

## **REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION (Tuesday, September 21, 2021)**

*Presiding Officer: Maria Mesires*

*PRESENT: Jason Harrington, Lorie Converse, Culley Gosier, Ammbrose Souza, Rande Richardson, Suzanne Renzi- Falge.*

*There were 10 visitors in attendance.*

### **Meeting Opening**

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

President Maria Mesires called to order the Public Hearing of the Watertown City School District Board of Education at 6:00 p.m. in the Starbuck Elementary gymnasium.

### **Public Hearing**

District Wide Safety Plan

The District held a Public hearing to answer any questions from the public regarding revisions to the Watertown City School District-Wide School Safety Plan following a 30 day public review and comment period. Superintendent Patricia LaBarr reviewed these updates for the board and public. There were no questions or comments.

### **Motion to Close Public Hearing**

President Mesires asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing.

Motion was made by Jason Harrington and seconded by Lorie Converse and carried; all voting aye.

A motion to open the Regular Board of Education Meeting was made by Jason Harrington and seconded by Ammbrose Souza and carried; all voting aye.

### **Regular Board of Education Meeting**

President Mesires took a moment to note that with the recent loss of a Carthage Central student, the Watertown City School District will be available for any support the Carthage Central district might need during this very difficult time.

Agenda Changes-- The only change to the agenda was to omit the Policy Committee Report, as the committee did not meet this evening.

Public Comments-- Mr. Darren Burgess, a fourth grade teacher stood and spoke briefly. Mr. Burgess praised the staff and administration at Starbuck Elementary, specifically noting the outstanding work ethic and the determination to put students first. Mr. Burgess commends Mr. Lennox for treating everyone at Starbuck with respect and for always making sure that the staff has what they need to do their work with students each day. Additionally, he thanked the Board of Education and district office administration for supporting the faculty and staff at Starbuck Elementary.

Communications-- The district clerk reported that the Jefferson-Lewis School Boards Association will host an upcoming presentation on October 21 featuring Student Mental Health. More information will be forthcoming.

### **Board and Staff Reports**

Welcome-- Michael Lennox, Principal, Starbuck Elementary

Mr. Lennox did a presentation highlighting several great things about Starbuck Elementary. He began by noting the new staff at Starbuck this school year in addition to recognizing the staff that have served 5,

15, 20 and 30 years of service with the Watertown City School District. Starbuck Elementary takes pride in its outdoor classroom in which students are provided hands on learning. Mr. Lennox mentioned that the students at Starbuck are recognized for good behavior with a Starbuck Star. Students receiving stars are announced each day and displayed throughout the building. He notes that this reinforcement of positive behavior is well received by the students and staff at Starbuck.

Additionally, he mentioned that Starbuck Elementary has an Attendance Team that work closely with students that are having attendance issues or if there is a general concern about a particular student. This team meets weekly and communicates to the family of the student. He notes that it is very important to keep on top of student attendance.

He notes that Starbuck Elementary is off to a great start of the school year.

#### Athletic Update-- Mr. George Emrich, Athletic Director

Mr. Emrich circled back to a previous board meeting where some athletic issues were discussed, as he wanted to provide some clarification for the board members and audience. In particular, he spoke about the procedures and requirements of hiring sports coaches in the district. He mentioned that the district's Physical Education staff is well represented with sports coaching although occasionally the district does reach out to the public to generate interested coaching candidates. One of the advantages of having teaching staff as coaches is the convenience of having the teacher/coach on the same schedule as the sports teams/students which enables practices right at the end of the academic day and eliminates unsupervised students.

Mr. Emrich then touched base on some of the areas of concern in the district in regards to sports. He spoke briefly on the yearly maintenance that is performed on the turf in efforts to keep it maintained, as it is 15 years old. Each year an annual impact test is performed on the turf in addition to a deep cleaning process. He feels that the turf has been maintained well. Replacement of the turf would need to be part of a future Capital Project.

Additionally, he updated the board members on the pools in the district. Last year, with the Capital Outlay project, several upgrades and repairs took place with the pool at Watertown High. Mr. Emrich mentioned that another areas in the district in need of improvement are the gymnasium at North Elementary, the tennis courts, and the ball field.

He went on to touch base on the student policy 7600 which prohibits students from participating in sports if they happen to be failing two or more classes at the time of report cards. Mr. Emrich went on to elaborate why this policy was changed a few years ago and subsequently board approved.

#### Superintendent of Schools Report--Patricia B. LaBarr

- Superintendent LaBarr reiterated President Mesires' previous comments in noting that the district is thinking of the Carthage Central School district with heartfelt sympathy. Counseling support was offered to Carthage Central staff and students.
- Last week the Superintendent met with a few members of the graduating class of 1970 for a bench donation/presentation at Watertown High School. Mr. Fairchild provided a tour of the building following the presentation and it was much appreciated by the graduates.
- There was a school bus and car accident this afternoon. Superintendent LaBarr received the call from First Student, she personally drove to the accident scene to observe what happened. Everyone involved in the incident is fine and she commends First Student with their quick response with the situation.
- Mrs. LaBarr is continuing to work on preparations with testing unvaccinated staff members. The district will be working with the Infinity Co. to fulfill the testing. Superintendent LaBarr is hopeful for an October 4th start with testing.

- She reports that the district is working with BOCES in order to implement more tutoring support for students that are on short term quarantine.
- Additionally, she reports that she has been working with Watertown High on musicals and thoughts of an upcoming homecoming celebration. It's understood that they would have to look "outside the box" in order to make these events work safely. She agrees that social-emotionally students need to get back to some of these events that they enjoy.
- She clarified that an incident happened Friday evening at the first football game. With the fact that social media was fueled over the weekend, by the time students returned to school on Monday she and the administration had a plan in place and that plan was successfully implemented.

#### Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Report--Stacey Eger-Converse

- Ms. Eger-Converse provided the board members with a copy of the Back to School monthly update. It provides information on instructional matters, events, technology glitches and professional development opportunities etc. She will keep the board members apprised of these updates as well.
- She has been working with Mrs. Lisa Blank on some revisions to the DODEA grant submission from May specifically for Physical Education. She is hopefully for some impending news regarding a 5 year grant which would support the district's PE and health departments.
- Ms. Eger-Converse was happy to announce that Lisa Blank was chosen to lead the regional DODEA STEM initiative. Congratulations Lisa!
- She also reports that homeschool numbers are on a steady include with approximately 210 students. The ENL (English as a Second Language) student enrollment numbers have increased from 72 students to 88 students in the district. She continued by giving a shout out to Kimberly Plante, the new central registrar in the district. Since July 1 Kim has registered 374 new students to the district, which is a huge increase from previous years.
- The tech department is working through a number of tech issues. ClassLink was launched this year. She thanks the Tech department, the Integration Specialists and the Instructional coaches for their patience.
- Ms. Eger-Converse also reported that threshold attendance letters will start to go home every 5 weeks starting at the 10-week marking period. Nudge letters will go to students that have missed 10 days, 15 days, or 20 days of school. Home school coordinators will work with her on these letter for all grade levels.

#### Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Student Services Report--Tina Lane

- Ms. Lane reported that the Covid cases in the district will be reported to families weekly. Principals and staff are working hard to keep within the guidelines in order to keep the number of quarantined students at a minimum.
- Covid testing began last week for the players of high risk sports; football and cheerleading. The nursing staff in the district worked quickly to implement the 15-minute rapid test. Weekly testing will continue for players of those high risk sports.
- Ms. Lane and Ms. Eger-Converse facilitated an on-line presentation last week for the student success system, Panorama. They presented to approximately 1,000 administrators state-wide. They focused on how the Watertown City School District has implemented Panorama and moving forward what additional plans are planned with Panorama.
- She noted to the board members that the district is in a substitute shortage. More substitute interviews are planned very soon.

#### School Business Manager Report--Joshua Hartshorne

- Mr. Harshorne began by reviewing a copy of the revenue status report and the appropriation status report. Board members were provided a hard copy in order to follow along.
- He mentioned that his office is working on year-end reporting.
- The first Smart Schools reimbursement was submitted today, which is \$2.15 Million. Mr. Hartshorne is hopeful for the approval to go smoothly.
- He reports that the tax notice was in the paper last Wednesday and will, again, be in this Sunday's newspaper.
- The Bid opening for the Capital Outlay project will be awarded to Burns Bros., which will be approved by resolution during the Items for Board Action. He reports that this is the vendor that was utilized previously at Case Middle School and it is favorable for consistency.
- Additionally, he reports that there is a Capital Meeting tomorrow regarding the future temperature controls.
- The Office of the State Comptroller will have the exit meeting coming up on Thursday.

**Items for Consent Agenda**

- A. Approval of the Minutes of the Committee on Pre-School Education.
- B. Approval of the Minutes of the Committee on Special Education.

The board is asked to accept the Minutes of the Committee on Special Education. Motion made by Suzanne Renzi-Falge. Seconded by Lorie Converse and carried; all voting aye.

**Items for Board Action**

**Approval of District Wide Safety Plan**

**WHEREAS**, the Watertown City School District’s District wide School Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner’s Regulation 155.17 and at the direction of the district’s Board of Education, the Superintendent of Schools, appointed a District wide School Safety Team and charged it with the development and maintenance of the Districtwide School Safety Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Plan was designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies and to facilitate the coordination of the district with local and county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies; and

**WHEREAS**, one public hearing, regarding the Watertown City School District’s School Safety Plan, providing for the participation of school personnel, parents, students, and any other interested parties was held on September 21, and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by this Board as follows: 1) the Board of Education adopts the above-mentioned School Safety Plan; 2) the School Safety Plan shall be filed with the Commissioner no later than 30 days after its adoption; 3) this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

The board is asked to approve the 2021-22 District Wide Safety Plan.

**Motion made by Culley Gosier.**

**Seconded by Jason Harrington and carried; all voting aye.**

Approval of Personnel Report

**RESIGNATIONS**

<b>A</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>Years</b>
1	Canfield, Lindsey	Teacher	9/15/2021	0

2	McClusky, James	Substitute	9/8/2021	1
3	Slate, Amy	Teacher Aide	9/7/2021	0

**APPOINTMENTS – PERMANENT – PART TIME**

B	Name	Title	Effective Date	Salary
1	Gardner, Stephanie	Noon Monitor	9/27/21	\$12.65/hr
2	Hodrick, Donasia	Food Service Worker	9/22/21	\$13.20/hr
3	Jewett, Michele	Food Service Worker	9/22/21	\$13.20/hr
4	Lopez, Maria	Food Service Worker	9/22/2021	\$13.20/hr
5	Haraczka, Stacie*	Food Service Worker	9/22/21	\$13.20/hr

- Pending Fingerprint Clearance

**APPOINTMENTS – PERMANENT**

C	Name	Title	Effective Date	Salary
1	Canfield, Lindsey	Teacher Aide	9/16/2021	\$15.15/hr
2	Gehring, Valerie*	Hall Monitor	9/27/2021	\$12.81/hr

- Pending Fingerprint Clearance

**APPOINTMENTS – PART TIME**

D	Name	Job Title	Effective Date	Ending Date
1	Brady, Anthony	Alternative Ed. Teacher	9/22/2021	6/30/2022
2	Shear, Dianna	Alternative Ed. Teacher Substitute	9/22/2021	6/30/2022

**APPOINTMENTS – SUBSTITUTES – INSTRUCTIONAL**

E	Name	Effective Date	Ending Date
1	Johnson, Warren	9/22/2021	6/30/2022
2	Lettiere, Andrea	9/22/2021	6/30/2022
3	Parks, Collin	9/10/2021	6/30/2022
4	Rowe, Cindy	9/22/2021	6/30/2022

The board is asked to approve the Personnel Report.

**Motion offered by Ammbrose Souza.**

**Seconded by Lorie Converse and carried; all voting aye.**

**Approval of an Educational Student Trip**

The board is asked to approve an Educational Student Trip for a student to attend the All State Symphony Orchestra in Rochester NY on December 2--5.

**Motion made by Rande Richardson.**

**Seconded by Culley Gosier and carried; all voting aye.**

**Approval of the Contractor for the Capital Outlay Project**

The Board is asked to approve Burns Bros. as the Contractor for the Capital Outlay Project.

**RESOLVED**, that the General Construction Contract for the Capital Outlay Project with Burns Bros. Construction is hereby approved.

**Motion made by Suzanne Renzi-Falge.**

**Seconded by Jason Harrington and carried; all voting aye.**

**Approval of the School Based Health MOU**

The board is asked to approve the School Based Health MOU.

**Motion was made to table this resolution by Rande Richardson.**

**Seconded by Ammbrose Souza and carried; all voting aye.**

**Items for Discussion/Information**

Upcoming Dates

October 5 (Tuesday) FAF Meeting, 5 p.m., District Office.

October 5 (Tuesday) Board of Education Meeting, 6 p.m. District Office Conference Room.

October 11 (Monday) **All Buildings Closed**, Columbus Day

**Adjournment**

At 7:34 pm, with no further business President Mesires asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion by Suzanne Renzi-Falge.

Seconded by Jason Harrington and carried; all voting aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle R. Gravelle, District Clerk