

**DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2020 - 7:00 PM
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM
LIVE STREAM**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Chairperson, G. Cooper, called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Rachel Chaleski, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Joseph DaSilva, Albert Russo, Amy Spallino, Kathryn Hodgdon, Richard Jannelli, Kathleen Molinaro
Absent: Joseph Britton, Dr. Pascarella, Loren Daly
Also Present: Courtney Leborious, Kelly Truchsess, Kevin Walston, Dr. Casimiro, Kim Thompson

RECOGNITIONS

- Adam Bhavnagarwala and Ibrahim Bhavnagarwala
- 2020 MIT Paper Presentation
 - Submitted a paper to MIT. Two Senior DHS students.
 - Dan Donovan introduced students.
 - Armed with their skills to tinker with microcontrollers and engage deep neural networks to assist them with artificial intelligence, they looked for a worthy problem to solve. At first, they wanted to build a sensor network for Danbury that could provide real time data to the city on distributions of toxic/harmful pollutants and changing weather conditions that impacted them. As they researched, they discovered that the # 3 killers in the US are actually the toxic emissions from cigarettes, mostly found within indoor spaces. What is incredible is that there are no smoke detectors to recognize cigarette emissions early enough when their toxicity and concentrations are extremely low before they can possibly do any damage to people especially vulnerable to secondhand smoke. So they pivoted their original project to make it more meaningful. They began to use wirelessly connected sensors driven by microcontrollers to characterize cigarette emissions and build classifiers for cigarette emissions to be recognized by neural networks from the signature patterns they create in very small changes to concentrations of component gases. These patterns can be recognized by their prototype hardware even if caused by a single cigarette in a room almost 10,000 cubic feet large within 300 seconds. They believe this invention can help hospitals, schools, workplaces and hotels identify second hand smoke early enough to protect lives. They presented their results at MIT a few weeks ago and have also been accepted to present at SensorComm 2020 – a leading industry forum on sensor technologies next month. They are also planning to publish extensions of this work at leading IEEE and ACM Forums over the next few months.

Exhibit

20-109 (pg.3)

They would like to thank the DHS community of students, teachers, staff and administration for the little things they do that make a big difference. Especially Principal Donovan, Mr. Jameson Parker and Mr. David Honeyford – who were also their AP Physics teachers last year.

Also included that Danbury has a history that most are unaware of. Danbury was actually a pioneer of today's trillion-dollar semiconductor industry. National Semiconductor corporation was founded in Danbury in 1959 – within two years of the creation of Fairchild semiconductor corporation in 1957 in Santa Clara CA – widely acknowledged as the birth of the technology cluster we call Silicon Valley today.

Their recommendation to the leadership of Danbury is that we need to get back to the future as we were in 1959. It's important for the city to promote the proliferation of excitement among students across the region that technology can bring by arming them with skill sets they can actually easily acquire. They started the AI Club and the IoT Club in the Spring and truly believe amazing things can happen when students start playing with technology as they do with a basketball. They would like to empower students with basic skill sets in coding and hardware development that can take them years ahead of the country. They are putting together a proposal for teaching coding to middle schoolers. They also have proposals for the new Danbury Career Academy and how it can bootstrap the level of interest the school system creates in Technology. The opportunities have never been greater and the paths to unprecedented economic success more clear as they are today.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Terra Volpe - Parent of two AIS students.
 - I am writing because I have serious concerns about the education of our youngest learners. This includes children K-2, minimally. My youngest, by every measure, has a gifted teacher. I want to be clear that this concern has nothing to do with her. She is literally doing everything she can. I spend a great deal of time with my child while she is in distance learning. Even with me there, I see her struggle. She struggles with the app, which is grossly age inappropriate. She struggles with the lesson because she is not in a classroom where she can function as a typical learner and I see her struggle to pay attention, even with breaks. The bottom line is, she isn't learning much, if anything, at all. This is the experience of a child with a mom who can work with her much of the time. I can see in her class, there are several kids without any adult support at home. I see kids in childcare, nearly navigating things by themselves. I can assure you, many of these kids, like my child, aren't learning. These kids will likely lose 1-2 years of academic learning on top of social/emotional growth, only learned when young children by participating in groups. It is my strong feeling, both as a mother and an early childhood educator for over 25 years, that children from K-2 are in a special group and require and deserve special consideration. Without a real plan for these young learners, they will not succeed and the long-term impact is real.

What is the plan for these kids? Why has this group not been considered more thoroughly and openly? Why are five, six and seven year olds, essentially expected to function in the Distance Learning space in the same way 11, 12 and 13 year olds are? How will the learning gap be handled when they return without the threat of Covid-19? Can the district allow these kids to attend, at least a couple of days, during the shut down and going forward, regardless of restrictions? Please don't abandon these kids and their very young learning needs. Please make accommodations for these young learners.

- Katie Williams

- It is getting extremely hard for me to rectify the apparent discrepancy between how the reopening of school is being handled versus the reopening of the rest of the community. For example, it has been deemed safe for restaurants to be open at 75% capacity. If that is deemed safe, I have a hard time understanding how my child would be any less safe in a room with ten peers who are all wearing masks for the entirety of their time together. This is just one of countless examples that I can think of across our community.

I want to know, to what extent the Board has been following the research that has been coming out, in which the medical community is not finding any difference in community spread whether schools are open or not. If schools are not super spreaders then why should they remain closed while businesses remain open? In addition, it seems that our surrounding towns, the parochial schools within the Danbury community, as well as school communities around the world who have experienced cases, have found that the students are actually contracting Covid from community events rather than from school itself. Therefore, it seems that given the policies and procedures that are in place within a school building, my child is far less likely to contract Covid during their time within the classroom, than at any other activity that they might engage in.

Lastly, while I understand that parents are concerned for their child's well being, I also want to acknowledge that we as parents take calculated risks every time we leave our home. There are any number of things that we can encounter throughout our children's lives that present a danger. I do not take any of these decisions lightly. With that being said, the American Academy of Pediatrics released on October 22, 2020 that "in states reporting, 0%-0.15% of all child COVID-19 cases resulted in deaths". The AAP also reported that "Influenza has an average annual mortality rate of 0.15 deaths per 100,000 children". If we are to say that the risk is too great to our children, then I must pose the question, should we allow our children to attend school during the annual flu season, as it poses the same, if not greater risk to my child?

I implore you to take into account the emotional well being of my child when making your decisions. Last minute decisions are extremely hard on children. My son went through a roller coaster of emotions leading up to not one, but two promised returns to school. Each time there were several emotions that we navigated through as a family, and then several more when things were changed last minute. My son is very observant and he has a hard time understanding why his cousins, sister and the daycare down the street are all allowed to have in

person learning, and I am having a harder and harder time explaining why that is the case.

- Megan Shaw - Parent of AIS student.
 - I am one of the moms that was interviewed for the article “Parents Furious Over the Hybrid Postponement” in the News-Times.
I am with a group of hundreds of Danbury parents expressing their frustration with the cancelling of opening schools scheduled for 10/26/2020. Not only is the education of our students not being considered but their mental health is being severely affected. Several daycares in the area have not had any cases or outbreaks and have remained open for months. I went to the open house the other night and asked the teachers if teaching Distance Learning was covered at all in college. They stated that it was not. How are teachers who were not trained to do this, able to teach our children effectively. We think that the parents need to have more of a say in the decision making. Parents have the decision to 100% distance-learn. Why do the parents who wish to have their kids in school not have the same option? I am aware Danbury is bigger. However it is very close to every single surrounding town that has opened. You cannot tell me that Bethel, Newtown and New Fairfield are in school full time and we cannot be open two days. New Milford and Brookfield are open two days and they are extremely close to Danbury as well. Governor Lamont said being in a classroom with a mask is the safest place to be. Why aren't they in school if this is the case? Norwalk is currently leading the state in the past week of cases. Why are they in session and Danbury is not?
- Meagan Guidotti
 - During the previous Board of Education meeting, a Board member asked if there was a chance that the rising numbers in Danbury would lead to a cancellation of the hybrid scheduling begin on October 26, 2020 as planned. Dr. Sal's response was “no”, as based on what they have seen in other districts, the virus is not being transmitted at school. Please provide an explanation as to how this statement was very clearly made at a Board meeting, and yet the decision was made to cancel Hybrid Learning yet again.
- John Urban
 - As parents, we need to know the data on Danbury. How many tests in the city, how many positive cases, how many hospitalizations? I would like to also see similar data on schools that have opened elsewhere in the surrounding area. Why is Danbury in the red zone while New Milford, Brookfield, Redding and Bethel are in the gray. What are they doing that Danbury is not? Finally, it seems that eight months wasn't enough time for the city and schools to adequately prepare for reopening. In relation to the statistics requested above, what are the specific criteria for reopening? Can we get a weekly update on how the city is progressing toward those criteria? Keeping the schools closed may indeed be the proper, safe thing to do, but we should be able to see the data.
- Carol Corcoran - Parent of DHS Junior.
 - My daughter and I are both upset at how the Board of Ed is making decisions. Every decision that has been made has been on the extreme side of caution. I

understand your want to be cautious, but I believe it is way too extreme and too risk averse.

I have seen my daughters mental health decline, her love for education disappear, her sleepless nights from too much screen time instead of learning from a live person. Our kids are becoming zombies and not taking in any real educational value and not retaining much of what's being taught. They are out of school after only a few hours and they aren't progressing. They have gone backwards and yet. They are free to go to the mall or stores and yet they cannot go to school. It does not make any sense.

Our religious and private schools in Danbury are in school. Abbott Tech, Immaculate, Ridgefield, Bethel and Norwalk. Those kids are progressing. Danbury hasn't even tried to push forward. What message is that sending to our kids? The parents have told you, loud and clear, that we want our kids in school. Those parents that don't, can keep their kids at home which means there will be even less of a threat at school. I need this Board to step up and push forward. We must move forward as we are being left behind. Companies take their employees' temperatures at the door before entering. Why not do that? If I can go to the nail salon and the hairdresser and the supermarket and the movies, then my kid should be able to go to school. I understand the risk and I gladly take it. I will sign a waiver or whatever to allow my daughter to feel whole again.

- Melynda (no last name given)
 - Regarding Distance Learning, as we continue in the distance model, what efforts are being made to maximize direct teacher to student interaction each day? In the last week, our elementary and intermediate students had an entire day lost to a virtual field trip so teachers had time to prepare their classrooms for hybrid, another day lost to teacher reorganization time after notice of change from hybrid back to DL, and again on Wednesday for all day asynchronous learning (which happens weekly). Why can't that work be done during afternoons, which are already staged for asynchronous learning? Why can't Wednesdays include more live instruction time if all students and staff are remote those days? As it is, elementary and intermediate students end their live instruction time daily at 12:30. Most afternoons are spent doing practice work with online learning tools which hardly substitute live instruction or engagement with teachers and fellow students. This is many hours for our young students to work independently without live instruction. How can we be assured this will be improved as we continue in a DL model and then further considered for a Hybrid Model?
Regarding a return to in-person instruction/hybrid model, what work is being done to better prepare our district for re-opening so that we are not in a position for further delay returning to in-person? Now that we've seen our return cancelled twice due to spikes, have we begun to better prepare, learning from the last two experiences? I'm interested to hear how this work may involve the broader city administration as well.
Overcrowding has been a known issue for years with this district, yet little has been done to mitigate it quickly. Had we been more proactive with this incredibly concerning problem, we would have been in a much better position to handle this, where adapting to safety protocols for in-person learning wouldn't be

handicapping us so much now. What efforts to improve our “foundation“ have been made to better prepare us not only for regular schooling but also for future emergencies? The news of the new career academy is an exciting development however it is a long term solution. We clearly need more immediate solutions. Please also note for those in attendance that we have some exceptional efforts being made by our teachers. I’ve watched as they’ve welcomed our kids into their lives and their homes virtually and engage them in new and different ways regularly. Late night email exchanges with concerned parents, creating fun and engaging Google slides or bitmojis, playing live music to open class, exercising along with the kids are all efforts I’ve seen our teachers making to remain committed. They do deserve recognition for this!

- Christine Farnham
 - It has been nationally publicized that Danbury Public Schools have violated Title IX and is in jeopardy of losing Title IX funds, money that Danbury Public Schools can not afford to lose. As a parent of two DHS athletes and a taxpayer, I would like to know what the Danbury Board of Education's stance is on this. Has this been discussed at the previous Board meetings given the fact that the notice of Title IX violation was delivered months ago? Where is the transparency?

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: K. Conetta moved, seconded by J. DaSilva that the Board of Education approves the item on the Consent Calendar, Exhibit 20-109 as recommended:

MINUTES

10/14/20 Regular Board Meeting

20-110 (pg6)

Nine Votes Yes: Rachel Chaleski, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Joseph DaSilva, Albert Russo, Amy Spallino, Kathryn Hodgdon, Richard Jannelli, Kathleen Molinaro

Two were not present to vote: Loren Daly, Joseph Britton

Motion carried at 7:26 pm

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

ACE Representatives: Chris Johnston

- This week the ACE English Department led by Joanne Tolles, Melissa Lasky, and Daniela Esposito, are participating in a week of virtual events at the Dodge Poetry Festival. This includes live performances, workshops, and meetings with poets and the performers. All ACE students enrolled in English courses are participating in the festival.
- ACE continues to partner with a food pantry through connection with Joanne Tolles in order to support our families in need of some extra support during this difficult time.
- On 10/30/2020, the ACE family will meet virtually to have a community building Halloween costume contest and jack-o-lantern display in an effort to bring some fun and team building.

- ACE is proud to recognize Brian Galarza and Jennifer Seden as last week's Students of the Week for their hard work, commitment to academics, and demonstration of resilience. Each student has been provided gift cards donated by American Paving.
- ACE is also proud to recognize their two Students of the Month award winners for demonstrating ACE's five behavioral expectations consistently since they began the Fall semester. Congratulations to Emely Mango and Chris Johnston.
- ACE will hold Parent Teacher Conferences from 11/9/2020 through 11/13/2020. Conferences will be available to provide parents an opportunity to become active partners in their students' educational plans.

ACTION ITEMS

A, September 2020 Operating Results and Analysis (General Funds/Grant Projects)

MOTION: K. Conetta moved, seconded by A. Spallino that the Board of Education approve the September 2020 Operating Results and Analysis (General Funds/Grant Projects) in accordance with 20-111(pg.19)

Nine Votes Yes: Rachel Chaleski, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Joseph DaSilva, Albert Russo, Amy Spallino, Kathryn Hodgdon, Richard Jannelli, Kathleen Molinaro

Two were not present to vote: Loren Daly, Joseph Britton

Motion carried at 7:31 pm

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- Facilities Update
 - C. Leborious stated that in the two-week prior, herself along with K. Walston, R. Jalbert and R. Torres all toured the schools again and looked at their reopening plans.
 - The custodial staff did an amazing job getting everything ready to go as well as the administrative teams at each individual school.
 - The Transportation Company did two weeks' worth of bus runs. Still doing runs this week to refine the pickup and dropoff locations and refining the amount of time to transport students to align with our schedule when we do open.
 - Also measured out all desk and spacing.
 - As ready as we can be to open when we get the assessment that we are ready to open.
- 2021-22 Budget Development
 - C. Leborious will issue a calendar at the next Board meeting after workshop dates are scheduled.
 - Getting the budget ready for next year, business as usual.
 - Month of November is dedicated to building the proposed budget.
 - Process of doing the projections for enrollment and staffing needs.

- Meeting with the Cabinet during the month of November and looking to start committee meetings with the Board and budget workshops in December.
- There is only one Board meeting in December so will need to utilize the workshop dates. Looking to have a proposed budget approved by the Board on 1/27/2021. Get to the City by mid of February 2021.
- Mindful as we develop a budget is to look at Cares Act money which is going away as well as the Coronavirus Relief Fund. As well as ASC funding through the Alliance Grant.
- K. Conetta asked how much was the one time funding? C. Leborious stated that it was about \$3.4 million. Of that one time money, a bulk was to purchase one time items but there are some ongoing expenses that we will have to account for next year. One time purchases of PPE, plexiglass, cleaners and sanitizers versus things such as software that was purchased. Those subscriptions that will need to be included in the budget for ongoing funding because there will be continued usage. Also some of the staffing that was paid with that one time money that we will have to fund in the budget for next year.
- R. Jannelli asked if any conversations have been held with Mayor Boughton related to any rollovers for next year like we did last year? C. Leborious stated that she doesn't know that there will be any additional underspending this year but they are amenable to that. C. Leborious said she will initiate that conversation and report back at the next Board meeting.
- The present budget shows a big gap. The State has not finalized the Coronavirus Relief Fund allocations as well as some expenditures that haven't been shifted over. The grants need to be right sized so the expenses are showing in the right place. Will show in greater detail at the next Board meeting.
- Contact Tracing Protocol
 - K. O'Dowd stated that in terms of contact tracing and how to handle cases when we are back in school will revolve around the guidance put out by Addendum Five.
 - If a positive case is identified, the contact tracing would begin. Would need to look at identifying what is a direct contact which means someone who was in contact with a positive person for 15 minutes or more within six feet of distance.
 - That guidance includes with or without a mask.
 - Would need to look at whether to close just one classroom, a cohort, or a grade level. At the secondary level, it is more challenging, and we would perhaps have to close an entire building.
 - When a direct contact is identified, they would be required to quarantine for 14 days and have a negative Covid test.
 - There are times where we may have a presumptive case and while awaiting test results, we may need to close for two to five days until we can identify that.
 - For suspected cases we may have what is called a contact of a contact. Waiting for test results for that positive person before moving forward to closing for the full 14 days.
 - Any positive case results in consultation with the Health Department.
 - Also collaborate with K. Prunty for decision making process for closing a grade, classroom or an entire building.

- PMHP-Primary Mental Health Program Grant
 - K. Truchsess gave an update about the grant.
 - This is funding to allow us to bring in extra support staff to work with children identified in need of additional adult mentoring, coaching and support to promote their academic success in schools.
 - Fortunate to receive this grant for a number of years. K. Truchsess would like to alert the Board that she would like to move forward with applying for the grant for the upcoming school year. Would start effective soon and run through June 2021.
 - A. Spallino asked how they mentor the children? Will it be on Zoom now? K. Truchsess stated that everything is in accordance with wherever we are in the phase of our plan, so right now they are meeting with students via Google Meets and hopefully will be able to work with children when we are back in school.
 - A. Spallino asked if they are mentors they already know? K. Truchsess stated that they are the same support staff we have utilized. They are employees that we bring on as part of this grant and they would work with the same groups of students, same employees that we used last year to work with the kids.
 - They are different from DSABC mentors which are community mentors. This staff is used similar to some of our paraprofessional staff. Social workers or psychologists are point of contact to help facilitate these interactions.

DISCUSSION

- Reopening Update
 - K. Walston acknowledged concerns heard during public participation.
 - Acknowledge that the Cabinet has a hard time helping to come to this decision and Dr. Pascarella anguished over the decision. All realized the pain and frustration this could and would cause the community.
 - K. Walston stated that there were different metrics shared previously which caused confusion in school and the greater community.
 - The governor identified cities and towns that were on red alert. Danbury was one of those towns, but the schools were not.
 - There is another metric that is used for schools. One for towns, one for schools.
 - The metric that is used for towns is the more aggressive metric of the two. A town is on red alert if there are more than 15 cases or more per 100,000 people in a two week period.
 - The school metric, a controlled setting, is 25 cases or more per 100,000 people in a two week period.
 - The latest metric from the State was announced on 10/16/2020. That was a week before our reopening date and Addendum Four was released 10/21/2020. All of these moving parts contributed to the confusion in the community as we were trying to reopen.
 - K. Walston understands the distinct difference in communications that families received on 10/23/2020. One stating we are welcoming back families to school, the other postponing the reopening.
 - The Cabinet, Dr. Pascarella and K. Walston all met on the afternoon of 10/23/2020 to review our readiness to open up on 10/26/2020. There was a

concern that the City could be reverting back to Phase Two because of the increasing cases in Danbury. It became apparent that we might be in the position to withdraw our efforts to reopen on 10/26/2020. That meeting quickly moved from preparation for Monday morning to reviewing actual cases with the local Health Department and K. O'Dowd to review the numbers.

- Learned on the afternoon of 10/23/2020 that Danbury has 96 confirmed cases in the previous three days. Brought to attention that Danbury had not seen those numbers of cases since 8/21/2020. At that moment, and going into the weekend with possible further cases, it was deemed inappropriate to open schools. The reopening email was already scheduled to go out in the system. Some families had already opened the emails so it was not possible to retract the message at that point. A second communication that schools would not open on 10/26/2020 was then sent out.
- Unfortunate for families and students but we are looking to reopen. We do not have a projected date. Important to continue looking at data.
- K. Walston reviewed Addendum Four. As a district, we have been saying safe enough to return to school. At time, the numbers were between 17-19 cases per 100,000. Felt confident, at that time, that we could open schools going into 10/23/2020. Learned on 10/28/2020 the cases are 25+ and are solidly in the red even in the school metrics, which is a very controlled environment.
- K. Walston stated that he will make sure this is available for the community and will post on the district website. This info will guide the district to make informed decisions.
- Questions from Board
 - J. DaSilva asked, when the trend goes in the right direction, would it be possible to caveat our plans? K. Walston stated that we do have to add something that says “subject to change” and include that in future communications.
 - K. Molinaro stated that she has heard from parents that there is no true transparency on how bad the cases are. Are cases in hospitals? Are they sick? Are they asymptomatic? Is there any way we can add that somehow? K. Walston stated that he can work with K. Prunty on seeing if we can link that information on our district website so families can see the data.
 - K. Prunty stated that previously, data had been shared via the mayor's social media. As of 11/2/2020 that will be changing and will be shared on the City website. There will be an age breakdown of cases and total cases. Similar to what she was sharing with the Cabinet previously. Hospitalizations are not shared from the hospital as that is a HIPPA violation. Hospitalizations have not been an issue at this point. The virus is acting differently than it was in the Spring. It is also a lagging indicator. Statewide, hospitalizations are trending upwards and that is something to watch. Have not seen that increase here in Danbury.
 - R. Jannelli asked how the bilingual speaking community is being informed or notified of this information?
 - K. Walston stated that all of Dr. Pascarella’s communications are translated by the translators in the district and the information goes out in multiple languages, particularly Portuguese and Spanish. Finding opportunity to speak to a sense of awareness to the non-english speaking members of the community.

- A. Mead said the Tribuna Newspaper has been making sure all the articles about Covid-19 go out in English, Spanish and Portuguese.
- Parent liaisons in seven schools, F.A.C.E and Parent Educators are working with families to make sure they are aware of the risks and understanding all of the information in their own language. The Health Department may also be working on other bilingual initiatives as well.
- The resource page, district home page and community page for families are also in multiple languages.
- K. Prunty stated that they are working with community leaders, specifically faith-based organizations. They have been having Zoom meetings to get information out that way. Sharing as much information as possible with those individuals so community members can get it from a more trusted source because people tend to tune out the Health Department after a while. Doing a lot of community outreach that way.
- A. Spallino wondered how many parents will be looking at the City website for numbers and the school's website. K. Walston stated that he will work with K. Prunty to link the City website on the district website.
- J. DaSilva asked if there is a possibility of bringing in some kids, especially younger students, to school since we can't bring them all in? K. Walston stated that if that is a direction the district decides to go in, there is a framework to help drive those decisions. Will bring more attention to Addendum Four and how and why we make those decisions.
- R. Chaleski asked if there is an update for the SATs? There was a trust that was lost when that was promised no matter what model we were in.
- K. Walston stated that he will have to defer to the Cabinet for that information.
- K. Casimiro stated that DHS and the district contacted the College Board immediately. There is not an additional date possible this school year. DHS was able to get vouchers out with detailed information and parents were sent instructions immediately on how to use the vouchers. There is still a December date available to use the vouchers. If student's have already registered for the December date, it is possible to get a refund by contacting the College Board. Very local sites are full but there are 66 sites across the state with availability. Recognized this is difficult for students to make those arrangements.
- D. Donovan stated that he is in the same boat with a Senior who needs an SAT. When he sent that letter out, they were on Distance Learning due to the size of our schools, not because of Covid-19 cases. This Distance Learning now is because of the cases and red alert. With those numbers, they shut down the school. Looked very hard at trying to figure out a plan. With two days to go and the materials, he gave it his best shot. All weekend long he spoke to the College Board. The State did a great job advocating for an in-school SATs but the College Board is a national organization and would not accommodate. D. Donovan pushed out the vouchers as quickly as possible.
- SATs can be available for Seniors after the Juniors take them which is too late for Seniors and college applications. Underclassmen will be allowed to take SATs in March of 2021. PSATs in January of 2021 for Juniors.

- Testing sites are also closing due to Covid-19. Most, if not all colleges, are going test optional this year.
- J. DaSilva stated that this is the second time in four months where the College Board has acted unreasonably. Who should we talk to about putting pressure on the College Board? K. Casimiro stated that our local contact has been very flexible, and the State has done a great job bringing this opportunity to students in Connecticut. When it comes to certain standardized tests and the flexibilities around them, more testing dates and sites would have been nice to mitigate this. We can have conversations at the State level because they do contract with the College Board.
- K. Thompson stated that the response to this is larger than all of us. Many colleges are test optional now and not looking for SATs.
- R. Chaleski stated that no SATs hurts kids for merit based scholarships. K. Thompson stated that a lot of schools are changing what they use now to do the merit based scholarships. A lot of schools are using different metrics and not test scores. Change is coming.
- Danbury Career Academy Update
 - K. Walston stated that the Sites and Facilities committee has their meeting on 10/27/2020. In attendance were Mayor Boughton and City Council members as well as Board members.
 - Mayor Boughton provided an update speaking to progress made and monies needing to be secured from the town.
 - Unique approach. Working hard to secure the site at the Matrix. Instead of building a school from ground up, essentially have a condominium type of agreement.
 - K. Casimiro stated that at the Nashville Academies, all high schools in the greater metro area are academies and have different pathways for career options. Aerospace, STEM, Health and Bioscience, etc.
 - We have something similar at DHS in the form of the CNA program. Students receive a high school diploma and CNA degree. 60 students graduated from this program last year. It's a popular program and very competitive.
 - Expanding on that idea at the Matrix. Need to see what programs would best suit our students.
 - Partnered with the National Center for College and Career Transitions (NC3T). State is promoting this idea and providing professional services free of charge so that over the next year and a half, the district can learn how to set these pathways/academies up and how to structure them. There are a variety of models to choose.
 - Next meeting is in January of 2021. City needs a proposal by February of 2021.

BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

- G. Coopers stated that any Board members interested in attending the CABA Convention, 11/15/2020 - 11/16/2020, should contact K. Pompano.

BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS

- R. Chaleski asked if the communication at MRP was addressed? K. Walston stated that the issue was rectified, and the principal clarified the inconsistency in communications and she would have more thorough communications moving forward.
- K. Conetta stated that Rogers Park Middle School is currently running a fundraiser called Stroll for a Goal which is designed to assist some of their students who are experiencing food insecurity. Participants are asked to complete 25 miles between 11/1/2020 and 11/25/2020. The registration link is on the RPMS website.

ADJOURNMENT

J. DaSilva moved, seconded by K. Conetta, that the Board of Education adjourn its Meeting of October 28, 2020 and the meeting was adjourned at 8:34 pm.

Kathleen Molinaro, Secretary

(Meeting was videotaped)