

**MINUTES OF CHESHIRE BOARD OF EDUCATION BUSINESS MEETING  
HELD IN TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON MAY 16, 2024 AT 7:30 PM**

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Board Members Present: Samantha Rosenberg, Chair; Anne Harrigan, Vice Chair; Adam Grippio, Secretary; Anne Marie Cullinan; Mark Ecke; Anthony Perugini

Board Members Absent: Timothy White

Administrators Present: Jeffrey F. Solan, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools; Vincent Masciana, Chief Operating Officer; Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Kevin Hanlon, K-8 Curriculum Coordinator

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**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.  
Ms. Rosenberg led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
- C. Student Representatives. Andrew Elliot and Ella Paul, student representatives for the 2023/2024 school year, reported on recent events at Cheshire High School including field trips for students interested in the trades, AP Exams, and shirt day. They also reported on a visiting author, unified theatre production and the many senior activities that will be taking place.

**2. PRESENTATIONS**

**A. CABE Student Leader Awards**

Dr. Solan reported that the CABE Student Leadership Awards Program was developed to give local Boards of Education a chance to reward student leadership potential. These students are selected from among their peers for exhibiting leadership qualities as defined by a list of criteria developed by a subcommittee of CABE’s Board of Directors.

This year’s award recipients are as follows:

Armin Ahmetovic	Dodd Middle School
Shams Ajaj	Dodd Middle School
Ella Paul	Cheshire High School
Andrew Elliot	Cheshire High School

**3. AUDIENCE**

None.

**4. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**A. Approval of Grants Resolution**

In accordance with Board Policy 3290–Business and Non-Instructional Operations–Grants and Other Revenue, the Board of Education, by resolution, shall authorize the Superintendent to apply for and accept any and all grants as

may be determined appropriate by the administration. Therefore, the Superintendent shall:

1. Investigate new sources of revenue whether local, state, or federal;
2. Propose new revenue sources and associated programs to the Board of Education for approval;
3. Implement measures necessary to apply for/receive additional revenues.

In accordance with this policy, the Superintendent or his designee is authorized to sign all required forms for state and federal programs. In addition, the Superintendent shall inform the Board of the activity of all grants applied for and received with the exception of those pursuant to Chapter 1973 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

**MOTION** by Ms. Harrigan and seconded by Mr. Perugini.

**MOVED** that the Cheshire Board of Education approves the Consent Calendar as presented.

**VOTE:** The Motion passed unanimously by those present.

## **5. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **A. CURRICULUM**

#### **I. Report on Meeting Held May 13, 2024.**

Ms. Cullinan reported that at the meeting they discussed an out-of-country field trip that the Board will be voting on this evening. The Committee also heard a presentation from the Science CCC (Cheshire Curriculum Council.) The presentation was an executive summary of the five-year curriculum review shared in March. The theme of the presentation was to bring the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) into the Now. The committee emphasized the strong overlap between the expectations of NGSS and the district priorities related to Complex Thinking, Social Emotional Learning, and the district definition of High Quality Instruction.

Ms. Silano shared that the Evaluation Committee met this past week and put together plans for evaluations for next year. She reported that teacher evaluation in Connecticut is changing. There are new guidelines and part of those guidelines eliminates the rating scale of teachers. She noted that the Evaluation Committee will present at the next Curriculum Committee meeting and if the Curriculum Committee approves, it would then come to the full Board for approval. At that point, it will be submitted to the State Department of Education for their approval.

**II. Approval of Out-of-Country Field Trip**

Ms. Cullinan noted that Board of Education policy requires that out-of-country field trips receive permission of the Board of Education. Cheshire High School teacher, Julie Barker, has requested permission to take students to Seoul, South Korea in November 2024. She said they need 10 students to sign up. In addition to visiting historical sites, participating students will present their research to a Korean team at one of the local schools. They will have an opportunity to visit schools in South Korea and obviously to do some sightseeing. The cost of the trip is \$4,290. This is a program as part of ACES International 2024 United States Korea Research and Education Collaborative. Superintendent Solan recommends approval of this request and reserves the right to cancel the trip should national security issues warrant.

**MOTION** by Ms. Cullinan and seconded by Dr. Harrigan.

***MOVED** that the Cheshire Board of Education approve the participation of CHS students in the educational field trip to Seoul, South Korea from November 16, 2024 – November 23, 2024.*

**VOTE:** The Motion passed unanimously by those present.

**B. FINANCE**

**I. Financial Report**

Dr. Harrigan asked Mr. Masciana to give the Finance Report. Mr. Masciana reported there have not been many changes since last month. He said they expect to close the budget at the June 28 fiscal meeting at 7:30 a.m. He reported that special education outplaced tuition is over budget by \$305K, down from \$480K. In addition, at the end of the fiscal year, the Board will reimburse the Food Services budget about \$20K for unpaid student meal balances. The department will continue to work on collecting the funds.

**II. Report on Meeting Held May 9, 2024**

Dr. Harrigan reported that the Town Council adopted a budget that reduced the Board's Approved Budget by \$525,000. Dr. Solan presented two reduction scenarios to the Committee with one retaining the new STEM Program and one without the STEM Program. After much discussion, the Committee voted to recommend the budget adjustments that included the STEM program.

**III. Approval of the 2024/2025 Board of Education Budget**

**MOTION** by Mr. Grippo and seconded by Mr. Ecke.

***MOVED** that the Cheshire Board of Education approves an Operating Budget for the fiscal year 2024/25 of \$89,542,609 as appropriated by the Town Council, representing, a reduction of \$525,000 from the Board of Education's Approved Budget.*

**VOTE:** The Motion passed unanimously by those present.

**IV. Medical Benefits Report**

Mr. Masciana reported that in April, the claims were \$1,281,795, about \$181,000 higher than our budget of 1.1 million. Stop Loss reimbursements year to date are \$337,303. The reserve balance actually increased \$78,000, ending April, at \$1.99 million, about 1.82 months' worth of claims. Mr. Masciana noted he is on the Board of CT Prime, our Stop Loss carrier, and they are reviewing the renewal for next year. Unfortunately, the renewal is not looking very good for any of the CT Prime members. He said we did build a 15% increase into next year's budget for stop loss premium increase, but he thinks the renewal will be above that.

**V. Report on Grant Activity for the 2023/2024 School Year**

Assistant Superintendent Silano reviewed the Grant Activity for the 2023/2024 year with the Board. Overall, grant revenues were \$1,635,924, about \$100K higher than last year. Ms. Silano reviewed each of the grants and gave examples of what the grant funds are used for.

**C. POLICY**

**I. Policy Report**

Mr. Ecke, Chair of the Policy Committee reported on the meeting held May 6, 2024. He reported the Committee spoke at length about the draft Equity and Diversity policy.

**II. First Reading of Policies**

Mr. Ecke gave a first reading to Policy #3541 Transportation. Our district Transportation Coordinator, Luther Miller attended the meeting along with Mr. Masciana to review suggested revisions to the policy. Changes include:

- clarifying ages for eligibility for school transportation
- updating walking distance so it is consistent, (one-mile) for all elementary students
- deleting language regarding hazardous walking areas (not clear for parents-too broad)

- updating bus route notification (no longer mail out postcards)
- clarifying Available Use of Seat Positions (a student cannot be assigned to both a bus and a daycare at the same time.)

**III. Second Reading of Policies**

Mr. Ecke gave a second reading to policy #6200 Adult Continuing Education. The recommendation is to remove the paragraph regarding Adults in Day Secondary School Programs that states residents of the school district may enroll in day classes at the high school. There were no changes to this policy since the first reading.

Mr. Grippo asked if there was any additional feedback from the Board regarding the Equity and Diversity Policy. Ms. Rosenberg said she appreciates the time the Committee has put into this.

**D. OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES**

Ms. Rosenberg asked if Mr. Perugini has any updates from CAGE. He reported there is an FOIA case being discussed that has implications for Boards of Education and how they enter Executive Sessions when the Superintendent is invited into Executive Session. He said he hopes to have more of an update at the next meeting.

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** by Dr. Harrigan and seconded by Ms. Cullinan.

***MOVED** that the Cheshire Board of Education approve the Minutes from meetings held on April 18, 2024 and May 2, 2024.*

**VOTE:** The Motion passed unanimously by those present.

**7. CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

**8. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Solan noted there was a segment done by WTNH news regarding social media and adolescents. Our students, including student reps, Ella and Andrew, participated in the story. In addition, WFSB did a story on the Darcey Circle of Security program that will be airing in the next few days. Lastly, he thanked Ms. Silano, Principals Dessert and Roden, as well as SPED Supervisor, Christina Sherwood, for completing the kindergarten/transition program evaluation process. Ms. Silano explained they utilized three important sources to support the decisions that were made. She said there were 31 students who requested early admission. Of those, 12 were granted admission to kindergarten, 15 were identified for the transition program and the others needed further

evaluation with families to make the decision. She said it was just an excellent experience and one that everyone feels good about.

9. **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

10. **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mr. Ecke, and seconded by Mr. Grippo, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Samantha Rosenberg, Board Chair

Attest:

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Carol K. Jesensky, Board of Education Clerk

Filed at the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Cheshire: 5/24/2024.