

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Via WebEx <https://woodbridgeps.webex.com/woodbridgeps/j.php?MTID=m8188251a33b12745b42dcc23882e4264>

Meeting Number: 187 166 4561

Meeting Password: 2mpVAUPcY36

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Piascyk, Chair called the meeting to order (7:02 PM).

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Lynn Piascyk, Chair; Mr. Daniel Cowan, Ms. Lor Ferrante Fernandes, Ms. Maegan Genovese, Secretary; Mr. Jeff Hughes, Dr. David Ross, 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; and Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Beth Heller, First Selectman; Joi Prud'homme, PTO; Christine Campbell, Dan Chase, Jeanne Ciarleglio, James Crawford, Janet Criscuolo, Christa Demetro, Kristin DeManche, Jeanne Dempsey, Carson Echeverry, Madison Eucalitto, Carrie Fanelli, Kim Franklin, Monique MacDonald, Kathleen Marlor, Jean Molot, Teresa Nakouzi, Heather Trofimchik, Mary Vincitorio, Teachers; Jennifer Cooper, Kit Dunbar, Wendy Glynn, Debbie Laydon, Suzanne Sugarmann, CSEA; Lola Johnson, CILU; Jay Dahya, Pua Ford, Jeffrey Luck, Maria Madonick, Aimee Meacham, Whitney Randall, Jane Roddy, Call-In Users 3, 12037, community; Shane Grogan, Luke Lamour, SCASA recipients, parents and family members.

SCASA Award – Superintendent Budd recognized Shane Grogan and Luke Lamour as recipients of the SCASA Award (South Central Area Superintendents' Association). This award is designed to honor students who excel in three categories: community service and/or service to others; achieve academic prowess relative to their ability; and leadership to their school community.

Teacher Appreciation Recognition – Ms. Heller acknowledged the contributions and efforts of BRS teachers, administrators and staff throughout the past year and proclaimed May 3-7, 2021 as *Teacher Appreciation Week* in Woodbridge.

CORRESPONDENCE – None

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

CONSENT AGENDA

It was requested that Policies 5114 Suspension and Expulsion / Due Process and 4118.238/4218.238/5141.81 Travel and Quarantine During the Covid 19 Pandemic be extracted from 30-day review for further discussion by the Board.

MOTION #1 – CONSENT AGENDA

Move that we approve the consent agenda as modified.

Mr. Hughes

Second by Mr. Cowan

UNANIMOUS

REPORTS

PTO Report – Ms. Prud-homme noted the restructuring of the PTO due to Covid, the successful virtual Spring Book Fair that raised \$7,140 with parent donations for classroom books in the amount of \$2,165, the logistical challenges with traditional classroom photos, teacher appreciation week May 3-7 with daily surprises, various virtual authors and read alouds in Kindergarten, Grades 1, 4, 5 and 6, the upcoming 6th grade graduation and formulation of school supply kits. Artsweek, with a theme of “schooling together to make good things happen” will feature mystic aquarium virtual field trips and assorted virtual studio events.

Superintendent Report – Superintendent Budd acknowledged the resignation of Marie Acampora in the Business Office and her 21 months of service to Woodbridge. The last day of school is June 21 with an early dismissal at 1:10 PM. The

Grade 6 Graduation ceremony will be held on Friday, June 18 in conjunction with guidelines disseminated recently by the State Department of Education and in compliance with CDC health and safety protocols. A summer academy will be held in July for students who may benefit from reinforcement of literacy and mathematic skills. We are still awaiting guidance from the CSDE on the learning model for next year, specifically whether students will be allowed to learn remotely from home. Parents will be kept apprised of developments and can be assured that local informed decisions will be clear, transparent and adhere to the parameters designated by the CSDE and in compliance with CDC protocols. It was suggested that even though it is currently unknown what the 2021/22 school year will be like, a parent survey be conducted now to ensure the proposed 2021/22 learning model aligns with the parent feedback.

Technology Update – Mr. Crawford presented an overview of technology inventory and outlined proposed lease funding. Standardization of equipment includes iPads for student use, laptops primarily for use by teachers and administrators as well as desktops in various offices. Current funding for technology includes \$50,115 for leasing of desktops / laptops; \$50,085 for purchase of iPads with associated hardware/software and supplies; \$20,000 in the Capital Budget for technology infrastructure (servers, wireless controllers and wiring); \$4,812 in recouped funds from recycling and \$1,340 in grant funding. A regular and routine replacement cycle ensures technology hardware does not become obsolete or create the inability to run the most current software and allows for consistent budget funding levels. iPads are included and purchased through the operating budget, while laptops and desktops are leased. Technology at BRS accommodates learner variability, empowers student success within their own digital world through a variety of platform options to support and improve student learning. Educators align learning activities with content area standards to maximize active, deep learning.

BRS Report – Ms. Sherman noted Brush Bot Day on Thursday inclusive of both remote and in-person students, upcoming assessments and the engagement of student learning following the recent spring break.

Upcoming Meeting Presentations – Professional Development and Summer Programs 2021. It was suggested the PD presentation include teacher survey results depicting what activities would be helpful to them, financial implications and possible collaboration opportunities with other districts. The summer program format will be similar to past presentations.

Facilities Committee – Mr. Cowan reviewed the April 9 meeting. Signage related to masks, leashes, dog waste etc. has been completed, the HVAC Jace integrated controller is overloaded and will require replacement and the recent leak in the K-Wing over the break was repaired. The next meeting is Friday, May 14 at 7:30 AM.

Finance Committee – Ms. Shavers noted the Preliminary Budget Hearing held April 19. The Board was apprised of the April 8 meeting which included review of the current budget, which now has a surplus of approximately \$11,000, the cafeteria deficit of \$17,000 and Eday unemployment costs rising to \$87,000. The committee also reviewed the legal bill process and the potential exposures associated with injury liability. The next committee meeting is Monday, May 10 at 6:30 PM with a review of Policy 3515 and discussion on third party users of the facility to generate potential revenue(s).

Curriculum Committee – Dr. Ross reviewed the March 18 meeting which included presentations on technology and detailed learning loss data that started to quantify the scope and extent, as well as the student groups most affected and how summer programming will target these areas. This committee will meet on Thursday, April 22 at 4:30 PM.

Questions were raised relative to the correlation of grades on report cards and students meeting the standards for education. It was suggested whether there could be an investigation into grading and standards that could reduce the time required for symphony math as grading should be the statistics out of symphony math that should be based on competency and not just putting effort or time logged into an app. Also, is there software the district could invest in that could visualize and anonymize grade data in a standard and regular format that would allow the Board to see in real time what is happening with students throughout the year and from year-to-year without creating an additional burden on the administration. As the Board has an obligation to inform the town and parents that the goal of educational system is being met, what additional data is necessary to determine that children are being educated in the core concepts of reading, writing and mathematics. It was noted that at Thursday's Curriculum Committee meeting, Symphony Math will be discussed in-depth. As for the issues pertaining to data analysis, the district has already identified that Powerschool, which is currently used by the district, could be used more effectively for collecting and analyzing data. Beginning in July administration will develop a plan that will harness the existing software for tracking data in reading, writing, math and science as well as other curricula areas. We have a robust plan in our proposed budget for next year pertaining to curriculum work and specialists to assure that the development of curriculum will clearly document and report to parents

exactly what assessments we are using and what is being gathered from them. The process of developing that curriculum will also help us identify if there are gaps that we should seek to plug by some additional teaching, learning or assessment. The Powerschool integration will also address the correlation between grades on report cards and meeting standards. We also learned through the analysis of data to identify the students for the learning loss program that we could be collecting and analyzing much more efficiently and elegantly than we currently are.

Policy Committee – Policies 5114 Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process and 4118.238 and 5141/81 Travel and Quarantine During the Covid-19 Pandemic extracted from the Consent Agenda were presented for further discussion. There was general consensus that Policy 4118.238 and 5141/81 Travel and Quarantine During the Covid-19 Pandemic required no further discussion.

MOTION #2 – POLICY 4118.238/4218.238/5141.81 - TRAVEL AND QUARANTINE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC (30-DAY REVIEW)

Move that we accept Policy 4118.238 and 5141/81 Travel and Quarantine During the Covid-19 Pandemic for 30-day review.

Ms. Genovese
Second by Mr. Cowan
UNANIMOUS

MOTION #3 – POLICY 5114 SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION / DUE PROCESS (30-DAY REVIEW)

Move that we accept Policy 5114 Suspension and Expulsion / Due Process for 30-day review.

Ms. Genovese
Second by Mr. Cowan

A question was raised relative to the definition of “promptly” on Page 2, under (B) Removal from Class, in the last sentence of Paragraph 3. It was noted that the CT 2nd Circuit court has governed on defining this as “reasonably as quickly as possible given the facts and circumstances”. The response level would be significantly different in situations such as bringing a firearm to school versus sticking gum under the desk. Discussion ensued regarding the definition of a “firearm” on Page 2, Number 11 for what is and what is not a “destructive device” and the lack of clarity within the definitions. If antique rifles and firearms are not destructive devices are they still considered deadly weapons. It was also questioned if it was necessary to include language from federal statute that contradicts the preference of the Board for how the policy should read. It was noted that the definitions depicted are exactly from statute and the federal penal code, and regardless of what the Board’s preference might be, it is current law. Further, there was a very detailed discussion on this topic at the Policy Committee meeting.

IN FAVOR: Mr. Cowan, Ms. Genovese, Mr. Hughes and Ms. Piascyk
AGAINST: Ms. Ferrante Fernandes, Ms. Shavers, Drs. Ross, Strambler and Townsend

MOTION FAILS 4-5-0

It was agreed this policy would be returned to the Policy Committee for further review of language and modification.

Policies 2111 (Equal Employment Opportunity), 4118.112 (Sexual Harassment) and 2131 (Superintendent of Schools) were presented for adoption.

MOTION #4 – POLICIES 2111 (EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY), 4118.112 (SEXUAL HARASSMENT) AND 2131 (SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS)

Move that we adopt Policies 2111 (Equal Employment Opportunity), 4118.112 (Sexual Harassment) and 2131 (Superintendent of Schools) as revised.

Ms. Genovese
Second by Ms. Ferrante Fernandes
UNANIMOUS

The next meeting of this committee will be May 11 at 8:00 AM with review of policies related to committees as well as diversity and equity.

CABE Liaison – Ms. Genovese invited Board members to participate in the diversity, equity and inclusion webinar on May 3.

A brief break was requested (9:35 PM). Chair Piascyk called the meeting back to order (9:41 PM).

NEW BUSINESS

Certified Staff Non-Renewals

In accordance with Connecticut General Statute 10-151, non-renewals of certified staff were presented for action.

MOTION #9 – CERTIFIED STAFF NON-RENEWALS

Move that pursuant to Connecticut General Statute 10-151, we accept the Superintendent’s recommendation to non-renew, at the conclusion of the 2020/21 school year, the teaching contracts of the following: *Michelle Andrews, Sylvia Antonellis, Vicky Burford, Christine Campbell, Micaela Cardozo, Janet Criscuolo, Christa D’Antona-Demetro, Taylor DaSilva, Madison Eucalitto, Allison Lemieux, Michaela Natal, Rose Piscitelli, Robin Robinson, Elisabeth Russell and Harley Ventura*. Further, that the Superintendent be directed to communicate this action of the Board in writing to each, and further, that the Superintendent be authorized to respond on behalf of the Board of Education to any requests which may be forthcoming from each and/or the representative of each, pursuant to Connecticut General Statute 10-151.

Ms. Shavers
Second by Mr. Cowan
UNANIMOUS

It was clarified that the teacher assistant staff members who were reassigned as teachers during the 2020/21 school year will return to the teacher assistant assignments.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

MOTION TO ADJOURN: (9:46 PM)

Ms. Ferrante Fernandes
Second by Dr. Townsend
UNANIMOUS

Recorded by Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board