

**Coventry Board of Education**  
Coventry, Connecticut

**Board of Education Regular Meeting**  
Approved Minutes of Thursday, September 29, 2022  
Administration Building Conference Room

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Beausoleil, Chairperson  
Gene Marchand, Vice-Chairperson  
Mary Kortmann, Secretary  
Peter DePaola  
Emma Eaton  
Courtney Rossignol  
Christina Williams

Also Present:

Maya Waterhouse, Student BOE Representative

Administrators Present:

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

Audience: Timothy Ackert, State Representative; Ronda Carrie, CGS Principal; Jennifer DeRagon, GHR Principal; Ross Sward, CNH Principal; Joseph Blake, CHS Principal; Michele Mullaly, Director of Teaching and Learning; Jennifer DuBois, CGS Teacher; Tim Sadler, Earthlight Representative; Jennifer Reilly, Chairman of Coventry's Energy Conservation/Alternative Energy Advisory Committee; and one other observer.

**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**

There were none.

**IV. Report of the Superintendent**

Dr. Petrone reviewed many events and meetings that have taken place in-district, regionally, and state-wide.

**IV.A. Recognition: Coventry's 2023 Teacher of the Year, Jennifer DuBois, CGS Teacher**

Dr. Petrone talked about Ms. DuBois as Coventry's first "Teacher of the Year." Ms. Carrie also said a few words of praise. Dr. Petrone introduced Rep. Ackert, who presented Ms. DuBois with a citation from the State General Assembly. There were congratulations from all.

#### **IV.B. Information: Board of Education Student Representative Report**

Miss Waterhouse reviewed various events taking place at Coventry High School including, PSATs, Home Coming, and updates to the Courtyard.

#### **IV.C. Information: 2022 Assessment Results Summary**

Ms. DeRagon, who also serves as the district's Testing Coordinator, led the presentation - 2022 Assessment Achievement, which is available via the district's website and the BoardBook portal. Ms. DeRagon was joined by Mr. Sward and Mr. Blake, who shared portions of the presentation.

J. Beausoleil said she appreciated the candor about the test results. She said she believes the administration will do everything they can to do what needs to be done to turn these results around.

Dr. Petrone thanked the Board for their patience. He said we have a great plan in place and a great team.

E. Marchand said he realizes how this is a nation-wide issue and not in Coventry alone.

The Board discussed how teachers are being supported.

C. Williams thanked the administrators for their transparency and the emotion that was delivered with the presentation.

C. Williams asked if the school year could be increased. Dr. Petrone said yes, but it does come with a price tag.

P. DePaola said he does not believe anyone is surprised by these results. He asked the administrators' opinion on how long Coventry will take to recover, compared to the nation-wide estimate of 3-5 years. Ms. DeRagon said we will know more at the end of this school year when we have that data to compare. Dr. Petrone said attendance is a key factor and if things improve in that area, we could be looking at 2 years.

The Board continued to discuss the details of the assessment results and various reasons for the fluctuations from year to year.

#### **MOTION: To move the Solar Project Update to next on the agenda**

**By: C. Williams**

**Seconded: M. Kortmann**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

#### **VIII. Old Business**

##### **VIII.A. Information and Possible VOTE: Solar Project Update**

Mr. Sadler updated the Board on the solar project. He noted the supply issues with the customized items that are needed for this project. He said they are looking to extend the project with the state's Public Utility Regulatory Authority by another 12 months. M. Kortmann confirmed that the system can be built, just not energized due to the unavailable parts. Mr. Sadler agreed.

C. Williams asked if all avenues had been pursued regarding the parts. Mr. Sadler said yes. P. DePaola said, assuming the approval goes through, what are the next steps. Mr. Sadler said summer installation is ideal. Dr. Petrone said there are a lot of moving parts with the roof project, but we would do our best to work together.

**MOTION: To authorize the Superintendent to provide a letter of support should the attorney require one.**

**By: M. Kortmann**

**Seconded: E. Marchand**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

#### **IV.E. Information: Administrator Goal Presentations 2022-23:**

##### **IV.E.1. Coventry Grammar School**

Dr. Petrone introduced Ms. Carrie who shared the Coventry Grammar School (CGS) Goals for the 2022-23 school year. (These goals are available on the website.)

C. Williams talked about the enrichment program and if additions have been made to literacy, math, and science. Ms. Carrie said there have been increases in all of those and she spoke about the specifics.

E. Marchand asked about the students who don't get to participate in enrichment. Ms. Carrie said these students truly enjoy the intervention experiences.

##### **IV.E.2. G. H. Robertson School**

Dr. Petrone introduced Ms. DeRagon who shared the G. H. Robertson (GHR) Goals for the 2022-23 school year. (These goals are available on the district's website.)

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

J. Beausoleil noted the success of the open houses.

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

##### **VII.A. Approve Minutes of September 8, 2022**

**MOTION: To approve the minutes of September 8, 2022**

**By: E. Eaton**

**Seconded: C. Williams**

**Result: Motion passes 5-0-2 (J. Beausoleil and C. Rossignol abstained)**

#### **VIII. Report of Board Members**

##### **VIII.A. Information: Transportation Committee Report, Meeting of September 21, 2022**

E. Marchand reviewed a summary of the Transportation Committee meeting. The minutes from the meeting were available for the Board's review.

The Board discussed route times, athletics, shortage of drivers, and parents' bus concerns.

### **School Building Committee Update**

M. Kortmann provided an impromptu update on the school building projects, including the roofs, the microgrid, and the HVAC grant.

### **IX. New Business**

#### **IX.A. Information: CT Public Act No. 11-55 "An Act Concerning Discrimination"**

J. Beausoleil noted Board members asked for this agenda item to be added. She reviewed the attachments that were available to the Board.

C. Williams said this request came forward because there were concerns about bathroom usage by transgender students. She said she is concerned with bullying from two different lenses – bullying and harassment of the transgender student and the safety of the other students in the case of a non-genuine transgender student who may have malicious intent.

Dr. Petrone said safety precautions are in place for all students and he reviewed those. He said if a crime is committed, it is treated as such.

Miss Waterhouse said there is usually only one class at a time in the locker room. She said she has never experienced any issue in the locker room and a teacher is always right outside. She also said there is not a lot of time - people get in and out.

Dr. Petrone reminded the Board that this law has been in effect since 2011 and the district has been following the law.

E. Marchand said he has an issue with the term “non-genuine” transgender child. He said he did not appreciate casting any doubt on a transgender child’s identity. C. Williams said it has happened where someone has misrepresented themselves this way with malicious intent.

Dr. Petrone again reviewed the procedures in place to handle student safety for all students.

P. DePaola said he wanted to be sure all students are protected, and no one group is protected over another group.

C. Rossignol said it is important that all students are supported.

E. Eaton said the risk that has been implied has been accounted for; we have safety protocols in place for all students.

J. Beausoleil said the topic has been addressed and questions have been answered.

### **X. Adjournment**

**MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 10:39 p.m.**

**By: E. Eaton**

**Seconded: M. Kortmann**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

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Respectfully submitted:

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Kimberlee Arey Delorme  
Board Clerk

Approved: October 13, 2022