



**Regular Meeting of the Region 14 Board of Education**

**Monday, January 3, 2022**

Via Zoom

<https://ctreg14-org.zoom.us/j/82852225822>

Meeting ID: 828 5222 5822

Phone: (646) 558-8656

**Present:**

George Bauer, Chairman  
Jim Crocker  
Carol Ann Brown  
Michael Devine  
Jonathan Kapstein  
Chris Matta  
David Butkus  
Tikva Rose

**Absent:**

N/A

**Also Present:**

Tina Tanguay, Director of Finance and Operations

Patricia Paige, Board Recording Clerk

**I. Call to Order**

Mr. Bauer called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**II. Introductions**

Members of the Board introduced themselves

**III. Approval of the Minutes**

A. Regular Meeting, Monday, December 6, 2021

A motion was made by Michael Devine and seconded by David Butkus to accept/approve the minutes as presented; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.

**IV. Acting Superintendent's Report (Tina Tanguay reported in Mr. McAllister's absence)**

A. African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies Update: Tabled until next meeting

B. Vision of a Learner and Action Plan: Tabled until next meeting

C. E.L.M. Tree Service Inc. Donation

Dylan Albert, a former Nonnewaug student and current owner of E.L.M. Tree

Services, offered to remove several trees from the high school complex totaling \$2500, gratuitous. A letter noting the charitable donation was provided to Mr. Albert for tax purposes.

A motion was made by Mr. Bauer and seconded by Jonathan Kapstein to accept/approve the charitable donation letter to E.L.M. Tree Services in the amount of \$2500; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.

The cleanup efforts were greatly appreciated.

D. Personnel Report

Ms. Tanguay read into the record the names of several new hires, resignations, and one retiring staff member.

E. Covid Update

Covid-19 test kits are being delivered to the DEMHS Point of Distribution on January 4, 2022. This is phase one, which will equate to approximately half of the total allocation and is based on the current number of kits received or 720 kits for students and 280 kits for staff. The state provided recommendations regarding who should obtain a test kit and included students and staff exhibiting symptoms, those who had direct exposure, and a class/program experiencing multiple cases. Administration will be working in conjunction with the school nurses on distribution.

Region 14 administration has been collaborating with the Bethlehem and Woodbury Emergency Management Teams in obtaining the N95 adult size masks. The anticipated delivery date is Thursday, January 6<sup>th</sup>.

Discussions were had regarding the updated Considerations for Quarantine, Isolation, Testing, and Contact Tracing Policies and Procedures in PreK-12 Schools, which were shared with school districts from the State Department of Public Health on December 31, 2021, and in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; it was brought before the board as an informational piece.

This update outlines a set of optional policy and procedural changes that school districts may choose to implement. They are being offered to Connecticut school districts to refocus the resources currently available to PreK-12 schools for Covid-19 prevention toward those activities most likely to reduce the risk of transmission and in consideration of recent changes in CDC guidance for quarantine and isolation for individuals testing positive, or exposed to someone with Covid-19. Guidelines for students and staff members who are vaccinated, partially vaccinated, or unvaccinated, were outlined. The district plans to implement these guidelines effective immediately.

A decision was made to close school on Monday, January 3, 2022. At the time the decision was made, there were more than 30 staff members that were unable to return to their duties due to Covid-19 related diagnosis and current Addendum 5 protocols. Ms. Tanguay thanked all those who participated in conversations on how to address the situation, with the final resolution to close school for the day and to notify parents in advance of, so that they could address any childcare needs.

District Covid stats note a total of 23 positive students and 32 positive staff.

## V. **Committee Reports**

### **Finance**

As of December 31<sup>st</sup> the monies received totaled \$20,429,926 or 54.16% of anticipated revenue. Expenditures disbursed to date are \$16,715,273 or 44.31%; currently trending on target.

Of particular note, was a kitchen fire, which occurred at the middle school just prior to the holiday break. The overall damage was minimal, but a 20 year-old oven was significantly damaged. Conversations are currently taking place with EdAdvance and Connecticut Restaurant to replace the equipment. Staff at both the middle school and Mitchell Elementary ensured that all students were offered a lunch in spite of the mishap.

A meeting of the Building Committee is scheduled for January 12, 2022 to resolve any lingering issues with regards to the high school building project.

### **Public Relations**

Ms. Brown and Mr. Matta recognized and congratulated several athletes for All State field hockey and soccer standings.

### **Curriculum**

A formal meeting of the Curriculum Committee was held on Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. They received a preliminary briefing on the two-day course for teaching the newly assigned course on African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies; the board will hear a polished version before too long.

Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, the committee toured Mitchell Elementary School and were impressed by the dedication of the staff.

January 10<sup>th</sup> is the final tour and will encompass the Agriscience teaching and goals.

Mr. Kapstein, the chair of the committee, urged committee members to reflect on the need for a clear and focused policy statement to replace what is currently housed on the website. He also suggested that the Curriculum committee be a permanent committee of the board as opposed to an ad hoc.

## **Policy**

David Butkus addressed the district's transgender policy and cleaning up some of the language so that it provides a little more clarity to parents and community members. He also addressed the schools' facilities in the region, specifically locker room privacy. Mr. McAllister to follow up with building administrators.

Other topics of discussion included Screen and Stay, School Visitors and the CIAC guidelines as they related to vaccinated and unvaccinated players.

## **VI. Board Chair's Comments**

The board heard from three Superintendent search firms, reviewed their presentations and asked questions regarding their proposals. Currently performing reference checks of the firms prior to selecting a final one for the district. After the firm is selected, the board will share the overall timeline and activities to find next superintendent.

## **VII. Privilege of the Floor**

Email from Ms. Kathy Velkey, Woodbury

Requested that the district do away with all divisive materials that reference critical race theory; opposes any policy that singles out any student's sexual identity including their protective rights. She referenced 5145.53

Jennifer Wilbury, Woodbury

Asked if the district performed in-school Covid testing; she was referred to the school nurse.

## **VIII. Old Business**

None

## **IX. New Business**

A. Election Polling Locations

The board received a letter from the town of Woodbury Registrars' of Voters, Lisa Amatruda and Rosalie Manzi-Platt, requesting use of the Woodbury Middle School and Mitchell Elementary School cafeterias for all General Elections and Primaries (Presidential, Gubernatorial and Municipal) due to the size of Woodbury's electorate. All of these elections are on the first Tuesday of November. On even years, the primaries for Presidential and Gubernatorial elections are generally before school starts in August. During odd years, the Municipal Election Primary, if held, would likely occur in mid-September.

Mr. Bauer, after reviewing the district's Policy 1330 regarding Community Usage of Buildings, explained that this request goes above and beyond the norm as schools would need to be closed to accommodate the request and was therefore brought to the board for their consideration.

The driving factor behind the request is voter capacity at the senior center, with parking, capacity, exit/entrance and ADA compliance major concerns. Other facilities have been investigated and there are no other options, both public and private, that meet those requirements. Discussions continued with regards to the impact on school board elections, school budget vote, and the school calendar and if the dates could be made available prior to finalizing the school calendar.

A suggestion was made to have the voting take place on days that would be scheduled as Professional Development days to lessen the impact on student days; voting must take place when students are not in the buildings. Ms. Amatruda noted that she could not provide specific dates except to what was done historically; Presidential Primaries are in April, the Municipal Primaries are in September, and the Gubernatorial are in September.

The consensus of the board was to find a way to accommodate their request. Mr. Bauer to follow up with Mr. McAllister in order to have the building staff weigh in. The item will be brought back to the board on the 18<sup>th</sup> for a vote for consideration; town meeting tentatively scheduled for January 27<sup>th</sup>.

X. **Other Business**

None

XI. **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Chris Matta to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m.; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.

*Respectfully Submitted,*



*Patricia Paige  
Board Clerk*

*Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Patricia Paige, Board Clerk*