

**MINUTES OF CHESHIRE BOARD OF EDUCATION MIDDLE SCHOOL SHOWCASE  
MEETING HELD IN TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON MARCH 16, 2023 AT 6:30 PM**

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Board Members Present: Adam Grippo-Vice Chair; Anne Harrigan-Secretary; Faith Ham, Samantha Rosenberg,

Board Members Absent: Anthony Perugini-Chair; Andrew Martelli, Timothy White

Administrators Present: Jeffrey F. Solan, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools; Vincent Masciana, Chief Operating Officer, Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Robin-Anne Carey, Director, Pupil Personnel Services; Kristin Pelz, Assistant Principal-Cheshire High School; Maureen Reed, Ed.D., Assistant Principal-Cheshire High School; Daniel Tartarelli, Assistant Principal-Cheshire High School; Stephen Trifone, Athletic Director-Cheshire High School; Mike Woods, Principal-Dodd Middle School; John Perosino, Assistant Principal-Dodd Middle School; Diana Burns, Principal-Chapman Elementary School; Katharine Carlucci-Assistant Principal-Chapman & Norton Elementary Schools; Kimberly Dessert, Principal-Darcey School; Amy O'Brien, Principal-Doolittle School; Kristin Lopa, Assistant Principal-Doolittle School; Kelly Grillo, Principal-Norton School; Erica Bordonaro, Assistant Principa-Highland Elementary; Kevin Hanlon, K-8 Curriculum Coordinator; Christina Sherwood, Supervisor of Elementary Special Education; Marie Broadway, Supervisor of Secondary Special Education; Ryan Murphy, Community Engagement Coordinator

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**1. CALL TO ORDER – 6:32 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 Mr. Perugini's absence, Mr. Grippo led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**3. PRESENTATIONS**

**A. Middle School Showcase**

Ms. Silano introduced Principal Mike Woods to lead the presentation. Principal Woods said they are speaking tonight about how social emotional learning is embedded to the curriculum and the practices of our classrooms at Dodd Middle School. Mr. Wood said they use the CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning) framework as a lens to support students both in and out of the classroom. The five attributes include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, Responsible Decision Making, and Relationship Skills. For the last two years, they have worked with consultant Mike Anderson, regarding intrinsic student motivation.

Mr. Woods introduced Dodd Math Teacher, Tom Toscano who spoke about building autonomy through choice. He said he was looking for a better way to assess students. He developed a system where students choose the way they assess. He shared four very different testing options: a quiz which is standard, a fill in the blank table for

those students who are spatial learners, Kahoot, a multiple choice game and a heat map which is a choice-based worksheet where students decide what problems they want to solve based off their comfort level with the previous problem. He said the feedback from this was very powerful. Students are actually excited to take the next test.

Seventh Grade Language Arts Teacher, Maria Mullally discussed how her training and coaching with Mike Anderson has benefited her. She has changed her language to be more student-focused and inclusive.

Kelly Mahoney, eighth grade ELA teacher discussed how she has used SEL in the ELA classroom in terms of self-reflection. She uses a “Blob Tree” which is a tool that can be used to help students articulate their feelings and help facilitate their development. It consists of many blob figures on or around a tree. The tree represents a setting, such as a school or group, and the blobs represent different emotions and feelings. She also discussed introducing Social Emotional Learning in their writing curriculum.

Jess Tresselt and Christina Esposito talked about a pilot program they developed this year around executive function. Executive function is the management system of our brain that helps us plan, organize and execute tasks. It is what we use every single day to get our goals accomplished. Some of the skills involved in executive functioning, our time management, organization planning, task initiative, emotional regulation, all of the things that could be very challenging for middle school students, but not impossible. They started teaching these skills to the students and it has been very effective.

Principal Woods said the faculty is doing great things. Dr. Solan said this training and coaching was made possible through our use of federal funding, as part of our bounce forward initiative to support the growth of our entire staff.

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Dr. Harrigan, and seconded by Ms. Rosenberg, the meeting was adjourned into Executive Session including Dr. Solan and Mr. Masciana, to discuss union negotiations at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Adam Grippo, Board Vice Chair

Attest:

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Carol K. Jesensky, Board of Education Clerk

Filed at the Town Clerk’s Office, Town Hall, Cheshire: 4/6/2023.