

**MINUTES OF CHESHIRE BOARD OF EDUCATION BUSINESS MEETING  
HELD IN CHESHIRE HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY ON MAY 4, 2023 AT 7:30 PM**

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

Board Members Absent: None.

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; Mary Jocelyn-Gadd, Principal-Cheshire High School; Kristin Pelz, Assistant Principal-Cheshire High School; Maureen Reed, Ed.D., Assistant Principal-Cheshire High School; Daniel Tartarelli, Assistant Principal-Cheshire High School; Diana Burns, Principal-Chapman Elementary School; Katharine Carlucci-Assistant Principal-Chapman & Norton Elementary Schools; Kimberly Dessert, Principal-Darcey School; Kristin Lopa, Assistant Principal-Doolittle School; Kelly Grillo, Principal-Norton School; Scott Jeffrey, Principal-Highland Elementary School; Erica Bordonaro, Assistant Principal-Highland Elementary; 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 – 7:34 P.M.**

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

**2. PRESENTATIONS**

**A. 2023 National German Exam Recognition**

Dr. Gadd introduced Cheshire High School junior, Sella Cahill. Sella is being recognized for her outstanding performance on the National German Exam. She received a perfect score on the exam then went on to take a 4-hour test in speaking, writing, and listening, which earned her a two-week, all-expense paid trip to Germany. Sella will be representing Connecticut on this trip. The Board congratulated Sella on her achievement.

**3. AUDIENCE**

None.

**4. HIGH SCHOOL SHOWCASE**

Dr. Gadd welcomed all and explained that this evening they will be talking about the Teen Mental Health First Aid (TMHFA) Training. (Presentation on file.) The program

began in Cheshire Public Schools in 2018. In conjunction with this training, training on QPR suicide prevention was provided to employees between 2018 and 2020. TMHFA was taught to all grade 10 students in Cheshire High School during the 2022-23 school year. Dr. Gadd said that CHS has been proactive in creating the conditions for students to learn crucial social-emotional skills within a positive classroom and school culture.

Dr. Gadd introduced Michelle Piccerillo, Director of Human Services. Ms. Piccerillo reviewed the partnership between Cheshire Human Services and Cheshire Public Schools which allows them to support our young people. She said during the pandemic it became increasingly clear that there was a crisis in youth mental health and adult mental health and our state was being overburdened with the needs of our residents. She said they became aware of TMHFA and ultimately received funding to run the program. She explained that during the COVID-19 pandemic depression and anxiety in youth doubled and has remained high. Additional challenges to our youth include the legalization of marijuana and negative feedback from social media. She said that when mental health problems persist and are not properly addressed, they could have lasting consequences. Early intervention can have a huge impact. Ms. Piccerillo explained The Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets and their Attitudes and Behaviors Survey that was administered to Cheshire youth in grades 7-12 in 2015 and 2018. Their goal is to administer the survey again in the fall of 2023.

Dan Tartarelli, Assistant Principal at Cheshire High School explained the certification process and class format for the TMHFA program. Cathy Sullivan, Physical Education Department Leader, reviewed the course curriculum content. Math teacher, Taryn DiSorbo, provided an overview of the teaching experience. Lastly, a video of Grade 10 student testimonials was shared with the audience.

Discussion: Board members asked questions regarding the program and the Developmental Assets Survey. They thanked Dr. Gadd, Ms. Piccerillo and the CHS staff for their informative presentation.

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mr. White, and seconded by Ms. Rosenberg, the meeting was adjourned into Executive Session at 8:27 p.m., to include Dr. Solan and Mr. Masciana for the purpose of discussing the Cleaning Contract Award and the Superintendent's evaluation.

Respectfully submitted,

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Anthony Perugini, Board Chair

Attest:

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Carol K. Jesensky, Board of Education Clerk

Filed at the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Cheshire: May 15, 2023.