs. Locke said that the Board had to stand firm regarding what they could offer, but that does not mean that the non-certified staff members are unappreciated.

**Item VII. Superintendent's Reports**

**B. Update on the Self-Funded Insurance through March 2021**

Mrs. Peters, Business Manager, reported that the health fund balance has been holding steady throughout the year, with the dental fund balance increasing. She said that the claims have dropped significantly as compared to last year. She said that the remaining balance in the dental account is \$117,000 (including the reserve), which is enough to cover about 9 months of claims. Mrs. Peters said that the health fund balance is enough to cover about one month of claims. She said that she would like this balance to increase enough to cover at least two months of claims.

Mr. Moccio said that the health fund is holding steady and with the 15% increase that is budgeted for next year, he hopes that the fund will be brought back to a level that will cover at least two months of claims.

**C. Financial Report, July 1, 2020, through March 31, 2021**

Mrs. Peters, Business Manager, reported that since the February 28 financial report, the following changes are reflected in the financial report through March 31, 2021 (run date April 5, 2021):

**100 Salaries-** the only change in the salaries line was substitute usage; as long as the positions that are open now remain open, the projected remaining balance will remain the same.

**200 Benefits-** the district received a credit following the Workers' Compensation Audit.

**300 Professional Services-** 323 line continues to be monitored due to a large encumbrance that needs further clarification from the vendor.

**400 Repairs and Maintenance-** a couple of the purchase orders were closed following a meeting with the Director of School Facilities. However, it is anticipated that most of the money in this line will still be used due to moving expenses and additional, unanticipated repairs.

**500 Transportation, Tuition and Other Services-** an encumbrance for transportation was moved from a COVID grant back into the regular budget once the grant funding expired in December 2020.

**600 Utilities, Instructional Supplies-** the district continues to use a lot of propane. That line is being monitored.

Mr. Moccio stated that he, Mr. Autieri, and the Leadership Team are working on finalizing the writing of the ESSER II Grant. He said that the ESSER II Grant is meant to cover the four priorities that he outlined in his memorandum to the Board, which was provided via the portal. He said that the district has a few years to utilize that grant funding. In addition, Mr. Moccio noted that the ESSER III Grant, also known as the American Rescue Plan, which is for a similar amount of time, but may be able to be extended an additional year. As positions and programs are identified as part of the grant application, he will update the Board and / or present items for approval, such as the EL Teacher proposal, which will be discussed later on the agenda.

Mr. Delano asked if another grant would be forthcoming for COVID relief. Mr. Moccio explained that both ESSER II and the American Rescue Plan are COVID relief funds. He said that ESSER II funding is to assist districts with learning loss, family and community connections, school safety, social-emotional well-being (students and staff); and remote learning / staff development / digital divide. He said that the ARP Grant will support the same areas as ESSER II, with a requirement that at least 20% of the total must be spent on learning loss.

Mr. Moccio said that some funding may be sought for assistance writing these grants, because in addition to the ESSER II and ARP Grants, there are also two more security grants available. He explained that the window

to apply for the grants is very short. Mr. Delano asked if it would be possible to share services with the town and utilize their grant writer. Mrs. Peters mentioned that the town's grant writer did assist with the ESSER I grant application.

### **VIII. Public Comment**

Mr. Delano asked how the schools are making out with regard to the additional students at the high school and middle school. Mrs. Mike said that the students were happy to see each other and the teachers were happy to have their students back. She said that staggered release times and lunch waves have been working very well and allow for as much social distancing as possible.

Mr. Moccio added that when he was touring the buildings with the Director of Pupil Services candidates, they went through each building. He said at the high school and middle school the students expressed that it feels different to have everyone back, but class were spread out as much as possible. He also noted that that lunch waves were modified. He said that he feels the district is moving in a positive direction with regard to students returning to full in-person learning.

### **Item IX. Old Business**

There was no Old Business.

### **Item X. New Business**

#### **A. Review and Possible Approval of a Proposal for a Grant Funded Districtwide 0.6 FTE English Learner (EL) Teacher**

Mr. Moccio stated that as part of the ESSER II grant application, he is proposing a grant-funded .60 FTE English Learner position. He introduced Mr. Autieri, Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

Mr. Autieri said that the proposal that was provided to Board members via the portal and published for the audience on the website, pertains to an English Learner (EL) Teacher. He said that the district had a similar position in place about ten years ago, but as the enrollment of EL students decrease, the position was eliminated. Mr. Autieri said that the number of students currently enrolled has increased, and he anticipates that the number will continue to grow. He said that the State requirements dictate that students are screened starting in kindergarten. He said that his office started working on the process a couple of years ago, and he developed a template that Ms. Wallach, District Registrar, is now using during the registration process. He said that his office has also created an English Language Learner Handbook, which details the programs, services, and supports, as well as information regarding translation services, which the district is mandated to provide. Mr. Autieri detailed the student screening, services, and testing available / required for these learners. He said that this position would support students in the areas of reading and word study development and writing, testing and screening, as well as provide staff professional development.

Mrs. Davis asked how this position would be funded. Mr. Autieri said that it would be funded for the next two years by the ESSER II grant funding. Beyond that, Mr. Autieri said that student enrollment would be assessed and it would be determined if the position would continue beyond the second year. If so, the funding for the position would be shifted to one of the Title Grants.

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Melnick, that the Board approve grant-funded districtwide English Learner (EL) Teacher position (.60 FTE). Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Ms. Lybarger, and Mr. Melnick voted for the motion, which carried.

**Item XI. Personnel Matters**

**A. Teachers Eligible for Tenure / Teachers' Performance (Executive Session Anticipated)**

Mr. Moccio stated that, as a courtesy, Board members were provided under separate cover with a confidential list of staff members that will be eligible for tenure next school year. He said that this item is only required to be placed into executive session if the Board members wish to have a discussion regarding any staff member's performance. He noted that a couple of staff members requested to have any discussion regarding their performance in open session.

Board members did not have any questions regarding performance.

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board place item XI.B. into executive session. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Ms. Lybarger, and Mr. Melnick voted for the motion, which carried. The Board entered executive session at approximately 7:25 p.m. Mr. Moccio was invited to attend.

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lybarger, that the Board return to regular session. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Ms. Lybarger, and Mr. Melnick voted for the motion, which carried. The Board returned to regular session at approximately 7:50 p.m.

**B. Discuss the Qualifications of Candidates for the Director of Pupil Services Position (Executive Session Anticipated)**

**C. Possible Appointment of Director of Pupil Services**

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Melnick, that the Board appoint Miss Katharine Gabrielson as the Director of Pupil Services for Stafford Public Schools, effective July 1, 2021. Ms. Bachiochi, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Ms. Lybarger, and Mr. Melnick voted for the motion. Mrs. Davis abstained. The motion carried by majority vote.

**Item XII. Student Matters**

There were no Student Matters.

**Item XIII. Adjournment**

Mr. Melnick made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Davis, to adjourn. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Ms. Lybarger, and Mr. Melnick voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Andrea Locke / Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary**

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**Sonya Shegogue, Chairperson**

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**Andrea Locke, Secretary**