

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION OPENING OF SCHOOL MEETING
HELD IN TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON SEPTEMBER 2, 2021 AT 7:30 PM**

Board Members Present: Anthony Perugini-Chair; Adam Grippo-Vice Chair; Faith Ham, Anne Harrigan, Andrew Martelli, Timothy White

Board Members Absent: Kathryn Hallen-Secretary

Administrators Present: Jeffrey F. Solan, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools; Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Vincent Masciana, Chief Operating Officer

<p>This meeting was live streamed via the Cheshire Public School's YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/cheshirepublicschools. Public comments were accepted via email at CPSCovid19@cheshire.k12.ct.us.</p>

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.

Mr. Perugini led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. He noted that the entire administrative staff is in attendance this evening.

2. Opening of School Report

A. Update on Fall Opening 2021

Superintendent Solan said all students were back to school for in-person learning. He called on Chief Operating Officer, Vincent Masciana, to present on the work that was done over the summer. Mr. Masciana said the work began the day after graduation. He reviewed and shared photos of the work that was done, including routine maintenance and repairs as well as capital budget projects. In addition to maintenance projects, PPE was stocked up at all of our schools. He noted that student meals will be provided for all students at no cost for the 2021-2022 school year. He explained that Doolittle School's opening was delayed by two days because mold was discovered in the school. ServPro was brought in to perform mold remediation. Fortunately, the issue has been resolved and Doolittle was cleared to open today. Lastly, Mr. Masciana reported that we have moved to eLearning for all compliance training.

Superintendent Solan next reported on the Opening of School. Convocation was held on August 26th and provided a fun and insightful program for all of our staff. At Convocation, Lindsay Grant was named Teacher of the Year and Patricia Amato was named Instructional Assistant of the Year. Dr. Solan reported on district enrollment noting:

- 2 kindergarten classes were moved from Darcey to Doolittle School
- 30 more students enrolled than were projected at Doolittle
- 13 more students enrolled than were projected at Highland
- 34 more students enrolled than were projected at Dodd

- 11 more students enrolled than were projected at Cheshire High School
- The overall enrollment summary shows 125 more students enrolled than projected districtwide.

Dr. Solan reviewed the District's Strategic Planning Initiative. The plan was created in 2011, and was designed to be applied through 2021. The community-wide review has been delayed because of the pandemic. The plan was reviewed by the CSPI Committee in 2016/2017 which sharpened the focus on Complex Thinking and Social Emotional Learning. The Superintendent next reviewed the mission statement, initiatives and performance standards. They will continue to focus on Social Emotional Learning and Complex Thinking for this coming school year.

Superintendent Solan reviewed some of the successes in our district:

- Cheshire has the fifth best overall SBAC performance in Connecticut for K-12 districts.
- Norton School was named a National Blue Ribbon School.
- Highland was recognized as a Special Olympics Unified Champion School.

He noted that the State released the student achievement data the previous day. While they are still reviewing the numbers, 73% of CHS students reached the achievement benchmark in ELA and 59% reached the benchmark in Math. He said they have already taken steps to improve those numbers, such as adding a new Math Department Chair, as well as additional instructional supports in Math and Writing. Scores in grades 3-8 showed that, in ELA and Math, the district ranked 2nd in our District Reference Group (DRG). Overall in the State, we ranked 5th. Our Special Education students scored third in our DRG.

Dr. Solan said that moving forward in 2021 and beyond, he will be working with the Board to review our Vision of the Graduate, and also work with CPS and community stakeholders to review the Vision and provide feedback. The goal is for the Board to adopt a three-year plan this spring.

Discussion:

Dr. Solan and Mr. Masciana answered inquiries from the Board and a member of the audience regarding the mold at Doolittle. Dr. Solan said air circulation and dehumidification are the two best strategies to combat mold. Mr. Masciana said, in the last 12 years, there have been 3 mold remediation issues. One was from a standing water issue in the underground tunnels at Cheshire High School. They did not know about the water until staff members, who have allergies to mold, began experiencing symptoms. The next was a similar issue at the high school due to air conditioning that was short-cycling in the library and then this most recent incident at Doolittle due to high humidity

levels. He said this is not a recurring issue; next summer they will take steps to improve the air flow.

A member of the audience asked if the mold was black mold as it appeared to be in the photograph. Dr. Solan said, no, the blackness in the photo was a hole in the wood, not mold.

3. **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

4. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **Affirmation of Strategic Plan**

MOTION by Mr. Grippo, seconded by Mr. Martelli.

***MOVED** that the Cheshire Board of Education reaffirms the Cheshire Public Schools Strategic Objectives and Goals for 2021/22.*

VOTE: The Motion passed unanimously 6-0.

5. **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Perugini reviewed the upcoming meetings. On a motion by Mr. White, and seconded by Ms. Ham, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Perugini, Board Chair

Attest:

Carol K. Jesensky, Board of Education Clerk

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