

# **DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2019**

**Administrative Center, 63 Beaver Brook Road**

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Chairperson, P. Johnston, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **ROLL CALL**

Present: Rachel Chaleski, Gladys Cooper, Richard Jannelli, Patrick Johnston, Frederick Karrat,  
David Metrena, Emanuela Palmares, Ralph Pietrafesa, Amy Spallino

Absent: Kathleen Molinaro, Farley Santos, Kim Thompson

Also Present: Dr. Pascarella, Kevin Walston, Joe Martino, Kelly Truchsess, Kara Casimiro

## **RECOGNITIONS**

- David Krafick “Hometown Hero” and Jeffrey Martinez “Emerging Hero”
  - On December 1, 2018 David Krafick, Principal of Park Avenue School and Jeffrey Martinez, a senior at Danbury High School, were recognized by the United Way of Western Connecticut at a dinner at the Amber Room Colonnade, along with a dozen people from seven area towns.
  - Jeffrey has earned 30 college credits while in high school, maintaining a 3.5 GPA. He is currently in the process of applying to some prestigious engineering colleges. Jeffrey stated that he enjoys volunteering and tutoring students at the Grassroots Academy, and he is very thankful for the opportunity of being an Emerging Hero.
  - Mr. Krafick stated that it was a wonderful honor and a great night. He enjoyed seeing the youth there from all the different towns and listening to their accomplishments as they read their bios. Mr. Krafick stated that no significant learning can occur without significant relationships between teachers and students.
  
- SpreadMusicNow presented \$40,000 check to VH1 Save the Music Foundation to support the group’s donation of musical instruments to Danbury schools
  - Dr. Pascarella thanked Jill Russell-Benner for what she has done with the program.
  - The grants started about two years ago.
  - Gives students access to instruments that they otherwise wouldn’t have access to.
  - The contribution has allowed the district to have six schools in total participate. Park Ave, South Street, Morris Street, Hayestown, Stadley Rough and Ellsworth Ave. The goal is to have all K-8 schools funded under the VH1 Save the Music Foundation.
  - The initial rental fee is typically 30 or 60 days. After that, a parent goes from paying \$20 to \$120 and that is when you see the drop-in participants. This program allows students to continue music education.
  - Looking at Mill Ridge Primary and King Street Primary as a general music grant. Part of the requirement is to have space for classrooms which is a challenge.
  - Mrs. Russell-Benner introduced music teacher Skip Jennings who did a phenomenal presentation on December 18, 2018 for the check presentation as well as Mary Peters who is the Orchestra Director at Broadview Middle School and DHS.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

- Kate Conetta - Expressed interest and consideration for the vacant seat on the Board of Education. Ms. Conetta grew up in Bethel and has lived in Danbury since 2011. She has honed a lot of skills that would be a valuable asset to the Board. Ms. Conetta is accustomed to handling critical tasks and detail to work. Ms. Conetta stated that the most powerful thing that anybody could bring to this job is a passion the work involved. She has always felt very passionate about the value of education.
- Josie Ruiz-Gogan - Not-for-profit group that supports the Danbury High School Marching Band. They have put a down payment on uniforms that they expect to receive for the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Their understanding was that the balance of the uniform cost would come from the BOE, but they have come to the understanding that only \$5000 is available. They would like to know if that is correct and if so, what can they do in the future to better manage the process for those funds should they partner again. P. Johnston stated he will have to look into that.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

**MOTION** - R. Chaleski moved, seconded by R. Pietrafesa that the Board of Education approves the items on the Consent Calendar, Exhibits 19-03 through 19-05, as recommended:

### MINUTES

11/28/18 Board Workshop

11/28/18 Board Meeting

12/12/18 Annual Board Meeting

**Motion passed at 7:25 pm**

## **PRESENTATION**

### Strategic Plan Timeline

- Kevin Walston gave an update on the process.
- Kickoff was held on December 11, 2018. Over 50 stakeholders were in attendance.
- Soon after that day, they identified four distinct stages to implement the strategic planning process.
- Data Synthesis Stage, Feedback Stage, Adoption Stage and Developmental Stage.
- Data Synthesis is about collecting information and recommendations from various sources. They will synthesize the info which will be the first draft to the Guiding Principles for the District, Vision Statement, District Statement and Mission & Portrait of a Graduate Characteristics.
- At end of January they will be meeting with TDEC (the advisory to the BOE) for the Feedback Stage, essentially asking for affirmation to carry on with the process.
- They will then go out and engage our various stakeholders' groups throughout the community for feedback including staff, students and Admin Council.
- Next is the Adoption Stage. After feedback is collected from various stakeholders from the community, will make necessary adjustments to the statements and present it to Board and community for consideration.
- Once the plan is approved by the Board, they will go in to the Development Plan.
- R. Jannelli asked when the final document is anticipated. K. Walston stated that the goal is September of 2019.
- R. Jannelli was also present for the December session and he felt it was incredibly productive, well organized and he was very impressed.
- K. Walston thanked his colleagues for their "all hands-on deck" approach.
- E. Palmares stated that she has been hearing a lot of positive feedback from the community with Mr. Walston's involvement with the community, capability to listen and gathering people together.

- G. Cooper stated that she personally would like to read some of the comments, feedback and information from the December session so she can get a better idea on what we are moving towards.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### A. Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Revisions

MOTION: R. Chaleski moved, seconded by G. Cooper that the Board of Education accept for second reading adoption Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Revisions, Policy 7-234.

**Motion passed at 7:35 pm**

### B. Truancy Policy

MOTION: R. Chaleski moved, seconded by A. Spallino that the Board of Education accept for second reading and adoption Truancy Policy 7-232 (replaces current policy in its entirety).

**Motion passed at 7:36 pm**

### C. Student Data Protection & Privacy/Cloud Based Issues (new Policy)

MOTION: R. Chaleski moved, seconded by R. Pietrafesa that the Board of Education accept for second reading and adoption a new policy 7-127, Student Data Protection & Privacy/Cloud Based

**Motion passed at 7:36pm**

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

### A. Bus transportation options

J. Martino stated that they continue to look at bell schedules. We currently have a four-tier system, which is very tightly stacked together. The goal is to go into a three-tier system. We keep adding buses every year, but a three-tier system would help to reduce a few buses. It is a very complicated system. They are going to keep looking at that and continue working with a consultant. We have about 11 non-public schools that we also have to provide transportation for.

### B. Facilities update

J. Martino stated that a study is going on now with Friar on identifying schools needing space. Also, being done is an enrollment study. They are extensive studies. J. Martino will check to see if the companies holding the studies are available for a workshop on February 13, 2019.

### C. Update on Goals

K. Casimiro stated that the benchmarks will be over at the end of January. Dr. Pascarella stated that the primary focus is on student achievement.

### D. AIS Magnet School Advisory Board (2017-2018 & 2018-2019 Update/Tuition)

Raise in tuition to \$2,100 per student.

## **DISCUSSION**

### A. 2019-2020 Budget

J. Martino stated that he will have a full and complete budget at the next meeting. Budget needs to be on Mayor Boughton's desk the morning of February 14th.

B. Enrollment Report

Enrollment was flat this year. The trend is not changing very much. We are seeing a lot of numbers coming out of the west side of Danbury with new condo constructions.

**INFORMATION**

- A. Updated Regulations for Policy 7-143.1, Administration of Medicine by School Personnel
- B. Updated Regulations for Policy 7-237, Physical Restraint/Seclusion/Exclusionary Time Out

Dr. Pascarella stated that the above items were in the packet for information to the Board.

**BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

A. Board Committee List

P. Johnston stated that he will be looking over the committee list and hopefully have it laid out for the next meeting.

B. Board/PTO Liaison List

P. Johnston said we have already had a couple inquiries so we will work our way through that.

C. Board Vacancy posted until January 16<sup>th</sup>

Interviews will be held after posting closes.

- Dr. Pascarella stated that the intent is to have K. Molinaro come back because the Board has a gift for her and a special recognition, for when she is able to return.
- E. Palmares stated that K. Molinaro had once volunteered to be the Board Historian due to her years of service and knowledge. It would be a good way to keep Mrs. Molinaro involved with the work and still continue to be with her family. P. Johnston agreed and stated that will be proposed to Mrs. Molinaro as soon as things level out for her.
- P. Johnston extended an invitation to the Board to attend an event that Mrs. O'Neill's class of Morris Street School is having on January 18, 2019 at 1pm.

**BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS**

- R. Pietrafesa has been visiting some schools. He stated that walking in to those schools really hits you on why you are on the Board. He encourages members to visit the schools and support the staff and students. From his personal opinion, being at the schools helps him make the decisions on the Board. R. Chaleski agreed and stated that it gives staff a voice and gives the Board context to make decisions.
- R. Jannelli asked Dr. Pascarella to remind principals that they can reach out to the Board to visit the school on pre-planned programs. It is nice to be extended an invitation.
- G. Cooper stated that we have opportunities as elected officials to do what's best for all students. When she needs help to make a decision about a particular program, she calls the school and asks when the program is happening so she can sit down with them and understand why she is making that vote. She believes that we need to understand what our roles are as Board Members.
- A. Spallino informed the Board that there will be a fundraiser at McDonald's on Padanaram Road on January 23, 2019 to help raise funds for the Pembroke School playground.
- A. Spallino spoke about the City-wide PTO meeting held on January 7, 2019. The new Director of Safety, Mr. Rich Torres, spoke to those in attendance about his plan of action for the district and how he is working on an emergency plan, so all schools have a uniform plan/wording. Parents were very pleased with his presentation. Also discussed that night was a suggestion that PTO's have pro bono audits in lieu of the recent discovery of other districts with money being used by PTO members for personal use. In addition, attendants were very pleased with the meeting being held in the new Black Box Theater at DHS

- G. Cooper thanked Dr. Pascarella and K. Walston. She appreciates them taking time out of their schedule and working together to make sure all our children are educated.
- R. Chaleski would like to see if an informational pamphlet can be sent to parents to better inform them on the budget process.
- Board Goal meeting was scheduled to be held on January 30, 2019 at 7 pm.
- G. Cooper will come up with a date for Superintendent's Committee meeting at a different time.
- R. Chaleski stated that the CAFE Legislative Breakfast will be held on January 15, 2019 from 8-10am at the Ridgefield Town Annex. They asked for our top three priorities for this upcoming biannual session. R. Chaleski replied with the following:
  - That the State continue to move toward an equitable and predictable education financial system for all Connecticut students.
  - We highly depend on the Alliance District Program to service for our students' basic needs.
  - Lawmakers should recognize the financial impact with any new policy or mandate in regard to the new student privacy law.
- Dr. Pascarella stated that they put together a sheet on the privacy law that is very explicit and R. Chaleski can give that to CAFE.
- R. Jannelli spoke about the Pembroke Playground and left flyers for those in attendance. So far \$22,000 has been raised of the \$150,000 goal. Some companies have been generous in fundraising and donations. Cartus will be hosting a corporate-wide luncheon to raise funds. We are still in need of donors.
- P. Johnston thanked G. Cooper and R. Chaleski for stepping up to the roles of Board Secretary and Vice Chair, respectively.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

P. Johnston moved, seconded by R. Pietrafesa, that the Board of Education adjourns its Meeting of January 9, 2019 and the meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

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Gladys Cooper, Secretary

(Meeting was videotaped)