

1. Call to Order

Dr. Nugent, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01PM. Other Members present: Cindy Luty, Cindy Dupointe, Deborah Burke-Grabarek, Megan Gallant, Charles Raymond and Dan Harris. Also present: Dr. Seitsinger; Superintendent, and Gloria Homiski; Recording Secretary.

Dr. Nugent stated that the Board hopes to host hybrid meetings in the near future.

2. Public Comment

Gale Ennis addressed the board with regard to the recent BOE vacancy appointment. She asked if she could receive copies of the board's policies and procedures for filling such a vacancy. Mrs. Ennis believes the decision not to elect Courtney Ennis was a disservice to the community.

Moved, to add Board of Education Committees to the agenda. Harris/Gallant. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Curriculum: Cindy Luty and Deborah Burke-Grabarek

Negotiations: TBD as needed

Policy: Megan Gallant

Equity and SEL Board Contacts: Cindy Dupointe and Cindy Luty

LEARN Representative: Cindy Luty

CABE Liaison: Sean Nugent

Finance: Sean Nugent, Cindy Dupointe and Charles Raymond (chosen tonight)

Dr. Nugent also asked members if they prefer to use Boardbook (electronic version) or receive scanned copies of the agenda and printed copies at the BOE meetings. It was determined that full agendas will be scanned and the most important documents will be printed for the meetings.

3. Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was accepted as presented.

4. Superintendent's Reports/Updates

CABE BOE Recognition Award:

The Preston BOE was again recognized by CABE. We have been awarded this recognition each year since 2018. (They did not give out the award in 2020 due to COVID).

2022-2023 School Calendar:

Moved, to approve the calendar as presented. Luty/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

CSDE Standards for Remote Learning for Grades 9-12:

Dr. Seitsinger shared the state's standards with the Board.

Healthy Food Certification for 2022-2023:

Moved, Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the board of education or governing authority certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the CT Nutrition Standards published by the CSDE, will comply with the CT Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. Gallant/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Moved, that the BOE or governing authority will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the CT Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the CT General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and inter-scholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales. Luty/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Board Retreat:

Dr. Seitsinger and Dr. Nugent said that they would like to hold a Board Retreat sometime in the near future. The meeting will be held in the PPMS Library on a Saturday morning from 8AM -11AM. Nick Caruso from CAFE will be invited as well. Dates in April will be reviewed.

Dr. Seitsinger congratulated Charles Raymond on his appointment to the Board and also Nancy Musa (Admin. Asst. to the First Selectwoman) on her retirement.

Meetings are still underway regarding the future development of the Blue Water RV Park across the street from PPMS.

We are beginning to look for another location to house Central Office. We will need to move in FY24. PPMS will need our two classrooms back.

Two workshops will be presented by Effective School Solutions entitled, Nurtured Heart Approach. They will be held on Thursday, March 24th from 10AM-11AM and Thursday, April 28th from 6PM – 7PM. Please contact Jessica Boucher, School Social Worker, for the Zoom Link to the meetings.

Equity Institute Surveys: These surveys are underway for staff, board members, families and students. The data collected will guide us through our strategic plan development.

Dr. Seitsinger shared with the Board the welcome packets created by Gail Smith. Each packet contains the necessary information for parents as well as a small gift for students.

5. Principal and Special Education Director Reports

Ray Bernier: PVMS Principal

Now that masking is optional, it is very nice to see students' smiling faces. There have been no problems since masking was made optional. With COVID cases at bay, PVMS brought back yearbook, Spanish and unified club meetings. PTO is starting to plan for field day which will be held on sight. Mr. Bernier shared a short video of the PVMS hallway which is decorated for Dr. Seus Day, March 2nd.

Dr. Seitsinger read Ann Perzan's report in her absence:

Staff members are working together to ensure a smooth transition from IEP Direct to CT-SEDS. They are participating in training sessions and reviewing student files. The transition must be completed by July 1st. The mental health of our students remains to be a major concern at this time.

Dr. Davis-Tomczuk: PPMS Principal and Director of Curriculum

Students and staff have made a great transition from mask wearing to optional mask wearing. There have not been any positive COVID cases since March 1st. Students are all eating in the cafeteria again as well. PPMS will host a "See Something, Say Something" presentation on Friday. It is the first presentation in two years! On April 1st students in grades 7 and 8 will participate in an "Ending the Silence" presentation by NAMI to promote suicide prevention. On May 19th at 1:30PM Scott Driscoll (retired trooper) will host an internet safety presentation.

Cindy Dupointe asked if the after school academic programs at both schools will be reinstated. Dr. Davis-Tomczuk stated that PPMS holds an intervention program during the school day. Mr. Bernier stated that to date he does not have a teacher interested in taking over the program.

6. Policy Review

First Read:

Policy 5144.1 Physical Restraint/Seclusion

Policy 5145.511 Sexual Harassment

Dr. Nugent asked that the Board review these policies and send comments or suggestions prior to the next meeting.

7. Expenditure/Projection Reports

Cindy Varricchio explained that she is continuing to remedy audit recommendations for FY2020. She is also working closely with the auditors to address any questions for the FY21 audit. She reported that we have expended 56% of our budget so far this year and she continues to monitor expenditures closely.

On March 24th we will hold a Special BOE Meeting to officially review the FY23 Draft Budget document. On March 31st another Special Meeting will be held to make final adjustments and vote on the budget. The budget will be submitted to the BOF on April 5th.

Dr. Seitsinger stated that the FY23 Budget is geared towards recovery and revitalization. Nothing new is being added to this budget. We are only trying to maintain what we already have in place. Prices are up across the board, thereby creating the need for 1.1 million dollars or a 9% increase. Dr. Seitsinger hopes that voters will continue to support the students of Preston Public Schools.

A lengthy discussion followed. Board members discussed different ways to handle PreK, early retirement incentives, middle school teacher certifications, the tax rate and the excess fund balance.

Another BOE Finance Committee Workshop will be held on Thursday at 6PM.

Dr. Seitsinger stated that he will attend the BOF Meeting on 3-16-22 to revisit the status of forming a Town Building Committee.

Dr. Nugent asked that we change the dates on the 5 year capital plan to 2023-2027 and submit it to the BOF.

8. Adjournment

Moved, to adjourn the meeting at 9:08PM. Burke-Grabarek/Dupointe. Unanimous. Motion Carries.