

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Regular Board of Education Meeting
Approved Minutes of December 10, 2020
Remote/Electronic

Present Board Members:

Jennifer Beausoleil, Chairman
William Oros, Vice-Chairman
Eugene Marchand, Secretary
Mary Kortmann
Barbara Paré
Christina Williams
Robert Williams

Also Present:

Emma Murphy, Student Board of Education Representative

Administrators Present:

Dr. David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools
Robert Carroll, Director of Finance and Operations

Virtual Audience Members: Jennifer DeRagon, GHR Principal; Dena DeJulius, CNH Principal; Joe Blake, CHS Principal; Ryan Giberson, CHS Volleyball Coach; Kara Hennessey, K-12 ELA Specialist; CHS Volleyball Team Members; and the CAPSS Superintendent Student Award Winners and families.

I. Call to Order

J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. Salute to the Flag

J. Beausoleil led the salute to the flag.

III. Audience of Citizens

J. Beausoleil read the two emails for audience of citizens, one from Karen Skudlarek and one from Emma Eaton [attached to the minutes].

IV. Report of Superintendent

Dr. Petrone noted various meetings and happenings taking place in the district and around the state.

A. Recognition: CHS Girls Volleyball Team - NCCC East Division Champions with Coach Giberson

Dr. Petrone congratulated the Volleyball Team. He introduced Coach Giberson. He noted the team finished this perfect season 14-0 and undefeated in every set played.

Coach Giberson thanked the Superintendent and the Board of Education for their support. He introduced the five seniors who were present: Delaney Harrington, Jessica Hanrath, Ella Reilly, Olivia Wojnilo, and Sydney Blanchard.

The seniors thanked the Board for letting the team play this season, considering the circumstances

C. Williams thanked the team for being the silver lining.

J. Beausoleil said this program has a long history of doing amazing things in difficult years and thanked the girls and the leadership on the team for continuing that history.

E. Marchand said every year the team does amazing things and this year was no exception.

R. Williams congratulated the team and told them to keep up the good work.

B. Paré said she is always proud of the volleyball team and it is awesome to see it continue.

B. Recognition: CAPSS Superintendent Student Award Winners - CNH Grade 8 Students Sydney Maheu and Tyler Calkins and CHS Grade 12 Students Maryjane Williams and Timothy Morris

Dr. Petrone talked about the award program. He introduced Ms. DeJulius who spoke about this year's CNH winners - Sydney Maheu, Tyler Calkins. Dr. Petrone introduced Mr. Joseph Blake who spoke about this year's CHS winners - Maryjane Williams, and Timothy Morris. There was congratulations from the Board.

C. Information: Student Board of Education Representative Report

Miss Murphy said everyone has been working on the lead up to PJ day, which is tomorrow. She said things are a little different this year, but we have already collected almost \$2,000.

She added that seniors are hearing from colleges, which is exciting.

D. Information: GHR Diversity Work

Dr. Petrone introduced Ms. DeRagon and Ms. Hennessey who shared a presentation on diversity initiatives with the Board.

J. Beausoleil said how nicely this ties in to things going on in our community. She added that she and B. Paré recently participated in a community dialog on diversity. B. Paré said it was a great experience, including telling stories and connecting to each other.

E. Marchand said this sounds very exciting and asked about feedback from parents. Ms. DeRagon said the PTO is energized and wants to know how they can be supportive of the work.

B. Paré mentioned that it is important for the community to back the work that is going on in the school.

R. Williams said he is very happy to see this work happening. He said how much he liked the mission statement and asked what programs are in place now. Ms. DeRagon said the second step program has been in place and the Chinese enrichment program is another. Ms. DeRagon talked about the teachers who are involved and active. She said people are starting to see how they fit into this vision. She continued to talk about different aspects of the program.

V. Report of Chairman

J. Beausoleil talked about the fundraisers happening through PJ Day and for Project Graduation.

She noted her appreciation for everyone's cooperation in working the meetings remotely.

VII. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

A. Approve Minutes of November 12, 2020

MOTION: To approve the minutes of November 12, 2020

By: C. Williams

Seconded: E. Marchand

Result: Motion passes unanimously

VIII. Old Business

A. Information: COVID-19 Update

Dr. Petrone thanked the parents for showing their support to staff and to him as well. He continued and thanked all staff who continue to move mountains every day.

Dr. Petrone updated the Board on various COVID-19 items, including possible new quarantine guidelines. He added that we are not seeing a spread in the schools.

E. Marchand asked about the substitute situation. Dr. Petrone said there has not be the best coverage. He said there are permanent subs for each building, but we are still short every day. He said teachers are covering as best they can and the administrators are managing as best they can as well.

M. Kortmann asked about the quarantine process as it relates to spread in the school. Dr. Petrone confirmed that the cases we have had have not been traced back to the schools.

C. Williams asked about PPE and supplies. Dr. Petrone said we are doing very well and we should be good through the end of the year.

C. Williams said she is thankful that the students are still in school and she is hopeful they can stay in school as long as possible.

B. Discussion and Possible VOTE(s) - Policies

J. Beausoleil noted the groupings of the policies.

1. Group One

J. Beausoleil asked if any member wanted to discuss policies in group one separately. There was no such request.

Result: Motion passes 4-3 (B. Pare, C. Williams, R. Williams against)

IX. New Business

A. Information: FY22 Budget Planning Dates Draft

J. Beausoleil noted we have begun budget season and mentioned the planning dates that are scheduled. Dr. Petrone spoke about the budget process.

X. Report of Board Members

A. Information: Fiscal Committee Report, Meeting of December 10, 2020

W. Oros reviewed the discussion from the Fiscal Committee meeting. He said additional CRF grant money was awarded. He added that the Food Service and Preschool are holding their own. He said the deficit is still approximately \$175,000.

XI. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:09 p.m.

By: C. Williams

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberlee Arey Delorme
Board Clerk

Approved: January 14, 2021

From: [Skudlarek, Karen](#)
To: [audienceBOE](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BOE Audience of Citizens
Date: Thursday, December 10, 2020 7:22:35 AM

Dear Board of Education members,

I want to raise this up during the Board of Education meeting so board members, parents, and community members are reminded of what we're expecting of our teachers during these times. We entrust our teachers to take care of our children from toddlers into adulthood. On a number of occasions they have gone above and beyond. And we have shown appreciation for them in many ways. We send them cards, gifts, and meals during parent-teacher conferences. But now, teachers need to know that what they're doing is well beyond anything they've ever done for our children. They are keeping our children safe while educating them and they're doing this by simultaneously teaching students in-person and remote. Some school districts are able to dedicate teachers to only remote learners while other teachers are dedicated to only in-person learners. Because of the size of our district, we don't have that luxury. I taught a class at UConn this fall where half the class was in-person and the other half was remote. It was exhausting to teach and engage all students at the same time. And I only taught it for 50 minutes a week. Our teachers are doing this much of the day, 5 times a week. And all the while, they're checking to make sure students are wearing masks, cleaning surfaces a number of times a day, and engaging students in the room and students online. This is no easy feat considering no teacher has ever done this before. I'm sure it's exhausting for them but they keep going in every day and work tirelessly at night to make sure our children are safe and educated. My gratitude runs deep and thank you just doesn't seem to be enough for all you're doing. Be safe and take care of yourselves as best you can.

Karen Skudlarek
118 North Farms Road
860 742-8159

From: [Emma Eaton](#)
To: [audienceBOE](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Audience of Citizens 12/10/20
Date: Thursday, December 10, 2020 6:19:48 PM

Dr. Petrone and Board of Education Members,

I'm writing tonight with thanks. I'd like to express gratitude for each of the following, because it really has taken every component of Coventry Public Schools to keep schools running safely and students learning:

First, to Dr. Petrone for the innumerable hours he has put in since all this began in March. I think it's fair to say that we should all be thankful that he is a salaried employee, rather than hourly. Thanks also for balancing the needs of families and staff, students, and public health. Keeping schools open and moving forward right now must be akin to solving a Rubik's Cube blindfolded with your hands tied behind your back, where the colors randomly change every ten minutes. Coventry is fortunate to have you leading the charge.

Thanks to the Board of Education members both for the work you do, but also for the justified trust you have in Dr. Petrone and his leadership team as they have had to create, adjust, and pivot models of education in a way that has never happened before.

Thanks to the district's leadership team - Dr. Giller, Cathie Drury, Michele Mullaly, and the building administrations in each school - for having to pull multiple brand new educational models out of your sleeves and implement them while educating our kids. It's a feat to try and understand how this was accomplished.

Thanks also to every staff member in every building in the district. Teaching during these times is stressful and challenging in ways I'm sure none of you ever imagined and the dedication, talent, and commitment each of you are giving to this important work has not gone unnoticed. Classroom teachers, related arts teachers, para-educators, special educators, administrative staff, technology staff, kitchen staff, and facilities staff have all worked together all fall to keep everyone in the community as safe as possible.

There's so much uncertainty right now. There are so many things we don't and can't know. I'm not sure anyone expected us to be able to keep the schoolhouse doors open to in-person learning into mid-December and if any of the district pieces I mentioned above hadn't really given their best I'm not sure we could have. We are a community made better and stronger by our schools, and for that I thank all of you.

Be well and stay safe, may you all enjoy your well-deserved holiday break and ring in the new year refreshed.

Emma Eaton
41 Sean Circle

Sent from my iPhone