

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Unapproved Minutes of Thursday, January 26, 2023
Administration Building Conference Room

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 Board of Education Representative

Administrators present:

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

Audience: CHS students being recognized: Senior Emma Smith, Junior Mary Levesque, Senior Paige Deane, Senior Grace Zima, Junior Cecelia Gardner; parents; Alison Blair, CHS Teacher; Joseph Blake, CHS Principal; Ross Sward, CNH Principal; Jennifer DeRagon, GHR Principal; Ronda Carrie, CGS Principal; and Michele Mullaly, Director of Teaching and Learning.

I. Call to Order

J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:03 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 reported on events taking place in-district, regionally, and state-wide.

IV.A. Recognition: CHS Students Emma Smith, Mary Levesque, Paige Deane, Grace Zima, and Cecelia Gardner - Scholastic Art and Writing Awards

Dr. Petrone reviewed the CHS students who participated in the Scholastic Art and Writing Competition and noted each of their awards: Senior Emma Smith won a Gold Key for her digital photograph "Cadence." A Silver Key was awarded to junior Mary Levesque for her drawing, "The Fly." Honorable mentions were awarded to senior Paige Deane for her digital photograph "Tomorrow Never Knows," senior Grace Zima's digital photograph "Dance of Revenge," and junior Cecelia Gardner's digital photograph "Ethereal Vision."

Ms. Blair said the competition is very competitive and Coventry always does very well. She explained the process. Mr. Blake gave commendations to Ms. Blair for her hard work.

J. Beausoleil noted the amount of talent the students have.

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

Miss Waterhouse reported on activities taking place at CHS, noting that mid-terms are done and the second semester is beginning.

IV.C. Information: District-Wide Student Support Update

Dr. Petrone introduced the administrative team, who shared a presentation as a mid-year update on social emotional and school climate, which is available on the district's website.

M. Kortmann asked about the work on attendance and if any success has been seen as a result. Dr. Petrone reviewed the different strategies and noted it does take some time to determine the success. Dr. Petrone said we are fortunate we are in a small town, as the staff are close to the students and familiar with their habits.

C. Williams talked about the climate surveys and whether we will be able to tell if this is an effective approach from the beginning of the year to the end. Ms. Carrie said yes and explained how the assessments will be done and the comparisons that will be provided.

E. Marchand talked about significant issues families may be facing and if resources are being used outside of Coventry. Dr. Petrone said staff meet with families and may point them in the direction for additional services. He reviewed the various in-house resources as well.

V. VOTE: Consent Agenda

P. DePaola asked that each item be discussed individually.

V.A. Approve the CNH/CHS March/April 2023 Field Experience to North Haven High School

MOTION: To approve the CNH/CHS Field Experience to March/April 2023 Field Experience to North Haven High School

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: E. Eaton

Discussion: P. DePaola had questions about the form and asked for explanations regarding the timing of the event. Mr. Blake and Mr. Sward explained the Future Problem Solvers and the trip, noting that it is a three-day event with a break of a day in-between.

Result: Motion passes unanimously

It was later clarified that this trip was not an overnight trip and that correction would be made on the form.

V.B. Approve the CNH/CHS April 2023 Field Experience to the New England Folk Festival in Marlborough, MA

MOTION: To Approve the CNH/CHS April 2023 Field Experience to the New England Folk Festival in Marlborough, MA.

By: M. Kortmann Seconded: E. Marchand

Discussion: P. DePaola asked for further information about the festival. Mr. Sward explained the trip and the activities involved. C. Williams asked for clarification on the date. Dr. Petrone said it is Saturday, April 22.

Result: To approve the field trip with the noted correction of the day of week passes unanimously

V.C. Approve the CNH June 2023 Field Experience to Amherst, MA

MOTION: To Approve the CNH June 2023 Field Experience to Amherst MA

By: E. Marchand Seconded: C. Williams

Discussion: P. DePaola asked for clarification. Mr. Sward explained this is an international competition. The Board discussed the overnight arrangements.

Result: Motion passes unanimously

VI. Report of the Chairman

J. Beausoleil reported on the CAFE Legislative Breakfast that was hosted in Coventry on January 20, 2023. She also reminded Board members, who are to provide their input on policies, that they submit the suggestions as soon as possible so a Policy Committee meeting can be scheduled.

VI.A. Assign Committee Members to Negotiation Committees

J. Beausoleil reviewed the negotiations that are coming up.

VI.A.1. Teachers (Full BOE)

J. Beausoleil noted all Board members will serve on this Committee.

VI.A.2. Administrators (3)

J. Beausoleil said she would like to serve on this committee and asked for two more volunteers. C. Williams and M. Kortmann volunteered.

VI.A.3. Cafeteria (3)

E. Marchand, E. Eaton, and C. Rossignol volunteered.

VI.A.4. Nurses (3)

P. DePaola, E. Marchand, and J. Beausoleil volunteered.

VI.A.5. Secretaries (3)

P. DePaola, E. Eaton, and M. Kortmann volunteered.

VIII. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

VIII.A. Approve Minutes of January 12, 2023

MOTION: To approve the minutes of January 12, 2023

By: E. Eaton

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes 6-0-1 (C. Williams abstained)

VIII.B. Approve Minutes of January 19, 2023 - 6:00 p.m. Special Meeting

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the January 19, 2023 6:00 p.m. Special Meeting

By: C. Williams

Seconded: C. Rossignol

Result: Motion passes 5-0-2 (P. DePaola, E. Eaton abstained)

VIII.C. Approve Minutes of January 19, 2023 - 7:00 p.m. Special Meeting

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the January 19, 2023 7:00 p.m. Special Meeting

By: C. Rossignol

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Discussion: C. Williams asked that the second sentence under "General" on page 3 read as follows, "She added that she was glad to see an increase in textbooks and paper media across all levels."

Result: Motion to approve the minutes with noted change passes 5-0-2 (P. DePaola and E. Eaton abstained)

IX. Old Business

IX.A. Information and Possible VOTE: FY24 Budget

Dr. Petrone reviewed the new information that is available. He noted, with the updates, the new increase is 4.05% and said it is mostly due to special education adjustments. Additionally, he reviewed some other districts' percentage increases.

C. Rossignol asked about the increase in pension. Dr. Petrone said this was due to an error discovered at the Town Hall and verified by the actuary.

J. Beausoleil asked for questions by site/department.

C. Williams talked about special education and wanting to compare outplacement service costs with in-house costs. Dr. Petrone talked about the varying costs at the different locations. He went on to explain that the services are so specific to the student that you cannot compare the two. He added that it is almost always less expensive to keep the students in-house and it is what is best for the student.

The Board discussed the different programs that have been developed in Coventry to serve this population.

C. Williams asked about the tuition-in students and how those funds are distributed. Dr. Petrone said funds are appropriately distributed into the operating budget and then into the Tuition Fund. The Board discussed the details of the Tuition Fund. C. Rossignol expressed her desire to use the Tuition Fund to supplement the operating budget to keep the increase low. J. Beausoleil talked about being careful and not using it for reoccurring costs, as it just creates a bigger problem down the road - it is not a predictable fund.

R. Carroll said they heard from CIRMA; they will be holding their rates, which is a \$10,000 savings. He said that change will be shown at the next meeting.

C. Williams asked about the different technology applications. Dr. Petrone said he would provide information on the following items:

- Barracuda Email Archiving (how long is the contract)
- Atlas Rubicon (how long is the contract)
- Bookflix (while a small dollar increase, the percentage increase is 200% - why)
- BrainPop (details on the contract length, this year compared to what was noted last year)
- CEN (why wasn't it on last year's list)
- Ekahau (what is it and why is it needed)
- ExtremeCloud IQ/Aerohive (why such a large increase)

Overall, C. Williams said she would like to come in under 4%.

M. Kortmann referred to the natural gas information. Mr. Carroll talked about the trends and projected costs.

X. Report of Board Members

X.A. Information: District Wellness Committee Liaison Report

C. Rossignol talked about the Committee meetings and that goals and subcommittees are being considered.

X.B. Information: Curriculum Liaison Report

E. Marchand talked about the work the Curriculum Cabinet is doing; focusing on the Portrait of the Graduate competencies. C. Williams asked if there has been any flowdown from the State on any curriculum changes. M. Mullaly said nothing new this year. There was a brief discussion on the Science of Reading Curriculum and the process of submitting the waiver to the State.

XI. Possible VOTE: Executive Session [School Security]

MOTION: Pursuant to CGS-1-200(c)(6)(A), the Board of Education will go into Executive Session for discussions related to school security with the Superintendent and District Security Specialist present at 9:18 p.m.

By: E. Eaton

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes unanimously

XII. Open Session

The Board came out of Executive Session and returned to Open Session at 10:43 p.m.

XIII. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 10:43 p.m.

By: C. Williams

Seconded: E. Eaton

Result: Motion passes unanimously

Respectfully submitted:

Kimberlee Arey Delorme
Board Clerk

Approved: _____