

**Regular Meeting  
Stafford Board of Education  
Stafford Elementary School Cafetorium  
Limited In-person Meeting and Electronic Meeting- via Zoom  
January 11, 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
- Mr. Steven Autieri, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
- 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)
- Mr. Damian Frassinelli, Director of Athletics and Recreation
- Ms. Anna Gagnon, Principal, West Stafford School
- Ms. Caroline Hargraves, Assistant Principal, Stafford Elementary School
- Mr. Timothy Kinel, Assistant Principal, Stafford High 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
- Mr. Marco Pelliccia, Principal, Stafford High School
- Ms. Diane Peters, Business Manager

***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 live 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 6:30 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, 12/14/2020

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Melnick, that the Board approve the Secretary’s Report for the regular meeting held on 12/14/2020. 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- Stafford Elementary School and IT Department**

Mary Claire Manning, Principal at Stafford Elementary School, is requesting a few items be designated as obsolete. The items are all damaged beyond repair.

Dean Fortin, IT/Network Coordinator, is requesting various computers and related materials from Stafford Elementary School. The computers are no longer necessary due to the 1:1 initiative for the Stafford Public Schools and range from 8-12 years of age. Jonathan Campbell, Assistant Principal at Stafford Middle School, has also provided Dean Fortin a list of technology equipment requested to be termed obsolete. The materials either are no longer able to be supported, are not compatible with school computers, or are beyond repair. Should the materials be approved to be termed obsolete, they will be recycled with a certified recycler.

Per Board of Education policy 3260-*Sales and Disposal of Books, Equipment, and Supplies*, such obsolete equipment must be returned to the Town of Stafford prior to disposal. If the Town does not want the materials, the district will assume responsibility for proper disposal.

**B. 20 – 21 Bills and Grants, 12-24-2020, \$189,861.21**

**C. Acceptance of Resignation- Certified Staff Member**

NAME	POSITION	SCHOOL	EFFECTIVE DATE	REASON
McDonald, Marie	History Teacher	Stafford High School	End of School Year, June 2021	Retirement

Mrs. Locke 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 and committee meeting reminders that were posted on the agenda. A thank you note from Mrs. Locke was shared with the Board.

**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.

**Item VII. Superintendent’s Reports**

**A. Update Regarding Learning Model**

Mr. Moccio provided the Board with an update regarding the number of students attending in-person vs. full-remote, as well as the number of cases of COVID-19 the district has experienced to date.

Mr. Moccio shared the following student enrollment information:

- Staffordville School- 102 (in-person) 14 (remote)
- West Stafford School- 111 (in-person) 18 (remote)
- Stafford Elementary School- 301 (in-person) 72 (remote)
- Stafford Middle School- 265 (in-person) 79 (remote)
- Stafford High School- 258 (in-person) 128 (remote)

Mr. Moccio said that the district had its first positive case of COVID-19 during the second week of October, with 37 positive cases to-date (staff and students). Mr. Moccio said that these cases have stayed isolated to the individual, and the district has not seen transmission within the schools. Mr. Moccio said that he will continue to monitor the number of cases and perhaps once there is a more consistent positivity rate in the State, he would like to again discuss increasing in-person learning to five days per week. However, a decision will not be made prior to Martin Luther King Jr. Day, as was previously discussed.

A staff survey regarding the learning model was distributed and 274 of approximately 320 staff members responded. The results are detailed below:

	Same Model	Full In-Person	Hybrid	Full-Remote	No Opinion
Staffordville School (26)	38.5%	26.9%	3.8%	30.8%	0.0%
West Stafford School (33)	42.4%	39.4%	3.0%	15.2%	0.0%
Stafford Elementary School (71)	38.0%	22.5%	7.0%	29.6%	2.8%
Stafford Middle School (53)	39.6%	9.4%	See Same Model	43.4%	7.5%
Stafford High School (71)	43.7%	8.5%	See Same Model	45.1%	2.8%
Multiple Schools Assignment (7)	71.4%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	14.3%
Districtwide (13)	30.8%	15.4%	See Same Model	15.4%	38.5%

Mr. Delano asked if the survey would be redistributed to staff. Mr. Moccio said that if union leadership is interested he can redistribute the survey before he makes a final decision.

**B. Initial Discussion Regarding the 2021 – 2022 School Budget and Potential Reconfiguration**

Mr. Moccio reviewed a PowerPoint presentation entitled “Stafford Public Schools Preliminary Discussion 2021 – 2022 Budget, January 11, 2021”. This presentation was shared with the public in advance of the meeting and is also posted on the district website.

Mr. Moccio discussed the following: Priorities and Assumptions, Historical Review, Budget Trends, Budget Process / Development, and Next Steps, which included the option of closing Staffordville School. Mr. Moccio said that closing Staffordville School is an emotional topic, but an option that the district must consider. He said that it is in the educational best interest of the students to have all of the students in the same grade level in the same school.

Mrs. Davis expressed concern that the town’s budget would be impacted and that they will not have time to adjust their budget. She said that she will need to see the associated dollar amounts to make a decision regarding the budget. She also said that she will not support long bus rides for the youngest students.

Mr. Melnick asked if moving the administrative offices to Staffordville School was still an option. Mr. Moccio said that it is not part of the plan at this time. He said that he is concerned about a third school being vacant and the possible cost to reconfigure the school once it is returned to the town. He said that he is concerned that we are saving money from this pocket to spend from another.

Ms. Lybarger stated that she understands the concern regarding a vacant building being returned to the town, but doing what’s best for the school system and the district’s budget should be the main focus. Ms. Lybarger asked for information regarding bus routes, parking and staffing / program reductions for the next Board meeting.

**VIII. Public Comment**

Ms. Shegogue stated that the Board will be taking questions and comments at this time. No responses will be provided. However, the Superintendent will have four opportunities for input and discussion over the next two weeks.

A member of the audience asked for more information regarding which staff would be cut if Staffordville School stays open.

A member of the audience stated that the district’s bus rides are already 45+ minutes long. He also asked for clarification regarding why PK – 5 are in school 4 days per week and grades 6 – 12 are not. Mr. Moccio stated that the ability for teachers in grades 6 – 12 to livestream from the classroom is the main reason.

A member of the audience asked if there would be more students in a classroom, which may potentially increase the spread of COVID-19. He also said that another vacant building is a concern.

A member of the audience asked for data regarding student regression due to COVID-19. She also asked how it is being addressed now. If all students have devices, why do we need desktops? She said that other line items should be looked at with a more detailed budget given to the Board of Education. She said that we are in the middle of a pandemic, and questioned if now the appropriate time. What is the transition plan? She’s heard this plan is the best for staff...what about the students?

A member of the audience asked why this isn't more of a collaborative effort with the town. He said that it would be beneficial if this happened in a coordinated manner. [The vacant building] may become a taxpayer burden tomorrow.

A member of the audience said that she's not pro closing Staffordville School, but this matter has been talked about for a few years now and wasn't just dropped on everyone. She said that she feels it has been thought about a lot and people are looking at the bigger picture. She said that she is concerned that there will not be enough space with the schools combined, especially with social distancing or if more space is needed in the future. She said that she doesn't see the transportation times as an issue. Losing Staffordville School will affect how the area around the school will be utilized. She also asked why Staffordville was chosen to close and not West Stafford.

Important that the Board of Education has the financial information shared with them to make a decision. She would like to have data that shows that one school is better than having two schools. She also asked why teachers can't collaborate via Zoom like they have been doing. She asked that the Board members take the time to review the information sessions before making a final decision.

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

There was no Old Business.

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

##### **A. Review and Possible Approval of Revisions to the 2021 – 2022 School Calendar**

Mr. Moccio said that the Board of Education approved the 2021 – 2022 school calendar on November 23, 2020. Following that meeting, he received information from the State that testing dates will no longer conflict with an earlier April vacation, which would potentially align with a number of surrounding districts. Moving April vacation to the week prior would also allow the school year to end one day earlier, due to the incorporation of Good Friday into the vacation week.

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board of Education revise the school calendar to reflect moving April vacation to the week of April 11 – 15, 2022, as recommended by the Superintendent. Ms. Bachiochi, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, Ms. Lybarger, and Mr. Melnick voted for the motion, which carried.

#### **Item XI. Personnel Matters**

There were no Personnel Matters.

#### **Item XII. Student Matters**

There were no Student Matters.

#### **Item XIII. Adjournment**

Mrs. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, 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 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christine C. Marinelli, Recording Secretary  
(In Person)

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Sonya Shegogue, Chairperson

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Andrea Locke, Secretary

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