



people. Additionally, she mentioned the Health/Sex Education in town and supported students asking questions and receiving factual answers.

Robyn Gallagher of 984 Main Street began by thanking the Board for their service. She talked about the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame and her hope for its involvement in Coventry. She also spoke about the Health/Sexual Curriculum at CHS, and she said she is happy about what is being taught.

Christina Williams of 436 Ripley Hill Road spoke expressing her condolences to the St. Lois community for another senseless tragedy; she thanked Dr. Petrone for his efforts regarding the SWATTING that was going on last week; and she also spoke about the Health/Sexual Curriculum and noted her disapproval of the recent Wesleyan University program and specifically that it is being shared with students who are too young.

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

Dr. Petrone reviewed various events and meetings taking place in-district, regionally, and state-wide.

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

Miss Waterhouse informed the Board that the Drama Department is putting on their first play in November.

##### **MOTION: To move the CHS Health Curriculum item ahead on the agenda**

**By: C. Williams**

**Seconded: P. DePaola**

**Result: Motion passes 6-1 (J. Beausoleil against)**

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

J. Beausoleil thanked those who waited while the Board was in Executive Session. She spoke about the Coventry annual holiday food drive and how folks could donate food.

#### **VI. Information: CHS Health Curriculum**

Dr. Petrone said Mr. Blake is present for questions. Mr. Blake spoke about Wesleyan University's Adolescent Sexual Health Awareness (ASHA) program, which came to Coventry recently and has been for 12 years.

The Board discussed this program in detail.

C. Williams expressed her displeasure with the details discussed in class and that it was not appropriate for the age of the freshmen students.

M. Kortmann said it is an important conversation when related to coercion.

E. Eaton said she understands C. Williams being upset. She went on to talk about the difference between a topic being brought up in class and one being taught.

Dr. Petrone said when the issue at hand came up, he and Mr. Blake addressed it. Mr. Blake reiterated that the teacher in the room redirected the conversation immediately.

P. DePaola asked about the background of the presenters. Mr. Blake said they are graduate students who have been trained in this area. He added that this is a good program, and there isn't a better one.

M. Kortmann said the percentage of freshmen who are having sex is 16% according to state statistics. She said this program is important.

C. Rossignol talked about the resources that are provided to students on this topic. She asked how those are vetted. Mr. Blake said they are used by the Wesleyan program. She asked if the district vetted the resources that were provided. She suggested WIC be added as a resource. The Board discussed resources given to students.

Dr. Petrone said we have accepted responsibility and reiterated that the issue was addressed immediately.

**MOTION: To add a vote to the agenda to discontinue the use of Wesleyan University guest speakers with respect to any talks on student health.**

**By: C. Williams**

**Seconded: C. Rossignol**

**Result: Motion passes 4-3 (M. Kortmann, E. Eaton, E. Marchand against)**

**MOTION: To discontinue the use of Wesleyan University guest speakers with respect to any talks on student health**

**By: C. Williams**

**Seconded: C. Rossignol**

Discussion: C. Rossignol said our educators should be teaching this, we don't need to bring in outside resources. She said you cannot always trust outside resources.

P. DePaola said there are a lot of good things in the program and it is too bad we can't separate it out between sexual assault and coercion.

J. Beausoleil said we have instructors who are certified health teachers. She said we have other teachers who are certified in other areas. She said outside specialty resources are brought in often to enhance the programming in many areas. She added that parents can always contact the school if they have concerns. She said the issue was raised with the conversation that was had in this class and the administration responded; during the class, the teacher redirected the conversation, and steps were taken to be sure this does not happen again. She said she does not believe in a unilateral decision for this program based on this one case.

Dr. Petrone talked about the challenges the district faces and noted this is not just in Coventry, adding that comments will be made from time to time in classes and it is the teacher's job to redirect the conversation.

C. Williams explained the combination of reasons for wanting to discontinue the Wesleyan program specifically, including issues with the resources (e.g., some website links did not connect), unpreparedness, and the inappropriate discussion held in class. She said she was not opposed to the district using another program that has been vetted by the district.



curriculum. Ms. Mullaly said what is on the website is a broader scope and that parents can be provided details at any time. She said she meets with parents whenever it is requested, as do the principals; they can go into much more depth if needed. Dr. Petrone said we are always happy to answer questions. Mr. Blake said this happens often.

E. Marchand made a friendly amendment, "**To follow the recommendations that Mr. Blake and Dr. Petrone just made; a general notice to parents that this is the upcoming curriculum and if you have more questions please follow up with the administration.**" C. Williams said she would consider that with a little bit more of a deeper dive of what is on the website; specifically what is going to be gone over. She said that would give parents enough heads up to address any concerns.

**C. Williams said she accepts the amendment.**

J. Beausoleil asked for a second to the amendment.

P. DePaola asked for the amendment to be repeated. E. Marchand said: "**To follow the recommendations of Mr. Blake and Dr. Petrone that a general notice would go out to parents that the health curriculum is coming up with broad stroke topics noted and for more questions, or if there are concerns, to contact the school.**"

**C. Williams accepted. Seconded: P. DePaola**

Discussion on the amended motion: P. DePaola said this will give parents notice as to what is coming with more specificity.

J. Beausoleil noted that Dr. Petrone and Mr. Blake already agreed to do this before the motion, so the vote is not needed and that is why she will vote against.

Dr. Petrone and Mr. Blake reiterated that only items where parents can opt students out will be noted. C. Rossignol asked if the Board will be able to see this before it is implemented and what happens to students who opt out. Mr. Blake said these students usually go to the library. Dr. Petrone said the Board can be provided a copy of what is communicated to parents as he does with other communications.

Dr. Petrone said the Board indicated their extreme pleasure with the Curriculum Parent Portal when it was first presented. He added that anyone can ask for more granular details.

**E. Marchand called the question.** J. Beausoleil said C. Rossignol is in the middle of a question and she would like her to be able to finish. C. Rossignol expressed her concern with parents having to spend too much time when asking the administrators curriculum questions and that if the information was provided beforehand, it would be more efficient. J. Beausoleil spoke from experience when she had questions as a parent, before she was a Board member, she spent time asking, meeting multiple times, and following up with staff. She said she was always accommodated.



**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

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Respectfully submitted:

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Kimberlee Arey Delorme  
Board Clerk

Approved: November 10, 2022