

BETHANY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting Minutes
Via Zoom Webinar
February 9, 2022

Present

Angelo Amato
John Paul Garcia
Angel Irigoyen
Amy Lestinsky, Vice Chair
EJ Maher
Christopher Pittenger, Chair
Shawn Uscilla
Lynette White, Secretary
Namita Wijesekera

Administration

Colleen Murray
Kai Byrd
Tom Reed-Swale

Absent

None

Call to Order

Dr. Pittenger called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

PTO Report

Mrs. Lestinsky reported on recent and upcoming PTO events.

Public Comment

Kimberly Wolcott, BEA President. The BEA is in favor of BCS students and staff continuing to wear masks.

Shannon Gluse, 337 Wooding Hill Road. Spoke in favor of unmasking BCS students.

Nicole Wetmore, 40 Woods Road. Spoke in favor of unmasking BCS students.

Stefanie Wells, 54 Rainbow Road. Spoke in favor of unmasking BCS students.

Melissa Zaldo, 191 Beacon Road. Spoke in favor of unmasking BCS students.

BOE Secretary, Lynette White read a Public Comment submitted by Russell Stutsky, 45 Cedar Road. Spoke in favor of unmasking BCS students.

Minutes

Motion by Lestinsky, seconded by Wijesekera to accept the January 12, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 abstain (Uscilla).*

Committee Reports

Finance:

Motion by Lestinsky, seconded by Amato to accept the report of expenditures and adjustments to the 2021-2022 Operating Budget through January 31, 2022 as presented. *The motion carries unanimously.*

Curriculum:	The committee met on February 2, 2022 and discussed curriculum programs, professional learning, equity, and received a presentation on the Boost Program and highlights on school-wide benchmark data.
Facilities:	The committee is scheduled to meet on April 5, 2022.
Ad Hoc Facilities:	The committee has not met recently.
Policy:	The committee is scheduled to meet on March 8, 2022.
Transportation:	The committee has not met recently.
ACES:	None.
Unfinished Business	Motion by Lestinsky, seconded by Amato to adopt the Superintendent's recommended Spending Plan for the 2022-2023 school year in the amount of \$7,277,693. <i>The motion carries unanimously.</i>
New Business	<p>The Board held a robust discussion on COVID-related school policies.</p> <p>The Board agreed to hold a Special Meeting on February 23, 2022 to make a decision on current COVID policies including masking and contact tracing. The Board directed Mrs. Murray to conduct a parent and staff survey on masking and to gather data to inform the Board's decision-making at the February 23, 2022 meeting. The Board agreed that cohorting can be discontinued effective as soon as practicable during outdoor recess.</p>
Superintendent Report	<p>Mrs. Murray reported that on January 31, 2022, PK-6 enrollment was 404 students.</p> <p>Mrs. Murray is projecting 55 Kindergartners for next year. At this time, 32 students have pre-registered.</p> <p>Mrs. Murray reported on the American Rescue Plan/ESSER III Grant Projects.</p> <p>Mrs. Murray notified the Board that the Director position has been posted and applications are under review. She further reported that 2 employees are on a leave of absence.</p> <p>Mrs. Murray stated the BCS Steering Committee has met several times over the course of the last month and are working on a mid-year data presentation and will bring the Equity Team to the BOE for a presentation in either April or May.</p>
Director Report	Mrs. Byrd reported on Curriculum and Special Services. Her report is on file in the BOE Packet.
Principal Report	Mr. Reed-Swale reported on BCS's recent and upcoming events. His report is on file in the BOE Packet.

Chairman Report

Dr. Pittenger stated the Bethany Finance Committee will be notified of the Board's adopted budget.

Dr. Pittenger reminded the Board members that the February 23, 2022 Special Meeting topic was originally intended to be about the State Partnership Health Care Plan but will now be about the COVID-related policies and practices.

Dr. Pittenger stated that a Spring Open Forum has been scheduled for Tuesday, March 29, 2022.

Communications

None.

Public Comment

Amber Durkin, 58 Perkins Road. Thankful for ending recess cohorting and to consider sixth graders switching classrooms.

Susan Marsh, 285 Sperry Road. Thankful for all the school has done and is in support of ending cohorts and unmasking students.

Melissa Zaldo, 191 Beacon Road. Thankful for the Board's robust discussion and for administration keeping BCS open. She reiterated she strongly supports student masking becoming optional.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Susan Carpenter
Susan L. Carpenter
Recording Secretary

Approved March 9, 2022

APPROVED