



PLYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CENTRAL OFFICE

27 NORTH HARWINTON AVENUE
TERRYVILLE, CONNECTICUT 06786

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Plymouth Public Schools is to challenge, inspire, and prepare all students for success in an ever-changing and complex world.

PLYMOUTH BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
TERRYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA
33 NORTH HARWINTON AVENUE
TERRYVILLE, CT 06786

TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2022

7:00 P.M.

MINUTES

Present: Mr. Seaman, Mrs. Kulesa, Mrs. Lucian, Mr. Showers, Mrs. Fusco, Mr. Foote, Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani, Mr. Perugino, and Mr. Zbuska

Also Present: Mr. Falcone, Acting Superintendent, Mrs. Mozak-Pezza, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Mrs. Melillo, Director of Pupil Personnel & Special Education Services, Mr. Tencza, Business Manager, and Mr. Trudeau, Director of Technology

1. **Call to Order & Pledge to the Flag**

Mr. Seaman called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. The group joined in the Pledge to the Flag.

2. **Adoption of the Agenda**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mrs. Fusco, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting of February 2, 2022 (Budget Workshop #2) Motion Mr. Showers, second Mr. Foote, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries. (MRS. LUCIAN ABSTAINS)

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Plymouth Board of Education of February 9, 2022. Motion Mr. Perugino, second Mrs. Lucian, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Plymouth Board of Education of February 23, 2022. Motion Mr. Zbuska, second Mr. Foote, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

4. **Public Comment** (limited to 3-minutes per speaker)

None

5.

Superintendent's Update

- In recognition of Board of Education Appreciation month, a token of appreciation was placed at each Board Members seat. This is just a small token of for all the Board does for our children and our school community.
- Some Events Mr. Falcone attended at each of the schools:
 - * Mr. Hults, Principal of Terryville High School and his staff playing dodgeball against students at the High school pep rally.
 - * Eli Terry Jr. Middle School Staff v. Student Basketball Game.
 - * Professional Development Day at Harry S. Fisher Elementary School where he watched Mrs. Loveland challenge Mr. Curtis in the blowup obstacle course which was provided by the PTA for a team building.
 - * He observed members of our community come together to read to our students at Plymouth Center School and Harry S. Fisher Elementary School during Read Across American Event. This also happened to be crazy hair and hat day.

Mr. Falcone experienced, as he does every time he walks through the buildings, a faculty and administration who truly cares about our students and are working to make our schools a positive place for learning.

- Students Luke Koser, from Luke's Cukes and Nico Florenciani from Nico's Nuggets approached Mr. Falcone with an idea they had to raise money for a good cause. These two 5th grade boys raised \$2,424.31 for the United Way of Western Connecticut.
- The Terryville High School Leo Club raised \$3,250 for Harvest Pack. They will be packaging meals for Ukraine refugee relief. They raised this money through the homecoming dance they sponsored in October and from generous Donations from local businesses, clubs and organizations.

Reports from the following individuals under Superintendent's Update

Mrs. Mozak-Pezza, Director of Curriculum & Instruction

- At the end of March, the 11th graders at Terryville High School will be taking the SAT. What is new about the SAT's this year is they will be taken online. Since 1926, the SAT has been administered on paper. Beginning this year, and moving forward, students will take the SAT on the computer both during school administration and during weekend administrations starting next year.

There are a lot of behind the scenes work that happens when changes occur. For instance, since the fall, Mr. Hults, principal of the high school, and Mrs. Mozak-Pezza have been working with the Pupil Personnel Services Department and the IT Department to prepare for the new testing platform. Accommodations needed to be reviewed and, if needed for those students needing accommodations, changed to align to the new format. The systems used to collect the pre-testing data has changed and this requires training for everyone on their use. Proctors had to be retained to administer the test online, and the administrators involved had to learn all the new testing procedures.

All training has been completed and work is being done on the pre-testing organizational details necessary for a successful implementation. Students are trying out the practice tests and becoming familiar with the online tools and format and proctors are reviewing the new testing procedures and logging into the testing system in order to learn its layout. The process is going well and at this time no problems are anticipated. Results may be obtained through the College Board Account on April 15th.

Mrs. Melillo – Director of Pupil Personnel & Special Education Services

- Transition Program – Per notification from the State Department of Education, the Terryville High School Transition Program has met the criteria to be a Public Transition Program in Connecticut. The district will not be included in the Connecticut Transition Programs list of the state website.

- Program run by the Transition Program is called Bark-A-Roos. Student make and sell dog and cat treats. They shop for ingredients, make the dough, cut and press the treats. The recipes are all-natural and contain less than 5 ingredients. Bark-A-Roo treats are offered on a monthly basis during the school year. The March sales will be donated to Americares or Save the Children, which are two Connecticut based charities that are providing relief funds to Ukraine. Free samples of the treats were provided to each Board Member. Thank you goes out to Mrs. Tammy Card, who is the teacher of the transition program and the paraprofessionals

Mr. Falcone – Acting Superintendent

- On Monday, March 21st, we will be presenting the Board of Education Budget to the Plymouth Board of Finance Committee at 7 p.m. in the Community Room at Town Hall.
- The Plymouth Board of Finance Budget Presentation and the Public Hearing will be held on Thursday, April 14, 7 p.m. in the Community Room at Town Hall. Following the presentation and public hearing, there will be a Special Joint Meeting with the Plymouth Town Council, the Plymouth Board of Finance and the Plymouth Board of Education.

Again, Mr. Falcone thanked the Board Members for all they do for our students, teachers and community.

6. **Recess**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to recess at 7:10 p.m. in recognition of Board of Education appreciation month. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mr. Foote, all in favor, motion carries.

7. **Resume Regular Session**

MOTION: To resume regular session at 7:20 p.m. Motion Mr. Perugino, second Mrs. Fusco, all in favor, motion carries.

8.. **New Business**

(a) **Out-of-State Field Trip**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the out-of-state field-trip to Washington, D. C. for 10 to 15 Social Studies Students in Grades 10 – 12 from November 13, 2022 to November 18, 2022. (The Close-up Foundation offers a weeklong course on civics.) Motion Mr. Showers, second Mr. Foote, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed any abstentions, motion carries.

(b) **Healthy Food Certification 2022 – 2023**

All public school districts participating in the NSLP must submit the *Healthy Food Certification Statement – Addendum to Agreement for Child Nutrition Program (ED-099)* by July 1, 2022 to certify whether or not all food items sold to students will or will not meet Connecticut Nutritional Standards.

- **Healthy Food Option:** 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 Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut 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 by non-school organizations and groups.

MOTION: To entertain a motion to implement the healthy food option.

Motion Mr. Showers, second Mr. Foote, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

If the board of education or governing authority votes "yes" for the healthy food option above, the board of education or governing authority **must also vote** on whether to allow food exemptions, as indicated below. ***NOTE:** If the board of education or governing authority votes "no" for the healthy food option above, a vote on whether to allow food exemptions is not required.*

- **Exemption for Food Items:** The board of education or governing authority will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards 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 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 interscholastic 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.

MOTION: To entertain a motion to allow the food exemptions. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mrs. Lucian, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

- **Beverage Exemptions:** The Board of Education or governing authority will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut 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 beverages 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. The "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 beverage sales.

MOTION: To entertain a motion to allow for the beverage exemptions. Motion Mr. Foote second Mr. Showers, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

9. **Board Member/Committee Reports**

A. **Finance/Operations** - Mr. Tencza, Business Manager

- Included in the packet are the following; Accounts by Facilities Report for February 2022 and 5 different submissions; (1) Business Office Activity Report; (2) Board of Education Budget Summary through February 2022 Report; (3) Cumulative Total Board of Education Budget % by Month; (4) Food Service Report; and (5) Capital Improvement Plan 2021 -2030.
- The Accounts by Facilities Reports will be forwarded to the Town of Plymouth Board of Finance
- The Food Service Report for February shows a profit.

- No changes on the Capital Improvement Plan 2021 -2030
- Accounts by Facilities Report

Mr. Perugino – Page 2 – Library Paraprofessionals shows this account is over budget. Is this correct?

Mr. Tencza – Yes, it is over budget. We did not budget this properly last year. At the end of the year, this line item will be fine.

Mr. Falcone – To clarify, the difference is when the paraprofessionals were budgeted last year, the rate of pay was lower than that of a tutor. There are tutors at both Harry S. Fisher Elementary School and Eli Terry Jr. Middle School. The difference between a tutor and a paraprofessional is students may go into the library with a tutor. However, with a paraprofessional a teacher needs to be present. The rates were never adjusted from last year to this year.

- Food Service for the Next School Year

* Currently, the waiver will not continue for free lunch for next year. Since the federal funding required to sustain this practice was rejected, the food service will go back to the way it was prior to the pandemic beginning on July 1, 2022.

* Mr. Seaman - A question was asked if the Board covered the expense of the free meals or did the government and what was the percentage of free and reduced lunch prior to the pandemic.

* Mr. Tencza - The government paid for all free meals.

* Mrs. Mozak-Pezza – Currently, our free & reduced lunch percentage is around 45%. This figure was slightly lower before the pandemic by a few percentage points, but not drastic. This is across all buildings. Before the reorganization of the elementary schools, there was a big discrepancy but at this point in time they are about even.

*Mr. Tencza – There is talk at the state level to reduce the free and reduced lunch threshold from 47% to 25%. If this is the case, we would be able to entertain free lunch across the district. There is a new regulation: A district cannot turn away a student. A student may charge up to 30 meals before the district can take any action with that student and the Board is required to pay for any shortfalls due to that regulation.

*Scoreboards have been placed at Eli Terry Jr. Middle School

* Jim Mazon has been evaluating the landscaping equipment. Once it has been decided what will be kept, he will meet with Charlie on the Town side.

* Jim Mazon will be contacting contractors for pricing on the repair of sidewalks and stairs.

* There has been contact with the Town regarding parking lots and entryways.

B. Personnel Report – Mr. Falcone, Acting Superintendent

No Questions

10. Public Comment (limited to 3-minutes per speaker)

None

11. Board Liaison Reports

Mr. Perugino

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Harry S. Fisher Elementary School

Report given by Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani

* Book Fair this week, opened to parents at conferences. Began on Monday, March 14th and ends on Friday, March 18th.

* March 16th, PTA ordered from Main Street Deli to feed the staff for the 1st night of conferences.

* Conferences this week either virtual or in person.

- * PTA Calendar Fundraiser – Tickets \$5.00 each. Raffle to begin in April. Looking for any alumni students or current students that would like to pick a winner. Each day in April a winner is chosen.
- * Beginning to meet with 5th grade committee on planning events for the end of the year.

Mr. Zbuska -- Plymouth Center School

- * Pasta Heaven Fundraiser Pickup, Wednesday, March 16th from 4 p.m. – 8 p.m.
- * Spirit Wear Fundraiser – Thursday, March 7th – Friday, March 18th.
- * Early Dismissal for students on March 11th.
- * Book Fair – March 14th – 18th – 3:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. and Wednesday and Thursday evenings.
- * Kindergarten Registration – March 23rd and March 24th.
- * Parent/Teacher Conferences on line schedule. Early Dismissal for students.

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani -- Eli Terry Jr. Middle School

- * PTA helped to pay for a 6th grade field trip. Other grades to submit their requests as well for field trip funds.
- * 8th graders beginning to plan the end of the year celebration.

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani -- Booster Club

- * Scholarships due April 26th.
- * Looking for new officers for next year.
- * Starting to plan sports award ceremony for the end of the year.
- * Car Wash – May 15th on RT 6, Snow White Car Wash in Bristol.

Mrs. Kulesa -- Terryville High School

- * PTSA continues its fundraising efforts for the after grad party.
- * May fundraising letter campaign has netted just over \$3,000. Still waiting to receive donations.
- * Fundraiser at Crabby Al's on March 26. There will be 2 seatings, one at 5 p.m. and the other at 6 p.m. Buffet – Dinner and Dessert – Raffles - \$25 per person. Money goes directly to seniors after grad party for a safe and fun celebration.
- * Parents of Juniors., this is a good time to get involved, learn a little about the PTSA before the Senior parents move on to other things. It will be your turn to take over.

Mr. Perugino -- CABE

No Report

Mrs. Fusco -- EdAdvance

- * EdAdvance is considering reaching out to new members.
- * Working on recruitment and retention. How to get individuals in the organization and to remain? They are using some of their surplus to do this.
- * After 6 years, Ed Advance is financially stable. In the last 5 years their revenue has grown 57%.
- * School Districts see the benefits and are using these programs. 90% of everything goes back to the communities.
- * Focus on Early Childhood and Preschool.
- * Healthy Food Option Grant was approved.
- * Care Closet – 3-year grant approved to help with student homelessness.

Mr. Showers --- District Safety Committee

Meeting scheduled for April.

12. **Board Comments**

Mr. Zbuska – He volunteered to work the Pasta Fundraiser and was able to meet some parents.

Mr. Perugino – Mentioned the passing of Joe Dennis who was the Facilities Director for the district. Mr. Perugino reminisced about the times he spent with Joe and his yellow legal note pad that he always carried with him. Great guy, super employee who will truly be missed.

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani – Read Across American was a lot of fun. Her daughter who wants to be a teacher, read to a fourth grade class. She loved the kids and this only confirmed that she wants to teach. Cindy was a little nervous reading to a first grade class but by the times he went onto the next group of children, she felt more comfortable and had a lot of fun. Encouraged everyone to go see the play, The Wizard of Oz. Performance is for 2 days, April 8th and 9th. Tickets can be purchased online. Kids put a lot of hard work into this production. Nico and Luke did a really good job. Through Cindy, both boys thanked all of the schools that raised money for the United Way and all of the parents that contributed.

Mrs. Fusco – Being her first year on the Board, she thanked everyone, enjoys being a Board Member, and feels it's so nice to be appreciated. This goes a long way.

Mr. Foote – Suggestion: Terryville v Watertown Basketball, Invitational Tournament.

Mr. Seaman – Thank you for the gift. He appreciates everyone on the Board. There are many hours that go into being a Board Member, i.e. going to PTA Meetings, Budget. This is a volunteer position with a lot of time and dedication involved. Mr. Seaman thanked Mrs. Piskorski for purchasing the gifts for the Board Members.

Mr. Falcone – The passing of Joe Dennis. Joe was one of those special people that goes through a Town and Community and makes a difference and an impact on people. People remember him and the things he has done for children behind the scenes. Joe was head custodian at Plymouth Center School for a number of years and then went on to be the Facilities Director. The difference he made in the building of the high school, the up keep of our grounds and how he truly cared about the kids was seen every day in what he did. Mr. Falcone could not say enough about Joe. He was a good, good person who made a difference in this community.

13. **Next Board Meeting** –The next Regular Meeting of the Plymouth Board of Education is on Wednesday, April 13, 2022 at 7 p.m. in the cafeteria at Terryville High School.

14. **Executive Session**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to enter into Executive Session at 7:49 p.m. to discuss the following:

(a) Personnel Agreements – Central Office Secretaries; District Technology Specialist; Director of Facilities and Board Certified Behavior Analyst,

(b) Teacher Retirement Incentive; and

(c) Memorandum of Understanding Shared Technology Support Services – Town of Plymouth & Plymouth Public Schools.

inviting Mr. Falcone, Acting Superintendent and Mr. Tencza, Business Manager and Mrs. Mozak-Pezza, Director of Curriculum & Instruction into executive session. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mr. Foote, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

15. **Resume Regular Session**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to resume Regular Session at 8:49 p.m. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mrs. Lucian any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

16. **Possible Action from Executive Session**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the following as amended:

(a) Personnel Agreements as discussed in Executive Session: Central Office Secretaries; District Technology Specialist; Director of Facilities and Board Certified Behavior Analyst,

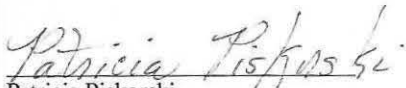
(b) Teacher Retirement Incentive; and

(c) Memorandum of Understanding Shared Technology Support Services – Town of Plymouth & Plymouth Public Schools, as discussed in executive session.

Motion Mr. Perugino, second Mr. Zbuska, and discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

17. **Adjournment**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. Motion Mrs. Fusco, second, Mrs. Lucian, all in favor, motion passes unanimously.



Patricia Piskorski
Recording Secretary
Plymouth Board of Education