

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION BUSINESS MEETING
HELD NOVEMBER 21, 2019 AT 7:30 P.M. AT TOWN HALL-COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Board Members Present: Anne Harrigan -Vice Chair; Anthony Perugini-Secretary; Richard Gusenburg; Marléna Soble; Neeta Vatti

Board Members Absent: Kathryn Hallen-Chair; Adam Grippo

Administrators Present: Jeffrey F. Solan, Superintendent of Schools, Marlene Silano Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Vincent Masciana, Chief Operating Officer; Kelly Lenz, Coordinator-School/Community Relations

1. CALL TO ORDER – 7:30 P.M.

A. Roll for Quorum. The roll was called and a quorum determined.

B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

In Ms. Hallen’s absence, Ms. Harrigan led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Student Representatives. *Isabel Orozco and RJ Streator, student representatives for the 2019/2020 school year, reported on recent events at Cheshire High School. Some of the events included the Halloween parade, their attendance at the CABE Convention, school spirit and the upcoming home football game. They reported that the Cheshire High School Marching Ram Band placed 7th at Giant’s Stadium. They also reported on their attendance at the CAPSS Supt Awards, where 21 students were recognized. Other updates were given on the Ram Page, Powder Puff games, and the 7th Annual Winterfest.*

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. **Approval of Minutes of the Board of Education Meetings Held October 17, 2019 and November 7, 2019.**

MOTION by Ms. Soble; seconded by Mr. Gusenburg.

MOVED *that the Cheshire Board of Education approve the minutes of the Board of Education meetings held October 17, 2019 and November 7, 2019.*

VOTE: The motion passed 5-0.

3. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

4. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Mr. Solan recognized the three out-going Board of Education members, Ms. Vatti, Ms. Soble and Mr. Gusenburg. He noted that the commitment put forth by Board of Education members is truly incredible. Most people only see the several nights per

month that they spend at business or committee meetings and miss the many hours they spend digesting information, coordinating efforts, and working with the community. Members of the Board serve with the express purpose of providing the children of Cheshire and their families with the best educational experience possible within our means. He said as Superintendent of Schools, he is proud to recognize and express appreciation on behalf of the Cheshire Public Schools community to our outgoing Board members.

Superintendent Solan stated that Ms. Vatti has demonstrated a consistent student-first approach from her soft sell of a possible professional development day on the Monday after the Super bowl to student-athlete surveys as part of high school coaching evaluations. Serving as the Chair of the Policy Committee these last few years, she has been instrumental in the revision of more policies than I can remember in any span over the past 15 years that I have worked in Cheshire. Ms. Vatti, thank you for your service.

Marlena Soble is incredibly passionate and student-centered. Throughout her tenure on the Board she has advocated for resources to support and enlighten our students. Her unwavering compassion for our students extends into the broader community. Our residents have benefited tremendously from the school and community partnership to support the Community Food Drive. Our students not only gather food, but support organization, transport, and distribution to truly reap the benefits of service to others. Ms. Soble, thank you so much for your service to our students and community.

Finally, Rich Gusenburg has served a relatively short time compared to our other outgoing Board members being honored this evening, but his service is still very much appreciated. He brought a different perspective to leadership that only someone who has served in another district can, and in doing so, enriched our conversations.

The Superintendent reported that this week marks American Education Week across America! The theme of American Education Week this year is Reach, Teach, Inspire. Those tenants are at the heart of our work in the Cheshire Public Schools. At a special event held last night, twenty-one students from our district received the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents' (CAPSS) Superintendent/Student Recognition Award for leadership, service to the school, academic prowess relative to ability, and service to others in the community. The students each invited a guest teacher to attend along with their parents. Congratulations again to all of our students and teachers who were recognized last night!

He congratulated Cheshire High coaches, athletes and Ramland Fans earning a CIAC Michaels Cup Award. The award is presented to schools that promote positive sportsmanship, student participation, and quality athletic programs. Approximately five schools from each class or size of school from small to class LL win this prestigious award. This is the 5th consecutive year that CHS has been honored! Representatives from our Athletic teams accepted the award at the annual CIAC Sportsmanship conference held earlier today.

He provided an update to ALICE training that was held on November 5th, noting it was an incredible success. He noted they are working on schedule training for our non-certified staff before extending the program out further.

The first Town of Cheshire School Modernization Committee meeting was held on Monday at Town Hall. The group is committed to evaluating our past work, our current conditions, and have creative and fiscal authority to examine our best future path.

On Friday, November 15th the Superintendent attended the annual CAPSS/CABE conference with Mr. Perugini. He reported they attended a variety of workshops including contract negotiations, Board of Education meeting organization, and Connecticut educational policy, but the highlight of Friday's event was an informative and provocative presentation by Dr. Derrick Gay on diversity and inclusion.

The Superintendent reported that on November 9th, 180 Cheshire High School student volunteers cleared 21 lawns and 533 bags of leaves for senior citizens in the community. Our schools and students hosted more than 100 veterans for recognition and education on Veteran's Day.

Lastly, the Superintendent reported he is very pleased to share that NEASC has accredited Cheshire High School. As part of the accreditation process, a large committee of educators from across New England descended on CHS last spring. They interviewed scores of parents, students, staff, community members, and many of our BOE members. They also reviewed all of our documents, observed days of instruction, and investigated every nook and cranny of the school. In order to maintain our status, we are required to provide periodic updates on the recommendations made in the report. The full report is available on the Cheshire High School website.

5. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

A. CURRICULUM

I. Report on Meeting held October 28, 2019

Curriculum Committee Chair, Anne Harrigan, reported on the meeting held October 28, 2019. The Committee heard an overview from Dr. Maureen Reed and representative teachers from Cheshire High School regarding changes to the Cheshire High School Program of Studies for the 2020-2021 school year. The proposed changes include the addition of two Social Studies courses. The courses are focused on expanding and diversifying the Cheshire Advanced Placement (AP) and Early College Experience (ECE) course options for students. An additional Science course was also proposed to align a Biology experience with the Next Generation Science Standards. The other proposed changes to the Program of Studies include two-course title changes, one-course removal in Art due to lack of enrollment, and an update to a prerequisite for an Art course.

II. Approval of Out of Country Field Trip

Board of Education policy requires that out-of-country field trips receive permission from the Board of Education. Cheshire High School teacher, Kristin Haase has requested permission to take students to Cologne, Germany from August 9, 2020 through August 23, 2020.

This request is before the Board of Education for consideration and approval. Superintendent Solan recommends approval of this request and reminds the Board that the Superintendent reserves the right to cancel the trip should national security issues warrant.

MOTION by Mr. Gusenburg, seconded by Mr. Perugini.

***MOVED** that the Cheshire Board of Education approve the participation of Cheshire High School students in the educational field trip to Cologne, Germany from August 9, 2020 through August 23, 2020, with the understanding that there is no cost to the Cheshire Board of Education.*

VOTE: The Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

B. FINANCE**I. Financial Report**

Ms. Soble reported they are projecting to end the fiscal year in balance. She said they are pleased to report that there are no significant budget concerns to report.

II. Medical Benefits Update

Mr. Masciana reported that there were \$1,086,064 claims in the month of October. The balance of the Medical Trust Fund as of October 30, 2019 is \$3,301,625 which is 4.55 claim months in reserve.

C. POLICY**I. Report on Meeting Held November 6, 2019**

Ms. Vatti reported on the meeting and the policies reviewed.

II. Review Policies for a First Reading.

The following policies are being brought to the Board for a first reading:

4118.5/4218.5 Responsible Use Policy – Computers, Network, Accounts, and Related Technology

This policy was reviewed and is recommended by the district's Technology Committee. It is recommended regarding employee use of the district's computer systems and electronic communications.

5118.2 Homeless Students

Changes to this policy are also a result of changes to Public Act 19-179 concerning homeless students. Language states that any homeless child or youth denied school accommodations shall continue in attendance or be immediately enrolled in the school selected by the child in the school district. The district must provide a written explanation of the reason for the denial along with information regarding the right to appeal.

6142 Instruction - Basic Instruction

The Committee continued their review of this policy. Changes to this policy include adding computer science to the program of instruction.

III. Review Policies for a Second Reading.

The Committee continued their review of the following policies. No substantive changes were made since the first reading.

- 4112.2 Personnel – Certified - Certification
- 4131 Personnel – Certified – Staff Development
- 5144.4 Students – Discipline.
- 6159 – Individualized Education Program

IV. Review Policies for a Third Reading and Approval.

The Committee voted to bring forward the following policies for a third reading and approval. There were no substantive changes since the second reading.

- 1331 Community Relations Smoke Free Environment.
- 4112.5/4212.5 Personnel-Certified-Non-Certified Security Check/ Fingerprinting
- 4112.51/4212.51 Personnel-Certified/Non-Certified Employment Reference Checks
- 4118.51/4218.51 Personnel-Certified-Non-Certified – Social Networking.
- 5114 Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process

MOTION by Ms. Vatti, seconded by Ms. Soble.

MOVED to bring forward to the full Board of Education policies #1331 Community Relations Smoke Free Environment; #4112.5/4212.5 Personnel-Certified-Non-Certified Security Check/ Fingerprinting; 4112.51/4212.51 Personnel Certified/Non-Certified Employment Reference Checks, and 4118.51/4218.51 Personnel-Certified-Non-Certified-Social Networking and 5114 Students – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process for a third reading and direct the Superintendent to put them into immediate effect.

VOTE: The Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

The Committee also discussed Regulation #6153 – Field Trips in regard to chaperone ratios. The Committee will continue discussions at their next meeting. They also discussed the fees that parents are charged to watch their students participate in sports. The Superintendent said there is no policy on admissions to sporting events. He reported back to the Committee that all surrounding towns do charge their parents admission fees to events.

D. OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES

There were no other committee reports.

6. AUDIENCE

Faith Ham, 633 Cortland Circle. Ms. Ham thanked outgoing Board members for their service.

Cathy Hellreich 4132 Town Walk Drive, Hamden. The former Board member thanked outgoing Board members and said it was a pleasure working with them.

7. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Vatti said it has been an honor and a privilege to serve on the Board. She said she is filled with gratitude for the opportunity to serve the community and to get to know so many wonderful people. She thanked community for their support and feedback throughout the years. She thanked her fellow board members, administration and staff.

Ms. Soble said there are 3 areas that she feels our district does very well. First, our test scores which are the highest that they have ever been. Next, she said the Board is always planning for the future, not only for the buildings, but the entire district. The third point is the sense of community we have in Cheshire - students and community with a common goal. She said she is very proud to be a part of this.

Mr. Gusenburg thanked everyone for welcoming him and stated how impressed he is with the Board and the time and care they put into their positions.

Ms. Harrigan thanked all of the outgoing Board members for their service.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of Parks & Recreation Survey

The Superintendent said the Cheshire Parks and Recreation Department is seeking student input in the development of the 10 newly acquired acres at Bartlem Park, and has asked us to administer a survey to middle and high school students.

MOTION by Ms. Soble and seconded by Mr. Perugini

***MOVED** that the Cheshire Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to administer a survey developed by the*

Cheshire Parks and Recreation Department regarding the use of space at Bartlem Park to students in grades 7 through 12.

Superintendent Solan said he would recommend removing the question asking for student's name and address. Mr. Perugini said he and other Board members agree.

AMENDED MOTION by Mr. Perugini, seconded by Ms. Soble.

MOVED *that the Cheshire Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to administer a survey developed by the Cheshire Parks and Recreation Department regarding the use of space at Bartlem Park to students in grades 7 through 12 without the solicitation of any personally identifiable information.*

VOTE: 5-0.

9. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Ms. Vatti, and seconded by Ms. Soble, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Harrigan, Vice Chair

Attest:

Carol K. Jesensky, Board of Education Clerk

Filed at the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Cheshire: 12/3/19.