

**Coventry Board of Education**  
Coventry, Connecticut

**Regular Board of Education Meeting**  
Approved Minutes of Thursday, October 28, 2021  
Administration Building Conference Room

Board of Education Members Present:

Jennifer Beausoleil, Chairperson  
William Oros, Vice-Chairperson  
Eugene Marchand, Secretary  
Mary Kortmann  
Michael Sobol  
Christina Williams  
Robert Williams

Also Present: Celia Delvecchio, Board of Education Student Representative

Administrators Present:

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

Audience: Dena DeJulius, CNH Principal; Joseph Blake, CHS Principal; William Trudelle, Director of Physical Plant and Facilities; students being recognized and their families; retired Chief of Police Mark Palmer; several citizens.

**I. Call to Order**

J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

**II. Salute to the Flag**

J. Beausoleil led the salute to the flag.

**III. Audience of Citizens**

Robyn Gallagher, 984 Main Street, was present to speak about the upcoming elections and commended the Board for their work. Her statement is attached to these minutes.

Brad Manning, 110 Paden Road, was present to speak about the mask mandate, which is set at the state level, and wanted to show support for the Board and district and for the work that is being done. He thanked the Board for keeping students safe.

Jennifer Petro, 17 Debra Drive, was present to thank the Board for the work they are doing. She also wanted to give commendations to GHR and the support they are showing to students with disabilities.

Emma Eaton, 41 Sean Circle, congratulated Chief Palmer on his retirement. She also congratulated the students present for receiving the CAPSS awards. Additionally, she

thanked the Board members who are leaving and those who hope to continue on the Board.

William Hall, 1022 Grant Hill Road, was present to talk in favor of unmasking students. His statement is attached to these minutes.

Rose Hierl, 100 Eric Drive, spoke in support of masks in schools.

#### **IV. Report of Superintendent**

Dr. Petrone spoke about a few items happening around the district, region, and state.

##### **A. Information: Recognition of Mark Palmer, Retired Coventry Chief of Police**

Dr. Petrone talked about his working relationship with Ret. Chief Palmer. He thanked him for his dedication and support. The Board Chair thanked Mr. Palmer for his partnership. E. Marchand talked about the outstanding job done on behalf of the community.

Mr. Palmer thanked Dr. Petrone for his collaboration throughout the years and the Board for the recognition.

##### **B. Information: Student Recognition - CAPSS Superintendent Student Awards with CNH Students, Celina Cunha and James Elliott; CHS Students, Nicholas Wesoloskie and Cassandra Hierl**

Dr. Petrone talked about the award and the qualifications needed to receive this award. He introduced Ms. DeJulius, who spoke about eighth grade students Celina Cunha and James Elliott. Mr. Blake spoke about CHS seniors Nicholas Wesoloskie and Cassandra Hierl.

C. Williams said how awesome these students are. E. Marchand thanked the parents for their hard work.

##### **C. Information: Coventry Board of Education CABE Board of Distinction Award 2021**

Dr. Petrone gave congratulations to the Board for receiving the recent Board of Distinction Level II award through CABE.

##### **D. Information: Student Board of Education Representative Report**

Celia Delvecchio talked about athletics at CHS, spirit week, and how many things are turning back to normal at the schools.

#### **V. Report of Chairman**

J. Beausoleil remind people of the vote on November 2. She thanked Dr. Petrone for the recognition celebration held earlier for the Board. She talked about her visit to the Current Issues class at CHS.

#### **VII. VOTE: Approval of Minutes**

##### **A. Approve Tabled Minutes of September 30, 2021**

**MOTION: To approve the tabled minutes of September 30, 2021 as revised**

**By: E. Marchand                      Seconded: W. Oros**  
**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

**B. Approve the Minutes of October 14, 2021**

**MOTION: To approve the minutes of October 14, 2021**

**By: C. Williams                      Seconded: E. Marchand**  
**Result: Motion passes 6-0-1 (W. Oros abstained)**

**VII. Old Business**

**A. Information: Microgrid Update**

Dr. Petrone said there is not much to report, as meetings have been cancelled.

**B. Information and Possible VOTE: Approve the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) FY2023 - FY2027**

J. Beausoleil asked for questions.

C. Williams asked for clarification on the priorities. W. Trudelle and M. Kortmann explained how the priorities work by year.

The Board talked about the items on the CIP list and specifically the School Building Committee items.

R. Williams asked about the maintenance truck and didn't we just purchase one. W. Trudelle said that was the utility vehicle.

**MOTION: To approve the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) FY2023 - FY2027 as submitted**

**By: W. Oros                      Seconded: M. Kortmann**  
**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

**C. Discussion and Possible VOTE: Approve NEW Policy 1325.1 Advertising at District Athletic Fields**

**MOTION: To approve 1325.1 Advertising at District Athletic Fields**

**By: E. Marchand                      Seconded: W. Oros**  
**Result: Motion passes 6-0-1 (J. Beausoleil abstained)**

**D. Discussion and Possible VOTE(s) - Approve Policy Revisions**

1231 Non-Discrimination - Community

1241 Volunteers, Interns and other Non-employees

1250 Visitors and Observations in Schools

1330 Use of School Facilities

3514 Green Cleaning Programs

3541 Transportation

3542 Model Code of Conduct Governing Procurements Under A Federal Award

4115.3 Athletic Coaches - Evaluation, Non-Renewal, and Termination

4116.1 Non-Discrimination - Personnel

4116.2 - Prohibition of Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace  
4116.11 Section 504 ADA  
5122.2 Non-Discrimination - Students  
5127 Graduation Requirements  
5131 - Title IX Prohibition of Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment  
5131.7 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy  
5131.71 Safe School Climate Plan  
5131.72 Child Sexual Abuse and-or Sexual Assault Response Policy and Reporting Procedure  
5145.4 Student Privacy  
6146.1 Weighted Grading and Calculation of Grade Point Averages

**MOTION: To accept all policies for revisions under item VIII. D on the agenda that were discussed at length at the last meeting**

**By: E. Marchand**

**Seconded: W. Oros**

Friendly ammendment by C. Williams to exclude policy 5144 Student Discipline from the group vote was accepted by E. Marchand.

**Result: Motion passed unanimously**

### **5144 Student Discipline**

C. Williams asked that we move health and covid protocol language out of the policy.

J. Beausoleil explained the process and noted the language could be reviewed at any time.

M. Sobol said it is covered by whatever the health and safety protocols are at the time.

M. Kortmann said the sentence does not note COVID-19 specifically; it states the district's health and safety protocols need to be followed whatever they are at the time.

Dr. Petrone said this is generic language that allows us to adapt.

E. Marchand agreed with M. Sobol. He said this is enabling language, giving the district the ability to manage.

C. Williams said she is concerned about the discipline chain, without a clear definition.

Dr. Petrone said a student would not be brought to expulsion for violating these protocols, unless a life was threatened.

C. Williams said this is not clear and unambiguous language.

M. Sobol said this language is not backing anyone into a corner.

M. Kortmann noted the current health and safety protocols are listed in the 2021 Reopening Plan.

J. Beausoleil added, they are everywhere; teachers review them, they are in the handbooks, etc.

R. Williams said since there is a defined section in the reopening plan, could we have a separate document that states those protocols. J. Beausoleil said that would be an unnecessary and complex task.

J. Beausoleil noted there was not consensus to change the policy.

**MOTION: To approve revisions to policy 5144 Student Discipline**

**By: E. Marchand**

**Seconded: M. Kortmann**

**Result: Motion passes 5-2 (C. Williams and R. Williams against)**

## **IX. New Business**

### **A. Information and VOTE: Approve the 2022 Regular Board Meeting Dates**

**MOTION: Approve the 2022 BOE meeting dates**

**By: W. Oros**

**Seconded: M. Sobol**

Discussion: C. Williams asked about the June dates and if one should be closer to the end of the month. M. Sobol said a meeting could be added if needed. The Board talked about summer meeting dates. E. Marchand noted that special meetings are added if needed.

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

## **X. Report of Board Members**

### **A. Information: Transportation Committee Report, Meeting of October 26, 2021**

M. Sobol reviewed the Transportation Committee meeting and noted the Administrative Regulation that was revised. M. Sobol talked about the positive relationship with M&J.

## **XI. Adjournment**

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

**By: R. Williams**

**Seconded: W. Oros**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

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Respectfully submitted,

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Kimberlee Arey Delorme  
Board Clerk

Approved: November 11, 2021

Robyn Gallagher – 984 Main Street

Dr. Petrone, Board of Education, thank you for your time this evening.

I'm standing here before you tonight because the municipal elections are less than one week away which makes this the last meeting before the election. This Board of Education is special – it has gone through truly “unprecedented times”. No one could have anticipated what was coming when they decided to serve on this Board two years ago. This Board has disagreed, respectfully, but the members here have always worked for Coventry's children.

So, I want to thank you – thank you for always putting the health, safety, and education of my children, and the town's children first.

It has not always been easy... not only were these “unprecedented times” but many of you have been attacked. Not physically, but attacked just the same.

There have been attacks here, in this room, with children watching while insults were shouted out.

There have been attacks on social media, spreading half-truths, mistruths and sometimes blatant lies.

There have been attacks on mailers delivered door-to-door – some of which were signed off on by people you thought of as respected friends.

There have been attacks on big ugly signs spread around town, displaying our divisiveness like dirty laundry for every resident, visitor, or traveler unlucky enough to drive up Rts 31, 44, or 275.

Despite that, you have not shirked in your obligations – you have not caved to intimidation or hysteries – you have persevered. Thank you.

I just want to take an opportunity to say a special thanks to the three of you who will definitely not be back next month (because you are not on the ballot).

- Robert, this was your first time serving and I really appreciated your perspectives on diversity and inclusivity. I agree with you that this is something important to emphasize in our schools.
- Mike, there is a reason I had a Sobol sign in my yard two years ago and wrote in support of your nomination to the board earlier this year. You have consistently been willing to volunteer your time. You are genuinely interested in serving our community and our kids. I am quite certain this is not your last stint in town politics so I feel like this is less of a “goodbye” and more of an “until next time.”
- Bill, you beat my husband by 3 votes... and as we drove home I said to him “Well, at least it was Bill. Losing him would have been a huge loss to the Board of Education.” I

the strength + vision to

cannot overstate the incredible respect I have for your experience, your dedication, your spirit of volunteerism, your integrity. You have set the bar for future members of this Board of Education. I hope they recognize that and strive to live up to it.

have the strength & vision to

Under the leadership of this Board of Education (and of course Dr. Petrone), my children and so many others thrive in our schools. We know this is so – the data proves it. So again thank you. To those who are not coming back – thank you for your time and commitment. To those of you who will be back – thank you for your continuing efforts. To those of you out there about to be elected – I thank you as well and I beseech you to look to the example set by outgoing members like Mike and Bill setting aside partisan politics to work for the one thing that really matters here – our children.



William Hall 1022 Grant Hill Rd

I am a Coventry resident and concerned parent. ~~I am also the creator of the~~ Unmask our Kids Scarecrow on the green.

with my

I have heard it has been said by some that I have hijacked Halloween, but the truth is that there are two very important things that have truly been hijacked.

18 months

For the past ~~2 years~~ our children's education, and mental and emotional health have been hijacked by lockdowns, isolation and masking. A quick Google search will show page after page of reports from medical experts confirming this statement, including the CDC's own data, and statements from the World Health Organization condoning the masking of young children.

It will also show that while the daily hospitalizations of children for covid in Connecticut average less than 1 per day, there is such a surge in childhood mental health issues since the start of the school year that close to 100% of child psychiatric beds in the state are currently full, with most facilities having sizeable waiting lists. More children have committed suicide during the pandemic than have died from covid. The damage to their emotional and mental health is real. We MUST end the fear mongering, and begin the healing process.

The second thing that has been hijacked is this bodies ability to do anything about it. The Governor is holding this board, and our children, hostage by threatening to withhold the very funding that is supposed to be used to help our children catch up <sup>from</sup> on the year where HIS mandates destroyed their education, if ~~you do not comply~~. And, he will continue to do so until such time as he can require that our children be forcibly injected with a still experimental vaccine with no long-term studies on it's side effects, despite the fact that children's natural immune systems are far superior in defeating covid.

Meanwhile, at a time when hospitalizations are down, vaccination of adults in Connecticut is among the best in the country, and towns across the state are dropping their mask mandates, this board seeks to double down on the damage being suffered by our children by <sup>for public spaces</sup> implementing draconian rules that not only keep masking and isolation practices in place, but will now make even the slightest act of non-compliance punishable by suspension or expulsion. This disgusting act is nothing short of child abuse, and there is no doubt that some teachers and administrators will absolutely abuse this power.

If this body choses to pass these changes to line 34 tonight, know that many parents in this town will follow the lead of 1.5 million others around the country, and will withdraw their children from school.

Make no mistake, someone WILL pay for this abuse. It may be members of this board, when they are voted out and lose their seats next Tuesday. It may be the school, through loss of funding when parents withdraw their children in mass. But I, and many others, refuse to let it be our children who continue to suffer the most from these tyrannical policies.