

**Regular Meeting
Stafford Board of Education
Stafford Elementary School Cafetorium
Limited In-person Meeting and Electronic Meeting- via Zoom
November 23, 2020, 6:30 p.m.**

Board Members Present (in person): Ms. Kathy Bachiochi
Mr. Mike Delano
Mrs. Andrea Locke, Secretary
Ms. Laura Lybarger
Ms. Sonya Shegogue, Chairperson

Absent: Mrs. Jennifer Davis
Mr. George Melnick

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. Frank Bonavita, Director of School Facilities
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. Caroline Hargraves, Assistant Principal, Stafford Elementary 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 (in person)

The meeting agenda and copies of all Board meeting materials were posted on the district's website (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 will be available on the district website.

Item I. Call to Order- Establishment of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 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, 10/19/2020

Ms. Lybarger made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Locke, that the Board approve the Secretary’s Report for the regular meeting held on 10/19/2020, as presented. Ms. Bachiochi, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, and Ms. Lybarger voted for the motion, which carried.

Item IV. Consent Agenda

A. Release of Funds for Various SHS Graduation Class Accounts

Marco Pelliccia, Principal of Stafford High School, submitted a request for funds raised by various graduation classes be released to the classes. Each of the graduating classes is included below, along with the total remaining funds.

Class of 2009	\$ 2,135.13
Class of 2010	\$ 1,655.23
Class of 2016	\$ 5,802.12

The Class of 2009 has notified the school that they intend to donate their remaining funds to the Citizens’ Scholarship Foundation to assist current students in achieving their post-secondary goals.

The Class of 2010 has opened a bank account for the funds and plans to use them for future reunion costs.

The Class of 2016 has notified the school that they intend to donate their remaining funds to the school and did not provide any specific account.

B. Cafeteria Profit and Loss Report- July 1 through October 31, 2020

The Cafeteria Profit and Loss report for July 1, 2020, through October 31, 2020, as prepared by Ms. Diane Peters, Business Manager, reports a year-to-date net loss of \$6,373.96.

The district served 34,844 meals through October 31, 2020, which includes 1,644 meals that were picked up by families with children 18 years or younger, as well as those meals served within the school setting. Meal counts are well below previous years due to the district utilizing the hybrid model at the secondary level and continuing the Wednesday remote learning day.

Stafford continues to provide all students in the Stafford Public Schools with a breakfast and lunch free of charge through December 31, 2020, or until the United States Department of Agriculture funding has been depleted.

- C. 19-20 Bills and Grants, 11/04/2020, \$28,964.00
- D. 19-20 Bills and Grants, 11/10/2020, \$786.62
- E. 20-21 Bills and Grants, 11/04/2020, \$332,933.12
- F. 20-21 Bills and Grants, 11/10/2020, \$159,948.66

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lybarger, that the Board approve the items listed in the consent agenda, as presented. Ms. Bachiochi, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, and Ms. Lybarger 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 VI. Board Reports

A. Student Representatives' Report

Miss Curtin reported on the following:

- Congratulations to Ryan Duffy for being elected as the Junior Class Student Representative
- Decoration and Spirit Contest
- CT School Day / SAT
- SHS Athletic Update
- WS and SV Update

Mr. Duffy reported on the following:

- SES Sidewalk Painting Project
- Visits from SRO Middleton
- SMS Update on Fire Response
- SHS Music Update

B. Budget Committee Report

Ms. Shegogue, Committee Chair, stated that the next meeting is scheduled on Monday, December 21, 2020.

C. Policy Committee Report

Mrs. Davis, Committee Chair, was absent. Mr. Moccio stated that the committee met on November 18, 2020, and reviewed five (5) policies and the accompanying forms. He said that he will be presenting the changes to the policies later on the agenda.

Item VII. Superintendent's Reports

A. Enrollment Update, October 1, 2020

Mr. Moccio provided Board members with the enrollment report as of October 1, 2020, as prepared by Ms. Emily Wallach, District Registrar. He said that the information is unaudited until the final State review, which should be completed by the end of December. October 1st is utilized by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to determine a district's official enrollment and potential reimbursement amounts for many State grants.

The total enrollment as of this date is 1,352, which includes 14 students who are currently attending non-reporting schools out of district and 304 students that are learning from home remotely. The overall enrollment has decreased by 107 students from last year's enrollment at this time.

Mr. Moccio said that the decrease in enrollment could be attributed to two primary factors. The first is an increase in the number of parents that notified the district of their intent to home school their children for the 2020-2021 school year, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-184 and 10-220. As of October 1, 2020, the district is aware of 75 students who are being home schooled, which represents 30 students more than the previous year. Secondly, due to COVID-19 social distancing guidelines, the district has 60 pre-kindergarten students enrolled, which is 35 less students than this time last year.

The following attachments were provided to Board members via the portal:

- Attachment A – “2020-2021 Enrollment Report (Unaudited)”, provides detailed enrollment data for 2020, as well as enrollment history from 2008.
- Attachment B – “Overview of Stafford’s Student Enrollment”, provides a breakdown of all students that Stafford incurs costs for, as well as those choosing to be home-schooled or attend East Catholic.
- Attachment C – “Out-of-District Enrollment”, reflects the number of students who attend technical, vocational, private, and magnet schools. The spreadsheet also shows the total number of students who attend public and non-public special education facilities.
- Attachment D – “Tracking of Enrollment by Grade Level”, tracks changes in grade level size since 2013.
- Attachment E – “Tracking of Enrollment by Cohort”, tracks enrollment by cohort since 2013 and reports the difference in cohort size from year to year.
- Attachment F – “Stafford Public Schools Enrollment Detail”, details the number of students in each classroom Pre-K through Grade 5.

Mr. Delano asked if parents were required to register pre-kindergarten age students even if they do not plan to send the child to school. Mr. Moccio stated that it is not mandatory to do so.

B. Update Regarding the Remote Learning Model and 1:1 Technology Distribution Schedule

Mr. Moccio provided an update regarding the remote learning model and the progress being made on distribution of district assigned 1:1 devices.

Mr. Moccio provided to Board members via the portal a copy of Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) *Addendum 12: Reimagining CT Classrooms: Planning the Instructional Time for Remote Learning in Hybrid and Full Remote Models*. He said that the addendum sets the minimum number of instructional hours for engaged learning by grade level and recommended time guidelines for student learning (Grades PK through 5- 4.5 hours; Grades 6 through 12- 5 hours, each with a minimum of 50% live instruction). It also provides guidance to districts and requires schools to develop full day schedules that includes both synchronous learning (live direct instruction) and asynchronous learning (recorded lessons and/or activities), as well as opportunities for students to ask questions and receive feedback.

In alignment with the Stafford Public Schools School Reopening Plan, synchronous learning is a required component for remote learning. Due to a lack of updated technology, the district has struggled to meet this threshold in grades PreK-5. As technology is now arriving and being distributed, a shift to increased time for synchronous instruction in PK-5 will begin on Wednesday, December 9, 2020. Administrators have notified staff and are assisting with sample schedules that are in alignment with Addendum 12. Mr. Moccio said that he and Mr. Autieri will be working on a parent communication to be sent home later in the week.

Regarding technology distribution, a communication was sent to all parents/guardians on Saturday, November 14, 2020, that included a letter explaining next steps, the device loan agreement, and the district protection plan. Board members were provided with copies via the portal. Mr. Fortin, IT/Network Coordinator, reported that the student Chromebooks have been distributed to Stafford High School and the student iPads have been distributed to Staffordville School and West Stafford School. The devices are being assigned and given to students as soon as the parent/guardian completes and returns the loan agreement to the school.

Devices are currently being prepared for Stafford Middle School, and Mr. Fortin stated that Chromebooks were delivered to students in Grade 6 today. The district is still waiting for approximately 200 Chromebooks to arrive, and those have been designated for Stafford Elementary School. All certified staff have received a Chromebook, and the IT Department is preparing Chromebooks and iPads for support staff.

The leadership team attended the Board meeting virtually and were available to answer questions.

Ms. Lybarger asked how those families with students in daycare would manage this change. Mr. Autieri stated that the district will be flexible and work with those families. He also noted that the students in grades PK – 5 would be working in small groups on literacy and numeracy, and each student would be provided with their own kit of manipulatives.

C. Financial Report, July 1, 2020, thorough November 13, 2020

The Board members were provided via the portal with a copy of the financial report of funds budgeted and encumbered/expended from July 1, 2020, through November 13, 2020, as prepared by Mrs. Diane Peters, Business Manager. Currently, schools are required to request permission prior to any purchases, as a spending freeze continues and only those items necessary in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the immediate needs of the students are being authorized. Mr. Moccio stated that school administrators have also been authorized to spend up to 25% of their supplies budget.

The total budget for the 2020-2021 school year is \$28,289,798.41. Year-to-date expenses represent 28.28% of the total budget. The unspent, unreserved amount of the budget is 8.3%. The application for the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) established by the CARES Act has been completed and accepted by the Connecticut State Department of Education. Per the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management, the fund is designated for the safe reopening of schools and implementing public health best practices to keep students and staff safe.

Mrs. Peters reviewed the variances since her last report to the Board. There were no questions.

VIII. Public Comment

A member of the audience stated that he applauds every member of the Stafford Public Schools community for doing a remarkable job. He wished the district luck in the days ahead.

Item IX. Old Business

A. Review and Possible Approval of Board Policies 5131.911- Bullying Prevention and Intervention (New) and 5131.912- Safe School Climate (New) (Second Read)

These policies listed below were included on the Board agenda for a “second reading” and possible approval.

A legend is included below to assist in determining why different fonts are being used when reviewing the policies (which are available on the district website).

- Black - language within the current policy
- Blue w/double underline - language to be added
- Red w/strike out - language to be removed
- Yellow highlight - changes suggested by the APC
- Teal highlight – changes suggested by the BPC

Policy #5131.911 – Bullying Prevention and Intervention

This is a new policy that would replace the current policy, which would need to be repealed. Extensive revisions to this policy were made, as the required procedures in reference to Safe School Climate Plans were removed from the bullying policy and are to be included in a new Policy #5131.912 – Safe School Climate Plan. Other revisions to the bullying policy include deletion of obsolete timelines, insertion of additional statutory language, and an update of the legal references. Reference to the new administrator training required by Section 5 of Public Act 19-166 has also been included. The Act requires the Board to post on its website training materials regarding the prevention of and intervention in discrimination against and targeted harassment of students based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics. The forms associated with reporting, investigation, and notification to parents are in the process of being updated and will be reviewed at the next BPC meeting.

Policy #5131.912 – Safe School Climate Plan

This is a new policy to provide greater access and transparency regarding the steps the district is required to take to meet individual school / student needs, in addition to legislative requirements. The information included within this policy was formerly included in Policy #5131.911 – Bullying. The updated policy revised language to include deletion of obsolete timelines, insertion of additional statutory language, and an update of the legal references. Reference to the new administrator training required by Section 5 of Public Act 19-166 has also been included. The Act requires the Board to post on its website training materials regarding the prevention of and intervention in discrimination against and targeted harassment of students based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics. Also included in the new policy are updated forms required for Bullying and Teen Dating Violence.

Ms. Lybarger made a motion, seconded by Mr. Delano, that the Board of Education approve the policies, as presented. Ms. Bachiochi, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, and Ms. Lybarger voted for the motion, which carried.

Item X. New Business

A. Review and Possible Approval of 2021 Calendar of Regular Board of Education Meetings

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lybarger, that the Board of Education approve the Stafford Board of Education schedule of regular meetings for 2021, as presented. Ms. Bachiochi, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, and Ms. Lybarger voted for the motion, which carried.

B. Review of the 2021 – 2022 School Calendar

The Board members were provided via the portal with a draft copy of the proposed 2021-2022 school calendar. Mr. Moccio stated that administrators, teachers, and union representatives from the CSEA have provided input regarding the proposed calendar. Two days are included on August 18 and 19, 2021, for new Teacher Orientation. The calendar reflects 181 instructional days for students and six contracted professional development days, four of which are scheduled prior to the first day of school.

The proposed calendar has a start date of Monday, August 30, 2021, which then results in an end date of Friday, June 10, 2022, barring any school cancellations. Friday, August 27, 2021, and Friday, September 3, 2021, are non-school days for students and 10-month staff.

The calendar reflects a variety of early release days. Six early release days have been included for the purpose of Parent-Teacher Conferences (SVS/WSS/SES - two in the fall and two in the spring; SMS/SHS – one day in each semester). Additionally, six early release days for professional development have been included and will occur on September 30, October 29, February 16, March 4, March 31, and May 27. The additional early release day will allow the district to meet mandated training requirements, allow time for necessary professional development, provide teachers time to review student data prior to the beginning of the school year, and increase staff requested collaborative meeting time. The other early release days are November 24 (day before Thanksgiving), December 23 (day before Holiday Vacation), and on the last day of school.

For planning purposes, a notation has been included at the bottom of the calendar alerting staff that makeup days may be scheduled if more than ten school cancellations occur, beginning with the cancellation of February 22, 2022, followed by the elimination of days from April vacation, beginning with April 18, 2022.

Mr. Moccio noted that April vacation was scheduled during the third full week of April, due to the anticipated SAT testing date, which is projected to be scheduled on April 13.

Mr. Delano made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lybarger, that the Board of Education approve the 2021 – 2022 school calendar, as presented. Ms. Bachiochi, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, and Ms. Lybarger voted for the motion, which carried.

C. Review and Possible Approval of Board Policy 3542.22- Food Service Personnel- Code of Conduct; Policy 5144.4- Physical Activity, Undirected Play, and Student Discipline; Policy and Regulation 6142.101- Student Nutrition and Physical Activity (Student Wellness Policy); and Policy 6171.2- Pre-School Special Education

All of the policies and regulations listed below were reviewed / revised by the Administrative Policy Committee (APC), which is comprised of the following staff: Mr. Steve Autieri, Director of Curriculum & Instruction; Ms. Trish Lustila, Director of Pupil Services; Ms. Peggy Falcetta, Principal of Staffordville School; Ms. Susan Mike, Principal of Stafford Middle School, Mr. Tim Kinel, Assistant Principal of Stafford High School; and Ms. Caroline Hargraves, Assistant Principal of Stafford Elementary School; Christine Marinelli, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools / Director of Human Resources; and me. The same policies and regulations were then reviewed / revised by the Board Policy Committee (BPC), comprised of Mrs. Jen Davis (Chairperson), Ms. Kathy Bacchiochi, and Ms. Laura Lybarger.

Typically, when policies are presented to the Board of Education, the initial presentation serves as a “first reading” to allow for ample review, discussion and public comment prior to possible approval at a subsequent meeting, which serves as a “second reading.” As the requested changes are to bring proper alignment with other Board policies, or to meet mandated legislative requirements, the Board may consider approving these policies, as presented. Should the Board wish to approve the policies as presented, a motion has been included below.

A legend is included below to assist in determining why different fonts are being used when reviewing the policies (which are available on the district website).

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- Yellow highlight - changes suggested by the APC
- Teal highlight – changes suggested by the BPC

Policy 3542.22 – Food Service Personnel- Code of Conduct (New)

This is a required policy per the CABE Policy Audit. The policy was written with the input of Diane Peters, Business Manager, and Beth LaPane, Director of Food Service, and provides an overview of conduct expected of those awarding and administering contracts supported by the Child Nutrition Program. The policy outlines how a conflict of interest can arise, defines a process to resolve any controversies, and identifies how the public can access procurement information.

Policy 5144.4 - Physical Activity, Undirected Play, and Student Discipline (New)

This is a required policy per the CABE Policy Audit. The policy is based on a model policy from Shipman & Goodwin. The policy includes updated legal references and the addition of "undirected play" per Public Act 19-173. The policy was originally required as part of a Public Act that restricted the removal of recess for elementary students, and has since shifted language requiring 20-minutes devoted to physical exercise.

Policy and REG 6142.101- Student Nutrition and Physical Activity (Student Wellness Policy) (Replace)

This policy and regulation replace the current versions. The new policy and regulation both include updated language that was identified through the triennial evaluation, which was completed and shared with the Board last school year. While the district received a passing score by CSDE, specific sections were identified and are now included. The policy provides the overarching philosophy of the district, including goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and nutritional guidelines for foods sold in schools, while the regulation provides the specific details and steps required of the district. Both the policy and regulation have been reviewed by the Admin Policy Committee, District Wellness Committee, and Beth LaPane prior to being reviewed by the Board Policy Committee. The regulation is for review by the Board and does not require formal approval.

Policy 6171.2 - Pre-School Special Education (New)

This is a required policy per the CABE Policy Audit. The policy was written with the input of Trish Lustila, Director of Pupil Services; Anna Gagnon, Principal of West Stafford School; and Peggy Falcetta, Principal of Staffordville School. The policy is based on a model policy from CABE and provides district guidelines regarding a program for preschool children with disabilities.

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lybarger, that the Board of Education adopt the following new or replacement policies, as presented: **Policy 3542.22- Food Service Personnel - Code of Conduct; 5144.4- Physical Activity, Undirected Play, and Student Discipline; Policy 6142.101- Student Nutrition and Physical Activity (Student Wellness Policy); and Policy 6171.2- Pre-School Special Education.** Ms. Bachiochi, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, and Ms. Lybarger voted for the motion, which carried.

Item XI. Personnel Matters

B. Review and Possible Approval of an Increase in Hours for the Pupil Services Secretarial Position (Class B)

Mr. Moccio stated that at the meeting on July 13, 2020, the Board approved the addition of a pupil services secretary. The person in this assignment assumes all duties associated with arranging and coordinating special education PPT meetings, Section 504 meetings, and also organizing and utilizing the document repository in the web-based system. Prior to adding this position, these tasks were the responsibility of the individual case managers, which reduced the amount of time available for direct student instruction.

Ms. Trish Lustila, Director of Pupil Services, was present at the Board meeting and reviewed a chart depicting the number of meetings scheduled / needing to be scheduled this school year to support her request to increase the hours for the pupil services secretary position from 30 to 40 hours per week for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year. Mr. Moccio stated that the increase in hours equates to \$156.30 per week and would be paid through the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) established by the CARES Act, resulting in no additional cost to the district. CRF monies may be used to pay for staff that are necessary to work through the backlog of special education evaluations meetings that were delayed due to the COVID-19 school closure.

Mrs. Locke made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lybarger, that the Board of Education approve the request to increase the number of hours for the pupil services secretary from 30 to 40 per week for the remainder of the 2020 – 2021 school year. Ms. Bachiochi, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, and Ms. Lybarger voted for the motion, which carried.

Item XII. Student Matters

There were no Student Matters.

Item XIII. Adjournment

Ms. Lybarger made a motion, seconded by Mr. Delano, to adjourn. Ms. Bachiochi, Mr. Delano, Mrs. Locke, and Ms. Lybarger voted for the motion, which carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

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

Sonya Shegogue, Chairperson

Andrea Locke, Secretary